

Our Nakba and Theirs:
Music, Modernism and the Twilight of the Elites
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By now, it is becoming hard to remember that, at the peak of its popularity and influence, classical music would carry with it an undeniable intellectual and even moral authority, qualities which would rub off on composers and performers such as Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Albert Schweitzer, Pierre Boulez, Van Cliburn and Igor Stravinsky, all of whom would, in different ways, play leading roles within the social and cultural landscape of the cold war period.

In one respect, not so much has changed in the years since: musicians with large, loyal and enthusiastic followings continue to have an outsized influence, frequently recruited for initiatives ranging from animal rights to medical marijuana to environmental justice. The songs of Bruce Springsteen, Johnny Cash, Smokey Robinson and Garth Brooks have been staples at candidates' rallies for decades, their endorsements actively sought out by political figures. Musicians have also served in various political positions in recent years, among them Congressmen John Hall (of the seventies rock band Orleans) and Sonny Bono, author of landmark copyright legislation. In Latin America, Gilberto Gil and Suzanne Baca have been appointed as Ministers of Culture in Brazil and Peru respectively, positions of substantial power and influence.

That those just mentioned are all pop musicians is indicative of a widely recognized albeit infrequently discussed development: classical music's precipitous loss of prestige and cultural authority over the past two or three decades. The reasons for this are a larger topic than what I will examine here. Rather I will focus on one corner of the classical music world where the fall from grace has been dramatic namely, what used to be called "contemporary" or "modern" music but which now, insofar as it is recognized as a distinct genre, requires an additional generic qualifier: contemporary classical music. Before I do so, it should be conceded that in the scheme of things, whether one or another kind of music gets subsidized, composed, and performed, is not a matter of much significance. What is significant and revealing is the basic outline of the collapse: an elite sanctioned enterprise is challenged, loses its capacity to claim expertise and, ultimately, its privileged status. This trajectory was recapitulated on many occasions outside of the world of music and the arts. Carried to its extreme, elite privilege and impunity is at the core of why many of us now find ourselves on the streets. And so the larger drama which is now being played out is more than a little familiar to composers of my generation, as the brief recapitulation of that which I will call our nakba will reveal.

The story begins in the 19th century where composers such as Beethoven, Wagner, Verdi and Brahms had achieved a societal status and cultural centrality equal to if not

unmatched by artists in any previous historical epoch. Their exalted status would continue through the modernist period, though they were met with an increasing incomprehension and bewilderment towards works which were, in some cases, deliberate assaults on bourgeois sensibilities.

Doubts as to the viability of musical modernism intensified during the post war period and would emerge as a frequent topic of highbrow discourse a generation ago. Books and magazine articles with titles such as "The Agony of Modern Music"¹, "Terminal Prestige"², "Rationalizing Culture"³ and "The Twilight of the Tenured Composer"⁴ took aim at what one then marginal composer described as "a wasteland, dominated by these maniacs, these creeps, who were trying to make everyone write this crazy creepy music."⁵ At a certain point a dominant critical narrative would emerge announcing the death of contemporary classical music at the hands a cadre of modernist zealots. Working within the legacy of the second Viennese School (Schoenberg, Berg and Webern) figures such as Pierre Boulez and Milton Babbitt-so the story goes- attempted to reduce the creation of music to a technocratic specialty. More fluent with the manipulation of abstruse arithmetic formulas than with the nuts and bolts of melody, harmonic progressions, audible form, or sonic appeal, they believed that the creation of music could be reduced to autonomous syntactic form at its most cognitively opaque with little concern as to what, or even whether, a message of any significance was communicated to their audiences.

In short, it was music without meaning and was received as such, not just by general audiences but by its nominal target audience of intellectuals who, in a minor recapitulation of the well worn *trahison des clercs* maneuver, fled towards the greener pastures of, first, jazz and then eventually a wide variety of popular and world musics. At its nadir, classical composition would be regarded along lines argued by philosopher Stanley Cavell, as a fundamentally fraudulent enterprise⁶. And while Cavell's description was directed narrowly at the aleatoric experimental tradition associated with John Cage and his circle, the indictment would frequently be extended to composers working within the high modernist tradition hostile to Cage and his school and and even to a wholesale rejection of twentieth century music⁷, one which necessarily included composers who saw themselves as reacting against modernism.

