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Music Scholarship, Musical Practice, and the Act of Listening

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Produced by the experience of the game, and therefore of the objective structures within which it is played out, the "feel for the game" is what gives the game a subjective sense—a meaning and a *raison d'être*, but also a direction, an orientation, an impending outcome, for those who take part and therefore acknowledge what is at stake. . . . Indeed, one has only to suspend the commitment to the game implied in the feel for the game in order to reduce the world, and the actions performed in it, to absurdity, and to bring up questions about the meaning of the world and existence which people never ask when they are caught up in the game–the questions of an aesthete trapped in the instant, or an idle spectator.

—Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*

I try to put together the two parts of my life, as many first-generation intellectuals do. . . . My main problem is to try and understand what happened to me. My trajectory may be described as miraculous, I suppose—an ascension to a place where I don't belong. And so to be able to live in a world that is not mine I must try to understand both things: what it means to have an academic mind—how such is created—and at the same time what was lost in acquiring it.

—Bourdieu, *Doxa and the Common Life:* An Interview

What does it mean "to have an academic mind" with respect to music? Does it make sense to speak, with Bourdieu, of "what was lost in acquiring it" if we examine the way music is constructed in musicology? To explore these questions, I will begin by drawing attention to an act that is crucial to musicology but nonetheless often taken for granted within it: the act of listening to music—of listening, that is, with rapt attention to the particular shape and details of particular, unique musical works. As one of the central "objective

structures within which the game of musical scholarship is played out, that act is crucial to the subjective sense" of the game and has often come to symbolize proper musical scholarship. But this disciplinary loyalty becomes problematic simply because the game of musicology is not the game of music (a pursuit that has its own sense and structures), even if the two have significant points of overlap. Rather than recognizing the differences between these two practices and reflecting on the significance of those differences for musicological practice, musicology has, I will argue, come to privilege the (scholar's) act of listening to the extent that other significant elements of musical practice have been rendered all but invisible. To explain this situation of disappearing practices, I will have recourse to Karl Marx's analysis of the manner in which commodities veil the social relations through which they are produced. From this perspective, what the academic mind "loses" both serves to secure its own institutional position and to naturalize the larger system in which it operates, by so constructing the musical object, the focus of scholarly inquiry, as to locate its significance within the work rather than in the behaviors and relationships that constitute musical activity.

This may seem a meager role for Marx in a collection dedicated to Marx and music, and indeed I make no claim to have forged a theoretical advance that will alter the practice of music scholarship in a way inconceivable without Marx. Rather, I offer the reflections of a music historian whose work centers on musical culture in the society of which Marx himself was a member; considering some of Marx's ideas in relation to musicological practices can explain something about those practices and their origins, clarify Marx's own perspective on the place of music within capitalism, and, finally, offer insight into the social position of musicology and the high musical culture it has helped to construct. Before arriving at Marx, however, I will consider the situation of musicology, and of phenomena that may seem far removed from the world of commodities, production, and class relations. As Bourdieu insists, however, ignoring these symbolic practices in search of an objective account of society is ultimately as deceptive as considering only those practices in isolation (see, for instance, Bourdieu 1990: 17 and 136–41).[1]

I begin, then, with a consideration of a central feature of what might, following Bourdieu, be termed the "academic mind" within music, the structures of thought that produce scholarship whose musicological legitimacy is unimpeachable, even given recent challenges to methodologies and canons.[2] I have elsewhere discussed what I believe to be one crucial component of the field's self-definition (see Gramit 1998a), so I will summarize only briefly here: Acknowledgment of the centrality of the aesthetic experience derived from focused attention to individual musical works is a sine qua non of at least the North American musicological enterprise. This foundational experience has defined the field of musicological study in a way that permits the disciplinary developments and controversies that have been so prominent

within the last decade to proceed largely without fundamentally challenging at least this one basic rule of the game. Thoroughly internalized, it is most frequently made explicit when drawn out by a polemical challenge—either in order to defend one's membership in the field or to challenge that of another.

One such discipline-bounding statement provides an admirably succinct characterization of the mode of attention to music that the musicological enterprise privileges. In the context of a discussion of scholarship that he criticized as failing to take account of "what many of us would recognize as the musical experience itself," Ralph Locke (1993: 169) defined that experience as "the active and often critical/creative *internal* participation in the musical artwork." Although unusually direct, Locke's statement is by no means unique. Ellen Rosand, also cautioning against trends in recent scholarship, asserts similarly (1995: 11) that scholarship demands "passionate engagement" and "personal involvement" with music, and writes of "returning once again to the musical work, to discover the affective structures of its operation"; Pieter C. van den Toorn (1995: 1) opens his attack on the practices of "new musicology" by invoking "a consuming interest in music" that results in "an effort to draw ourselves closer to a musical context and enhance our appreciation"; Lawrence Kramer (one of the targets of van den Toorn's attacks), in a polemical exchange with Gary Tomlinson, writes (1993: 27) of "listening with the kind of deep engagement, the heightened perception and sense of identification, that both grounds and impels criticism"; and even Tomlinson, who argues for a methodology that will not necessarily place the criticism of individual works at its center, still acknowledges (defensively) "our love for the music we study," and "our usual impassioned musical involvements"—which, he maintains, we should "dredge up . . . from the hidden realm of untouchable premise they tend to inhabit" (1993: 24).

