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# Sonata Theory in the Undergraduate Classroom

Seth Monahan

Since the mid-1990s, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy have committed themselves to changing the way we hear and think about sonata form. Dissatisfied with traditional schematic or architectural approaches to the form, these authors have long advocated a dynamic, action- and expression-oriented model of the genre—one that revives familiar nineteenth- and twentieth-century traditions of narrative/humanistic analysis (a la Marx and Tovey) while also providing a framework for rigorous analysis of musical details and processes. Their enterprise, Sonata Theory (always capitalized), has made significant inroads with professional analysts but remains mostly unknown outside of academia.

However, as Stephen Rodgers has recently pointed out, Sonata Theory takes its place alongside several recent theories of the classical style that boast the kind of transparency and aural immediacy that make them well-suited for beginning and intermediate pedagogy.[1] My purpose in this essay will be to expand on Rodgers's insight and to show what Sonata Theory has to offer students who are *not* aspiring scholars. My principal focus will be on the undergraduate classroom, especially on the theory's applicability in upper-division form and analysis classes. However, the pedagogic program I outline here can easily be adapted for use with graduate-level performers and/or education majors as well. Given the breadth of this journal's audience, I shall presume no prior experience with Sonata Theory—though I would hope that theorists who have some experience with the topic would find new pedagogical ideas and insights here as well.

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[1] Stephen Rodgers, Review of Matthew Santa, *Hearing Form: Musical Analysis With and Without the Score* (New York: Routledge, 2010) (*Music Theory Online* 16/3, 2010). Rodgers also cites William Caplin's idea of "tightly-" and "loosely-knit" themes and Kofi Agawu's paradigm of "beginnings, middles, and endings" (which themselves "overlap" with Caplin's ideas about formal function); see William Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) and Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).



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The essay falls into seven parts. The first offers two parallel perspectives on a Mozart string quartet movement—one using traditional sonata-form concepts and another using Sonata Theory—in order to demonstrate the kind of interpretive style the theory facilitates and encourages. The next three sections introduce basic terminology and concepts, while the fifth and sixth consider a host of pedagogical and curricular concerns. The final section focuses on an array of deviations from the conventional sonata plot that make for especially engaging classroom analyses. There follow three appendices: a brief overview of Hepokoski and Darcy's core text, the *Elements of Sonata Theory*; a set of repertoire lists for pieces well-suited to Sonata Theory analysis; and an aural analysis rubric.

## I. A Test Case: Mozart's "Hunt" Quartet, K. 458

The grandly-conceived opening movement of Mozart's String Quartet in B♭ major, K. 458 ("The Hunt") might not be ideal for *introducing* sonata form; like the other five quartets dedicated to Haydn, it is sweeping in its dimensions and ambitious in its scope. But it is less daunting than some of Beethoven's well-known curricular warhorses (e.g., the "Tempest" or "Waldstein") and certainly within the grasp of undergraduates with some experience analyzing smaller sonata designs.

What would a conventional sonata-form analysis tell students about the "Hunt" quartet?[2] They could easily gather that its primary theme was built as a small ternary (ABA) design with a return of the main incipit at m. 27, and that from there, Mozart segues into a transitional passage. (Their instructor might also point out while the elision of the main theme into the transition is standard fare, rounded primary themes of this sort are quite unusual.) They would likely assume that the secondary thematic area began around m. 47, marked by a change of key and the music's sudden preoccupation with a new motive—the sixteenth-note neighbor figure heard in nearly every bar between mm. 42 and 70. Though there are many cadences to choose from, it seems likely that the one at m. 77 would serve as the gateway to the closing area (though m. 88 might also serve well).

The three-stage development also brings few surprises—save perhaps that it opens with a wholly new *cantabile* theme in the

[2] An annotated score of the quartet's opening movement is available on this journal's website.

dominant (mm. 91–105). The second stage is more agitated and more recognizably "developmental"; a new motive enters (a clear derivative of the exposition's sixteenth-note figure) and the music ascends the circle of fifths, from F minor to C minor to G minor (mm. 106–22), and then changes direction, cycling down the circle to E♭ major (m. 126). There the third, retransitional leg begins. Other than a brief deflection to the subdominant in m. 167, the recapitulation (like most of Mozart's) holds closely to the expositional model. There follows at m. 230 an extended, tonic-confirming coda, focused first on the movement's main theme and then on the two sixteenth-note motives heard earlier.

Now obviously, there is much more to say about this wonderful movement. Depending on the level and experience of our students, we could lead them through discussions of its contrapuntal ingenuity (especially in the coda!), its deployment of topics (e.g., the much-discussed opening "hunt" motif), its use of expressive chromaticism (as in mm. 71–73) or common phrase forms, or its diversity of textures. We could also use the movement (alongside countless others) as a model for eighteenth-century harmonic syntax and prolongational strategies. But none of these features, examined atomistically, have much to do with the movement *as a sonata form*. Indeed, as described above, its status as a sonata—its "sonata-ness"—is arguably one of the movement's least interesting or distinguishing features. Labeling its sections ("first theme," "second theme," "development," etc.) merely points out what this quartet has in common with countless other movements. For beginning analysts, such an exercise risks seeming perfunctory, a mere precursor to the discovery of what is singular or special about the piece.

This need not be the case, however. Let us now go through the movement again—but this time keeping in mind one of Hepokoski and Darcy's central axioms: the idea that an eighteenth-century sonata-form exposition will be structured around two important cadential goals. The first such goal is the *medial caesura* (or "MC"), a marked rhetorical break or pause (usually at a half cadence) that closes the transition and opens the secondary thematic area. The second goal will be the perfect authentic cadence (PAC) that culminates the secondary thematic area, announcing that the exposition's tonal goal—a secure modulation to the secondary key—has been safely reached. In Sonata Theory, this terminal PAC

is known as the moment of *essential expositional closure*, or "EEC."[3]

By remaining alert to cadential processes (and by keeping in mind the ways in which these processes normally unfold), our experience of this second hearing may change substantially. To begin: the half cadence that closes the primary theme's B-section (m. 25) will now grab our attention as a prospective medial caesura, making the return of the primary theme in the tonic seem all the more capricious.[4] Another half cadence comes in m. 42, at what seems to be the end of the transition. This arrival, now in the dominant key, makes for a more propitious MC. Though there is no *literal* pause here, the abrupt thinning of the texture suggests a clear structural division, with the bare sixteenth-note motives passed between the instruments (mm. 42–46) serving merely to accentuate a deeper conceptual "silence" in those bars. (Such embellishments are common; Hepokoski and Darcy call them "caesura-fill.") Indeed, the motives' rhythmic acceleration and rising registral sweep in mm. 45–46 suggest that a major arrival is at hand—presumably, the anticipated second thematic group.

But then the unforeseeable happens: when the music restarts in m. 47, the ostensibly transitional sixteenth-note figure (henceforth "motive *x*") remains obstinately lodged in the texture. Indeed, aside from the key change, nothing about the music that follows sounds very much like a proper secondary "theme" at all. The resumption of the dominant in m. 47 (rather than a clear, phrase-initiating tonic) suggests that the bass is somehow "stuck" on the half cadence articulated in m. 42; the repeated embellishment of that bass with the minor mode's flattened submediant D♭ lends a sense of foreboding, even crisis. The sonata gives the impression of spinning its wheels, of being unable to move past the half cadence whose division of the form ought to have been a mere formality.

And then, just as abruptly, another change: the dynamics fall off (m. 51), the tension dissipates, and motive *x* carries us gently to an innocuous PAC in F major (m. 54). Is what *follows* the secondary

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[3] For an expanded discussion of the basic cadential trajectory of the eighteenth-century sonata exposition, see Section II below; see also James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), Chapter Two: "Sonata Form as a Whole: Foundational Considerations."

[4] Recall that if the half cadence had been an MC, it would have led instead to the non-tonic secondary thematic zone.

group? Not in any straightforward sense. Composers typically reserve PACs for the *end* of secondary groups, for the moment of "EEC" described above. But the upcoming music is positively riddled with PACs (mm. 60, 66, 69, 77, 81, 85); indeed, it mostly just strings together repetitions of various two- or four-bar cadential/closing formulae. Something has gone terribly wrong—we seem to have bypassed the secondary theme altogether and proceeded directly into some kind of closing zone.

Needless to say, such an interpretation would scarcely have been possible in past decades, when traditional wisdom obliged all sonatas to have some sort of "second subject."[5] But I would argue that this movement is best understood as an idiosyncratic specimen of what Hepokoski and Darcy call a "continuous" exposition—that is, one in which no medial caesura *and no secondary theme* materializes.[6] In such movements, the sonata's transition will often simply spin forward until, having modulated at some point, it reaches a terminal PAC and closing zone in the sonata's secondary key. Mozart's plan here is more personalized, more deliberately eccentric: the uncontrolled proliferation of the would-be caesura-fill (motive *x*) seems to cause a short-circuit in the unfolding exposition. Rather than launching a new secondary theme, the

[5] Many contemporary analysts refer to m. 54 as a secondary theme; see Melvin Berger *Guide to Chamber Music* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1985), 292; Donald Ferguson, *Image and Structure in Chamber Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964), 62; Harold Gleason and Warren Becker, *Chamber Music from Haydn to Bartók* (Bloomington: Frangipani Press, 1980), 22; and A. Hyatt King, *Mozart Chamber Music*. Guildford: Billing & Sons, 1968), 25. John Irving is more circumspect, noting the "ambiguity of thematic function" in the exposition's second half and offering a reading with a number of parallels to my own: "Whether the motif [at m. 42ff.] can be considered a second subject is debatable….Bars 42–53 essentially prolong V/F, and are more memorable for their character of cadential closure…than for any specific secondary thematic function….[B]ar 54 sounds like a closing theme, although true 'closure' is withheld for some time yet" (*Mozart: The "Haydn" Quartets* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 38). More pithily, Thomas F. Dunhill regards this ostensible second subject as "more a succession of glittering musical spangles than a definite theme"—though he has little to say about formal/functional ambiguity per se (*Mozart's String Quartets*, Book II [London: Oxford University Press 1927], 6).

[6] I return to the issue of continuous expositions in Part VII below.

movement, finding its MC suppressed, simply cuts its losses and moves to close prematurely, with the "caesura-fill" figure—and its attendant cadential progressions—still proliferating like so many brooms from *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Only in m. 71 does Mozart finally (and graphically) apply the brakes, with a series of full-bar diminished seventh chords; these lead to a second closing zone, one that is finally free from the ad nauseam repetitions of motive *x*.

It is easy to hear the fallout of this staged medial caesura mishap echoing throughout the movement in fascinating ways. Above, we noted that the development started with a self-contained lyrical theme in the dominant key, contrasted to all that precedes. In light of our new insights about the exposition, this passage suddenly becomes more suggestive: might this be the "missing" secondary theme, the one that was nudged out of the exposition by the motive *x* debacle?[7] (Example 1 re-imagines mm. 41–54 by restoring this dislocated secondary theme to its "proper" place.) No less striking is the fact that the development seems fated to play out this "debacle" a second time. At m. 106, a variant of motive *x* appears and, as if to mark that entrance with a note of foreboding, the key simultaneously collapses into the parallel minor. Predictably, motive *x* soon gains a toehold and overruns the texture, to the exclusion of all else, until the retransitional half-cadence in m. 134.[8]

Because Mozart's recapitulation retraces the exposition almost exactly, it offers a third opportunity to hear motive *x* overtake the texture. But remarkably, the coda *also* follows suit: there, after a jubilant stretto on the sonata's main subject (m. 240), motive *x* returns in full force to embroider repetitions of the tonic PAC in m. 257. It is only in the movement's last bars that Mozart gives his listeners the impression of a reconciliation, with the primary theme and the motive *x* variants appearing side-by-side during two brief codettas in mm. 271 and 275. But this last-minute truce hardly offsets the striking fact that each of the movement's four main sections begins with properly thematic material and concludes in tangles of the mischievous motive *x*.