These widely circulated critiques would result in classical composers being marginalized from what had been their exclusive perches from which their influence could be projected. That they have been dislodged from these is routinely attested to by examples like the following: when the New York Times seeks "expert" opinions on "where music's soul resides"⁸, Paul Simon, Roseanne Cash and others from the pop music world are asked to contribute their perspectives-no classical composer is represented. Or, while, The New York Review of Books would, during the first decade, open its pages to Robert Craft and Charles Rosen extolling the work of then cutting edge high modernists such as Elliott Carter, now, its musical perspective tends to be centered around vernacular idioms. What would have been dismissed as celebrity biographies of Eminem⁹, Rap¹⁰, various Motown artists and Bob Dylan in years past are now respectfully reviewed and often praised. A somewhat more downscale indication of contemporary composers'

marginalization is provided by a perusal of the guest list of the middle brow public radio interview show Fresh Air which finds only two classical composers, Steve Reich and John Adams on the guest docket for the past two years, next to columns of jazz, rock, soul, hip-hop and world music musicians.

I should stress here that I do not endorse what is by now the dominant conventional wisdom which assigns responsibility to academic high modernism for contemporary music's waning cultural authority. In particular, while I have rather little affinity with the idiom, the allegation of fraudulence directed at its practitioners (insofar as it has any meaning) is obviously belied by the high level of technical competence, in the most traditional sense of the term, of the composers working within it. Rather than denigrate it, my objective here is to note that such charges directed at academic modernism would assume the status of a conventional wisdom and, as such, had an important impact on the ultimate viability of the field and in the capacity of recognized elites to dictate the terms of the broader public's engagements with musical culture.

Expressed in more familiar terms, what all this amounted to was the spectacle of a Blanche Dubois of art forms getting its comeuppance. And it was long overdue to many, including to cultural populists who resented classical music's combination of arrogance and preciousness, not to mention its access to funding sources insulating it from the harsh dictates of the late capitalist marketplace. But the pleasures of Schadenfreude would turn out to be short lived as other disciplines in the arts and humanities would soon follow classical composers in a march towards the cultural margins.

Among the first to join in would be literary scholarship. Just as the charge of fraudulence would emanate first from within the ranks of composers, so too would the dimmest views of literary studies be instigated within the field. While many traditional literary scholars expressed their discomfort with post-modernist and post-structuralist tendencies earnestly in academic journals, the best known of these salvos would appear in satirical works such as Frederick Crews' *The Pooh Perplex* and sequel *Post-modern Pooh*, alarmingly pitch perfect take downs of the range of critical "theories" dominant across two different academic generations. Along similar lines, David Lodge's series of novels poked fun at the pantheon of academic celebrities pretty much all of whom emerge as buffoons, most notably the character of Morris Zapp, a stand-in for the literary critic Stanley Fish, whose own family demands a ransom from his terrorist abductors for his release from captivity. Probably the least known of these satires would be David Bromwich and Edward Mendelson's *Raritan* article "Historicizing Phrenology"¹¹ which would be seriously discussed within the field for nearly eight years before being exposed for a hoax by journalist Ron Rosenbaum¹².

Coming from within the academic fraternity these portraits, while certainly uncomfortable, could be accepted as the normal and healthy internal self-criticism which any serious discipline takes for granted. More problematic was the increasing recognition that the most skeptical, corrosive and hostile views of the field were prevalent on the outside. This became apparent with a less friendly satirical attack delivered by

NYU physicist Alan Sokal in the form of an absurdist article accepted for publication by the flagship post-modern journal *Social Text*¹³. The Sokal hoax, as it became known, demonstrated, at minimum, a widespread perception that leading members of the post-modernist movement were incapable of rational discourse, profoundly ignorant and simultaneously contemptuous of, scientific norms and altogether lacking in intellectual self-discipline. Subsequent defenses mounted in its wake only made matters worse and opened the field up to additional kicks from the political right administered by Paul Gross and Normal Levitt in their book "Higher Superstition"¹⁴. More damage would be inflicted by the disclosure that one of the leading figures of the deconstruction movement in literary theory, Paul de Man of Yale University, authored anti-semitic works for a Belgian collaborationist newspaper. With de Man's unmasking, the relativist tenets of fundamental to post-structuralist criticism would take on a much darker subtext as a form of holocaust denialism, one which while familiar to its continental followers, would be particularly abhorrent to many of its most enthusiastic domestic adherents and potential sympathizers.

