

## AFFECTING AND EFFECTING MUSICOLOGICAL SCHOLARSHIP

### Abstract

Musicologists have yet to take a stance or even consider how they will approach electronic theses and dissertation writing. This is ironic for a field with a history of caring a good deal about the dissemination of information, concern for writing styles and formats, interest in musicological outreach, and enthusiasm for teaching critical thinking. This paper has two purposes: to help begin a discussion about ETDs and their potential impact on scholarship in the musicology community; and to offer some ideas about electronic resources for musicological research. Although the musicology community possesses either a nonexistent or conservative approach to ETDs and electronic publishing (or is at times unaware of ETDs and electronic publishing), it has also exhibited a strong interest in creating electronic databases to inform others about theses and dissertations being completed or in progress at institutions around the world.

Musicology is an interdisciplinary field that embraces approaches to music history and culture, theory, analysis, interpretation, and criticism. Musicologists borrow their language and tools from other closely related disciplines such as aesthetics, visual arts, history, comparative literature, sociology, bibliographic studies, film studies, and women and gender studies. There are usually situations that require knowledge from more distantly related fields. For instance, examining the kinds of inks used by a composer in a document might require information about chemical analysis. Similar to scholars in other interdisciplinary fields, musicologists have enjoyed using Internet resources to produce scholarship that never could have existed before, but, at the same time, the

general response from musicologists about publishing electronically ranges from conservative to nonexistent. This attitude seems to be transferred to the writing and submission of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETDs). Unlike other disciplines, musicologists experience a lack of hierarchy in music web sites; there are difficulties in distinguishing some differences between scholarly web sites of the highest expected quality such as those offering dissertations, syllabi, articles, and research materials online and those affiliated to research institutions that might really be individual fan sites. In a field with a history of caring a good deal about the dissemination of research and information, concern for writing styles and formats, interest in musicological outreach, and enthusiasm for teaching critical thinking, musicologists have yet to take a stance or even consider how they will approach electronic theses and dissertation writing. This paper has two purposes: to help begin a discussion about ETDs and their potential impact on scholarship in the musicology community; and to offer some ideas about electronic resources for musicological research.

At the most recent national meeting of the American Musicological Society (AMS), held in Kansas City, Missouri in November 1999, there was no discussion of the fact that some universities are either requiring or offering the option of ETD submission in all disciplines. There was also no discussion of the fact that anyone interested in doing so may submit theses or dissertations to the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD) ETD Digital Library web pages (<http://www.ndltd.org/> and

<http://www.theses.org/>). Some of the scholars I personally spoke with about ETDS thought it would be good to wait it out and see what kinds of problems other fields are experiencing. Most agreed that the issues with ETDS are merely the same ones that have existed with text formats. These issues include dissemination of information, copyright, dealing with UMI, obtaining permissions, and knowing the differences between the actual document and the monograph. These observations are typical of the current situation regarding ETDS and musicological scholarship. I found it strange that nobody I spoke with at the meeting suggested that the situation regarding ETDS and musicological scholarship could be made better. Several possible improvements can be made: giving the author of the dissertation or thesis more control over its dissemination; enabling the author to include multicolored graphic representations of information that are not restricted to still life, but rather make use of currently available products of technology such as QuickTime and which are not restricted to requirements that all graphics be in black, white, and gray; and, of course, permitting the author to include music with the musical examples using products of technology such as MP3 or .WAV.

ETDS have not yet become a main focus of discussions at national meetings of other scholarly music societies such as the Society for American Music (SAM, formally known as the Sonneck Society), the Music Library Association (MLA), or the Society for Music Theory (SMT). Nevertheless there are universities, represented at these meetings, that offer degree programs in musicology and the option or requirement for students to submit