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[7] Berger hints at a similar hearing, musing whether Mozart devised this cantabile theme "to make up for the lack of a strong subsidiary theme in the exposition" (292).

[8] Though notice also how the motive snaps back to its original form when the major mode is reinstated in m. 126!

Example 1. Recomposition of Mozart, String Quartet in B-flat major, K. 458 (mvt. I), mm. 45–53, showing restoration of developmental “S-theme” to its “proper” position

This second reading of the quartet has attempted to make good on Hepokoski and Darcy’s vision of sonata form as an “expressive/dramatic” unfolding, one that is organized around the attainment of several “generically obligatory” cadences.[9] Though its particular metaphorical flair is my own, its central conceit—that sonata form is a goal-driven process that can unfold either frictionlessly or with significant complications—is a direct import from Sonata Theory. The same is true of its many anthropomorphic elements. Sonata Theory explicitly encourages a volitional and psychodramatic

[9] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 13.

conception of musical form, inviting us at times to imagine individual sonatas or their themes as striving, sentient agents. And although one can hardly miss the proliferation of motive *x* in each of the form's sections, Sonata Theory helped us to establish a more nuanced link between those motivic processes and the formal processes at large; that is to say, it helped us to explain what the motives were *doing* there, by relating them to the staged mishap of the bungled MC. In sum, viewing the opening of the "Hunt" quartet through the lens of Sonata Theory helped attune us to the movement's deliberately Haydnesque wit, its knowing manipulation of convention, while also acting as a narrative catalyst, encouraging us to rationalize its events as stages within a dramatic musical plot.

As countless theory instructors know well, narrative/anthropomorphic analyses like this one can be a singularly effective way of engaging students. By assimilating a work's features into the framework of a coherent musical story, we give those details an expressive meaning they might lack on their own. And by encouraging students to hear pieces invested with intention and embroiled in struggle, we help them to foster a sense of identification with, and thus an investment in, the music at hand.[10] As we move forward, then, two questions naturally arise. First, how can we get our students to a point where they could, with ease and gratification, follow their instructor on an analytical journey of this sort? More importantly, what kind of preparation, encouragement, and assistance do they require to come upon comparable musical plots through their own process of discovery? These are the questions the rest of this study sets out to answer.

## II. What is "Sonata Theory"?

We must first begin at the beginning, however, with the most basic of questions, since even professional music theorists can be unsure as to what Sonata Theory actually *is*. One reason is that its core text, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (2006; henceforth just "*Elements*") was not so much the unveiling of a new theory as the culmination, consolidation, and enrichment of a partly familiar one. Aspects of

[10] In his essay in this volume, Matthew BaileyShea makes an impassioned and articulate case for the role of narrative and agential analysis in the undergraduate classroom.

the theory, including many of its core concepts, appear in articles by Hepokoski and Darcy (alone or as co-authors) dating back to the early 1990s.[11] On the one hand, this piecemeal unveiling led to ambiguities between what was to be considered Sonata Theory proper and what was merely the idiosyncratic analytical style of its two highly visible author-practitioners. On the other hand, because certain key terms and aspects of their labeling system have been vernacularized for over a decade—"medial caesura," "EEC," and so forth—it is not uncommon to encounter studies that use the terminology of Sonata Theory while pursuing very different analytical ends than Hepokoski and Darcy's, further blurring the lines.

So to clarify, we must turn to the compendious *Elements* itself. There, we find Hepokoski and Darcy engaged with at least three interrelated—and decidedly ambitious—projects. At the heart of their tome is a far-reaching empirical/taxonomical study of musical style. Conceived as a kind of "research report" and grounded in the analysis of hundreds of individual movements, the text sets out in the most preliminary sense simply to understand what *happens*, rhetorically and harmonically speaking, in late eighteenth-century sonatas.[12] To this end, the authors develop an elaborate terminological apparatus—one that differentiates between five broad "types" of sonatas (each with numerous subtypes) and that provides helpful handles for many dozens (if not hundreds) of individual compositional scenarios, many of them never previously identified or codified.[13] What is more, Hepokoski and

[11] See James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, "The Medial Caesura and its Role in the Eighteenth-Century Sonata Exposition," *Music Theory Spectrum* 19/2 (1997): 115–154; James Hepokoski; *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), "Masculine/Feminine," *The Musical Times* 135 (1994): 494–99; "Beethoven Reception: The Symphonic Tradition," in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); "Back and Forth from Egmont: Beethoven, Mozart, and the Nonresolving Recapitulation," *19th-Century Music* 25/2/3 (2001–2): 127–154; "Beyond the Sonata Principle," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 55/1 (2002): 91–154; and Warren Darcy, "Bruckner's Sonata Deformations," in *Bruckner Studies*, ed. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hackshaw London. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[12] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, v.

[13] Randomly, one might cite such situations as the "dissolving P-codetta"-style transition (Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 102), the

Darcy are careful to situate many of these compositional options within informal hierarchies of ranked "defaults," underscoring which procedures would have been so common in a particular historical moment as to be nearly "reflexive" (concluding the exposition with a perfect authentic cadence, for instance), which would have occurred less frequently, and which would have been "deformational" or decisively non-normative.[14] Over time, they show, lower-level defaults and deformations often became standard options within the style, clearing the way for new sorts of expressive deviations and manipulations.[15]

On these grounds, the authors' "research report" begins to shade into a broader theory of composition and style change. And indeed, the *Elements* concerns itself extensively with these and a host of other aesthetic and philosophical issues, including genre theory, phenomenology, and listener-response theory. As Hepokoski and Darcy write, "what at first may seem to be a work of music theory turns out in the end to be a set of reflections on what sonata form is and how it can be understood to mean anything at all."[16] The most concentrated expression of this, the book's second broad agenda, is the formidable "Appendix One," a rigorous exploration of these two key questions: what sonata form "is" (ontologically, socio-culturally, aesthetically) and how it can or should be understood to carry different kinds of meanings.

Third and most obviously, Sonata Theory is an analytical tool, a

"medial caesura declined" (45), the "failed exposition" (177), the "coda rhetoric interpolation" (288), or the "recapitulation that appears to begin after P1.1" (256). Many of these rhetorical scenarios also break down into subtypes.

[14] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 10. Paul Wingfield has questioned the representivity of Hepokoski and Darcy's core repertoire, believing Mozart to be overrepresented at the expense of other significant composers like Clementi ("Beyond 'Norms and Deformations': Toward a Theory of Sonata Form as Reception History," *Music Analysis* 27/1 [2008]: 137–77, 141); William Drabkin voices a similar concern ("Mostly Mozart," *The Musical Times* 148 [Winter 2007]: 89–101).

[15] The use of the submediant for the secondary group in minor-key sonatas is a familiar example. Rare before 1800, this low-level default appears in a number of canonical early-Romantic works (including Beethoven's Ninth and Schubert's Eighth) and eventually became a standard, even preferred, option for later nineteenth-century composers.

[16] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, vii.

system of categories and labels and concepts, many of which can be applied with algorithmic precision. But even in this regard Sonata Theory is unusual, since Hepokoski and Darcy maintain that their approach is more than a merely "mechanistic 'system' of labeling." It is also, as they see it, an analytical "style," a particular type of hermeneutic or interpretive "practice."[17] Clearly, such a claim opens the authors to charges of overreaching, since it is doubtful whether it really falls to Hepokoski and Darcy to prescribe the "style" of analysis (read: *their* style) that subsequent practitioners of Sonata Theory should assume. But for me this concern is beside the point, because my classroom successes with Sonata Theory owe a great deal to precisely the analytical style the authors advocate—one that is intensely narrative and teleological, concerned not just with musical process but with the long-range and moment-by-moment expressive ramifications of those processes.[18] This, I believe, is the theory's greatest asset: its capacity for sensitizing us to the drama that inheres in sonata forms and especially in those works in which the execution of sonata form itself seems to be a central dramatic or compositional "issue." Our next step, then, is to investigate this teleological, cadence-oriented conception of the sonata genre in detail.

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[17] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 59, 609.

[18] As the authors write, "the language and concerns of Sonata Theory lead to larger interpretive situations in which technical analysis and an artfully nuanced hermeneutics become different aspects of the same process. We encourage an intellectually and analytically responsible boldness in this regard, an interpretive flair that startles pieces awake as historical and cultural statements" (Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 253).

## III. The Basic Expositional Teleology

Example 2 provides an overview of what Hepokoski and Darcy call the "essential trajectory" of the standard late eighteenth-century ("Type 3") sonata.[19] As the boxed legend indicates, the circled letters are mostly abbreviations standing for thematic "zones" or "action spaces." (These same letters can also, less strictly, refer to the themes found within those spaces.) The expositional drama begins with a primary theme or themes (P), which proceed, typically through a transitional zone (TR), to that decisive (half-) cadential pause, the "medial caesura" (MC).[20] At this point the secondary thematic zone (S) opens, its themes tasked with proposing the new tonic key and then securing it with a decisive perfect authentic cadence. This cadence, the EEC, serves as the long-range goal of the entire exposition. (The closing zone [C] that follows tends merely to confirm this tonic arrival.)

[19] The "Type 3" is congruent with what we typically call the "textbook" sonata—i.e., one that features an exposition, a development, and a recapitulation. Sonata Theory recognizes five "types" in all, four of which were already known to analysis. Types 1, 4, and 5 are, respectively, the sonata "without development," the sonata rondo, and the concerto sonata. The Type 2, previously unrecognized (and rare after the mid-eighteenth century), features a normal exposition, a development that usually treats the primary theme and transition, and a "tonal resolution" that treats only the secondary and closing groups. See Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, Chs. 16–19.

[20] Half-cadences in the primary or secondary key are common; perfect authentic cadences (PACs) in either of those two keys are less typical but still feasible options. It is worth noting that the prevalence of *tonic-key* medial caesuras gives the lie to the ubiquitous maxim that a sonata transition's purpose is to modulate to (or "toward") the secondary key; see for instance Cedric Thorpe Davie, *Musical Structure and Design* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), 69; Douglass Green, *Form in Tonal Music: An Introduction to Analysis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979), 184; and Ellis Kohs, *Musical Form: Studies in Analysis and Synthesis* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), 264. So pervasive is this truism that analysts sometimes speak of a transition as modulating "to the dominant key," when in fact that music remains squarely within the tonic; see for instance Charles W. Walton's analysis of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 49 no. 2 (*Basic Forms in Music* [New York: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1974], 168).

Example 2. The essential sonata trajectory to the ESC (adapted from Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, Figure 2.1b)

On the face of it, one might find little that is new here beyond a few of the labels. But the emphasis on musical process can make for a very different analytical and pedagogical experience. Obviously, at the very earliest stages, students will need simply to memorize the components of this "generic layout" just as they would the traditional schema (which they may or may not already know). But the next step, pedagogically speaking, is to focus on how that "layout" is actualized in real time—in other words, to shift from an architectural conception to a rhetorical one.

When it comes to cultivating a sense of sonata-as-process, we do well to follow Hepokoski and Darcy by focusing first on the attainment of the medial caesura (MC), the sonic cue that announces that the S-theme or themes are about to make their entrance. As these authors point out, medial caesuras are not only themselves aurally arresting moments; they are also typically prepared by one or more of the following rhetorical signals, in order: 1) a "lock" onto the structural dominant, often via a ($\hat{4} \rightarrow \sharp\hat{4} \rightarrow 5$ or $\flat\hat{6} \rightarrow \hat{5}$) bass motion[21]; 2) a prolongation of the half-cadential dominant, usually accompanied by an accumulation of energy (crescendos, increased figuration, and so on), which culminates in 3) a series of "hammer blows"—emphatic reiterations of the cadential chord.