Nor are such statements limited to polemics of recent years. In the 1980s, Margaret Bent defended traditional musicological practices, especially the editing of music, against Joseph Kerman's advocacy of the primacy of music criticism in part by asserting that editing did indeed involve the crucial element: "learning is a dynamic and shifting consensus of knowledge *that includes aesthetic and musical experience* as well as data in the traditional sense" (1986: 6; my emphasis). A product of the German academic controversies of the 1960s and 1970s, Carl Dahlhaus's *Foundations of Music History* (1983) revolves around the problem of writing a plausible history of music while still acknowledging the necessity of "aesthetic immersion in musical works as self-sustaining entities" (27).[3] And, returning to North America, both of the main participants in the most prominent disciplinary debate of the 1960s, Joseph Kerman and Edward Lowinsky, claimed the musical experience as their unassailable starting point: Kerman wrote of a "passion" for the great composers, of "the essential musical experience," and of "an original commitment to music as aesthetic experience" (1965: 66–67)

while Lowinsky countered that "[my] credo has always been: 'the beginning and the end of musicological studies lie in sympathetic and critical evaluation of the individual work of art' " (1965: 226, citing Lowinsky 1961: 72).

Four decades of statements, ranging from almost offhand to fervent and written by scholars of widely differing perspectives, should suffice to make the point: So basic is the aesthetic experience of music—an intense, focused involvement with an individual work of music—to the conception of the object of musicological study that it demands acknowledgment from all sides. In order to establish credibility—even for enterprises (like Bent's or Tomlinson's) that focus elsewhere—it is essential at least to *suggest* that one knows that passionate involvement. To do otherwise is to risk dismissal of the sort given by Charles Rosen (1996: 63) to Tia DeNora: "It would be grand to have a social history of music, but before it can be realized, the sociologists will have to take music more seriously." This formulation lays out the stakes particularly clearly: focused attention to the music itself is what separates legitimate musical scholarship from work in other disciplines that presumes to touch on music (e.g., "the sociologists").

So pervasive a structuring value, I would argue, is part of the *habitus* of the discipline—the structure of thought into which the field disciplines its practitioners and which in turn shapes their perceptions and practices.[4] If this is so, then even attempts to develop new musicological practices would continue to be shaped by it. And in fact, the unmarked presumption that listening—and in particular, concentrated listening to unique works—is the essential musical act is apparent not only in conventional musical scholarship but also in some of the most prominent recent attempts to depart from those conventions. Given this orientation, it is no coincidence that the most prominent and widely discussed examples of "the New Musicology" have been those that have devoted extensive attention to critical rehearings of canonic musical works.[5]

At this point, I should hasten to assure readers who may be wearying of a long parade of examples—one that could easily give rise to the expectation that the old dispensation is about to be dismissed in favor of a new, music-free music scholarship—that I am by no means arguing that musicologists should stop listening to music or writing about "the notes" (a fear given explicit voice by a professional colleague who heard an earlier expression of this position). Rather, I have simply sought to demonstrate that one particular tenet of music scholarship is both pervasive and naturalized: even if individual examples of scholarship may focus on other matters, musicology is ultimately "about" pieces of music to which we listen intently. It may seem disingenuous to proceed to insert my own statement of loyalty—that I too value both the experience of listening to music and the challenge of exploring how individual pieces "work" in various contexts—but it is nevertheless true. I recognize the pervasiveness of the value not only in the words of others but

in my own hesitation in making the value itself the object of some of *my* scholarship. For surely, I find part of me objecting, listening to music *is* fundamental, and what we mean by "music" when we name it as the object of our study is self-evident.[6]

And yet, a more reflective part of me insists that it is not in fact so self-evident, and this prompts me to raise the possibility not of a noteless musicology but rather of one that recognizes that the act of listening—especially of listening like a scholar—is only one of the ways through which music becomes significant, and further, that the mode of listening itself can be seen to be as significant as the thing listened to. Before expanding on this position, I will try to convey my sense of its necessity, which arises in part from reflecting on my own experience of music. Simply put, I cannot, with Kerman, claim "an original commitment to music as aesthetic experience," perhaps because I first encountered music that I learned to value for its own sake not through the act of focused listening but rather through the act of playing—specifically, learning an instrument in an elementary school band program. To be sure, I also learned to listen (albeit not immediately, as anyone who has attended an elementary school band concert will understand), but several other modes of listening seem to me to have been at least as important as that of solitary aesthetic participation in a work: listening in lessons to the voice and sounds of the teacher; listening to myself, practicing, in an attempt to internalize that voice and create those sounds; and listening to others in an ensemble situation, whether the direct interaction of chamber music or the larger and overtly hierarchical band or orchestra. Eventually, I also learned to listen to, delight in, and revere "great works" (just as, eventually, playing came to occupy a less significant role in my conception of music) and even to write about those works and their composers. But anyone who can remember listening as a child to an AM easy listening station believing that this was the "classical music" he was beginning to experience in band will perhaps always remain skeptical that aesthetic listening is the necessary center of music.

