Co-Publishing Music History Online:
Strategies for Collaborations between Senior and Junior Scholars

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Digital publishing offers many opportunities for reaching larger audiences than possible in print. This connects to one important feature of the Internet, the promise of the latest information. While the implicit preference for new content and more of it is one of the guiding forces of the online world, those factors sometimes challenge the relevance of older material, which may be passed over in deference for something new, regardless of its value. The challenge is to find a way to address the penchant for the latest by perceiving it as a challenge to revisit solid, venerable work and adapt it for online that maintains its academic integrity. The revision process can be pursued in several stages: (1) by introducing digital enhancements, including links to subheads and other sections; (2), updating the bibliography and other references; and (3) revising the body of the work, possibly with a co-author, to bring the content forward to reflect the latest research and newest resources. In this way the revision process serves the original publications and the readers well, since it also opens the door for evaluating the content regularly so that it maintains its viability online and retains its scholarship.

Updating Content

In the print paradigm obsolescence results from the time involved between editing, typesetting, printing, and distribution. Months, sometimes years, intervene, as articles, chapters, or books are published, and can inadvertently lapse into being dated almost upon release. While some of the latest developments in printing and distribution have shortened the time that had been associated with that aspect of the publishing process, online publications can surpass it

because it is absent entirely. In taking existing print articles online, then, the risk is that the research lacks some of the recent data, which contributes to its appeal to the broad, international, online audience.

This is a prime occasion for senior scholars to collaborate with junior ones in the publishing process. Both benefit: senior scholars offer the junior colleagues the opportunity of co-authoring important research, and junior scholars can give new life and currency to articles that had previously existed in print alone. By publishing revised articles on peer-reviewed sites, like Harvard Business Publishing for Educators, the A-R Online Music Anthology, and others, authors can reach many readers, who may now discover it for the first time.

Before presenting an article online, authors should review and update their references, both in the annotations and also in the bibliographies included with the original publication. Part of the revision process is to review oblique references that might have been expedient in print. Instead of relying on citations that begin "As cited in," the revised version should now include direct references to online sources, even multiple ones when they exist. This not only updates the article for the Internet, but also shifts the tone so that it now connects readers directly with the subject matter in context. In this way the often passive reading of an older article can shift to the active engagement with its new content online.

Given that most articles and chapters have been typeset electronically, it should not be difficult to reformat the text and bring it up to date. The challenge lies in finding the latest information on the Internet, since it exists in various places, with accessibility delimited by the ways in which information is discoverable. This is an opportunity for senior scholars to collaborate with junior ones in bringing the material up to date, and with that effort it can publicize the efforts of younger colleagues through the appeal that the existing content already

offers. When it comes to updating the article, the author may want to provide parameters, so that the footnotes or endnotes reflect the latest edition of the publications cited, along with URLs for material that is now available online. Bibliographies will benefit from such scrutiny, with a similar effort made in updating the items listed. In fact, authors need to update bibliographies with lists of print and online resources and, when possible, include hyperlinks with the latter. The revised article should acknowledge the efforts of such a collaborator, whose work has the potential to renew a venerable piece of research.

Linking Out: Bibliographies, Facsimiles, and More

In revising existing articles, authors may consider linking to online bibliographies, databases, and other resources, so that the readers have access to the larger body of information that the author consulted. As a result, the readers can then interact more deeply with the subject matter through links that allow them to check the research or, hopefully, to explore new topics based on methodology the author used in creating the article. (Some examples of articles with effective links are the style overviews in the A-R Online Anthology.)

Other links are crucial, especially those that take readers to facsimiles and other primary sources. While the choice of material to include in facsimile in the original print publication may have been mitigated by the cost of finding, using, and reproducing original sources, those costs are reduced in the digital environment through links that take readers directly to important material. This gives new life to the original article, which now serves as a portal to materials that individual readers might be left to discovering on their own. Further details, like annotations with links allow authors to share expert knowledge with their readers, and add to the utility of the revised format that now lives in the online world as if it were made expressly for it.

Beyond facsimiles, links to supporting material could include sound, so that readers can benefit from recorded interviews, when they exist, as well as performances, and videos. This will transform the article from a static example of research in the print world into a powerful example of digital scholarship online. The cost of doing this is the time it takes to find the supporting materials and, perhaps, the effort to update the content when necessary. In some cases, the details will not affect content, but it is important to maintain an openness to a thoroughly rewritten essay. When the latter occurs, it affords a further opportunity to engage a co-author to validate the existing research by working with the original author on its revision and in the process to shape the article for a new generation.

Along the way, both the original author and the co-author should look for ways to take advantage of other features of the Internet. Internal links within the article can assist readers to find specific sections when subheads are hyperlinks listed at the beginning of the article. In this way, each article should contain a table of contents, so that it functions like a conventional book in presenting the title and subheadings at the outset, a detail which also provides a handy glimpse of the scope of the essay that does not occur regularly in print. At a deeper level, the digital article becomes a self-contained body of research that readers can explore dynamically. In this way the updating does not merely list online resources in lieu of print ones, but helps to share the ideas in depth and with the possibility of intensifying the result. Readers could then become active participants in the research, as they have access to the sources and can follow the arguments within the original article and then pursue their own investigations based on the authors' expertise.

Newly Revised and Always Current

This kind of transformation is essential to modern scholarship, so that the solid research that already exists has a new and purposeful life online. Instead of presenting older articles as static scans of earlier publications, the Internet affords authors a chance to renew the content by using the features of the Internet to support the research. At the same time, the collaborations that might be necessary for some seasoned authors assists the younger ones by associating them with a solid publication and, as a consequence, giving them ownership of revised articles, so that they can take those articles forward and build on them in their own research. Such ownership can assure the original authors that their work will continue to be meaningful long after the original publication date. A successful revision should renew the content so that it becomes a dynamic piece of research on the web, which benefits from the full use of digital features to enliven the scholarship that originally brought it into print. This revision sets the stage for incorporating future innovations in digital technology into publications, so that the solid scholarship of previous generations not only becomes relevant in the early twenty-first century, but has the potential for continuing to have an impact on future generations.