The opening movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in A minor, K. 310 provides an excellent opportunity to hear these processes in action.[22] The transition (TR) begins in m. 9 with an embellished re-launch of the sentential primary theme (P).[23] But it soon swerves toward the submediant F, preparing the imminent modulation to C; in m. 15, we hear the characteristic "dominant lock" ($\hat{4} \rightarrow \sharp\hat{4} \rightarrow \hat{5}$) bass motion in that key. As is typical, the moment of the dominant's arrival is marked by an increase in figuration and a spike in dynamics; together, these effect the anticipated "energy gain." And after six bars, the dominant prolongation arrives at the MC (m. 22),

[21] Hepokoski and Darcy refer to the entire pre-MC dominant prolongation as the dominant "lock." I tend to reserve the term for the gesture by which the prolonged dominant is attained; for me, this stays more faithful to the root metaphor as I understand it (i.e. one in which a transitional passage "locks onto" its desired cadential dominant just as an automated weapons system "locks onto" its desired target).

[22] An annotated score of this movement is available on this journal's website.

[23] Hepokoski and Darcy would call this a "dissolving consequent" transition; see their helpful taxonomy of TR-types (*Elements*, 93–112).

a half cadence in III punctuated with three quarter-note "hammer blows," bringing the first half of the exposition to a close. From there, the S-theme commences in the relative major.

The exposition's second crucial cadential juncture—the moment of EEC—is no less productive for guided listening. As Hepokoski and Darcy define it, the EEC is the first "satisfactory" perfect authentic cadence (PAC) in the sonata's new key that moves on to new material—the premise being that by securing this new key unambiguously, the EEC declares that the most crucial "work" of the exposition is now done; what follows will by definition assume a closing function. However, to identify the moment of expositional closure requires close attention to the unfolding events within S-space, because a cadence that might seem at first to be the EEC can turn out to be otherwise. If themes from the S-zone return after a PAC (suggesting that their work is not in fact done), or if the newly attained key is somehow "lost" or destabilized, the prospective EEC is said to be "deferred" to some later point.[24] Deferrals can also occur if an attempted PAC falls short of being structurally "satisfactory," as when a voice drops out or when the cadence is otherwise malformed.

Returning now to Mozart's K. 310 sonata, we find several unambiguous instances of EEC deferral. Toward the end of its coquettish C-major S-theme, we arrive at a clear cadential progression, replete with a trill on scale degree $\hat{2}$ (mm. 33–34). But at the moment of the expected tonic, the right-hand voice drops out for a single sixteenth note, resulting in what Hepokoski and Darcy call an "attenuated" cadence and thus deferring the EEC forward to the next cadential attempt. But there, at m. 40, we find a deferral on two accounts: not only does a voice drop out, but the $\hat{7}$–$\hat{5}$–$\hat{1}$ motive first heard in mm. 35–37 returns (mm. 40–41), suggesting that S is still underway. (Recall that for an EEC, we need to move on to "new material.") Thus it is only in m. 45, when the outer voices converge on an octave C-natural, that we encounter the EEC, making mm. 46–49 a very brief closing (C) zone, one that refers (as is often the case) back to the primary theme.

Mozart's strategy in the A-minor sonata is a fairly common

[24] Hepokoski and Darcy point to the opening movement of Beethoven's First Symphony as an example of both phenomena. There, what appears briefly to be a solid V: PAC EEC (m. 77) is rendered null by a sudden drop into the *minor* dominant and the resumption of the S-theme's principal motive in the murky bass register (*Elements*, 125–28).

one: its chain of playful deferrals serves simply to extend and add interest to the exposition's cadential processes. By sensitizing students to this technique, to a composer's strategic thwarting of expectations, we can help them to understand musical closure as a rhetorical/dramatic *process* rather than just an attribute of some single Euclidian point in the musical timeline (i.e., "closure occurs at the PAC in m. 80"). However, EEC deferrals vary widely in character, and not all of them are so benign or "playful." In Section VII below, we will examine EEC deferrals of a more dramatic sort, ones having the character of a disruption or malfunction of the ongoing sonata process.

## IV. Developments and Recapitulations

Not surprisingly, Sonata Theory makes comparably fewer predictions about how the typical eighteenth-century development section will play out; the degree of variance among individual works makes it all but impossible to map out a series of generic expectations or rhetorical norms. However, one is hardly obliged to fall back on the old unhelpful dictum that "anything can happen." Hepokoski and Darcy propose a four-stage rhetorical template that applies to many (though by no means all) eighteenth-century developments: 1) an optional "linking" passage; 2) an anticipatory "entry or preparation zone," often at a hushed dynamic; 3) a "central action" (or set of actions); and 4) the "exit" or "retransition."[25] They also insist on the primacy of so-called "rotational" procedures—the tendency for developments to cycle through the exposition's materials in their original order, though not necessarily comprehensively. (Thus we might expect a development to begin with some or all of the primary-thematic materials and then to move on to elements of the transition, and so on—though it is rare for the full selection of expositional materials to appear.[26])

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[25] Though the authors might protest (see Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 229–30), the resemblance of this model (excepting its optional "link") to William Caplin's tripartite "pre-core / core / retransition" scheme is clear (*Classical Form*, 139–59).

[26] Although the rotational principle is central to Hepokoski and Darcy's concept of the genre, I tend to present it as a heuristic rather than as an axiom or presumed norm. To be sure, it can be very effective for uncovering the logic behind certain development sections—as, for instance, with the opening movement of Beethoven's First Symphony,

Once again, Mozart's A-minor sonata offers a clear illustration, as its development divides into three episodes whose thematic content is unambiguously rotational. The first episode (the *piano* "entry zone," mm. 50–57), reinstates the primary theme (P). The second episode (the *fortissimo* "central action" zone, mm. 58–69), unfolds a series of minor-key dominant pedal points using the fanfare motive from TR (cf. mm. 16, 18). And the final episode revives a weak-beat trill figure first heard toward the end of S (cf. mm. 42–43), locking onto a retransitional dominant in m. 74.

This schematic breakdown is only the first step, however. For Hepokoski and Darcy, it is equally crucial to fold the development's events into an overarching narrative design drawing on as many parameters (thematic, harmonic, textural, topical) as possible. As I teach it, the K. 310 development is implacably tragic: episode one depicts the corrosion of the secondary theme's sunny C major into the agitated dominant of F minor (m. 53), which Mozart reinterprets, under a furious cascade of sixteenth-notes, as the German augmented sixth of E minor (m. 57). The TR-based episode two brings to fruition a seed planted in the exposition: the modulation of the original transition to C *minor* rather than C major (mm. 16–22). But where the exposition's TR was able to lift the music through the medial caesura into the major-mode S-theme, here the TR music merely drifts from key to key (Em—Am—Dm), finding no cadential release and no escape from the oppressive minor mode. The retransitional episode merely ramps up this falling fifth sequence, eventually tracing a precipitous stepwise bass descent from D (m. 70) down a seventh to the dominant E (m. 74), where we prepare to loop back around to the primary theme again.

As might be imagined (and as Example 2 makes clear), the eighteenth-century recapitulation will tend to reinstate the same basic thematic/cadential trajectories as the exposition, albeit with adjustments to ensure that the secondary thematic group is in the home key, where it drives to the "ESC," or moment of *essential structural closure*, the tonic-key correlate of the EEC. For Hepokoski

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where the composer builds entire episodes from motives selected, in order, from the pre-MC zones: episode 1 (m. 114ff.) draws from the first motive of P (mm. 13–14); episode 2 (m. 125ff.) sequences the second motive of P (m. 16); and episode 3 (m. 138ff.) uses the culminating motive of TR (m. 58). But there are other pieces that expressly defy any putative rotational ordering, like the virtually counter-rotational development of the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in D, K. 311.

and Darcy, the ESC is a moment of singular import, the crowning moment (or "telos") of the entire sonata process. This is a point that I must underscore often for my students, because in practice we spend the least time on recapitulations, and for fairly obvious reasons: unless there is significant recomposition, the thematic/cadential processes will be identical or similar to those we have already studied in the exposition. That being said, situations where the recomposition is indeed "significant" offer opportunities for rewarding study—both in terms of comparison (identifying which portions of the exposition have been preserved or altered) and of creative justification (speculating *why* the composer deemed such changes necessary). In the case of Mozart's K. 310 recapitulation, I invite students to articulate how Mozart's alterations (mm. 86–96 and 118–128) might serve to intensify the turbulent and troubled character of his all-minor-mode reprise.

It will come as no surprise that I have built this initial demonstration around Mozart's A-minor sonata because I have found it to be very effective in the classroom. However, it is only one of many pieces that my students will encounter in their early study. In the next section, I will go into some detail about my broader pedagogical strategies, explaining how I structure our time and analytical focus during the weeks we spend engaging Sonata Theory.

## V. Pedagogical Considerations (I): Structuring the Sonata Theory Unit

Before moving on to curricular specifics, a few words are in order on two preliminary issues: the positioning/duration of Sonata Theory in the curriculum and the baseline skills required of students. Regarding the first: my feeling is that an effective engagement with the theory requires a significant period of concentrated study—ideally, between four and six weeks of course time. I have learned that if one has time to deal with sonata form only glancingly (as in a history survey or a basic harmony course), a Sonata Theory-based approach offers few terminological or conceptual advantages over the standard "textbook" model. Therefore, my comments here will presume that instructors have enough curricular latitude for students not only to master the requisite terminology (which can be done in a few classes), but also to engage a breadth of repertoire and develop a deeper feel for the style of listening and analysis that

Sonata Theory encourages.

As for the skills a student needs to embark on such a unit: these are scarcely more than what would be needed to navigate sonata forms in any pedagogic context. A working grasp of tonal harmony is essential, though students need not have fully mastered more advanced chromatic topics. They will, however, need to be able to observe and track cadential processes as they happen, through bass-line cues and more general phrase rhetoric. They must also be able to determine the key of a passage without undue effort. (Although these skills will improve during the unit, students particularly challenged in these areas will quickly fall behind.)

The question of repertoire looms large, and requires considerable thought. As a rule, my aim is to expose students to as many pieces as possible in the time we have. If our purpose is to study sonata form as a cultural practice, then it is essential that students hear a broad sampling of representative works in a range of compositional styles, from galant keyboard trifles to symphonic tours de force. Needless to say, this strategy entails certain tradeoffs in terms of analytical depth; not every movement we examine can be dissected in terms of its every chord or contrapuntal nuance.

Indeed, not every movement will even be engaged from start to finish. Speaking broadly, my approach has two types of analytical encounters in store for students. When introducing a new concept or device (the medial caesura, for instance), I will look closely at an initial example and then lead students through a half-dozen or more excerpts chosen to reinforce that device's essential features while also highlighting the variety of its possible realizations.[27] (With larger, form-generating rhetorical strategies such as those discussed in Section VII below, we will often listen to a series of complete expositions.) However, this initial exposure period will then give way to the in-depth study of one or more complete movements. And while we will invariably discuss localized details—aspects of tonal syntax, phrase design, and so forth—the central focus in such exercises is always the movement's overall narrative arc. (So it is vital to choose movements that lend themselves to such an analysis, like Mozart's A-minor sonata.) If a class meets three times weekly,

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[27] The use of audio editing software to pre-trim excerpts to the desired length is essential; cuing mp3s or CDs manually while students wait is distracting and consumes valuable class time. I recommend the free and user-friendly application Audacity for extracting excerpts and adding fade-ins and -outs.

we might only do one full-piece analysis per week—perhaps two if we use a wide zoom and focus mostly on large formal processes rather than details. But these are the moments of synthesis and culmination toward which the entire unit drives.

What is expected of students during these weeks? For most class sessions, I will have them study at least one piece (or a portion of a piece) in advance, with leading questions that serve as a springboard for discussion. The best results, in my experience, come from mixing fact-gathering questions—those with objectively right or wrong answers—with more open-ended hermeneutic queries. As the unit progresses, questions of the latter sort become more frequent, since students will have had an opportunity to see me model the kind of creative rationalization that allows one to develop a persuasive narrative interpretation. Thus, in the first or second week of the unit (after reading several excerpts from *Elements of Sonata Theory* and looking at upwards of a dozen expositions), students would grapple with the following set of questions to prepare for our first complete work, the opening of Mozart's A-minor sonata:

1. Where does the exposition's medial caesura fall? Is it prepared by any or all of the standard rhetorical signals (dominant "lock," prolonged V, energy gain, etc.)?