By introducing this alternative perspective autobiographically, I by no means wish to argue that we replace the aesthetic experience of music with experiential narrative as the mark of legitimate scholarship. Indeed, even my skeletal summary raises issues that reach well beyond the personal. For instance, simply to compare my account with what for Adorno (1994: 328) counted as a "prototypical" (read "autobiographical"?) initiatory musical experience—"a child who lies awake in his bed while a string quartet plays in an adjoining room, and who is suddenly so overwhelmed by the excitement of the music that he forgets to sleep and listens breathlessly"—is to be made aware of the distinction between what Bourdieu calls (1984: 74–75) "domestic learning" ("acquired pre-verbally, by early immersion in a world of cultivated people, practices and objects") and a later, scholastically mediated

learning open to those of less privileged origin. What I do hope to have suggested is that even if we limit ourselves to activities that fall clearly within the commonsense definition of musical, a perspective that centers on reflective, critical listening, no matter how socially oriented, will inevitably neglect or marginalize much that is essential to music. The physical activity of playing, of training a body to enact music; the institution of the music lesson, with its highly personalized means of reproducing cultural authority; and the relational and hierarchical dynamics of performance: all of these are inextricably linked to the music that has traditionally been the focus of musicology, yet they fade from view when "music" is implicitly defined as the work of a composer for aesthetic contemplation by a listener. And if we consider as well the relations that bring musical artifacts and events (instruments, printed scores, concerts, etc.) into being, the areas occluded from view still further dwarf that which musicology has defined as its object. As an alternative and supplement, then, I am proposing that we consider music as an activity, and musical works as one product of a set of relationships involving a wide variety of participants. From this perspective, rather than imagining listening, reflective or otherwise, as the center that defines musical meaning, we can suggest that the meaning of that activity too is crucially dependent on one's position amid those relationships. Such a perspective would permit musicology to reflect on its own social relationship to music rather than assuming it within its definition of its object.

There is by now of course nothing novel about the claim that music is an inherently social undertaking, nor that scholarship has often overlooked that sociality; and further, the assertion that music is fundamentally about relations among people has recently been given an eloquent and provocative exposition by Christopher Small (1998). Why, then, reiterate such claims and insist on adding Marx to the mix? Marx himself was certainly never centrally concerned to explore the workings of music within the economic system he theorized; in fact, one of his few explicit discussions of music ([1857–58] 1973: 305–306n.) famously dismissed its performance as productive labor within capitalism with a highly unflattering analogy:

> The piano *maker* reproduces *capital*; the pianist only exchanges his labour for revenue. But doesn't the pianist produce music and satisfy our musical ear, does he not even to a certain extent produce the latter? He does indeed: his labour produces something; but that does not make it productive labour in the *economic sense*; no more than the labour of the madman who produces delusions is productive . . . . Productive labourer [is] he that directly augments capital.

Given Marx's concern to detail the precise role of labor in the emerging capitalist economy he sought to analyze, this distinction is a crucial one, even if

Marx here takes "music" in precisely the sense I have been criticizing. (I will return to the historical context of this view below.) My concern, however, is more limited: Marx's analysis of the nature of commodities and their exchange offers striking parallels to the disappearance of musical activity behind the aesthetic experience, and that disappearance is arguably closely linked to the integration of music into the system whose workings Marx analyzed. To see this demands a review of the starting point of Marx's critical analysis of capitalism, a review that will be so basic as to seem pedantic to readers versed in the social sciences; however, within musicology, it is unfamiliar enough that even my elementary explication may provide material for new reflection.[7]

Marx's massive critique of political economy, *Capital*, begins with what Marx took to be capitalism's most pervasive and fundamental element, the commodity, which he defines in an initially straightforward way:

> The commodity is, first of all, an external object, a thing which through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind. The nature of these needs, whether they arise, for example, from the stomach, or the imagination, makes no difference. Nor does it matter here how the thing satisfies man's need, whether directly as a means of subsistence, i.e., an object of consumption, or indirectly as a means of production. ([1867] 1976: 125)

But this ability to satisfy needs—the commodity's use value—is only part of the story. The second crucial property of the commodity is its abstract value, revealed as a quantity in exchange with other commodities. In this exchange, qualitative (use-related) values disappear, and the value revealed in exchange represents only that which all commodities hold in common: the property "of being products of labour." Moreover, value expressed in exchange cannot represent labor of any particular sort, since different commodities require different forms of labor for their production. What must determine value, then, is "human labour in the abstract": from the perspective of the exchange of commodities, "they are merely congealed quantities of homogeneous human labour, i.e., of human labour power expended without regard to the form of its expenditure" ([1867] 1976: 128).

