

Graduate Seminar MUSC 7300

SONG

Mondays 1:45-4:45pm | Lerner Center Conference Room

Office: Lerner 327 | Email: maryca@sas.upenn.edu

Seminar Description

Modern singer-songwriters like Missy Elliot and Taylor Swift may seem far removed from the *trobairitz* and *trouvères* of the European Middle Ages, while the preponderance of “greatest hits” records appear to have little in common with the great *chansonniers* of the fifteenth century. Yet, while many centuries separate the songs that infiltrate our lives and media today from the songs of antiquity through to the sixteenth century, the concept of “song” as we understand it began to be formed, reformed, developed, and expanded in early and pre-modern Europe. This seminar examines song in its diverse contexts through a variety of lenses—text, music, history, gender, theory, art, materiality, theology, performance, movement. Examining a wide array of premodern song traditions, this course offers participants interdisciplinary perspectives on song that draws together through discussion and close musical and poetic readings and analysis.

Through the seminar participants will gain a grasp on the concept of song and its historical position up to the sixteenth century. While the subject matter of this course is specific, namely early and pre-modern song, the larger ideas explored in the seminar have a broad relevance to the humanities and to the continued production of “song” into the twenty-first century. From song as a form of personal expression, communication, and religious worship, to song as functional, practical, and as a musico-poetic genre, this seminar introduces students to the concept of locating one type of artistic creation within historical, cultural, political, and religious frameworks. The seminar will enable participants will take larger theoretical ideas explored in this seminar and apply them to other song genres, while the research skills we will develop through assignments and seminar activities will be useful for research in music studies more broadly.

Requirements

Seminar Leading and Participation	40%
Assignments	60%
TOTAL	100%

Expectations

I expect that students will attend seminar regularly and be fully prepared for discussion by reading, taking detailed notes, and bring assigned materials (printed or accessible on computer/tablet). For each meeting, I expect students to be full and equal participants and that we will treat each other with respect, listening closely and observing general etiquette in debate. I encourage disagreement and dissent, but not close-mindedness. In return, I will provide an open classroom and ample space for discussion. I realize too that illnesses and family emergencies happen, and hope we can all work to accommodate each other as needed.

CANVAS

Updates to the course syllabus, schedule, and links to all readings, recordings, etc., available digitally, will be posted on the course's Canvas page. This will also be a way for us to communicate throughout the course and share materials (in addition to using resources like Dropbox, Google Docs, or plain old email).

Colloquia, Concerts, and Conferences

I highly encourage you to attend scholarly and performance events virtually or in person this semester, especially those that pertain to early music. I will highlight events of interest throughout the semester through the Announcements tab on Canvas. There will be at least two required concerts during the semester.

Music Library and Librarian

Our music librarian Liza Vick will be having office hours throughout the semester, and I encourage you to meet with her and get to know her:

<http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/contact/subjspec/lizavick.html>

Academic Integrity

Intellectual development requires honesty, responsibility, and doing your own work. Taking ideas or words from others—plagiarizing—is dishonest and will result in a failing grade on the paper, assignment, or course, and possibly other disciplinary actions. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, ask me or consult Academic Integrity at the University of Pennsylvania: A Guide for Students, which can be found here: <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>

Statement on Disabilities

In compliance with Penn policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except under unusual circumstances, to arrange reasonable accommodations. Students must register with Student Disabilities Services (SDS) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Land Acknowledgement for the University of Pennsylvania

We recognize and acknowledge that the University of Pennsylvania stands on the Indigenous territory known as “Lenapehoking,” the traditional homelands of the Lenape, also called Lenni-Lenape or Delaware Indians. These are the people who, during the 1680s, negotiated with William Penn to facilitate the founding of the colony of Pennsylvania. Their descendants today include the Delaware Tribe and Delaware Nation of Oklahoma; the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape, Ramapough Lenape, and Powhatan Renape of New Jersey; and the Munsee Delaware of Ontario. (www.alumni.upenn.edu/s/1587/gid2/16/interior.aspx?sid=1587&gid=2&pgid=1318)