2. Are there cadences prior to the MC? If so, do they conclude any recognizable phrase forms (periods, sentences)?

3. Given what we know about the usual tonal goal for a minor-mode exposition, what might surprise us about the key of the transition in m. 16ff.?

4. Where does the EEC fall? Is it preceded by any "deferrals"?

5. How does Mozart modulate from the development's first episode (m. 50) to its second episode (m. 58)? What exposition theme(s) is episode two based on?

6. Does Mozart's recapitulation make any significant changes to the exposition's thematic / textural design? If so, do these changes affect the overall character of the reprise?

Compare these to the more challenging sorts of questions that students would get for the "Hunt" quartet in the fifth or sixth week of the unit:

1. Mozart's strategy in this "continuous exposition" is different from what we saw in Haydn's "Joke" Quartet, op. 33 no. 2, in that there *is* a single, clear medial caesura attempt, in bar 42. Be prepared to explain why it is that throughout all the music that follows we might not really imagine ever to have found an S-theme. Related here is the question of why, despite numerous V: PACs, we might say that we don't get the "real" EEC until m. 77.

2. The development begins with a poised, self-contained, and "non-developmental" theme in F major. How might we hear this cantabile theme as a direct response to the unusual exposition just heard (at least as I've encouraged you to hear it)?

3. Two striking things happen in bar 106: one harmonic, one motivic. What are they, and how do you suppose, in the overall narrative of the work, might we imagine them to be related?

4. The exposition and development share a key feature: that they eventually become dominated by a single, excessively repeated motivic unit. (If you've been paying attention, you'll know what it is!) The recapitulation is largely verbatim, so we see much the same there. How about the coda? How does it play into this movement-spanning narrative?

Questions like those above (in both lists) are similar to those that I use to motivate our discussion of pieces or excerpts introduced in class, without advance listening.

Throughout the unit, exercises in aural analysis offer a vital complement to score study and guided listening.[28] For these activities, I provide students with multiple-choice rubrics that

[28] For a more fully developed and illuminating perspective on aural sonata-form analysis, see Brian Alegant, "Listen Up!: Thoughts on iPods, Sonata Form, and Analysis without Score," this journal 22 (2008), 149–76.

address key features of a given exposition; these rubrics get longer and offer more options as the unit progresses. In the second week, I might play a short exposition and ask students to determine after five listenings: (a) whether the transition was "independent" or an extension of the P-theme materials; (b) which, if any, of the standard features of MC-setup are present; and (c) what cadence-type serves as the MC (PAC or HC in the tonic or dominant).[29] A month later, the rubric will be much more complex and the repertoire slightly more involved; Appendix C shows the last and most complex rubric I used in the spring of 2011 with a group of honors freshmen theory students at the Eastman School of Music.[30] By posting mp3s, blank rubrics, and answer keys online, I also offer students the option for additional practice.

Through this coordination of aural and score-based analysis, students develop several key skills over the course of the unit, all of them hinted at above.[31] Most obviously, they will become familiar with the basic rhetorical characteristics of eighteenth-century sonata forms. More broadly, they will develop a heightened sensitivity to

[29] When playing music on my laptop, I have found it helpful to use a digital projector to show the iTunes window as the excerpt plays, since this allows students to jot down the time of important events.

[30] Our final exam featured two aural sonata-form analyses: the expositions of the opening movements of Mozart's Violin Sonata in A, K. 305 and Beethoven's Piano Sonata in E, op. 14 no. 1. By the end of the unit, in-class and take-home exposition analyses were rather more challenging; pieces analyzed included the opening movements of Haydn's Piano Sonata in C, Hob. XVI:35; Haydn's Symphony no. 95 in C minor; Clementi's Piano Sonata in C, op. 36 no. 3; and Mozart's Symphony no. 21 in A, K. 134.

[31] Though I have yet to fold compositional exercises into my Sonata Theory units, it is easy to imagine how creative activities would enrich the overall pedagogical experience—especially when students are capable enough to do substantial compositional work in a fairly short time (i.e. days rather than weeks). One could, for instance, give students the recapitulation of a simple keyboard sonata and ask them to rewrite the all-tonic transition so that it modulates to the dominant or relative major, effectively turning a reprise into an exposition. Or one could provide students with sectional templates in various stages of incompleteness (the harmonic/rhythmic skeleton of a TR without specific melodic content, an S-theme's left-hand part without a right hand, and so on) to be fleshed out in a stylistically appropriate way, perhaps using a specified work as a model.

common-practice cadential processes and the rhetorical functions associated therewith.[32] Another related (and highly transferable) skill is the ability to extract meaningful and musically relevant analytical data from a piece without taking ownership of every note or chord. In a perfect world, our sophomores would be able to accurately assess a work's harmonic design in a single pass, through a combination of strategic listening and bass-line study. But in reality, only the most experienced and committed students reach that level. For most, harmonic analysis remains laborious and time-consuming; this can lead to the mistaken impression that "analysis" itself is necessarily slow-going and unrewarding.[33]

I have found that one can unseat such assumptions by shifting students' attention from syntactic analysis to rhetorical analysis—that is, by "zooming out" to a level where the privileged units are no longer individual chords or local prolongational idioms, but rather rhetorical structures of phrase-length or longer. In itself, this is hardly a novel strategy. Most of us have shown students how to make meaningful observations about small forms without taking inventory of every chord—as when we have them focus on phrase endings to classify a given period-form as interrupted, continuous, sectional, or progressive.[34] Students learn a similar type of strategic

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[32] Though students are often intuitively able to distinguish between "initiating," "continuational," or "closural" functions in the classical style, I make a point early on to ground those intuitions in analytical observables such as harmonic rhythm, phrase design/length, motivic activity, and so on. Tripartite classifications of formal functions—familiar from LaRue, Hatten, and others—are most extensively developed by Caplin; see Jan LaRue, *Guidelines for Style Analysis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970); Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); and William Caplin, *Classical Form* and "What are Formal Functions?" in *Musical Form, Forms, and Formenlehre: Three Methodological Reflections*, ed. Pieter Bergé (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009).

[33] Such a misconception often stems from what BaileyShea calls "analytical myopia"—an attention to local details (especially chord identification) so consuming that it overshadows a consideration of a work's expressive features. As theory instructors, he warns, we often "run the risk of missing the forest through the trees" ("Teaching Agency and Narrative Analysis," from BaileyShea p. 28, this issue).

[34] This typology of period types is from Laitz (which in turn borrows "interrupted" and "progressive" from Green); see Steven G. Laitz, *The Complete Musician*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and

hearing on a larger canvas when studying Sonata Theory, by observing broad thematic and rhetorical features while targeting specific (especially cadential) moments for harmonic analysis.[35] Whether it be a whole piece or just a complete exposition, this "larger canvas" offers more fruitful opportunities for the kind of emergent narrative understanding—the assimilation of music's salient features into a teleological utterance rich with human meaning—that is the ultimate goal of my Sonata Theory pedagogy.

Of course, before students can create responsible analytical narratives on their own, they first need to (a) master the prerequisite terminological/conceptual apparatus, (b) cultivate the kind of strategic listening that draws sustained interest out of music's cadential processes, and (c) acquire, through imitation of their instructor's example, a fluency with the kind of specialized narrative grammar that convincingly maps animistic or agential conceits onto "purely musical" processes. This is a tall order for a six-week unit, to be sure. But one can make significant strides in that time. Even if students are not fully independent at the unit's end, they will hopefully have made an important discovery: that in its higher forms, music analysis is anything but a mechanical routine; it is a creative enterprise, one that brings pieces to life in our imagination—not unlike performance itself.

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Green, 62.

[35] Because students do often take "analysis" to mean the same thing as "chord-by-chord analysis," it is usually necessary to spell out what is meant by this kind of strategic listening, lest they become intimidated (indeed, even panicked) by the prospect of engaging an entire four- to six-page movement for a single homework assignment. This is why it is essential not only to provide leading questions, but also to make those questions fairly consistent from assignment to assignment, thus giving students a framework to help them to structure their listening and analytical habits.

## VI. Pedagogical Considerations (II): Choosing Repertoire / Norms versus Deviations

As this point, one vital curricular issue remains to be addressed. Having argued emphatically that students should be exposed to "as many pieces as possible," I have neglected to specify *which* pieces. Before offering any specific suggestions, I should like to first lay out my general thinking on the matter.

One of the most admirable features of Hepokoski and Darcy's project is its effort to rehabilitate the dramatic viability of even the most unassuming sonata form. We have all encountered twentieth-century critics who regarded sonata recapitulations as dramatically inert, owing to their redundancies with the exposition. Sonata Theory seeks to overturn that bias by inviting us (and our students) to hear *both* exposition and recapitulation alike as "expressive trajectories" toward key cadential junctures.[36] That being said, I have found that once students have mastered the theory's basic precepts, pieces that unfold entirely by the book make for less engaging and exciting lessons than those that stage complications within those basic trajectories.

Thankfully, though, students are usually prepared to shift their focus from norms to exceptions after only a few lessons, since discussions of the latter will always entail continued review of the former. (To recognize and celebrate the atypical, one must know what is "typical.") This principle—moving fairly swiftly from the paradigmatic to the unusual—underwrites my selection of all our classroom pieces, from excerpts to entire movements. Consider, for instance, the issue of normativity in the teaching of the medial caesura principle. After a class or two studying MCs that unambiguously offer the usual series of ordered rhetorical cues (see above), students are usually able to grapple with subtler situations, such as that shown in Example 3, the MC-setup of Beethoven's "easy" Piano Sonata in G minor, op. 49 no. 1. Here, in keeping with the compact and unassuming nature of the work at large, Beethoven telescopes a number of the pre-MC markers while overriding others entirely. Though there is no prolongation of the

[36] This emphasis on the tonal drama of sonata forms echoes aspects of Charles Rosen's well-known writings and reflects the wider shift toward a harmonic (rather than thematic) conception of late-eighteenth-century form that followed Leonard Ratner's *Classic Music: Expression Form and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980).

Example 3. Beethoven, "Easy" Piano Sonata in G Minor, op. 49/1 (mvt. I), mm. 10–18, showing truncated MC preparation

dominant harmony (V/III) or increase in energy, the dominant itself is preceded by the characteristic $\hat{4}\rightarrow\sharp\hat{4}\rightarrow\hat{5}$ "dominant lock" gesture. And although hammer-blows seem to be absent, students will be intrigued to learn that they are not so much omitted as cleverly hidden; with an additional listening or two, many will intuit that the grace-note figures on each quarter note result in a three-part "arrival gesture" that is rhetorically quite similar to the standard hammer-blow figure. That is to say, the three hammer blows have been "absorbed" into the dominant lock figure itself.

From there, one can introduce even more sophisticated manipulations of the expected aural cues, like those in Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F Minor, op. 2 no. 1, shown in Example 4. Here, too, we encounter an emphatic "lock" onto the dominant of the second key—indeed, the $\hat{4}\rightarrow\sharp\hat{4}\rightarrow\hat{5}$ motion occurs three times. But when the dominant pedal (m. 20ff.) never yields to a fully-articulated MC pause, we face a conundrum: is there an S-theme here? On further discussion, many students will agree that we are meant to realize (but only in hindsight!) that the music over the pedal *was* the S-theme, and that the installation of the dominant in m. 20 was nothing less than the medial caesura itself, making the sustained

scale degree $\hat{5}$ a kind of bass-voice caesura-fill disguised as a pedal point. With these ambiguities sorted out, they are then ready to recognize that the thrice-iterated $\hat{4}\rightarrow\sharp\hat{4}\rightarrow\hat{5}$ bass motions (mm. 15–19) were themselves hammer blow surrogates, forming a "three-part arrival gesture" similar to the one in Example 3.[37]



Example 4. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F Minor, op. 2/1 (mvt. I), mm. 11–23, showing extension of MC dominant pedal into S-space

[37] These "three-part arrival gestures" are quite common in lieu of proper "hammer blows" and just as easy to hear.

