

1-1-2022

Review of The Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy

David Castro

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcollections.lipscomb.edu/jmtp>

Recommended Citation

Castro, David (2022) "Review of The Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy," *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*. Vol. 36, Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcollections.lipscomb.edu/jmtp/vol36/iss1/9>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Carolyn Wilson Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy by an authorized editor of Carolyn Wilson Digital Collections.

The Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy

Ed. by Kent D. Cleland and Paul Fleet

New York: Routledge Press, 2021. ISBN: 978-0-367-22689-3. 493 pages + xxi.

Reviewed by DAVID CASTRO



Resources for those who take music theory pedagogy seriously have begun to blossom in recent years. Following the standard set by Michael Rogers (1984, 2004) and Gary Karpinski (2000), and in addition to this journal, we now have the online journal *Engaging Students*, *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory* (Lumsden and Swinkin, 2018), and *Teaching Music Theory* (Snodgrass, 2020), to name just a few resources. Further, Routledge has recently published two companions relevant to readers of this journal: *The Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy* (VanHandel, 2021), and the subject of this review. It would seem as though we are living in a golden age of scholarship regarding music theory pedagogy.

The *Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy* (RCASP) stems originally from a 2017 conference hosted by the Royal Academy of Music, London, titled, “Aural Skills Pedagogy: What is to be done?” This volume includes five of the eight papers presented that day, but also goes well beyond them. Twenty-nine chapters form the body of this volume, representing scholarship from around the world. The editors deliberately sought contributions from an international community of teachers, hailing from the United Kingdom, South Africa, Hong Kong, Australia, Portugal, Canada, and the United States. In addition, although this volume is aimed primarily at those who teach aural skills to undergraduates, the editors solicited contributions that addressed aural skills as a part of musicianship training before, during, and after undergraduate study.

Every chapter includes a bibliography, and the list of sources drawn on by contributors is rich, to say the least. One could spend a lifetime just reading everything referenced in this volume, or so it seems. My point in sharing this is to warn the reader that this volume, like all excellent scholarship, will have the effect of greatly expanding your list of “books and articles to read.”

The Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy invites the reader to consider everything, from “What are we doing when we say we are doing ‘aural skills?’” to “How can I help my student match pitch?” As such, this volume is an essential resource for anyone who wants to become a better, more thoughtful teacher. This review will begin with an overview of the volume, detailing its organization, followed

by a consideration of the topics covered within each chapter. I will then provide a few thoughts on the state of aural skills instruction generally (as I see it) and on the volume as a whole.

I. Overview

The editors have organized the 29 chapters in this volume into six sections, as follows.

1. Terrain
2. Theory and Curriculum: Methodologies for the Learning Space
3. Teaching: Activities within the Learning Space
4. Transferring: Application outside of the Learning Space
5. Techniques [subdivided into]
 - a. Tonal
 - b. Post-Tonal
6. Technology

An “Intermezzo” introduces each of the six sections, the volume begins with an “Overture” that surveys the collection as a whole, and the editors conclude with a “Coda,” subtitled “The Future of Aural Training: *Clausula Vera* (True Cadence).” More on the Coda, in particular, will be shared below.

The chapter groupings provide meaningful waypoints as one makes one’s way through the book. That said, it is not clear to me what is meant by “the Learning Space” in the titles of sections 2, 3, and 4. For example, the title of the fourth section refers presumably to skills and/or benefits that apply outside of the immediate classroom environment, but Chapter 21 (details below) focuses on classroom activities and assignments. The Intermezzo for this section includes a rationale for grouping these chapters together, which is based on a rather abstract deployment of the term “incorporate,” but it still is not clear how that concept connects with “outside the Learning Space.” That said, I hasten to add that this quibble is of little consequence, because it takes nothing away from the quality of the chapters, whether they are taken individually or are considered within their respective sections.

II. The Conceptual/Philosophical Chapters

In contrast with the six sections given by the editors, in my overview I will divide the chapters into just two groups. The first group includes those chapters that are broadly informational, ones that advance a philosophy of aural skills and/or musicianship, and ones that address curricular design. The second, and much larger, of the two groups includes chapters that speak to the practical, day-to-day life of an aural skills instructor. Many of these include detailed lesson plans, assignments, and, in one case, a syllabus.