The terminal point of this descent would be mordantly described in 1999 by Andrew Delbanco in the *New York Review*¹⁵:

A couple of years ago, in an article explaining how funds for faculty positions are allocated in American universities, the provost of the University of California at Berkeley offered some frank advice to department chairs, whose job partly consists of lobbying for a share of the budget. "On every campus," she wrote, "there is one department whose name need only be mentioned to make people laugh; you don't want that department to be yours." The provost, Carol Christ (who retains her faculty position as a literature professor), does not name the offender—but everyone knows that if you want to locate the laughingstock on your local campus these days, your best bet is to stop by the English department.

Just as classical composers continue to function within in the academy in a reduced capacity, so too do college English departments continue to service diminishing numbers of undergraduate majors as well as non-majors within required survey classes. One difference between the fields resides in classical composers, being, perhaps, more painfully aware of their declining status among their peers, now seem reluctant to express opinions outside of narrowly defined music theoretical topics. Literary scholars appear somewhat less constrained in offering their expert opinions on a wide range of topics-or "texts" as they construe the empirical basis of their discipline. Among the least reticent is Harvard's Elaine Scarry who, in a series of articles¹⁶ discussed the role of high intensity radiated fields in the explosion of TWA flight 800 in 1997. That Scarry, the Cabot Professor of Aesthetics, has virtually no credentials in the relevant highly technical subject matter suggests that a high degree of intellectual self-confidence (not to say chutzpah) remains deeply rooted at least among the elite ranks of humanities faculty. A less flamboyant example is provided by the recent political writings of Yale's David Bromwich.¹⁷ These are brilliant and profoundly damning portraits of the Obama presidency, widely read in the nascent and, one hopes, quickly developing movement in opposition to the administration's constitutional, environmental and economic

outrages. While they are outstanding instances of journalistic polemics, in the tradition of I.F. Stone, they are reasonably viewed as categorically distinct from Bromwich's central (albeit impressively broad) scholarly domain of English imaginative literature extending from Shakespeare to Hazlitt to Wordsworth to modern poetry.

It should come as no surprise that those whose academic credentials have become "a laughingstock" would direct their energies towards other fora in which their rhetorical fluency and sensitivity to textual nuance can be profitably exercised. Something of the same has occurred among academic composers many of whom now work within idioms (e.g. rock and world musics) which share little relationship to the canonic works which constituted the core of their academic training. These exercises in academic moonlighting, while in one respect reflecting favorably on the underlying competence of those engaging in them are at the same time consistent with the dim, stigmatized view of the enterprise reflected by Delbanco and others viewing the humanities as best avoided by those wanting to be taken seriously within the broader academic (and non-academic) culture.

The public shaming of these two poles of academic humanities programs was the source of a fair amount of consternation within each. And at the same time it would be the cause of some satisfaction outside most notably among skeptics who viewed these as largely consisting of the expression of subjective tastes and prejudices at best, and, at worst, the parading of charlatanism and fraudulence posing as expertise. Among the disciplines whose stock rose as the humanities declined were those whose empirical methodologies were seen as exempting them from the charge of subjectivity run amok. Foremost among these was what was seen as the most rigorous of the social sciences, namely, the field of economics, in particular the neoclassical rational choice doctrine which would emerge within the field in opposition to Keynesian and even Marxian approaches which had defined the field during the post war period. This wing of the field would quickly establish itself to the virtual exclusion of all others, acquiring unparalleled prestige, its leading practitioners commanding large salaries and its graduates having their pick of entry level jobs within an elsewhere tight academic job market.

The best known figures would move effortlessly around the three legged stool of government, corporate board rooms and the academy. Milton Friedman, Alan Greenspan, Lawrence Summers, and Jeffrey Sachs, would become nearly papal in their influence on public policy both here and abroad, their pronouncements on public policy granted ex-cathedra status by elites in media and policy making circles. For the broad public, the economists from the Freakonomics franchise would apply their presumed expertise to everything from prostitution to gun control, musical taste, and climate change, subjects far from interest rates, demand curves and price equilibria. These would help to establish the capitalist market as a secular icon, especially among nobody's fool hipsters who had been traditionally resistant to the blandishments of right wing economic ideology.