ETDs. On NDLTD's ETD Digital Library web page (<http://www.theses.org/>) there are a list of links to official university nodes in the NDLTD,<sup>1</sup> other NDLTD sites with ETDS, and other sites with ETDS. Accessing ETDS might depend on where the researcher is requesting the thesis or dissertation. Some ETDS are restricted to local access and therefore require the researcher to come on campus or have an affiliation with the university. These ETDS cannot be accessed from a remote or off campus terminal. Several searches using the keywords "music" and "musicology" failed to yield results at almost all the university nodes in the NDLTD with exception to Rhodes University Electronic Theses Collection, which does not list music or musicology as a subject area in its collection of ETDS.<sup>2</sup> A keyword search for "Musikwissenschaft" ("musicology") in the Humboldt-University of Berlin resulted in nine hits, which were all in German. Of these nine ETDS there were several repeated entries, so there really was a total of four hits (two in .html and two in .pdf). Keyword searches using "music" and "musicology"

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<sup>1</sup>The official university nodes in the NDLTD are Australian Project; Concordia University; Humboldt-University of Berlin; North Carolina State University; Rhodes University; University of Virginia; University of Tennessee, Memphis; University of Waterloo; Virginia Tech; and West Virginia University. The other NDLTD sites with ETDS are Dissertation.com and Diplomica.com. The other sites with ETDS include DOE Environmental Sciences Division; Konstanzer Online-Publikations-System; Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.); National Library of Canada; Theological Research Exchange Network (TREN); UMI; Universit t Utrecht; University of Michigan; University of Stuttgart; and Independent ETDS.

<sup>2</sup>The brief list of ETDS at this web site shows that there were no theses or dissertations that deal with music in other fields besides musicology.

also failed to yield results at both Dissertation.com and Diplomica.com. Finally, the same keyword searches used at the other sites with ETDs yielded extremely few viable results. This was especially true for the University of Michigan and UMI.<sup>3</sup> Surprisingly, there was only one result from the “music” keyword search at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.), no results in the National Library of Canada’s ETD file set, and no results from the web site featuring Independent ETDs.<sup>4</sup>

These observations reveal that in the present, few musicologists are writing ETDs and few ETDs focus on musicological (or even music-related) topics. It is interesting, however, that the musicology community has exhibited a strong interest in creating electronic databases to inform others about dissertations being completed or in progress at institutions around the world. Today many musicology dissertations are registered in databases such as Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology-Online. This database is maintained by Indiana University and is a featured link on the Internet home page of the

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<sup>3</sup>The free guest access privileges enables users to search citations and abstracts in UMI’s Dissertation Abstracts database for all titles in 1999 and 2000 only.

<sup>4</sup>Only three documents were found using this link. The institutions represented here are Linköping University, Sweden; University of Illinois at Chicago and University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

American Musicological Society (<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/music/ams/>). The DDM home page (<http://www.music.indiana.edu/ddm/>) gives a historical background about the web site. According to the web site, the text resource *Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology*, began in 1952 as a publication of the Joint Committee of the Music Teachers National Association and the American Musicological Society (chaired by Dr Helen Hewitt). The resource was updated a number of times in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s. In 1977 the resource's title changed from *Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology* to the *International Index of Dissertations and Musicological Works in Progress* and in 1984 a new edition using the old title was published. This edition and the preceding one dating from 1996 were under the co-editorship of Drs Cecil Adkins and Alis Dickinson. During the mid 1990s an electronic distribution of the information given in the text publication became favored by the Board of Directors of the American Musicological Society. By the end of 1996 the AMS Committee on DDM endorsed a proposal from the Thesaurus Musicarum Latinarum (TML) at Indiana University to develop Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology-Online database.

The DDM home page gives instructions and a link to a submission form. The information to be provided on the form includes the name of author, title, degree objective or degree, field (musicology, music history and literature, music theory, etc.), institution, research director, period the dissertation covers, and if possible a few additional index words. In addition to these basic submission requirements completed

dissertation reports include the date of the degree, details of binding, pagination, and reproduction of the original copy (boldfaced) of the dissertation (typescript, computer print, or typeset are the three options), and then checking some additional boxes such as if the dissertation includes facsimiles, translations, illustrations, plates, tables, appendices, etc. After submitting this information, the Office of the Center for the History of Music Theory and Literature at Indiana University contacts the dissertation author to confirm the submission. The DDM database is extremely easy to browse using author or keyword search. It gets updated periodically throughout the academic year, much more frequently than its predecessors in text format.