Beginning with the first group, Chapter 1 opens the doors of perception onto the world of aural skills in the broadest sense. Paul Fleet begins with an introduction that rests heavily on the conversations had at the conference that spawned this book, noting two items in particular. This chapter presents a test of the following two positions, both of which were generally agreed upon during those conversations: “that ear training does not get the space it requires in a curriculum, and it is unhelpfully compartmentalized by educational qualification levels that do not match the differing entry points of the students” (10). The author details his process of data collection and analysis, with the ultimate result supporting those anecdotal claims made by aural skills pedagogues in conversation. Within formal music education, the results of this study show that ear training is emphasized during undergraduate years, but not before or after. The results also show that ear training courses are compartmentalized; that is, in most schools they are likely either taught as stand-alone classes (as opposed to being integrated with theory courses), or “not taught” at all.¹ In short, the results of the study support the claims made by those aural skills pedagogues who attended the 2017 conference. In light of these results, the author writes, “We can find solidarity in this data and take stock of the current situation in general. We can understand the terrain we find ourselves working within, and work toward setting the ear-training learning events we value within a mutually agreed collective framework of understanding within our respective institutions across the globe” (24).

1 The data are based on curricular offerings as observed on institution websites. “It was decided that if an institution had a learning event that specifically mentioned words that represented aural or ear training as the primary activity, that would count as ‘taught alone’; if they mentioned those words alongside others that included theory, musicianship, and so on, it would count as ‘taught within’; and if no mention of those words featured within the learning events for that state of learning at that institution, it would count as ‘not taught.’” (14) No specific institutions are named in any category, but Tables 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 show the data on which my statement is based.

Chapter 2, by Simon Parkin, is something of a manifesto, in which basic skills of “aural” (which is how aural skills courses are referred to “across the pond,” as I learned via this chapter)² are laid out, after which the claim is made that “aural” is prior to and unites theory, improvisation, and performance. In other words, this chapter makes the case that adequate training in aural skills is foundational to success in all areas of musicianship. The constraints inherent to teaching within an institution of higher learning are addressed, including the divide in the author’s home institution between instructors who specialize in written theory and those who specialize in aural skills. The value of integrating these two aspects of the curriculum is asserted. The author also muses on the potential benefit of having aural skills instructors attend studio instruction, to see how students realize skills gained in class within a different context, and of having studio teachers attend aural skills classes, so they can gain an awareness of, and hopefully begin to employ, terms and skills taught in the classroom. This is an idealistic goal, as the author admits, but one that seems all but guaranteed to benefit students.

In Chapter 3, Gary Karpinski mounts a rationale for dictation exercises, which shows how the skills involved in taking dictation translate into skills that are broadly desirable in a variety of musical situations. It is important to note that “dictation skills” is taken rather broadly. For example, one potential exercise mentioned has students identify the meter of a heard piece, according to beat class (i.e., compound duple, simple triple, etc.).

In Chapter 6, Jeffrey Lovell argues *against* the complete and total integration of written theory and aural skills courses. He advocates instead for a modified integration: “I hope to illustrate that it is still possible to achieve the spirit of integration while allowing the skills-based courses to follow their own curriculum and proceed at a pace that is more appropriate for meaningful musicianship development—and not merely to exist in the service of the topics covered in music theory” (80). It is intuitively true that aural skills are acquired more slowly than written skills, so they must lag behind, if the aural skills learned are to be sufficiently meaningful. However, another emerging theme in this book is the variety of skill levels with which students arrive at undergraduate institutions. The differences within an institution and between institutions can impact how integrated the theory and aural skills can and should be. Since every institution draws on a slightly different student body, there can be

2 It is not coincidental that this book is where I learned about referring to such coursework in the UK as “aural.” One of this volume’s central missions is to gather perspectives from around the globe, so something as simple as this was an element of discovery for me.

no one best approach to anything in music instruction, including the integration of theory and aural skills. The author makes excellent points that take these variables into account and that acknowledge his local context.