This next step in this progression was, as everyone knows by now, off the cliff, which is to say a near total collapse of the field's intellectual and moral standing. The economists' nakba can be dated to the year of the housing bubble which would be missed by virtually the entirety of the mainstream of the profession—a failure roughly equivalent to the membership of the American Astronomical Society failing to predict an eclipse. Perhaps the cathartic moment was Alan Greenspan's testimony before the house banking committee admitting to "flaws" which resulted in "the model's" predictive failure. Greenspan was, of course, careful to couch his mea culpa in typically obscure scientific rhetoric, insodoing equating himself to a civil engineer or biochemist discussing a faulty construction technique or ineffective prescription pharmaceutical. The underlying assumption was that the fundamental principles of economic science remained sound but that they had been mistakenly applied in this particular instance. What was increasingly clear to those outside and a significant minority on the inside was that economics was no more an objective science than was the humanistic disciplines many economists had viewed as empirically soft and intellectually suspect. Indeed, economics would be shown to embody the most cynical view of the humanistic enterprises: an elaborately staged masquerade whereby elite prejudices were transformed into eternal truths, implemented in public policies, somehow always having the effect of further enriching elites to the immiserative detriment of the other 99%.

The transformation of the economics discipline from deity to demon is best charted in Charles Ferguson's 2010 documentary *Inside Job* which demonstrates in clinical detail how an elaborately fashioned edifice of mathematical rigor and formal methodology was built on a foundation of self-interested fraudulence. Columbia Professors Glenn Hubbard and Frederick Mishkin are shown to be simple con-men albeit extremely effective ones having parlayed their academic reputations into positions of considerable influence and, not coincidentally, considerable personal wealth. In a subsequent article for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*¹⁸, Ferguson took aim at the conflict of interest policies obtaining in elite universities, comparing these with the similarly lax regulations which lubricate, rather than impede, the revolving door between the government, the defense industries and private lobbying firms. Ferguson concludes with the Hippocratic imperative "academe heal thyself!" in recognition of the fundamental role which supposedly disinterested academic inquiry has served in promoting the fraudulent core of assumptions at the root of economic policy for two political generations, one which has visited untold harm on tens if not hundreds of millions of people.

Mainstream economists have been slow to recognize, and even slower to accept their responsibility for, the decisive role of their discipline in the global catastrophe. Slower still has been the political establishment, within which mainstream economic retains much of the lustre of the supply side revolution of the 1980s. That this is the case can be seen in the response by to the economic crisis namely the imposition of an international regime of austerity—a page taken directly from the supply side playbook. There are now indications, most conspicuously in the form of the Wall Street occupation movement, that this conventional wisdom will be, at least in part, dislodged. That this will not happen without intense external pressure gives a good indication of the fundamental corruption at

the heart of the economics profession and its essential role in the ongoing war of dispossession waged by economic elites against the vast majority of the population.

In fairness, it should be recognized that more than a few economists have harbored doubts and have been increasingly willing to express them. One indication can be seen in the Nobel Prizes which have, in recent years, been granted to those well outside of the right wing mainstream—most notably in 2006 going to the psychologist Daniel Kahneman whose work is a direct repudiation of the assumption that humans are capable of consistently exercising the cognitive capacity for rational choice in the economic realm. Another Nobel Prize winner Paul Krugman has been granted a New York Times platform for his attacks on what he has dubbed mainstream “fresh water” economics, a recent column accusing it of “recapitulating 80-year-old fallacies in the belief that they’re profound insights, because (most economists) are ignorant of the hard-won insights of the past” According to Krugman, “many economists aren’t even trying to get at the truth (but engage in) the invention of stories to rationalize the disaster in a way that supports their side of the partisan divide.”

“All this” Krugman continues, “makes me wonder what kind of an enterprise I’ve devoted my life to.” While literary scholars and composers may, in their darker moments, harbor real doubts about how their fields are practiced, few, even in the depths of despair, would ask this sort of question about their fundamental purpose and premises.

The three disciplines mentioned above are to a greater or lesser degree fighting a rear guard action to re-establish their legitimacy. The final discipline I will survey here, political science, has a somewhat different status in that it has retained a reasonable degree of intellectual respectability. Members of Washington’s permanent political class continue to welcome political scientists, who, like their economist brethren continue to take leave from positions within academic departments which have not yet become the butt of jokes. And they continue to be granted an expert status when making appearances on media outlets from all sides of the ideological spectrum. That said, there are indications that their nakba while yet to occur, may very well be immanent.