Such formulations, taken, it is important to note, from the first few pages of a massive work, have done much to give rise to the impression that Marx's viewpoint represents economic reductionism in the extreme, and that the claim of labor as the determinant of value is arbitrary and insufficient. But as Dominick La Capra has noted (1989: 174–79), the opening of *Capital* is anything but straightforward in its stance toward what it appears to introduce as absolute categories: value-neutral language is interrupted abruptly by ironic comments that undercut it, and it only gradually becomes clear that Marx is presenting not transcendent categories illustrated by the concrete example of

capitalism, but rather historical but naturalized categories through which capitalism produces—and distorts—its reality. If, then, Marx's appeal to labor as the determinant of value seems a troubling sleight of hand, and if his tone at times appears disconcertingly abstract, we may suspect a strong motivation: this definition of value is not only a part of Marx's analysis of the commodity, but also the heart of the system Marx is critiquing, a system in which abstraction from social relations to objects is essential.[8]

The notions of naturalization and deceptive appearances turn out to be crucial to the functioning of the commodity, because the two distinct forms of value inherent in it lead to a thorough mystification of the system in which commodities function. The exchange of commodities on the basis of quantities of abstract labor value means that what appears as the inherent value of things obscures their critical function within the relations that constitute society: "the commodity seems not to *be* a value, a social mediation, but rather a use value that *has* exchange value" (Postone 1993: 169). In Marx's own terms,

> Since the producers do not come into social contact until they exchange the products of their labour, the specific social characteristics of their private labours appear only within this exchange . . . . To the producers, therefore, the social relations between their private labours appear as what they are, i.e., they do not appear as direct social relations between persons in their work, but rather as material [*dinglich*] relations between persons and social relations between things. ([1867] 1976: 165–66)

Later, Marx succinctly refers to this process as "the conversion of things into persons and persons into things" ([1867] 1976: 209). La Capra comments (1989: 178) that "one might extend Marx's train of thought and argue that meaning divorced from an intimate relation to the work process is projected and fixated in a detached symbolic form into the mystified commodity as fetish."

The location of meaning returns us to the scholarly practices with which I began. Those practices exist within a society in which the straightforward consumption of musical commodities is the norm, notwithstanding Marx's unwillingness to view musical performance as productive labor. This is self-evident in the circulation of recorded music, but even "live" performers also frequently operate under various circumstances as wage laborers.[9] So, too, do salaried academics, despite the social esteem in which their labor has traditionally been held. And one could easily argue that (despite Adorno's claim (1978: 281) that "a Beethoven symphony as a whole, spontaneously experienced, can never be appropriated") musicological publication takes as a raw material—a means of production of its scholarly product—the musical object, the work that is the object of its study. If this parallel seems to conflate capitalists and workers (professors receive wages, but earn the "profit" from their publications as well) it is once again worth adducing Bourdieu and

noting that the usual profit realized is cultural capital in the form of professional recognition rather than immediate financial gain.[10]

It would be foolish to argue that a different scholarly focus will materially alter these productive relationships; I mention them rather in order to suggest that they have exercised a strong and often unrecognized influence, which becomes more comprehensible if we consider Marx's discussion of the commodity. In conjunction with institutionalized demands for scholarly productivity, the commodified circulation of musical objects predisposes us to take as the "natural" object of our study those musical objects and the relations among them, rather than the activities and the historically specific systems of social relationships that give rise to them.[11] We thus mis/recognize music's power to mediate social relationships as a power inherent in the (mystified) object. Even analytical approaches that seek to demonstrate how musical processes reflect larger social forces, valuable though they are, also perpetuate this situation to the extent that they posit a separate musical object that represents or models social relations. Again, I am not advocating the abandonment of such scholarship—after all, following Marx, in materializing relations between persons, it in a sense makes works "appear as what they are," that is, as reifications of the social. Rather, I am suggesting that we supplement the intellectual contemplation of musical objects with analysis of the social significance of music as a practice. This must inevitably also involve not only examination of the specific social relations and activities that have allowed musical objects to appear as autonomous, meaningful entities, but also reflection on musicology as a practice in relation to the historical or contemporary objects it seeks to characterize.

From this perspective, the functions of the aesthetic experience of music merit further consideration. That mode of experience—described by Locke (1993: 169) as "*internal* participation in the musical artwork" or by Dahlhaus (1989: 95) as "the mental retracing of musical logic"—is, as I have suggested above, a listener's rather than a participant's mode, reflective rather than active, and directed toward contemplation of the musical object as a whole. Precisely this concern for the whole of the object that focused listening constitutes minimizes awareness of the personal relationships of music-making. To be sure, technology has rendered this disappearance even more literal through the ubiquity of recordings, in which music-making people are not physically present at all. But to the extent that we listen solely to the unfolding "musical logic" (whether as audience member or performer) those relationships are equally effectively obscured from our awareness. (The central role of the piano in the century before recording might also be related to its allowing the performer to substitute musical relationships between parts within a work for the personal relationships of ensemble performance, and the persistence of score-reading requirements in many graduate musicology programs, even granting its undoubted practical utility, also naturalizes the same substitution.) Whether or

not one considers music a commodity per se, then, the *act* of listening to the autonomous musical object can be understood as part of the ideological work of music in that it models and naturalizes the veiling of social relationships through its constitution of an ostensibly independent object. The structure of the individual work so attended to plays no role in this process (although this by no means precludes the possibility that the structure of individual works or genres may in particular contexts function ideologically in other significant ways). Indeed, the rich variety of structures and styles that such listening can apprehend and that we are often at pains to point out to our students may serve to focus our attention all the more firmly on the objects themselves and their relationships to one another, turning attention away from both the social relations that bring them into existence and the role of the act of listening itself.