In Chapter 12, Bryden Stillie and Zack Moir discuss aural skills in popular music education. They make the case that the praxis of popular musicianship is different, so the education must also be different. Two points of difference that they advance are utility and notation. Utility refers to the relationship between that which is practiced in the aural skills classroom and that which is done in the process of creating and performing popular musics: “The assessment of aural skills is predicated on measuring recognition or identification of quantifiable elements of certain music theories rather than examining, what is arguably more important, the sound itself” (184). The issue of notation could be regarded as a subtopic under the rubric of utility, because the argument is that musicians who work primarily in popular styles simply do not use notation, thus they should not have to practice dictation/transcription in the aural skills classroom. This chapter suffers a bit from an opening claim that we as educators need to break down the “arguably false” dichotomy between popular and classical, yet goes on to rely on that dichotomy to support many of its central claims; for example, “[t]he contexts in which popular musicians deploy their aural skills are typically very different than those of classical musician, and we need to acknowledge this in the pedagogic approaches we implement to teach and assess such skills. This is an unfortunate dichotomy, but. . .” (181). Nevertheless, this chapter truly forces an open consideration of what counts as “aural skills,” and of what appropriate goals (learning outcomes) are, considering the immediate goals of the students in the class and in the program as a whole.

In Chapter 16, Colin Wright begins with “an exploration of what we understand by ‘aural’ and the wide range of those associated inner skills that underpin and form the basis of what constitutes musical performance” (270). This chapter engages the theoretical and philosophical questions of aural skills training, with particular focus on assessment. This chapter is particularly useful for anyone planning to revamp their aural skills courses, as it gives the reader a lot to think about regarding things that we simply take for granted more often than not.

James Cuskelley presents the Kodály method in Chapter 17, including its origins and influence, and elaborates on its guiding principles. This volume is focused primarily on aural skills in higher education but is nevertheless valuable for those who teach at the secondary and higher levels to be aware of the philosophy and methods of Kodály, both because it is one of the three main methods in the field of early music education

(as I understand it), and because the guiding principles can be implemented at all levels of music instruction.

Chapter 18, by Robin Harrison, serves as an excellent and somewhat more practical companion to Chapter 17 in that it also concerns the Kodály method, but includes some applications to music education beyond primary school.

In Chapter 19, John Robert Stevenson does for Dalcroze Eurhythmics what Chapter 17 did for the Kodály method. As with Chapter 17, it would take some time and effort to discover just how to apply the methods of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to the aural skills classroom in secondary or higher education, but that could be valuable, nevertheless.

Nathan L. Lam revisits the debate surrounding *do*- and *la*-based solmization in minor keys in Chapter 23. The author makes a case that, rather than having to choose one or the other, instructors can be sensitive to the pros and cons of either approach and might even use both, depending on immediate musical context.

Chapter 25, by David John Baker, walks the reader through data-driven, statistical analysis of the factors that predict success or failure in melodic dictation. Rather than making concrete claims regarding melodic dictation, the author details the variety of factors, both individual and musical, that are in play when students attempt to dictate a melody. The author then walks the reader through the myriad details to consider if one wishes to study melodic dictation empirically, i.e., via data-driven analysis. No findings are detailed, so the last section can be thought of as a primer for anyone seeking to study the cognition of melody empirically.

Chapter 28 is the first of two dedicated to the role of and our relationship to technology. In this chapter, Nathan Fleshner and Trevor de Clercq consider aural skills technology broadly, situating various technologies inside, outside, and as (i.e., in place of) the aural skills classroom. Gamification is discussed, as is the divide between a computer's ability to assess notated dictation vs. its ability to assess a real-time musical performance. The authors take an even-handed approach, not advocating for or against technology, but summarizing the current state of affairs. The authors are ultimately ambivalent about the value of technological innovations, making this chapter a contribution that is both thorough and honest.

Chapter 29 concerns a specific task given to students at the RCM in aural classes, which is identifying and singing an individual member of a given SATB or 5-note chord (depending on the level). Jonathan Pitkin developed and implemented a piece of software called "Audit" that allows students to practice this skill outside of class. Data regarding student success before and after the implementation of Audit were inconclusive, but this chapter would be useful to anyone considering writing software

of their own, or even those thinking about implementing existing software in their classes, because the author provides a thoughtful discussion of the value of computer aided instruction, including the types of practice possible in the digital environment.