Another web site offering information about dissertations electronically is *Music Theory Online: The Online Journal of the Society for Music Theory* (<http://boethius.music.ucsb.edu/mto/mtomain.html> or <http://boethius.music.ucsb.edu/mto/docs/diss-index.html>). Unlike DDM the Music Theory Online database includes abstracts of recently completed dissertations as well as dissertations in progress. Links to abstracts can be found next to each entry in the Dissertation Index (<http://boethius.music.ucsb.edu/mto/docs/diss-index.html>). Internationally based archives for reports or abstracts of completed dissertations or in-progress dissertations about musicology can be found at the Archive of Dissertation Abstracts in Music, a UK based web site (<http://www2.rhbnc.ac.uk/Music/Archive/Disserts/index.html>). Another good archive is produced by the UK based International

Society for Music Education (<http://www.isme.org/findex.html>). These internationally based web sites have many similarities to DDM.

More generalized electronic databases can also enable researchers to find theses or dissertations relating to musicology and additional electronic resources for research. The most extensive (and wonderful) of these is Osnabrück Universität's Electronic Library's list of electronic resources for music. The web site can be easily navigated by users who know very little German. One can begin by using the Electronic Library: Musik web page (<http://elib.uni-osnabrueck.de/MUSIK/diss.html>) to find online databases and archives, online publications, and software (freeware and public domain). Five links can be used for accessing lists of dissertations from this web page. From the *Verschiedene Datenbanken zur Musik/Musikwissenschaft* [Various Databases for music and musicology] web page (<http://elib.uni-osnabrueck.de/MUSIK/dbanken.html>) the researcher comes across a mother lode of links to electronic resources that are useful for musicological research, which includes: All Music Guide; *Cantus Planus Archiv*; Digital Tradition Folk Song Database; DDM; Expanded Academic Index (Telnet); International Index to Music Periodicals (IIMP); International Database of Choral Repertoire (also known as MUSICA); Popmusik-Datenbank; SMT Online Bibliographic Database; SMT Research Profiles; The 14th Century Music Database; The Music Database; and *Thesaurus Musicarum Latinarum*. The William and Gayle Cook Music Library, Indiana University School of Music, has the Worldwide Internet Music Resources web site

([http://www.music.indiana.edu/music\\_resources/outline.html](http://www.music.indiana.edu/music_resources/outline.html)). This web site also offers many links to electronic databases and resources that are useful for not only musicological research, but also for performers and composers as well. Under the boldfaced and underlined category “Research and Study” there are links including Musicology and Music History, Professional Societies, Research Sites, Resources about Music, Music theory, and Technology. An outstanding feature of this web site is that there is a link to Citing and Evaluating Internet Resources, which should be addressed in every music research course in the world, but is not. The web site is less organized than Osnabrück Universität’s Electronic Library’s list of electronic resources for music; Indiana University’s web site is a list with too many bullets and individual links thrown together under too few categories. Other good web sites for accessing dissertations about subjects that might interest musicologists are: Electronic Theses and Dissertations in the Humanities: A Directory of Online References and Resources by Matthew G. Kirschenbaum (<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ETD/ETD.html>); OCLC FirstSearch (<http://newfirstsearch.oclc.org/>); and The Union Institute Research Engine: Dissertations and Theses (<http://www.tui.edu/Research/Resources/Dissertations.html>).

Although many more archives will appear in the near future, none seem able to compete with the most widely used methods of finding dissertation and theses in musicology, namely the CD-ROM and Internet versions of *Dissertation Abstracts*, *International Masters Abstracts*, IIMP, and RILM on the MUSE database. RILM consists

not just of abstracts of completed dissertations, but offers abstracts of any format about music topics in print. Students and scholars who study music in colleges and universities learn quickly that knowing how to use this resource is key to their academic survival.

Graduate students and scholars in musicology continue using *RILM* to find other sources and because of the Law of Least Effort they are more likely to return to the same source to find information about dissertations. Project Muse

(<http://wysiwyg://314/http://music.jhu.edu>) is also being used by musicology students and scholars as part of a less direct path to finding dissertations in their areas of interest.