For historians of musical culture, this process of refocusing is of interest not only because it has obscured much of the larger phenomenon of musical practice, but also because the gradual elevation of the reflective listener and the disappearance of musical practice proves to be a significant part of the development of an ideology of serious music in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—and can lead us back to the dismissal of music with which I began my discussion of Marx. This is not the context in which this process can be traced at length, but the following sketch suggests that the disappearance of music as a field of social practice and the socioeconomic developments Marx traced were more than coincidentally related.

An observation by Charles Burney provides a useful starting point. Visiting Augsburg in 1772, the English scholar-cum-tourist excused the brevity of his account with a revealing generalization:

> I was somewhat tired of going to imperial cities [i.e., free cities not under the rule of a local prince] after music; as I seldom found any thing but the organ and organist worth attending to, and not always them . . . . These cities are not rich, and therefore have not the folly to support their theatres at a great expence. The fine arts are children of affluence and luxury; in despotic governments they render power less insupportable, and diversion from thought is perhaps as necessary as from action. Whoever therefore seeks music in Germany, should do it at the several courts, not in the free imperial cities, which are generally inhabited by poor industrious people, whose genius is chilled and repressed by penury; who can bestow nothing on vain pomp or luxury; but think themselves happy, in the possession of necessaries. The residence of a sovereign prince, on the contrary; besides the musicians in ordinary of the court, church and stage, swarms with pensioners and expectants, who have however few opportunities of being heard. ([1775]) 1959: 42–43)

The expectation that courts were the centers around which music flourished was as unexceptional as the frankness of Burney's pragmatic account of its

utility was unusual. But hindsight lends a further casual observation about the city a significance Burney likely never anticipated: "At going out, on the Munich side, there is a very fine building, just constructed, for the use of a cotton manufactory, which is of an immense size, and in a pleasing style of architecture" ([1775] 1959: 43); the old free cities would not be the center of industrial development, but Burney's "poor industrious people" would in the next century begin to accumulate "affluence and luxury" through precisely such means. While it would be misleading to claim—especially for Germany—that industrialization was the cause of the transformation of musical life that followed (and was indeed already under way as Burney wrote), the unchallenged centrality of the courts in musical life was coming to an end.[12]

Musicians, however, were by no means certain what, if anything, could replace the patronage of those courts. Already in 1787 a Viennese commentator noted that, because of declining support for music at courts, "one can scarcely expect the likes of Handel, Gluck, Gasmann, Paisello, Sarti, Naumann, Salieri, Haydn, Dittersdorf, or Mozart in the future" (Schmith 1787: 96–97).[13] Johann Friedrich Reichardt put it much more succinctly in a comment ascribed to him by Ludwig Achim von Arnim: "I am not dumb enough to become a great musician in such a time" (cited in Hartung 1992: 11).[14] For those who sought to support themselves in the face of this uncertainty, the musical press not only offered potential income (as it did for Reichardt, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Berlioz, Carl Maria von Weber, and many others), but also, amid reviews and aesthetic discussion, a wealth of specific discussion concerning the practice of musical life, ranging from discussions of pedagogy to advice to young musicians, and from discussions of new instruments and inventions to counsel on dealing with patrons. Musical discourse, in short, despite the prevalence of idealist interpretations of musical works (see Bonds 1997), made little effort to obscure the practices on which that music depended. Indeed, the musical press routinely carried proposals for developing or preserving adequate support for music and musicians—ranging from modest proposals to provide income for teachers to sweeping reforms proposed in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848—and music's social significance was frequently discussed as a reason such support should be provided.

Claims for that significance were crucial to the accommodation of music within the new social order that developed throughout the first half of the century, but they also prepared the way for the disappearance of musical practice from musical discourse. For example, the loss of stable court support for musicians was still of concern to a Viennese author in 1818, but a higher motivation for musical patronage has replaced Burney's simple love of affluence and luxury:

> But when the first class of the state [i.e., the nobility], upon which the fine arts always formerly depended to support their progress, for the sake of

> cultivation of the spirit and of taste, no longer know how to appreciate their essential value, then the entire burden of supporting the disciples of the arts falls upon the middle class, and if in the end they prove too weak, then music, poetry, painting, and sculpture are degraded, and give way to the rustic. (Ascribed to . . . . r. 1818: 137)[15]