Because it does more than summarize the 29 preceding chapters, and because it is largely theoretical/philosophical, I include the Coda here. In this numberless chapter, the editors not only comment on the collection, but also present two devices intended to compel readers into more creative and intentional thinking about aural skills instruction. The first is a section titled “Toward a Methodology for the Future of Aural Training,” in which the editors present a spiral curriculum that moves students from “theoretical aurality,” through “technological aurality,” and on to “practical aurality,” then repeats that sequence. In addition, the following “pedagogical actions” are listed: integrate, connect, incorporate, apply, and interconnect. Their model, explained in depth, treats aural skills as a “lifelong journey” (476), rather than as a series of courses to be satisfied in college. The second device is “A Manifesto for Aural Skill Education (aMASE),” which is exactly what it sounds like. Readers considering their own aural skills courses might want to consider each of the eight points in this credo.

III. The Practical Chapters

Turning now to the practical chapters, Timothy Chenette focuses on the first stage in Karpinski’s model of dictation: attentive hearing, in Chapter 4. Attentional control is defined, and barriers to attentional control are enumerated. The author then provides examples of how this information can provide valuable perspective to what we do in the classroom. This chapter highlights the fact that we are teaching humans whose brains have limitations, and that how we engage and train them to hear music precisely is important.

In Chapter 5, Martin Scheuregger presents an aural approach to music analysis, with the goal of getting students’ attention out of the score and into their ears and the aural experience of a piece. Students use time stamps and basic terminology to create graphic analyses, which can be freely artistic or created in a spreadsheet. Several examples of student work are included, and a few pieces are suggested for classroom use, including some discussion of what lessons might be learned by studying them. One benefit of this method is that once an instructor is no longer beholden to a score (which can be expensive, if it can be found at all), any piece of recorded music is available for analysis and discussion. From the most basic minuet to Tuvan throat singing to film scores to popular musics, all are available for analysis.

Samantha M. Inman advocates for sing-and-play exercises in Chapter 7. The author begins with a review of current textbooks and the degree to which they include sing-and-play exercises, if at all, then details the results of a survey the author conducted regarding “the range of approaches to sing-and-play assignments in current use” (103). She also shares personal and best practices in detail, including sample exercises and methods for assessment. A list of considerations, questions that must be answered before creating a sing-and-play curriculum, is included, and at the end of the paragraph Inman states, “The answers to these questions vary according to resources, student population, and the inclination of individual instructors” (103). This highlights a major problem facing those who wish to try out the activities in this volume: although we are experts, we are not always given free rein over our content. Another point is that aural skills instructors have limited time in which to teach, meaning that the adoption of sing-and-play exercises, for those of us who do not already do them, likely means giving up some other instruction we currently provide.

Chapter 8, by Christopher Atkinson, concerns undergraduate aural skills and the teaching of pitch function, in the service of teaching students how to “understand” music they perform. The author admits that his notion of “understanding” is somewhat ineffable—it is something we as experienced musicians can hear, but would be hard-pressed to define. Nevertheless, he does a commendable job of defining his terms, making his goals clear, and providing a rationale for the second half of the chapter, in which he presents a novel proto-notation that gets students to recognize precisely how any given note is participating in an underlying harmony, thereby encouraging them to hear and sing each note in a more meaningful way. As a side note, this chapter offers a lot of definitions, including one of aural skills itself, and I cannot help but wonder if the need to offer such a definition is an indicator of the lack of a shared understanding, even among experts. I am not sure that a collection of essays regarding the pedagogy of organic chemistry would include a definition of the topic.

In Chapter 9, Justin Mariner and Peter Schubert focus on the keyboard, as such, making a case for integrating keyboard skills into aural skills and written theory courses. Even though it is about pedagogy and thus tangentially relates to the aural skills classroom, I am not sure how this chapter belongs in this collection. Even so, readers who come to this volume to learn about aural skills pedagogy might delight in the unexpected joy of learning something about keyboard skills pedagogy.