In conclusion ETDs will effect musicological scholarship because scholars and students alike will have to sharpen their bibliographic research skills. Perhaps one of the most ideal situations would be if there could be an archive, such as DDM or the one on the MTO web site, that could provide the kind of information mentioned in this presentation and then present a link to the actual document for viewing. In the near future, ETDs will certainly have an increasing effect on scholarship in musicological areas such as aesthetics. Connected to this idea is the notion that ETDs will encourage more musicologists to focus on metatheory; to study how musicologists write or to use more tools for analysis that get presented and tested in dissertations.

Knowing about how much musicologists care about writing, it is impossible to view a world in which they do not care about writing for electronic theses and dissertations. Once musicologists realize how much their scholarship can change because of ETDs, and

especially for the better, scholarly societies will want to participate in discussions about their role in producing ETDs. Waiting to see what happens should not be acceptable. Musicology scholars will have to address the same considerations about ETDs as scholars have already done in other fields. A major concern is musical excerpts and how these will be handled in the document. For right now it seems that either scanning or presenting the document using either a markup language format or .pdf might offer the most flexible options. It is also likely that musicology students, as well as students in other disciplines, will be held completely responsible for submitting their theses and dissertations correctly in an electronic format.

Today's musicology students working on their theses and dissertations benefit from Internet resources long before they begin their research for their final projects. Introduction to research courses in music can now show a broader collection of resources, outside of the music library, that are useful to musicology students. For instance, a student wishing to study the history of a musical instrument can be shown the web site for the *Thomas Register* or a student unable to find information about a postmodern composer can find information through [whowhere.com](http://whowhere.com) or at a biography web site. Like graduate students in other fields, musicology students can use the Internet for studying for comprehensive or general exams. If a student is unable to take a survey course on Renaissance music, but knows that questions about Renaissance music might be on the exam then she can find a course syllabus from another college or university on

the Internet. Now that ETDs are becoming more and more accessible on the Internet, musicology students are also able to read them, skim them, and determine what they need to do in order to produce their theses or dissertations. Unfortunately, there are still very few examples of ETDs in musicology available online at the present moment. But as this condition is sure to improve, the musicology community will experience having more knowledgeable students at the onset of their academic careers.<sup>5</sup>

### **LIST OF RECOMMENDED URLS**

**American Musicological Society (AMS)**

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/music/ams/>

**Archive of Dissertation Abstracts in Music**

<http://www2.rhnc.ac.uk/Music/Archive/Disserts/index.html>

**Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology-Online (DDM)**

<http://www.music.indiana.edu/ddm/>

**Dogpile Metasearch**

<http://www.dogpile.com>

**Electronic Theses and Dissertations in the Humanities: A Directory of Online References and Resources** by Matthew G. Kirschenbaum

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/ETD/ETD.html>

**International Society for Music Education**

<http://www.isme.org/findex.html>

**Music Theory Online: The Online Journal of the Society for Music Theory**

<http://boethius.music.ucsb.edu/mto/mtomain.html> and  
<http://boethius.music.ucsb.edu/mto/docs/diss-index.html>

**Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD):**

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<sup>5</sup>I am grateful to Professor Jeffrey Perry at the Louisiana State University College of Music and Dramatic Arts for his helpful suggestions for this paper.

**ETD Digital Library**

<http://www.ndltd.org/> and <http://www.theses.org/>

**OCLC FirstSearch**

<http://newfirstsearch.oclc.org/>

**Osnabrück Universität=s Electronic Library=s Electronic Library: Musik**

<http://elib.uni-osnabrueck.de/MUSIK/diss.html>

<http://elib.uni-osnabrueck.de/MUSIK/dbanken.html>

**Project Muse**

<http://wysiwyg://314/http://music.jhu.edu>

**The Union Institute Research Engine: Dissertations and Theses**

<http://www.tui.edu/Research/Resources/Dissertations.html>

**Worldwide Internet Music Resources**

[http://www.music.indiana.edu/music\\_resources/outline.html](http://www.music.indiana.edu/music_resources/outline.html)