Such gloomy forecasts may seem quaint from our perspective, but conservative commentators did not hesitate to proclaim their fulfillment; according to Heinrich Paris in 1839, the cause was clear: "because we have destroyed the worship of all ideas; everywhere we have made only *material* interests the single mover [*Mobil*] of all social relationships; because in everything *money* has become our only god" (201–202).[16] In both cases (and many more could be cited as well), music's value has been translated from luxury to betterment of the spirit, but at the cost of dematerializing it. Nor was this strategy by any means limited to musical and political conservatives. Writing in the self-consciously progressive *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1845, Theodor Hagen claimed that a socialist reorganization of factory work could succeed only if workers also underwent a spiritual regeneration through music, which would help overcome the debilitating effects of contemporary urban life (194). When Marx observed that the musician produced only music, not a contribution to the material economy of capitalism, then, he was continuing a tradition already firmly established in musical discourse itself.

Redefining music's value as spiritual in this way could help avoid associations with idle luxury on the one hand and common spectacle on the other (a frequent metaphor of dismissal for virtuosos equated them with tightrope walkers [e.g., ... r. 1818: 137]) could be avoided; a corollary was an increasing focus on a canon of exemplary works shared by conservatives and progressives alike, as Lydia Goehr (1992) has eloquently demonstrated. But another corollary was a deepened gulf between the devalued practical details of musical life and the redemptive value ascribed to those works, properly understood, and between the world of the increasingly professionalized participant in musical life and the cultivated listener.[17] When the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* ceased publication in 1848, its publisher, Breitkopf and Härtel, claimed that under the current chaotic situation of music, "there is no longer any place for a *general* musical newspaper" (Breitkopf and Härtel 1848: 859–60).[18] This observation is easy to dismiss as an excuse for the failure of an increasingly tedious publication, but both the observation and the lack of variety and vitality in the paper's last years are symptomatic of the change in musical discourse I have outlined. Academic music, practical music, and music for the concertgoer had become increasingly distinct practices, and no one publication could hope to appeal to all these factions. Musicians produced and reproduced works, scholars understood them and chronicled their history, and listeners were bettered by experiencing them as

autonomous artworks, the means of whose production demanded no more consideration than the manufacture of the upholstered chair in which one might sit to hear them.

Musical works, then, have come to function in relation to the social relations of music-making as commodities do in the social relations of production, both representing and masking the reality of those relations. To the extent that this process is a naturalized one, it persists through its near invisibility. To claim an external function for what appears as self-evidently valuable within the field is to mark oneself as an outsider (hence the current concentration of statements of loyalty to the musical experience around the polemics through which the discipline defines its boundaries):

> In the social fields, which are the products of a long, slow process of autonomization, and are therefore, so to speak, games "in themselves" and not "for themselves," one does not embark on the game by a conscious act, one is born into the game, with the game; and the relation of investment, *illusio*, . . . is made more total and unconditional by the fact that it is unaware of what it is. (Bourdieu 1990: 67)

No one is "born" into the field of musicology (although one is certainly born into circumstances that favor the development of particular modes of attending to music). But to the extent that a discipline avoids reflecting on its presuppositions, it may indeed be nearly as unaware of its investment as Bourdieu here suggests. And from that position of involvement, statements that come close to making the music/commodity parallel explicit—even if they do so in an effort to express the vividness of the aesthetic experience—will likely find little following. Consider, for example, how strangely distant from the standard language of analysis and criticism is this passage by Thrasybulos Georgiades (1967: 94):

> [Schubert's] *Am Flusse* works like a magic box that sounds by itself. It has the magic of an object constructed by a sorcerer's hand and now active by itself. The master who produced it at the same time imbued it with breath. The work of the spirit which is a "work" in the strong sense of the word, is like such an artful object, built by a human—a magic box that spontaneously develops its own life as soon as it is constituted and let free, made independent, set on the table as it were, by the artist who built it. It has the characteristic of the real: it is graspable as if by hand, and yet mysterious.[19]

Georgiades's extraordinary blend of the language of magic and industry, of physical object and spiritual creation, comes uncomfortably close to revealing the tensions of an ideology of the work that demands that it be simultaneously revered with quasi-religious reverence and ascribed an autonomy, a separation conceivable only in physical terms. In them we can perhaps also read some of

Georgiades's own status as an outsider of sorts—a foreigner practicing a historically German discipline within the German university system and focusing on a central component of the German musical canon—and note as well that the same work elsewhere shows him to have been unusually aware of sociological constraints on musical styles.[20]

If, as I have argued, the specific relations that constitute music deserve closer attention than we have most often given them, so too do those that constitute musical scholarship. As John Guillory (1993) has shown in the case of literature, attention to the institutional site of academic discourse is crucial to understanding its social role. I have already directed attention to several aspects of this issue, but in conclusion I would like to return to a familiar institutional context in which the obscuring of musical relationships through the privileging of the aesthetic experience of music occurs: the university music department, within which an ability to hear and to talk accurately about "the music itself" is routinely considered a defining feature over against the studies of music in other disciplines. I have elsewhere suggested (Gramit 1998a) that a deep loyalty to the aesthetic experience of music unites performers and scholars in traditional North American music departments; however, I would also like to suggest that the same ideology can work to ensure that the partnership of scholar and practitioner will not be an equal one. The denigration of performance is accomplished without the overt elitism of Boethius ("How much more admirable, then, is the science of music in apprehending by reason than in accomplishing by work and deed!" [cited in Strunk 1965: 85]) or Guido of Arezzo's simple insult ("In our times, of all men, singers are the most foolish" [Strunk 1965: 117]), but the effect is much the same: the discursive privileging of intellection over purportedly unreflective practice.