In my view, more involved examples like these are anything but optional additions to a curriculum mainly focused on the ordinary; they are essential complements to the paradigmatic cases, chosen specifically to illustrate that stylistic norms are not hard-and-fast "rules" and that a composer's dialogue with those norms is flexible, non-binding, and often a matter of considerable ingenuity—more game-like than recipe-like.[38]

Along similar lines, I believe it is important to include excerpts that invite students to pit their own musical intuitions *against* the theory at hand. With Sonata Theory, such situations arise most often during the placement of the EEC/ESC. While Hepokoski and Darcy's guidelines (the first "satisfactory" PAC within S-space that moves on to new material) often yield satisfying results, there are quite a few works in which the ostensible EEC moment will strike many students as less than convincing—typically when the closing zone contains themes that do not sound sufficiently "closing" in character (i.e., tightly-knit forms like sentences and periods).[39] Such

[38] Indeed, to shield students from the atypical or unusual cases is arguably to disadvantage them in at least two respects. First, if students never learn the crucial distinction between "norms" and "rules"—if they are allowed to conceive of musical forms merely as prescriptive *formulas*—then they are more likely to use deviant or non-conforming works (when they do encounter them) as grounds to dismiss our teachings as overly narrow or even irrelevant. Second, students exposed only to paradigmatic cases are denied the gratification of seeing for themselves the breadth of creative responses to a genre's constraining/regulating influence at a given historical moment.

[39] These include, for instance, the opening movements of Mozart's Serenade in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik") (the strict EEC is m. 35; students prefer m. 51) and Piano Sonata in B♭ major, K. 333 (strict EEC in m. 38; students prefer m. 50 or 59). Hepokoski and Darcy allude to the issues I raise here and concede that the first PAC—the technical moment of EEC—may *not* be the most "fully satisfying" gesture of closure. That being said, their claim that this "first PAC" signifies the "attainment of an important generic requirement—nothing more, nothing less" (*Elements*, 124) rings a bit hollow, since to insist repeatedly that the EEC/ESC moments are the goals around which the *entire sonata* is organized is clearly to afford them a more profound and salient role than a mere "generic requirement." The deeper issue, which Hepokoski and Darcy do not address, is that EEC and ESC are primarily *tonal* categories (i.e. largely agnostic to issues of rhetoric and formal function), which places them at odds with the rest of Sonata Theory, which is eminently rhetorical in its outlook.

instances offer wonderful pedagogical opportunities. For rather than quibbling about where the EEC/ESC "is" or "is not," one can invite students to reflect on their own decision-making processes and to put a coherent, fact-based argument behind their sense of frustration: what about this or that moment seems to suggest that the music is either "done" or "not done"?[40] This invitation to challenge Hepokoski and Darcy's interpretive guidelines serves a broader pedagogic purpose as well. By showing that we can selectively disagree with the authors of Sonata Theory without "invalidating" the Sonata Theory enterprise as a whole, one drives home the key point that music theories are not usually built from truth claims in the scientific sense; they do not exist simply to be falsified (or worse, endlessly and tautologically corroborated) by analysis. Rather, they are interpretive *tools*—tools whose purpose is to bring us into closer engagement with the music that we care about.

[40] Of course, by allowing students to invoke formal function as a deciding factor in EEC/ESC placement, one takes a decisive step away from Sonata Theory orthodoxy, toward a more catholic, common-sense, and *rhetorically*-oriented concept of "closure," in the manner of William Caplin (who is similarly apprehensive about "tightly-knit" closing themes). Hepokoski demurs; see "Approaching the First Movement of op. 31 no. 2 through Sonata Theory," in *Beethoven's Tempest Sonata: Contexts of Analysis and Performance*, ed. Pieter Berge et al. (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven Studies in Musicology, 2009), 43. I see no problem with this. Indeed, I have found that students often invest more in their own analytical decisions when they discover that they are participating in disciplinary disputes that involve contention among living scholars. (The impression that the concepts of "music theory" are actually open to debate or change over time is understandably, if regrettably, rare among nonspecialists.) So if students feel—and they often do—that "tightly-knit" forms are poor candidates for closing themes, they will be pleased to know that prominent scholars share their opinion and enriched to understand the rationales on both sides of the debate. This liberal approach to the EEC/ESC question bears out Mary Wennerstrom's insistence that "labels can be liabilities if they are considered a final answer; they can also be the starting point of stimulating discussions in which the teacher and students are both learners" ("The Liability of Labels," this journal 22 [2008], 19).

## VII. Culminating the Unit: Three Types of Sonata-Form "Plot Twists"

In addition to governing the presentation of individual topics, the progression from norms to deviations also determines the overall arc of my Sonata Theory unit. Once students have grown comfortable with the standard trajectory of the eighteenth-century two-part exposition (i.e., one with a single medial caesura and a clearly-defined S-zone), I structure our remaining time around one or more common manipulations of that generic template: 1) the "continuous" exposition (which features no medial caesura); 2) situations where a work seems to present *more than one* MC; and 3) what I call "digressive" EEC/ESC deferrals. These sonata-form "plot twists" occupy a curious gray area between norms and deviations. On the one hand, they can be found in hundreds of individual works and were clearly "available" to any eighteenth-century composer. On the other hand, each would seem to draw its dramatic potency from the assumption that listeners are *expecting* a glitch-free two-part exposition.

In what follows, I discuss each of these large-scale formal devices in turn, offering sample analyses as well. Readers will also want to consult Appendix B, which provides annotated repertoire lists for each of the three strategies, as well as a list of movements whose relative conventionality makes them ideal for use earlier in the Sonata Theory unit.

### Plot Twist No. 1: "Continuous" Expositions and Recapitulations

One of the more novel ideas advanced by Sonata Theory is the notion that a dedicated secondary-thematic space is, despite its occurrence in a vast majority of pieces, still only an optional rather than obligatory element of sonata form. As my analysis of Mozart's "Hunt" Quartet showed, it is possible to hear a movement's transition spinning forward all the way to its closing space without the rhetorical break and thematic restart normally provided by the medial caesura. Hepokoski and Darcy call such expositions and recapitulations "continuous." Their signature is the lack of a clearly-articulated medial caesura—the logic being that if the MC's purpose is to announce the commencement of S-space, then

the absence of that marker usually means that there is no way to delineate where S-space begins.[41]

If this premise runs contrary to the entrenched assumptions that "all sonatas" have distinct P- and S-zones, it in no way implies that the concept of secondary-thematic space is irrelevant to these works. As Hepokoski and Darcy argue, the two-part expositional format is ubiquitous enough to be a regulating norm even with movements that do not outwardly conform to it. That is to say, our experience of a "continuous" exposition is likely to be shaped by the *expectation* that an MC and secondary thematic zone ought to materialize—a fact that composers seem eager at times to exploit. For this reason, the experience of such movements pivots on what Hepokoski and Darcy call the moment of "psychological conversion," the point where one becomes aware "that the more standard, two-part form is not going to be realized"—i.e., that we are dealing with a continuous type instead.[42]

My teaching focuses on two distinct types of continuous expositions: those that hint (falsely) at an impending medial caesura and those that do not.[43] With the latter type, which I call "run-on" expositions, our principal orienting clues are of two sorts. First, there is the harmonic perspective: all else being equal, the point of "conversion" will tend to occur when we realize that the secondary key area has been established long enough and securely enough to rule out that a pre-MC transition is still going on. (For students

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[41] All the same, Sonata Theory's rule of thumb ("*if there is no medial caesura, there is no secondary theme*" [Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 52; emphasis original]) can give the false impression that S-themes are existentially dependent upon MCs. A better formulation might be, "when eighteenth-century expositions lack an MC, there is usually no convincing secondary theme or themes to be found and thus no *reason* to use those labels." For as Hepokoski and Darcy themselves point out, it becomes increasingly common in the nineteenth century for composers to conjoin the halves of a two-part exposition (P/TR and S/C) without a clearly-articulated medial caesura.

[42] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 52.

[43] This typology differs from Hepokoski and Darcy's, which distinguishes between continuous expositions featuring a run-on "expansion section" that extends, cadentially undivided, all the way from transitional space to the EEC (that is, for most of the exposition) and those that reach an "early" secondary-key PAC that is then repeated with variation until the exposition's close (2006, 52, 60).

less accustomed to tracking modulations by ear, this may be more obvious in minor-mode sonatas, since the modulation will usually be accompanied by a change of mode.) Second, there is of course the *absence* of MC-preparation rhetoric itself, which can be both conspicuous and telling—especially for students who have spent several weeks focusing intently on these processes and who have likely developed an intuition for the typical proportions of sonata forms.

In class, I begin with an especially clear-cut example of this subtype, like the compact finale of Haydn's String Quartet in B Minor, op. 33 no. 1.[44] I begin by asking students first to analyze by ear 1) where the EEC is and 2) where it seems that the secondary theme should begin (the last of these obviously being a strategic "trick question"). When a second listening confirms that there is no medial caesura, despite a clear modulation to III, I pause to introduce the concept of the continuous exposition and then devote several more hearings—now with a score—to the question of where the so-called "point of conversion" falls. Although this conversion-point is subjective and may differ from listener to listener, experienced students will often come to a reasonable consensus as to where it lies. In the finale of op. 33 no. 1, transitional music begins in m. 13 (see Example 5) and unfolds a falling fifths sequence that arrives on the dominant of D major in m. 25. But rather than playing up this dominant—as he might were an MC forthcoming—Haydn extends his sequence to arrive on D major itself (m. 27) and then launches a new set of thematic modules that merely serve to prolong the new tonic. It is at this point (m. 33 or thereabouts) that students will often begin to sense that something in the expected sonata process has gone awry.[45]

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[44] Hepokoski and Darcy also discuss this movement (*Elements*, 54–55).

[45] When time permits, I like to invite students to locate the conversion point as precisely as possible—even down to a specific bar—since such an exercise encourages both a closer interrogation of their own hearing and also a more meaningful engagement with the nuances of the work's harmonic/melodic design.

Example 5. Haydn, String Quartet in B Minor, op. 33 no. 1 (mvt. IV), mm. 17–47, showing continuous exposition and "point of conversion"
*(Example continued on next page)*

Fortspinnung *continues...*

*cadential modules repeat, leading to EEC in m. 51...*

III: PAC

Example 5. *(continued)*

More engaging still are those continuous expositions that lead us to believe that a medial caesura is forthcoming, only to drive forward without pause to the EEC. Hepokoski and Darcy colorfully call this a "bait-and-switch" maneuver—the implication being that this procedure decisively calls forth our expectation for a two-part expositional format, only to withdraw that option at a later point on the compositional timeline. This is precisely what we saw in my analysis of the "Hunt" Quartet in Section I above.[46]

[46] Hepokoski and Darcy actually offer the opening of K. 458 as an example of their second continuous exposition subtype (i.e. one with an "early" secondary theme PAC followed by cadential reiterations; 2006, 54–55). However, it is clear that the "bait-and-switch" principle also applies.