Jennifer Beavers and Susan Olson address pitch-matching issues in aural skills students in Chapter 10, which begins with a review of literature concerning pitch cognition. The authors then provide best practices for assessing the root cause of

any difficulties observed in students, and for setting up one's classroom to maximize successful learning and singing. The chapter concludes with a section titled, "Four Common Problems and Solutions," an excellent concise guide for working with students who need extra help with the vocal production aspect of aural skills.

Chapter 11, by Chi Ying Lam, relates an innovative musical pedagogy developed for use in a primary school in Hong Kong, where aural skills are not typically taught (evidently). The innovation presented in this chapter was the grafting of techniques from the pedagogy of drama onto those of aural skills (herein called "aural awareness"). The experiment detailed in this chapter asked students to identify individual pitches, *à la* absolute pitch. In the end, it is shown that the drama exercises did, in fact, help students recognize pitches. In addition to the novel pedagogy, this chapter offers a unique perspective in which absolute pitch is valued. Elsewhere in this volume, the widely agreed-upon value favors functional hearing as opposed to absolute pitch, so this chapter serves as a reminder that all values can be questioned.

In Chapter 13, Anri Herbst introduces the concept of a "ghost score," which is, simply put, one presented to students incomplete. The student's task is to complete the score, working from a recording. Students can dictate a four-measure melody outside of any context other than melodic dictation practice, or they can transcribe four measures of a melody while being given a more complete musical context for that melody, in the form of a professional recording and the notation for the other instruments sounding during those measures—not to mention the music leading into and out of those four measures. Even if a melodic dictation curriculum consists entirely of melodies from existing literature, those melodies are typically presented in isolation from their original context. The author makes the secondary point that scores can comprise any music, including popular and non-Western musics. Indeed, the chapter's example is a transcription "of Miriam Makeba's 1960 (remixed in 2008 and 2012) rendition of the Indonesian lullaby 'Suliram' [. . .]" This chapter suffers from some errors regarding identification and content of examples (detailed below), but it nevertheless advances a compelling pedagogy.

Chapter 14, by Miranda Francis, recounts a new aural skills course designed after students with absolute pitch (AP) complained that the standard course was boring and/or a waste of time. The new course was designed to engage "real-world aural skills of direct relevance to their working lives as professional musicians" (211). The course is thoroughly conceived and seems to be well designed, a judgment I base on the course syllabus and several excellent assignments in the chapter. Although the course described in this chapter does not do this, I could not help but dream

about a course that ignores pitch, or takes it for granted, and focuses on rhythm and meter, or one that tries to teach the recognition of scale degrees, as such. This latter skill is one that musicians with AP struggle with yet is integral to the way we wish our students to listen to music. One curiosity is the following statement: “A recent survey of professional musicians . . . found little agreement as to the specific aural skills necessary for practitioners, ‘nor the extent or level of those skills necessary to undertake professional work’” (214). Those who argue that what we do in aural skills courses ought to relate directly to what professional musicians actually do should take note.

Christopher Price laments the decline of music literacy among students in popular music courses in Chapter 15, and advances singing as the most effective means for teaching literacy. The author recommends the old genres of the glee and the catch as ways to engage students in both singing and reading music. Wordplay is the great delight of the catch, although the lyrics are often of a “scurrilous or salacious” nature (243), so the author helpfully provides some examples that are innocent and therefore appropriate for use in the classroom yet retain the wit and fun inherent to the genre. In addition, five complete examples from the glee repertoire are provided at the end of the chapter for immediate use. A secondary concern within this chapter is that of “a musical legacy.” The author explains this by pointing out the importance of verbal literacy: “[T]he issue is profoundly political. Illiteracy disenfranchises; it disempowers. And beyond the political is the cultural: literacy confers access to the soul and the heritage of a civilization” (226). Therein lies the point of connection with music literacy, since music is a powerful contributor to the construction of a cultural identity.

In Chapter 20, Crystal Peebles provides samples of practical exercises aimed at helping students appreciate harmonic underpinnings of common melodic fragments. The methodology is grounded in “schema” theory, in that the author begins with a small set of stock harmonic progressions and has students sing arpeggiations of each, thereby internalizing the progression. The arpeggiations are called “mantras.” Students build on these mantras “to facilitate sight singing, improvisation, and dictation activities” (326). Assignments and activities are detailed.