When the listener-oriented privileging of the aesthetic experience is internalized, a hierarchy is established, with "the music" as an abstract, unified entity at its apex and the skills necessary to realize it subordinate to it. This relationship is succinctly conveyed in Henry Kingsbury's report (1991: 203) of a conservatory sight-singing class which was informed that " 'these chorales [by J. S. Bach] are not music—they are drills.' " Here the low status of the practical exercise provides a context that effectively removes the drill's material from its ordinary category of aesthetic object. In less blatant but more pervasive ways, the same message—that development and practice of a skill is distinct from and lower than art—is conveyed by such unremarkable institutions as music history curricula that teach composers and their works, or more recently and "progressively," those works in a social context (in both cases rarely treating performers or pedagogues as historical actors), and by music theory curricula designed to culminate in the analysis of musical works.[21] By such means, practicing musicians are trained with the unstated goal that they will acquiesce to the disappearance of their practice behind the musical object. This is not to argue that such curricula should be abolished,

but simply to point out that among their functions is to reproduce a hierarchy that figures literate and cultivated knowledge of music as superior to practical skills, thereby perpetuating within the institution an opposition between intellectual and manual labor that pervades our society and provides a prime marker of status within it.

The loyalties and interests that inform the scholarship I have discussed are multiply determined and deeply rooted; I make no claim to be able to loose myself or my own scholarship from them. By drawing attention to those loyalties and interests in this essay, however, I hope to have suggested that, far from being a straightforward response to the nature of music, the act of reflective listening is an important part of the way we make music what it is for us, and that that particular constitution of music is intimately connected to the immediate site of music scholarship, to the dominant mode of contemporary musical consumption, and to the larger systems of relationships that have constituted music and our society. Given this situation, it is difficult to imagine that "the music itself" will at any time soon cease to be the principal focus of musicology. But by maintaining an awareness of the factors that condition our scholarly practice, we may realize the necessity of broadening our interpretations of music to encompass the practices that an unreflective maintenance of our conventional position would obscure from our awareness.

I would also argue that these considerations are relevant to more than the internal squabbles of an academic discipline, absorbing though those may be to its practitioners—and this, finally, is why I continue to find it worthwhile to approach the complex of art music and the musicological scholarship that defines it with explicit reference to Marx. If, as I have suggested, musicology creates its object (music) so that its subject (the cultivated listener) turns out to be none other than the scholar her/himself, in so doing it defines music as a kind of ideal counterpart to the material commodity. And by insisting on its immateriality while reifying it as a thing separate from the relations in which it is enmeshed, musicology has reinforced the place of the culture of art music as an imagined refuge of individual subjectivity in a society whose ruling principle, exchange value, is ultimately inimical to the development of that subjectivity. In short, as unromantic as much musicology may seem, it can provide the ideological justification for art music as a primary locus of what Robert Sayre and Michael Löwy ([1984] 1990), developing an idea found in Lukács, term "romantic anticapitalism": an insistence upon precapitalist values as an alternative to the pervasive impact of exchange, which destroys both traditional community and the freely developing and imagining individual. Over against this threat, properly receptive listeners can be imagined to form a community unified precisely by their "active and often critical/creative *internal* participation in the musical artwork"—an individualized and yet collective act—and as we have seen, this is just the feature of musical experience most privileged by musicological discourse. By presenting an imagined alternative

to exchange-based existence, the high musical culture that musicology has served to reinforce might indeed play a positive role. But it can do so only if we recognize the inevitable limits to that alternative by examining as well the ideologies and practices of music that bind the apparently distinct and purely musical world of the listening experience to the far more troubled reality of the society in which it exists as a privileged moment.

Notes

Although no explicit reference to it appears in this essay, Suzanne Cusick's "Gender and the Cultural Work of a Classical Music Performance" (1994) was a considerable influence, especially pp. 80–92; her notion of disappearance has proven extremely suggestive, although I here develop it differently than she does. My discussion of Marx, in particular, is indebted to the participants in a faculty/student colloquium at the University of Alberta in 1996; participants included Regula Qureshi, Henry Klumpenhouwer, Adam Krims, Anthony Olmsted, Vernon Charter, James Cockell, Tamara Schwartzentruber, and Silvia Yee. Finally, the insistent questioning of Jean-Jacques Nattiez and Richard Taruskin at a presentation of some of these ideas at the 1996 annual meeting of the American Musicological Society led me to rethink and clarify several points. I am grateful for their questions, although I do not expect that they will agree with the answers at which I have arrived.