Example 6 shows a more conventional instance of this "bait-and-switch" technique, from the first movement of Haydn's String Quartet in G, op. 76 no. 1. Here, TR arrives at a strongly articulated dominant (m. 42) that is then prolonged under a chain of motivic repetitions, suggesting an imminent caesura. And at m. 47, over a stable dominant triad, the first violin breaks its prevailing melodic pattern to unfold a freer scalar gesture suggestive of caesura-fill. But ultimately there is no caesura to "fill"; rather than abbreviate the lower voices (as he might have with a true half cadence), Haydn sustains the remaining instruments throughout the bar and then *resolves* them to tonic in m. 48, setting in motion a new series of one-bar modules based on previous measure's would-be "fill" gesture. And as often happens, this "near miss" non-caesura sets the exposition on a more troubled course than we might have foreseen. The placid tonic/dominant oscillations of mm. 47*ff*. are soon upset by a lapse into the dominant minor, culminating in dramatic *fortissimo* outbursts across three octaves (m. 56). The major mode is only really restored with the arrival of the EEC in m. 72.[47] (If time permits, it can be productive to compare this movement's exposition to its recapitulation, since the latter replays these events with enough alterations to leave open the question of whether a "bait and switch" had really occurred; see especially m. 165*ff*.)

Appendix B includes brief descriptions of several more "run-on" and "bait-and-switch"-style continuous expositions by Haydn and Beethoven.

## Plot Twist No. 2: "Double" Medial Caesuras

In precise distinction to the works just discussed, one sometimes encounters expositions that feature more than one potential MC. Such a scenario presents us with an apparent paradox: if the function of the MC is to signal the commencement of the secondary theme

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[47] This exposition is related to Hepokoski and Darcy's third "expansion-section" subtype, one in which an MC is "fully articulated" before "the plug is pulled on the two-part exposition." Such situations, they explain, "involve undermining the caesura-fill that follows the MC, thus refusing to permit the caesura-fill to rest or anchor itself with an S-theme on its other side. Instead, the fill is reinvigorated into an expanded *Fortspinnung* or 'thematic' modular chain that takes on a life of its own" (2006, 55). Arguably, Mozart's "Hunt" quartet is an even more dramatic instance of this technique.

Example 6. Haydn, String Quartet in G, op. 76 no. 1 (mvt. I), mm. 33–49, showing "bait-and-switch" MC evasion

group, then in principle we cannot have two of them, since we can only truly enter S-space once. The resultant ambiguities—

which are easily grasped by any student with several weeks' experience—make for some fascinating analytical scenarios. Take for instance the opening movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in C, op. 2 no. 3—a *locus classicus* of the double-MC technique. Here, Beethoven's virtuosic TR culminates in an apparent I: HC medial caesura (m. 26; see Example 7). But the music that follows, though lyrical and contrasting, falls short of being a satisfactory S-theme, since it is in G *minor* rather than G major—an "expressive…flaw" that must be overcome.[48] And indeed, Beethoven quickly comes to treat this would-be secondary theme as an obstacle rather than a goal in itself; at m. 39 the music is abruptly energized, as if compelled to resume its search for a proper continuation. The effort is successful: at m. 45 we arrive at a clear half-cadential medial caesura, one that yields to the "true" (G-major) S-theme in m. 47.

Though clearly intended as a striking departure from the usual sonata story, Beethoven's strategy here is far from unique. Appendix B offers a list of works that present varied instantiations of the double-MC scenario.[49] In most, the potential MCs are not equally

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[48] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 172.

[49] Because such works tend to feature "extra" music between the first MC attempt and the entrance of what is ostensibly the "real" S—music that is not yet S but arguably not TR either—questions of terminology will naturally arise. Here, I advise a casual approach over strict adherence to Hepokoski and Darcy's own labels. To account for situations where the "extra" music makes a clear claim to secondary-theme status, they devise the three-part "trimodular block," or "TMB," labeling system: the "false S" is designated "TM$^1$," the revived transition is "TM$^2$," and the "real" S is "TM$^3$" (Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 170–77). Other cases fall into a broader category they call "medial caesura declined" (45–47). I find the "trimodular block" labels less than satisfying because they omit any reference to S—the music whose very identity is at stake in these situations. By contrast, "medial caesura declined" is an apt descriptor, but it refers only to the false MC itself, not the music that follows (unless the "declined" caesura clearly occurs *within* P or TR, a scenario I discuss below in reference to Beethoven's String Quartet in C minor, op. 18 no. 4). My own classroom terminology tends to be ad hoc and depends on the piece in question. In a case like Beethoven's op. 2 no. 3, I have found it adequate simply to refer to the music at m. 26ff. as a "false" or "would-be" MC and S. In works like op. 10 no. 1 (see Appendix B) or op. 18 no. 4 (discussed below), I prefer to call the "extra" music a "post-medial transition" or something similar, in an attempt both to capture its restless, searching quality and to underscore its implausibility as a true secondary theme.

Example 7. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C, op. 2 no. 3 (mvt. I), mm. 24-49, showing "double" medial caesuras. "TM" labels beneath the score correspond to a "trimodular block" analysis; see note 31.

*(Example continued on next page)*

37

*abrupt energization: resumption of transitional rhetoric*

*f*

[TM²]

40

*get 6th "dominant lock"*

*sf* *sf* *f* *sf* *sf*

43

*prolonged dominant, leading to second MC attempt*

*f* *sf* *sf*

45

*second MC (w.caesura fill)*

*p*

47

S *"real" S in dominant major*

*dolce*

[TM³]

Example 7. *(continued)*

weighted, as they are in Example 7; often, the second is weaker. Appendix B also features several movements whose recapitulation *omits* one of the two caesuras, thus seeming to declare the remaining one as the more "legitimate" of the two; these works are especially useful for full-piece narrative analyses.

Such a scenario is played out to fascinating effect in Beethoven's String Quartet in C minor, op. 18 no. 4 (Example 8), a movement that makes clear early on that its arrival at a medial caesura will be fraught with complications. Although the first plausible MC arrives in m. 25, it comes after an especially graphic instance at a *failed* MC attempt—what Hepokoski and Darcy call an "MC declined"—in mm. 13–16. There, though the music seems intent on cadencing (first a i: PAC in m. 13, then a i: HC in m. 16), each beat-three cadential chord is dislodged by a strident, off-beat echo in the first violin.[50] At this impasse, the P-theme is reinstated (m. 17) to move the music forward to the second, more convincing MC attempt in m. 25. But what follows is a not S, but a seemingly transitional "scene-change" theme that tonicizes A♭ major and F minor before arriving at the second, attenuated medial caesura (m. 33) that leads to the "real" S, a periodic theme in the relative major that arrives at the EEC in m. 70.

The music after the repeat signs unfolds less like a "development" per se and more like a large-scale variation of the exposition.[51] And tellingly, this exposition-variant omits both the "scene change" music heard in m. 26 and the second MC that emerged from it (cf. m. 33). Now, the "hiccupping" cadence figure from m. 13—the exposition's declined caesura—proceeds directly to a statement of the "real" S-theme in the major subdominant (m. 113). The result, of course, is a normal two-part format—i.e., one with a single medial caesura. This omission is prescient, since the recapitulation follows the same course, making absolutely clear that the m. 35 theme was the "true" S and the m. 26 music an imposter.

[50] Each instance of this passage (cf. mm. 109 and 149) becomes longer and more harmonically confused, with the off-beat first-violin chords creating an increasingly insistent (and increasingly absurd) "hiccupping" effect.

[51] This would therefore be a development that was "rotationally" related to the exposition. See note 26 above.

Example 8. Beethoven, String Quartet in C Minor, op. 18 no. 4 (mvt. I), mm. 20–37, showing "double" MCs and post-medial transition music
*(Example continued on next page)*

Listening ahead, however, we find that the excised "scene change" theme will not be so easily written off. By the end of the recapitulation, the movement would seem to have realized a familiar Beethovenian "tragedy-to-triumph" narrative, with the S-theme's ringing C-major ESC (m. 195) announcing a decisive victory over

Example 8. *(continued)*

the tumultuous minor mode of the movement's opening—a victory we may well attribute to the recapitulation's "correction" of the ambiguous and overlong exposition.[52] But in the coda—indeed, just shy of the work's final bars—the exiled "scene change" theme springs back into existence. And at that very instant, the music collapses back into C minor (m. 209), where it will stay until its conclusion. The narrative implications of this critical moment are striking: the music that was streamlined out of the sonata process returns here to exact its bitter retribution, pulling the plug on the expected major-mode ending and ensuring a tragic outcome for the movement as a whole.

[52] For Hepokoski and Darcy, minor-mode sonatas carry an additional "burden," a kind of innate desire to break free from the expressively negative sphere of the minor mode into the parallel major (*Elements*, 306–17). Because relative-major S-themes can be recapitulated *either* in the minor tonic or the parallel major (both are generically "available" options), the question remains open throughout such sonatas as to which option a composer will choose. Thus, for these authors, the arrival of S in C major would mark the (apparently!) triumphant conclusion to a suspenseful movement-spanning narrative arc.

## Plot Twist No. 3: "Digressive" EEC/ESC Deferrals

At the end of Section IV above, we observed a series of EEC deferrals in Mozart's Piano Sonata in A minor, K. 310. At the time, I characterized those deferrals "benign," since they posed only minor setbacks within an otherwise clear progression toward the cadential goal. However, some deferrals will undermine a movement's cadential processes more profoundly, by dislodging the (ostensibly secure) tonic and sending the music on a wayward tonal digression at the moment of closure or shortly thereafter. These scenarios, a favorite of Haydn, are excellent classroom vehicles owing to their arresting aural profile and sophisticated manipulations of musical time.

Haydn's String Quartet in C, op. 64 no. 1 offers an especially clear case. Although the "digressive" deferral is in the recapitulation, it is best understood in light of a curious feature of the exposition: the secondary theme's striking aversion to local tonic harmonies. After only nine bars of proper dominant, the expositional S-space wanders into G minor (m. 35) and hovers on a strangely inert, nearly-tonicized D major triad before lapsing into focused cadential rhetoric (mm. 50–55). When we find that Haydn's recapitulation has omitted S-space entirely—there is no medial caesura, and the former P-music proceeds directly to an attempted ESC (m. 129)[53]—we might well take this as an attempt to sidestep such ambiguity. But ironing out one tonal wrinkle only creates another. Shortly before the would-be ESC, TR collapses briefly but ominously into the tonic minor (mm. 121–24; see Example 9). Then, just *after* the ESC attempt (m. 129), this flatward impulse reasserts itself more aggressively: at bar 133 (in what seems at first to be closing space), the music lurches up by half-step to the dominant of D♭ major, sending us on a nineteen-bar digression wending its way through B♭ minor and finally up to a half-cadence in C minor—a tonal correction that Haydn celebrates with a triumphant C-major fugato on the exposition's headmotive in the tonic (m. 152). It is this second post-cadential digression that ultimately produces the *real* C-major ESC in m. 170. And tellingly, this ESC replays—now successfully—the music that followed the failed ESC attempt from m. 129. (Haydn will often dramatize the correction of tonal mishaps by "rewinding" the music to an earlier point, giving the impression that he is choosing, the second time around, a path not initially taken.)

[53] Note that this results in a "continuous" recapitulation.

TR (part of a "continuous" recapitulation; no S-space)
collapse into minor...
117
fz
I: HC
121
dim.
cresc.
cadential drive to ESC
ESC?
126
molto cresc.
f
ff
p
I: PAC
ESC notionally achieved: putative closing space
No! C major dislodged...
130
pp
fz p
fz p

Example 9. Haydn, String Quartet in C Major, op. 64 no. 1 (mvt. I), mm. 117–70, showing deferral of EEC post-cadential tonal detour *(Example continued on next two pages)*

135 *tonicizing D-flat major...*

*cresc.*

138

*p*

141 *...and B-flat minor...*

*mf* *p*

145 *...and C minor...*

*p* *f*

150 *reinstatement and cadential affirmation of C-tonic triggers "celebratory" stretto of P-theme headmotive*

*mf*

i: HC

Example 9. *(continued)*

154

157

*cresc.*

*f*

160

*fz*

163

3

ESC *ESC achieved; resumption of premature "closing" music from m. 129ff.*

166

3

3

I: PAC

*fz* — *p*

*fz* — *p*

Example 9. *(continued)*

In my experience, classes organized around these more complex analytical situations unfold most effectively if students have done the listening in advance—and always with guiding questions. While it is true that many of these post-EEC/ESC tonal ruptures are easy grasped on a first hearing, untangling the twisted timelines of Haydn's "rewind/redo" scenarios can be quite demanding and usually benefit from the synoptic distance afforded by solo study—to say nothing of the luxury of unlimited hearings.[54] That being said, there are other, even more drastic EEC/ESC complications that are quite easy to hear and well suited for spontaneous in-class listening: these are situations in which the EEC or ESC is omitted entirely, resulting in a "nonresolving" (or "failed") exposition or recapitulation.[55] Though they are beyond the scope of this essay, I would direct interested readers to Haydn's String Quartet in G minor, op. 20 no. 3—a work whose opening movement is well suited to wrap up a discussion of "closure complications," since its exposition (which begins earnestly enough) stages extensive, often hilarious, and ultimately insurmountable difficulties in finding a terminal cadence.