Chapter 21 pairs well with Chapter 13, in that it concerns the use of real music in the aural skills classroom, as opposed to music composed for didactic purposes. Daniel B. Stevens, Philip Duker, and Jennifer Shafer write, “When we had previously asked our students to notate outer voices, Roman numerals, and figures, they often focused exclusively on the correctness of their notated lines and chord symbols, becoming mired

in atomistic elements rather than holistic qualities of the music and their experience of it” (334–5). The solution presented in this chapter is to employ real music from literature and to have students engage with such pieces holistically. “Encountering excerpts from a variety of genres (both popular and classical) dramatically increases students’ perception of the relevance of these activities to their everyday lives” (335). The authors include in-class activities that build toward and then focus on the guide-tone method detailed in Rahn & McKay, 1988. This chapter is an excellent and practical guide to teaching aural skills beyond sight-singing and dictation.

Jorge Alexandre Costa begins Chapter 22 by advancing a pedagogical theory, but the second half of this chapter includes eight examples of the pedagogical theory in practice. The idealistic opening puts this article squarely in the group of chapters that see aural skills as a corollary to music analysis. The author defines the musical *habitus* (a socially generated cognitive construct), which operates within a social *field* (a defined social space, such as an academic discipline), thereby establishing a context in which meaningful aural skills can take place. In the second half, eight examples demonstrate the pedagogical theory that stems from *habitus* and *field* in practice. One quibble I had with this chapter is that the term *habitus* is used in a technical sense a few times before it is defined for the reader, so I had to reread an earlier section after learning what the term meant. I advise reading the definitions on pp. 353–54 before reading the article in full.

In Chapter 24, Jena Root presents a practical guide for introducing improvisation into college-level aural skills courses. She makes it easy to see how improvisation can be part of the classroom experience, even for those for whom music exists almost primarily “on the page.” In addition to a clear rationale and instructions, the author also includes an URL that takes the reader to a website containing supplementary material.

After a summary of three seminal works in atonal aural skills, Kent D. Cleland presents a novel process for teaching students how to sing atonal melodies *at sight* in Chapter 26. Due to the author’s institutional expectations (limitations?), the method is designed to be presented/learned over the course of just one semester, so the author measures student performance with equal emphases on process and product.

Jenine Brown presents a method for guiding students through 12-tone analysis without a score in Chapter 27. After a brief literature review, the author provides lesson plans and suggestions for how to adapt the lessons to slightly different contexts. This chapter is a must-read for anyone hoping to get students to *listen* to post-tonal music, as opposed to “understanding” it by labeling tone-rows in the score. It should

be noted that not all programs offer an entire semester of post-tonal aural skills, one of the various ways in which this book implicitly draws attention to differences among music programs.

IV. General comments

As I made my way through this book, I was struck by the vast number of skills and activities that count as “aural skills.” Beyond sight-singing and dictation, the voice can be integrated with the keyboard, the ear can be employed in score reading and interpretation, and both can create music in real time in the form of improvisation, to name just a few of the directions in which aural skills might be extended. Furthermore, for those who teach it, understanding this subfield of a subfield leads down myriad interdisciplinary paths. In addition to being experts in music theory and analysis, aural skills pedagogy also calls on us to be vocal coaches (Chapter 10), to be proficient in both diatonic and chromatic spaces (Chapters 23 through 27), to explore musics beyond the canon of Western art music (Chapter 13), to be philosophers of music (Chapters 2, 17, and 19), and to be at least conversant in issues of music cognition (Chapters 4, 10, and 25), to name just a few paths that intersect with aural skills. To do what we do well is truly a labor of love.

I also realized that a bit of a divide regarding intended outcomes exists among aural skills pedagogues. For some, aural skills should enhance students’ thinking in music. In this view, aural skills are a natural companion to the analysis and interpretation of music, which is to say, music theory. For others, aural skills exist to enhance the practical, day-to-day musicianship of the professional performer and/or composer. In this view, skills of transcription (written or mental), performance, and improvisation are the goals of aural skills, and what we do in the classroom needs to be relevant to students’ futures in “the real world.” This divide bears mentioning, because each chapter rests comfortably within one of these two camps, and readers would do well to be aware of their own bias(es) as they read the volume.

