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BOOK REVIEWS

Music and the Southern Belle: From Accomplished Lady to Confederate Composer. By Candace Bailey. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2010.

Music, Women, and Pianos in Antebellum Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: The Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary. By Jewel A. Smith. Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2008.

Recent research has increasingly provided nuanced images of the lives and musical activities of women in the United States of the nineteenth century. Two pioneering and influential studies appeared in 1986 that examined the importance of music and the piano in the lives of nineteenth-century women.[1] Judith Tick's "Passed Away Is the Piano Girl: Changes in American Musical Life, 1870–1900" explored the professionalization of women musicians, whereas Mary Burgan's "Heroines at the Piano: Women and Music in Nineteenth-Century Fiction" underscored the importance of the piano and piano teaching for women throughout the Victorian world. In the following decades, important studies by Paula Gillet, Richard Leppert, Jodi Lustig, Ruth Solie, and Phyllis Weliver, among others, further contextualized music making in the lives of nineteenth-century women, in the process deploying a broad array of sources, including paintings, prints, fiction, periodicals, and other media.[2]

The two books under review here build upon these earlier studies by offering focused case studies the musical lives of middle- and upper-class women. Candace Bailey's rich and finely nuanced study, *Music and the Southern Belle: From Accomplished Lady to Confederate Composer*, explores the musical lives of white upper-class women during the antebellum period and the Civil War. Young women studied mainly piano but also guitar, voice, and harp. Music lessons were viewed as an indispensable part of their education; young women were expected to gain facility on their instrument or to develop their vocal abilities, but within constraints, and without aspiring to a professional career. This gender expectation was crucial because men and women had well-differentiated roles in everyday life. Within southern social norms, music was viewed as allowing women, especially before

[1] See Judith Tick, "Passed Away Is the Piano Girl: Changes in American Musical Life, 1870–1900," in *Women Making Music*, ed. Jane Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 325–48; and Mary Burgan, "Heroines at the Piano: Women and Music in Nineteenth-Century Fiction," *Victorian Studies* 30/1 (Fall 1986): 51–76.

[2] Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Phyllis Weliver, *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction, 1860–1900: Representations of Music, Science, and Gender in the Leisured Home* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); Jodi Lustig, "The Piano's Progress: The Piano in Play in the Victorian Novel," in *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction*, ed. Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 83–104; Paula Gillett, "Ambivalent Friendships: Music Lovers, Amateurs, and Professional Musicians in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Music and British Culture, 1785-–1914: Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich*, ed. Christina Bashford and Leanne Langley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 321–40; and Paula Gillett, *Musical Women in England, 1870–1914: "Encroaching on All Man's Privileges"* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 2000), 77–108.

marriage, to be "useful" by entertaining men, whether family members, guests, or potential suitors. Although in this "culture of resignation" women studied and played music to please others, they could also derive pleasure from the activity in the form of artistic edification or as an escape from daily preoccupations, as seen in a letter from Mary Pettigrew, written in 1843: "Oh what a charming thing music is. It is a heavenly passion and given us I think to lead our mind from this world to that of a better" (23). Skill in music added to a woman's reputation as a lady of society, and brought prestige to her family. The cultured practice of music by women separated genteel families—those that owned pianos and possessed means sufficient to pay for music lessons—from other segments of society. The private parlor was a sanctioned space where women could demonstrate their musical progress for family and friends away from the public gaze.

In *Music and the Southern Belle*, Bailey vividly depicts the fascinating lives of these women, the music they made and composed, and the society and times in which they lived. She utilizes an impressive array of sources: individual sheet music publications, bound volumes of music, personal letters and diaries, concert programs, periodicals, and literary sources (including plantation novels). Bailey's in-depth research allows her to illuminate her grand-scale observations with solid evidence. For instance, she explains that the level of difficulty of the music that southern belles often played in private spaces contradicted the societal prejudice against highly technical musical displays by women, and that this repertory was beyond the abilities of most amateur musicians.[3] As the author notes, the hand crossing, large registral leaps, stark dynamic contrasts, and other technical challenges in pieces such as Theodor von la Hache's *Freedom's Tear Reverie* "challenge the propriety and docile nature of the southern belle's behavior" (101), as described by etiquette manuals. As the author suggests, we might imagine that these women were allowed to act as professional musicians for a short time and then return to their regular lives once they stepped down from the public stage. The sheer amount of extant high-level piano pieces in the personal music collections owned by southern belles demands that we think beyond the accepted knowledge of southern mores.

In her last chapter, "Confederate Women Composers," Bailey persuasively demonstrates how the Civil War was a watershed moment for the status of musical women. During the first decades of the nineteenth century there was little composition by Southern women. By midcentury, however, Southern women began to compose patriotic pieces, including some celebrating U.S. victories in the Mexican-American War of 1846–48. These musically modest pieces were often unattributed, and stayed within expected boundaries of social and musical propriety. The Civil War changed the position of women in general, including their participation in music. Southern women composers increasingly signed their pieces, which were overwhelmingly patriotic in nature. Women thus found new ways to "become useful" for the Confederate States, and eventually to bring about a more permanent transformation of the concept of "ladyhood."