## VI. Concluding Thoughts

In many respects, the pedagogy of sonata form has changed very little over the past half-century. Despite ongoing shifts of professional opinion—including a number of pointed challenges to the status quo—undergraduates today can expect their textbooks to present them with more or less the same basic sonata form "recipe" that they would've encountered as English-speaking students in the 1950s (one that was itself not so different from the one known to German-speaking students in the 1880s).[56]

[54] The same can be said for nearly any listening assignment that asks students to compare one of Haydn's expositions with its subsequent recapitulation, since the divergences are usually too extensive to track in real time.

[55] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 177, 245.

[56] In itself, this is hardly a bad thing; the nuanced refinements of the academic status quo are not often suited to the core curriculum. Charles Rosen's challenge to the viability of any overriding schematic practice—his emphasis on sonata *forms* over "sonata form"—leads directly away from any tidy pedagogy (see *Sonata Forms* [New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1988). Similarly, Leonard Ratner's welcome restoration of an

In terms of its basic architectural layout, Hepokoski and Darcy's image of the sonata is often (though not always!) consonant with those traditional perspectives.[57] However, through a shift of interpretive emphasis—by focusing on the dynamic, processual aspects of the form—Sonata Theory lights the way to a new and reinvigorated engagement with the genre. My purpose here has been to show the benefits that this conception offers to instructors of undergraduates: a dramatic, expression-oriented model of the genre that appeals to the narrative sensibilities of performing musicians; a flexible and easily-mastered labeling system; a historically sensitive taxonomy of compositional procedures; and a broad compatibility with other analytical approaches. These advantages are hardly unknown in the field at large; I hear routinely from analysts who have turned to the *Elements* as a framework for their sonata-form pedagogy. Their anecdotal successes, like my own, confirm Hepokoski and Darcy's "expressive/dramatic" image of sonata form as both a welcome addition to the undergraduate curriculum and a springboard for any number of stimulating analytical adventures.

eighteenth-century (i.e. harmonic) conception of the genre did little to diminish the didactic value of thematic "contrast" for those navigating these larger forms for the first time. And it goes without saying that Heinrich Schenker's self-consciously esoteric take on sonata form offers little of use to the analytical novice (see *Free Composition*, trans. and ed. by Ernst Oster [New York: Longman Press, 1979]).

[57] The two most pronounced departures from the "traditional" perspective (and, not surprisingly, the two most debated schemata in Sonata Theory at large) are the continuous exposition and the "Type 2" sonata. On earlier scholarly acknowledgements of the continuous exposition type, see Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 51; for a critique of the "continuous" exposition as an analytical principal, see Caplin, "What are Formal Functions?," 60–61. For a critique of the Type 2 sonata, see Wingfield, 155–60.

## APPENDIX A
## The *Elements of Sonata Theory* as a Teaching Tool

A central challenge in writing this essay has been meeting the needs of two distinct audiences: 1) theory teachers who are professionally familiar with Sonata Theory but who have never considered its pedagogical use; and 2) teachers who are entirely new to Sonata Theory. While I hope that my study would generate interest for both groups, it would be unrealistic to suppose that it could serve the latter as a one-stop resource. Unexperienced instructors will almost surely want to peruse the *Elements of Sonata Theory* for themselves before debuting Hepokoski and Darcy's system in the classroom. My purpose here is to offer a few words of guidance for colleagues who may be looking to consult the *Elements* for the first time.

First and most importantly: to the question of what role the *Elements* ought to play in one's undergraduate teaching, it is important to recognize that Hepokoski and Darcy's tome is not a textbook. With six-hundred-twenty-two pages of miniscule type, most of them embroidered with discursive footnotes, it is closer to a medieval *summa*. And though its prose is crisp and lucid, its density and implacable pace may still challenge students unaccustomed to academic writing. Well-chosen excerpts can certainly be effective; I typically have my classes read Chapter Three ("The Medial Caesura and the Two-Part Exposition") in its entirety with guiding questions. But for the most part, this is a work whose benefits will come to nonspecialist students only indirectly, through the instructor's mediation.

Naturally, this mediation begins with the question with what to cover and what to leave out. Instructors with only a few weeks at their disposal will probably want to focus on Chapters One through Fourteen, which deal systematically with the various thematic spaces (or "action zones") of a typical "Type 3" sonata. The book's second half addresses more specialized concerns, including the other four "types" of sonatas. (The four chapters on the "Type 5," or concerto-sonata, are a 170-page book-within-a-book. Though richly developed, this material is also terminologically and conceptually cumbersome; I have only assigned it in graduate seminars.) Even within the book's first half, though, careful pruning is necessary; the level of detail may gratify experienced readers, but it would

quickly overwhelm undergraduates.[58]

The question of whether to deal with the authors' extensive para-analytical/philosophical apparatus is also a pressing one. Merely assigning Appendix One as supplementary reading tends to be fruitless; students will tend to be either over- or underwhelmed, depending on whether they appreciate what is at stake. All the same, I believe that there is much to be gained by devising some way to address these crucial issues, even if only briefly. One effective strategy is to present the class with quotations selected for their potential to spur discussion on meta-analytical topics, like the following comments on the regulating function of genre in early nineteenth-century composition:

> Beethoven was by no means the only composer of the *Eroica*: he cannot lay exclusive claim to the totality of the work's implications. Many of the compositional features of that piece are more accurately regarded as dramatizations of (or dialogues with) pre-existing, culturally produced norms that were external to Beethoven.... In any composition there are at least two voices: the composer's voice and the genre's voice. (*Elements*, 607)

When carefully unpacked, provocative statements like this can help to establish a richer conceptual foundation for one's analytical work in the classroom. In the case of the quotation above, few students will have considered the vital role that socially-produced conceptual structures such as genre play in much artistic production and reception (either in the past *or* the present). The idea that formal analysis might entail more than mere labeling—that it can endeavor creatively to reconstruct that enabling dialogue between the individual artist and the conventions of his/her time—can make the task of close reading more purposeful and engaging for many students.[59]

[58] One might decide, for instance, that a discussion of primary themes need not to go into detail about the five "special P-types" Hepokoski and Darcy lay out: "P as Grand Antecedent"; "Mozartean 'Loops': A Specialized Variant of the Sentence"; "$P^{0}$ and $P^{1.0}$ Modules/Themes"; "The 'Circular' $\hat{8}$–$\flat\hat{7}$–$\hat{6}$–$\sharp\hat{7}$–$\hat{8}$ Pattern in P-Space"; and "$P^{gen}$ and $P^{tel}$ Themes" (*Elements*, 77–92).

[59] Although I tend to include more of this meta-analytical content when teaching Sonata Theory to DMA students, engaged undergraduates can also find much to ponder here.

Finally, the issue of repertoire: on this front the *Elements* can be a tremendous resource, albeit with one critical limitation. A glance through the "index of compositions" (pp. 639–48) shows that Hepokoski and Darcy discuss hundreds of major compositions in one capacity or another. Some of these are mentioned only briefly; others are discussed at length. But most of the pieces cited offer something that is inherently *interesting* from a Sonata Theory standpoint; even the most compressed citations can offer the seed of a rewarding full-piece analysis. That being said, one will search in vain for complete, detailed analyses of entire movements to work from. By and large, pieces are cited mainly as exemplars of one or another compositional technique.[60] This is ironic, since Sonata Theory specifically encourages us to think in terms of complete movements; its central concern is the long dramatic arc bridging the first bars and the last.[61] And indeed, those who have seen Hepokoski and Darcy present their often riveting full-piece analyses in the classroom can attest that the *Elements*, for all its plenitude, falls short of conveying the method's true analytical potency—a potency that arguably only emerges in an expert pedagogical performance. One can, I believe, infer the flavor of such performances from the vivid language in the authors' many analytical vignettes. But the very need for such a reconstruction underscores that undergraduate instruction is, in certain respects, an "off-label" use for Hepokoski and Darcy's tome. All the same, I would hope that the sample analyses provided above (along with those sketched below in Appendix B) might serve to bridge that gap and to provide interested instructors with a stable of pieces that can be especially gratifying to teach.

[60] Arnold Whittall concurs: Hepokoski and Darcy "provide a fair number of score extracts, as well as Figures in which the basics of the theory are given graphic representation. But the two types of material are not brought together, forcing the reader to wonder what an…analysis of a complete, large-scale sonata-type composition—say the 'Eroica' Symphony—would be like" ("Representing Sonatas," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 133/2 [2008], 323). Michael Spitzer makes virtually the same point ("Sonata Dialogues," *Beethoven Forum* 17/2 [Fall 2007], 176).

[61] As its authors argue, the most convincing interpretations will be "closely congruent with every moment of the music" (Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 254).



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## APPENDIX B
## Annotated Repertoire Lists

### Formally / Rhetorically Straightforward Sonata Forms

Beethoven: "Easy" Piano Sonata in G minor, op. 49 no. 1 (mvt. I)
Beethoven: "Easy" Piano Sonata in D major, op. 49 no. 2 (mvt. I)

These compact sonatas adopt a rhetorical transparency to match their technical simplicity. (Essentially, these are the mature Beethoven's impersonation of middle-of-the-road Mozart.) Both movements are clear in their sonata outlines and both lean towards easily-recognizable phrase designs, mostly sentences and periods. The first features a brief, S-based development and a very unusual S-based closing theme. The second is noteworthy in that its recapitulation features no recomposition at all; the original I: HC MC is replayed at pitch and moves into an exact tonic-key transposition of S.

Mozart: Piano Sonata in C major, K. 545 (mvt. I)

This well-known work features a terse, lucid exposition (with a satisfying trill-cadence EEC), a brief, didactically useful sequential development, and perhaps the most famous instance of a recapitulation that begins in the subdominant. It is also useful for phrase-paradigm recognition, as both halves of the exposition (P→TR and S) are sentences.

Mozart: Piano Sonata in C major, K. 309 (mvt. I)

Though more ambitiously conceived than the C-major sonata just discussed, this movement is no less clear in its outlines. It features an independent transition, a multisectional S-theme, and a clear trill-cadence EEC. After a brief development, the recapitulation is mostly faithful, except for an outlandish tonic-minor detour within the P-theme.

Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525 "Eine kleine Nachtmusik" (mvt. I)

> This movement offers the advantage of asking students to reconcile a work they almost certainly know by ear with the rhetorical template Sonata Theory provides. The exposition is quite straightforward, except that Hepokoski and Darcy's guidelines would seem to place the EEC too early (m. 35); students will tend to prefer m. 51. The development is perfunctory and the recapitulation is by-the-book.

Haydn: Symphony no. 95 in C minor (mvt. I)

> This minor-mode movement offers students a good introduction to more ambitious symphonic writing. (Unusually for Haydn's late symphonies, there is no slow introduction.) The transition moves abruptly into the relative major while using the P-theme headmotive in interesting contrapuntal ways. The ostensible EEC at m. 46 is deferred by an unstable chromatic digression; closure occurs in m. 58, after a dramatic return of the primary theme. The development is long; for less experienced students it might be challenging to analyze. But Haydn's drastically shortened reprise is a rewarding and straightforward study, as is the absorption of the recapitulation's opening headmotive into the retransition.