Chapter 5 exemplifies one problem facing those of us hoping to implement a teaching technique or module developed by another, which is that our local context can differ greatly from the context in which that attractive teaching technique was developed. Every institution imposes a unique set of constraints and expectations upon aural skills courses, so a fair amount of adaptation has to take place before we can try something that has been successful elsewhere. Readers should not expect anything in this book to be easy to implement.

I also wonder: where are the good, solid theories and pedagogies of melody? Who is willing to talk about scale degree without relating it to harmony? Chapters 8, 20, and 21 invoke scale degree in the service of harmony, but this book lacks discussion of melodic contour, perception of scale degree, and so on. Pedagogy of scale degree and melody seem to be wide-open avenues for further research.

A few chapters in this volume highlight one current and significant trend in aural skills pedagogy in that they juxtapose common-practice aural skills against pop/rock aural skills. The walled garden of college-level musicianship is opening up not just to novel pedagogical methods, but also to an increasingly wide variety of musical styles; our pedagogy is adapting accordingly. This volume might end up serving as some sort of time capsule that teachers of the future will read to remember this moment in the evolution of our profession.

Turning now to specific features of the book, I do wish that the material in the final chapter, the Coda, would have been at the beginning. As much as I truly appreciate the book's musical metaphors, including the Overture, Intermezzi, and Coda (subtitled *clausula vera*), the information and ideas contained in this final chapter reveal a lot about the editors' thinking regarding the book's six sections. Some of this information is available in the body of the book as Intermezzi, but including it at the outset establishes a mindset and context for absorbing the broad range of topics. The first chapter, written by one of the editors, suggests reading the Coda after Chapter 1, although only "if time is tight and you plan to dip in and out of this book over a period of time." I would recommend this to all readers, regardless of your intentions.

Readers should know that RCASP was conceived independently of the similarly titled *Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy*, and therefore has some differences. For example, RCASP does not come with lesson plans for each chapter. Some authors include such details, but lesson plans were not integral to the purpose of this collection. Any idea that these two volumes are companions to one another would be mistaken.

And finally, this book needed another round or two of editing. There are so many misspelled terms that it can become distracting. To provide just a few examples, Graph 1.8 misspells "within" as "wothin" (23); "unpinning" should have been "underpinning," and "paritmenti" should have been "partimenti" (320). Perhaps most egregiously, my name is misspelled in Chapter 12 (179, 188). In addition to misspellings, Chapter 13 includes errors in the prose when referring to examples. Be advised that example numbers in the second complete paragraph on p. 197 are off by one and seem to refer to a graphic that is not there. In addition, the prose at the top of p. 198 guides

the reader to Example 13.4, which “presents a Ghost Score of ‘Suliram’ [. . .]” but it is clearly referring to Example 13.5 on p. 199, which is captioned “Ghost Score of ‘Suliram.’” Errors of these types are not enough to render the content unintelligible, but they do occur with regularity.

The range of topics found in the *Routledge Companion to Aural Skills Pedagogy* reflects the dizzying array of activities possible within aural skills courses and addresses each topic thoughtfully and carefully. This book is an invaluable resource for those who want to teach aural skills well, and my guess is that every reader will find something fresh and exciting within its pages that will carry forward into a new assignment, a revised syllabus, or even a refreshed curriculum. The variety of perspectives—geographical, philosophical, and musical—will challenge even the most seasoned teachers to think more deeply about the assumptions they carry into the classroom.

Works Cited

- Karpinski, Gary. 2000. *Aural Skills Acquisition: The Development of Listening, Reading, and Performing Skills in College-Level Musicians*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lumsden, Rachel, and Jeffrey Swinkin, eds. 2018. *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music Theory*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Rahn, Jay, and James R. McKay. 1988. "The Guide-Tone Method: An Approach to Harmonic Dictation." *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 2: 101–12.
- Rogers, Michael R. 2004. *Teaching Approaches in Music Theory*. 2nd ed. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Santa, Matthew. 2010. *Hearing Form: Musical Analysis With and Without the Score*. New York: Routledge.
- Snodgrass, Jennifer. 2020. *Teaching Music Theory: New Voices and Approaches*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- VanHandel, Leigh, ed. 2021. *The Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.