[3] See also Bailey's article "The Antebellum 'Piano Girl' in the American South," which is similar to chapter 5 in her *Music and the Southern Belle*. Bailey, "The Antebellum 'Piano Girl' in the American South," *Performance Practice Review* 13 (2008), http://scholarship.claremont.edu/ppr/vol13/iss1/.

Jewel Smith's *Music, Women, and Pianos in Antebellum Bethlehem, Pennsylvania: The Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary* is related in title and theme to Arthur Loesser's classic study *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History*.[4] The book is also a socio-musical history, in this case of one of the oldest educational institutions for women in the United States. Smith demonstrates that the Moravians were truly interested in women's music education. The main role of the Moravian Young Ladies' Seminary was to prepare young women to fulfill the duties they would perform in their homes and society at large. As in the south, the family circle and the church were important sites for music in the mid-Atlantic region. The Moravians, however, believed that formal academic instruction was indispensable for women because it "refined the mind" and supported religious devotion; they also championed the idea of women supporting themselves, through music if necessary, whereas southern society often disdained this idea, especially for middle- or upper-class women.[5]

Although music was an "ornamental branch" in the Moravian seminary's curriculum, parents were more than happy to pay the extra fees required for music lessons, and they actively supported their daughters' musical education at the school. As in the United States at large, the vogue for the piano and piano music pervaded much of middle- and upper-class Moravian society, and the amateur piano repertory came to be viewed as a predominantly female domain. Moreover, as Smith demonstrates, many of these women became professional music instructors.

Smith brilliantly dispels the stereotypes and commonplaces about women musicians and the music they played. "Because most women in Antebellum America did not enjoy public concert careers," she explains, "they were assumed to be capable only of providing music for the parlor or the church. These assumptions present a distorted picture not only of what women of the time were performing but also of the popular concert repertoire. [. . .] In fact the salon enjoyed equal status with the opera house and the concert hall; it bridged cultural barriers and opened doors of opportunity for exposure in social circles" (90). Smith found that the piano repertoire in the Moravian Seminary played was influenced by the local performances of touring virtuosi such as Sigismond Thalberg, Henri Herz, and Louis Moreau Gottschalk. In addition to this mid-nineteenth century virtuosic repertory then in vogue, the students at the Moravian Seminary also played the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Chopin. Like Bailey, Smith demonstrates that women did play technically challenging repertoire, leading to the question whether there was indeed an important difference between southern and northern musical practices.

Smith gives us an engaging and well-documented narrative about the role of music in one Moravian educational institution, and compares the experience there to situations elsewhere in the country. My main reservation concerns the poor quality of the images reproduced in the book. Given that they illuminate many of the points Smith makes in her study, I wish that the publisher had paid more attention to their clarity.

[4] Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954).

[5] In addition to their school in Pennsylvania, the Moravians operated a very successful school for young women in Salem, the town they founded in North Carolina.

Bailey's *Music and the Southern Belle* and Smith's *Music, Women, and Pianos* offer concrete and exceptionally well-documented interpretations of the role of women in music in two economically, geographically, and culturally different regions of the United States. These books deepen our knowledge of these previously hidden musical histories, and challenge our notions about the role and success of women in music in the United States in the nineteenth century. They also point to the need for further local and regional studies, ones that will enrich a literature in which studies of New York City and a few other large urban areas dominate. Women had a significant role to play in all these local, regional, and national histories.

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David Moritz Michael: Complete Wind Chamber Music. By David Moritz Michael. Edited by Nola Reed Knouse. Recent Researches in American Music, vol. A59; Music of the United States of America, vol. 16. Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2006.

David Moritz Michael (1751–1827) is remembered "among the major figures in American Moravian music."[1] Born and trained in Germany, Michael spent two decades in service to the Moravian Church in the United States, from 1795 to 1815, first in Nazareth and later Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. During this time he was active as a composer, performer, and teacher. His setting of Psalm 103, first performed in 1805, is perhaps the first composition of its type written in the United States by a Moravian. Michael led the Bethlehem collegium musicum in 1811 in what may have been the first performance of Haydn's *Creation* in the United States. And although the Moravian Church is more commonly associated with choral music, the tradition is also rich in instrumental music, evident in this edition of Michael's wind music. The sixteen pieces included in this edition might all be loosely characterized as suites or divertimenti. Fourteen of the pieces are titled Parthia, numbered I to XIV. The Parthia are in three to five movements and are composed for two clarinets, two horns, and either one or two bassoons. Numbers one and eleven have the addition of a trumpet, and number two includes flute. The other two pieces in the volume are water suites titled *Bestimmt zu einer Wasserfahrt auf der Lecha* and *Bey einer Quelle zu blasen*; they are longer than the Parthia, but have the same basic instrumentation of clarinets, horns, and bassoon(s). They were composed as functional music for the Whitmonday festivities on the banks of the Lehigh River in Bethlehem; the musicians performed aboard a boat traveling the river. *Bestimmt zu einer Wasserfahrt auf der Lecha* was composed for the 1809 celebration and *Bey*

[1] David Moritz Michael, *Der 103te Psalm,* ed. Karl Kroeger (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, 2008), xii.