Mozart: Symphony no. 40 in G minor, K. 550 (mvt. I)

> Like "Eine kleine Nachtmusik," this work offers the advantage of familiarity; it also presents students with a more grandly-conceived sonata design. The development is challenging; I tend usually to focus only on the exposition and recapitulation (which is rather extensively rewritten, especially for Mozart). Note the interesting issues toward closing space: the abrupt EEC deferral at m. 66 (actual EEC: m. 72); the extended closing space that repeatedly swerves from the relative major back into G minor (in conjunction with primary-theme outbursts!); and the appendage of a "closing zone to the closing zone" at m. 88.

"Continuous" expositions

Beethoven: Piano Sonata in F minor, op. 57 "Appassionata" (mvt. III exposition)

This whirlwind movement is a *locus classicus* of the "run-on" type of continuous exposition. Though the modulation to the secondary *key* is clear enough on paper (V7/V in m. 68), it emerges without so much as a pause in the manic sixteenth-note motion, and nothing like a proper secondary "theme" ever emerges. It is also useful in demonstrating the unsettling expressive negativity of minor-mode sonatas that modulate to the minor dominant, forgoing any passage into the major mode.

Haydn: Symphony no. 45 in F♯ minor "Farewell" (mvt. I exposition)

This movement adds a degree of narrative complexity to the "run-on" continuous exposition. Like the "Appassionata," it drives along implacably, closing in the minor dominant (C♯ minor) without so much as a hint of a medial caesura. However, Haydn accentuates this tragic outcome by first modulating to the relative A major (m. 23)—only to have that optimistic music collapse dramatically into A *minor* (m. 38) en route to the real secondary key. (And like Mozart's "Hunt" quartet, the development presents a conspicuously S-like, contrasting lyrical theme [m. 110].) The recapitulation—also continuous—is largely recomposed.

Beethoven, Piano Sonata in A major, op. 101 (mvt. I exposition)

Here we find a relaxed and singularly beautiful instance of the "run-on" type of continuous exposition, one that Tovey described as a "single stream of lyric melody."[62] More advanced students will be able to savor the exposition's sophisticated harmonic ambiguities—in particular, the striking attenuation of the tonic A major.

[62] Donald Francis Tovey, *A Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas (Bar-to-bar Analysis*) (London: The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, 1931), 205.

Not only is E major fully tonicized by the seventh measure, the emphasis on the dominant triad E is strong enough at the very opening that it might initially strike us as tonic.

Haydn: String Quartet in E♭ major, op. 33 no. 2 "The Joke" (mvt. I exposition)

This is Hepokoski and Darcy's canonical example of a "bait-and-switch" continuous exposition.[63] As with op. 76 no. 1 (discussed in the main body text), Haydn deliberately leads the listener to anticipate a medial caesura (most likely around mm. 18–19, at the end of the dominant-pedal liquidation), but then pushes the music forward with a burst of energy, derailing the prospects of any MC. This evasion of the expected MC seems then to unhinge the exposition for the rest of its course; its remaining bars trace a chaotic path—one that changes topics and affects nearly every measure—to the EEC in m. 28. Examples like this are well suited to aural analysis ("where *does* Haydn lead us to believe the MC will be?").

Haydn: String Quartet in B♭ major, op. 64 no. 3 (mvt. IV)

This more advanced example presents us with a "double" bait-and-switch scenario. Here Haydn gives us every reason to suppose that a bait-and-switch-style exposition is underway—a half-cadential MC is proposed in m. 35 but then its dominant is drawn out to absurd lengths, losing focus and energy, without ever pausing. But then, as we pass the psychological "point of conversion," Haydn reinstates the half-cadential drive and arrives at a weakly articulated MC in m. 58. A comparison to the recapitulation is well worth one's time: there, Haydn replays this same gambit with *increased* hyperbole: the drawing-out of the cadential dominant is longer and more diversion-prone, but now there is a strongly articulated MC (mm. 194–95) before the S-theme.

[63] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements*, 54–55.

"Double" MCs

Mozart: String Quartet in G major, K. 387 (mvt. III exposition)

In this sumptuous sonata-without-development (a "Type 1" in Hepokoski and Darcy's terms), the long, chromatic transition leads to a very unusual v: PAC MC (m. 25). The minor-dominant music that follows is a poor S-candidate; it feels more like an eerie no-man's land between thematic zones. But it leads to a second caesura, a V: HC MC, in m. 30. A more congenial, major-dominant S-theme follows.

Beethoven: Piano Sonata in C minor, op. 10 no. 1 (mvt. I exposition)

This movement is similar in many ways to op. 18 no. 4 (discussed in the main body text, pp. 108ff): between its C-minor P-theme and its relative major S-theme falls a submediant transitional passage that would appear to *follow* the medial caesura (now an unusual i: PAC at m. 30). This submediant passage has its own dominant buildup to the proper S-theme; is it merely a post-MC "transition"? Is it a plausible S-theme candidate? Unlike op. 18 no. 4, however, the entire complex returns, with only minor adjustments, in the recapitulation.

Beethoven: Violin Sonata in F major, op. 24 ("Spring") (mvt. I exposition and recapitulation)

After an apparent tonic-key HC MC in m. 25, the music lurches into an A♭-major transitional passage whose furious energy quickly dissipates, precipitating a tentative dialogue between the instruments in C minor. An abrupt burst of momentum (m. 34) drives to a second, dominant-key HC MC (mm. 36–37) that then announces the entry of a sentential C-major S-theme that shows itself repeatedly vulnerable to chromatic minor-mode digressions (mm. 46, 62), in what we might hear as echoes or after-effects of the earlier, wayward C-minor music. Curiously, the primary theme shows a similar vulnerability to chromatic corruption in the recapitulation (m. 134).

Beethoven: Piano Sonata in F major, op. 10 no. 2 (mvt. I exposition and recapitulation)

After seventeen bars of P-theme, there erupts an eccentric and intrusive MC in V/iii (!)—at which point a lyric-heroic dominant-key S-theme candidate enters. A second clear MC follows (m. 36), but the music it launches sounds more like pre-closing material. (Thus, the piece is unusual in that the more plausible S-theme candidate *precedes* the second MC.) The recapitulation is very sophisticated: a D-major false reprise (m. 119) leads to a reprise of the exposition's "irregular" MC, which now serves as a dominant (i.e., V7/F) retransition! The recapitulation proper lacks the original MC; does the old "S" now function as TR?

Haydn: String Quartet in C major, op. 20 no. 2 (mvt. I exposition and recapitulation)

In the exposition of this challenging movement, Haydn presents us with two potential MCs, both of them followed by plausible S-music in the dominant (mm. 21, 33; the second is more emphatic), creating a situation of great ambiguity. However, the truncated recapitulation eliminates the first MC-candidate and potential S altogether, as if to suggest that the second S was in fact the "real" one.

Haydn: String Quartet in F minor, op. 20 no. 5 (mvt. I exposition and recapitulation)

After a "fakeout" i: HC MC preparation (m. 13), Haydn moves to a seemingly legitimate III: HC MC in m. 18. But when the apparent P-based S dissolves into sequences, Haydn sets up a second III: HC MC and presents another, more successful (and non-P-based) S-theme candidate (m. 28; EEC in m. 46). As in op. 20 no. 2, the modified recapitulation discards the first, problematic MC, making for a much less ambiguous structure. (And just as in Beethoven's op. 10 no. 2, the discarded first MC returns incognito as the retransitional figure [m. 82]!) The extended coda—suitable only for more advanced students—features a direct modulation to the key of the *minor flattened supertonic* (G♭ minor).

"Digressive" EEC/ESC Deferrals

Haydn, String Quartet in G major, op. 76 no. 1 (mvt. IV EEC)

This movement's garrulous P-based S-theme spends twenty-nine bars rummaging for a terminal cadence, only to have the fruit of its efforts promptly quashed. After only a beat, the cadential tonic of the putative B♭ major EEC (m. 54) is elbowed aside by the stark *sforzando* of a pensive new theme in B♭ *minor*, which quickly meanders to its own relative D♭ major, the flattened dominant of the global tonic. It is a full dozen bars before Haydn relents and gives us the real EEC, which in an instant restores the genial world of B♭ major and reboots the frenetic energy of the pre-digressional music. Here it can be helpful to ask students what kind of recomposition would be necessary to produce a perfectly normalized version of the exposition. (One needs only to jump directly from bar 53 to bar 76.)

Haydn, String Quartet in D minor, op. 76 no. 2 "Fifths" (mvt. I EEC)

This more involved example embarks on its tonal detour at the very moment of EEC: rather than the expected relative key (F major), the cadence is consummated by an unsettling F-minor triad, setting off a *Sturm und Drang* episode whose scurrying first violin leads the music on a frantic tonal detour through A♭ major (once again the global tonic's flattened dominant!) and then back to F for a second pass at the EEC. Note also the fascinating manipulations of musical time: as if to "correct" this S-space anomaly, Haydn leads his post-deferral digression into a new dominant lock (mm. 41–43) and then produces a second, "replacement" MC (m. 44). The post-caesural music in bars 45ff. then returns to *pre*-deferral elements of the S theme (m. 45 = m. 15, etc.), which are now given a second, successful chance to produce a viable EEC (m. 51).

Haydn, String Quartet in C major, op. 76 no. 3 (mvt. I EEC)

Here Haydn offers a "rewind / redo" situation comparable to op. 76 no. 2—only this time Haydn recycles the music just *after* the EEC rather than before. After only three bars, the ostensible closing zone swerves into the minor dominant (G minor, m. 29), opening the door to a subdued contrapuntal episode in the flattened mediant (E♭ major, m. 33). When Haydn at last reveals E♭ to be the submediant of G major, the music quickly arrives at an eruptive C-major PAC identical to the original, faulty EEC (m. 38 = m. 26), and from there the closing music proceeds as it surely would have liked to the first time. (Here too, one can ask students to propose a normalized, glitch-free recomposition merely by eliminating certain measures.)

# APPENDIX C
## Aural Analysis Rubric

*This rubric was used with advanced second-semester freshmen, for analyzing expositions at the end of a six-week Sonata Theory unit. Expositions were typically played five times, with the iTunes window shown on an overhead projector so students could jot down timings as necessary.*

1. Overall Exposition Type (circle one):

Two-Part (w/MC) Continuous (no MC)

2. Primary Theme Phrase Design (circle one).

Period Sentence Sentential Period None/Other

3. Transitional Theme (circle one):

Independent Continuation of P Begins as post-cadence codetta to P

None

4a. Medial Caesura Prep (circle all that apply):

Energy gain Dominant "lock" Prolonged Dominant

"Hammer Blows" General Pause Caesura-fill

4b. Second Medial Caesura Prep (circle all that apply, if "double" MCs are present):

Energy gain Dominant "lock" Prolonged Dominant

"Hammer Blows" General Pause Caesura-fill

5. "False" Medial Caesura Preparations (circle one, including for "bait-and-switch" continuous exp.):

Yes (give number) ______ No

6. Secondary Theme (circle one if appropriate):

New Material P-based None (continuous exposition)

7. Secondary Theme Key (circle one if appropriate):

Dominant Mediant Minor Dominant Other

8. Secondary Theme Phrase Design (circle one if appropriate):

Period Sentence Sentential Period None / Other

9. EEC Deferrals (circle one):
List in order by type / reason. Reasons include...

S material returns New Tonic Destabilized

Evaded Cadence Attenuated Cadence Other

[then describe]. Please include *clock times* for all EEC deferrals!

________________________________________________

________________________________________________

10. Closing Space (circle one):

P-based Not P-based None (EEC is final cadence)

11. Closing Space (circle one):

Harmonically closed Ends with retransitional dominant

12. Issues in Proportions:

Note whether any section of the sonata seems conspicuously longer or shorter than would be expected, based on the overall size/scope of the movement)

13. Other Issues or Challenges Worth Noting:

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