1. Drawing on a scholar as deeply influenced by Max Weber as Bourdieu is may itself seem a problematic mix of intellectual traditions, but as Michael Löwy (1996) has noted, a diverse strain of Marxist thought going back at least to Lukács has integrated Marx and Weber in various ways.
2. I must emphasize that I am here limiting my consideration of music scholarship to the field of musicology as represented primarily by the practices of its North American professional society, the American Musicological Society. That is, I am discussing the practices of a discipline whose primary object of study has long been the European art music tradition, studied historically—leaving alternative approaches and musics to its professional counterparts, the Society for Ethnomusicology and the Society for Music Theory. This is not only because this is the scholarly discipline with which I am most familiar, but also because the practices I will describe seem to me crucial to the process by which musicology so defined sets its boundaries with other academic studies of music.
3. For a discussion of Dahlhaus's position within those controversies, see Hepokoski 1991.
4. For a more detailed discussion of *habitus*, see Bourdieu 1990: 52–65.
5. See, for example, the work of Susan McClary (e.g., 1991 and 1993) and that of Lawrence Kramer (e.g., 1995).
6. This presumed security about the object of inquiry could perhaps be posited as one of the characteristics that defines musicology as a discipline over against ethnomusicology (but see McClary 1991: 19 for a frank questioning of this security). For a basic discussion of the ambiguity of the term "music" in ethnomusicology in an introductory test, see Nettl 1983: 15–25.

7. The account of Marx that follows is based on my earlier discussion in Gramit 1998b.
8. For further discussion of these issues, see Postone 1993, esp. pp. 63 and 166–71.
9. For examples see Couch 1989 and Peterson and White 1989.
10. To the extent that systems of merit pay for academics rely on quantitative evidence of scholarly productivity for salary adjustments, however, the transformation of such recognition into monetary form can be direct indeed.
11. Clearly, such traditional musicological activities as studies of patronage indicate that some interest in these relationships has long existed, but to the extent that such studies figure as biographical background or social context to "the music itself," they do not challenge the scholarly priorities I have described.
12. This is in some respects an old, familiar story, one told at length as early as 1935 by Eberhard Preußner ([1935] 1950), but also one usefully revisited from the perspective of more recent scholarly concerns. The best recent account of this transformation at the local level is Applegate (1998). A useful overview of the social and economic development of the period (with extensive bibliography) is found in Sheehan (1989). DeNora (1995: 47–48) has rightly warned against the tendency by historians to exaggerate the role of the "emerging" middle classes, but as the sources cited below reveal, the changes to musical life were deep and enduring enough to bring about widespread concern among those whose livelihoods depended on it.
13. ". . . man kaum Haendel, Gluc [sic], Gasmann, Paisello, Sarti, Naumann, Salieri, Hayden [sic], Dittersdorf, Mozart's u.s.f. in der Zukunft zu erwarten hat."
14. "Ich bin nicht dumm genug, um ein großer Musiker in solcher Zeit zu werden."
15. "Wenn aber die erste Classe im Staate, auf welche sonst immer die schönen Künste, um der Ausbildung des Geistes und des Geschmackes willen, ihre Fortschritte stützten, ihren wesentlichen Werth nicht zu schätzen weiss, dann fällt die ganze Last der Pflege ihrer Jünger auf den Mittelstand, und werden diesem die Schultern endlich zu schwach, dann sinken Musik, Dichtkunst, Mahlerey und Bildhauerkunst herab, und machen der Rustik Platz."
16. "Weil wir überall den Cultus aller *Ideen* zerstört; überall nur noch *materiellen* Interessen zum einzigen Mobil aller socialen Verhältnisse gemacht haben; weil überall das *Geld* unser alleiniger Gott geworden."
17. For a useful summary of the transition from participants to listeners, see Schmitt 1990: 71–78.
18. "In diesem Strudel ist kein Platz für eine *allgemeine* musikalische Zeitung mehr. . . ."
19. "*Am Flusse* wirkt wie ein Zauberkästchen, das von selbst klingt. Es hat die Magie des Gegenstandes, der von Zauberhand konstruiert ist, und nun selbsttätig wirkt. Der Meister, der es anfertigte, hat ihm zugleich Odem eingeflößt. Das Werk des Geistes, das im strengen Sinn des Wortes 'Werk' ist, gleicht einem solchen vom Menschen hergestellten, kunstvollen Gegenstand, einem Zauberkästchen, das spontan ein Eigenleben entfaltet, sobald es konstruiert und vom Künstler, der es baute, losgelöst, verselbständigt, gleichsam auf den Tisch gelegt wurde. Es hat das Merkmal des Realen: ist wie mit Händen greifbar, und doch geheimnisvoll."

20. See Georgiades 1967: 125–46: “Schuberts Musik und die Öffentlichkeit: Biographisches und Soziologisches.”
21. This practice also has a venerable history in musical discourse: a ubiquitous topos of German music journalism of the early nineteenth century was the contrast of true art and “mere craft” (*Handwerk*).

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