Should it occur, a good explanation for it will have been provided by the first entry returned by a google search for the phrase “Political Scientists for Obama”. This links to a paper¹⁹ by the University of Pittsburgh political scientist Jonathan Yoon the first sentence of which reads “Unlike the post-election disappointment that has followed many election outcomes, the Obama presidency will likely break through a structural bias in American politics favoring the status quo and bring about significant changes in policy.” This must be true, according to Prof. Yoon, because “(m)odern political science’s analytical theory and methods provide us with a scientific basis for confidently predicting that the promise of change will become a reality.” Yoon concludes that “even if the tone in Washington remains shrill and partisan, we can expect to observe a

significant leftward shift in policies and therefore a clean break from the policymaking of the past 14 years.”

As mentioned, Prof. Yoon’s is only the first of numerous other scholarly articles along similar lines predicting "transformational leadership" from our first African American president, a resurgence of traditional liberal priorities, albeit tempered by the President's well known predilection for "pragmatism" and commitment to "bipartisanship". If there were a core demographic for the Obama campaign, one at which its award winning marketing campaign was targeted it was the Political Science profession. And, from all appearances it was eminently successful with virtually the entirety of its most respected figures jumping on board, from the right inhabited by Samuel Huntington to the extreme left represented by Michael Parenti.

Benefitting from their protection behind the walls of the Ivory Tower, political scientists who served as a de facto sales force for the Obama brand have been mostly exempted from having to explain the collision of their Polyannish predictions with the center right reality of the Obama administration. On at least one instance, however, some of its most enthusiastic promoters were called on the carpet for their professional failure in marketing to the public what has amounted to a defective product.

This occurred in the context of a widely circulated Facebook and subsequent blog posting²⁰ by Brooklyn College Political Science professor Corey Robin. In it, Robin assembled a conclave of professional colleagues (along with a few credible outsiders), inviting them to comment on a Glenn Greenwald piece challenging the widespread assumption that the objectively reactionary policies of the administration were due to "weakness" or "blundering" as was frequently claimed. Rather, according to Greenwald, these were rationalizations appealed to by apologists for the administration attempting to maintain a residual investment in what they had confidently predicted to be a transformational presidency.

As this discussion was largely en famille, the uncomfortable, not to say taboo topic of the failure of the overwhelming majority of the profession to accurately predict the appalling reality which was to emerge was no more than obliquely addressed. In the comment section of Robin’s blog, however, where faculty room niceties do not apply, the matter was rather brutally brought to the group’s attention as one of Robin's invited guests, Stanford's Joshua Cohen, the editor of the highly respected Boston Review, and a longstanding and effective apologist for the administration is taken to task by a "FranklyO" for failing to give any "indication that you understood the broad and pervasive disaster that ‘bipartisanship’ would become." After several testy exchanges, FranklyO is ultimately able to extract from Cohen a rare "confession" for "not predicting how far Obama has tacked to the right", though Cohen is quick to assert that "most of . . . us find the extent of that move surprising."

Cohen’s choice of pronoun is revealing. For while many credentialed experts were surprised, many nominal amateurs were not in the least, having, in fact, predicted an outcome very close to that which materialized. Included among this number were, to cite

a few names more or less at random, the Black Agenda Report's Glen Ford and Bill Dixon, the Progressive Review's Sam Smith, former Harpers Washington editor Ken Silverstein, the blogger John Caruso, former San Francisco Board of Supervisor's president Matt Gonzalez and UPenn's Adolph Reed.²¹ Strikingly, with the notable exception of Reed, all of these were making their predictions without the benefit of the "scientific basis" provided by "modern political science's analytical theory and methods." The fact that they were able to derive accurate predictions even without access to the powerful analytical tools available to members of the political science fraternity would seem to enhance their credibility. Alas those who made the correct predictions remain anonymous, relegated, for the most part, to the far fringes of the blogosphere. It is the "serious people" who continue to instruct the emerging oppositional movements on strategy, tactics and direction on the basis of a presumed academic and scholarly authority provided by a field which, having paraded its intellectual bankruptcy, has nothing of the kind to recommend it.

That is, of course, not to say that political scientists should be excluded from participating in politics. Rather it is to make the obvious observation that they have no more authority to do so than anyone else and also to make less familiar observation that there is something disturbingly authoritarian in an academic discipline based on the presumption of certain individuals having a privileged basis for their engagement in democratic discourse. The field's almost complete failure to recognize the nature of the Obama presidency, not to mention prior instances where the liberal, technocratic intelligentsia bought into absurd notions of political potential²², should provide definitive evidence to the contrary. The bright side of political science's exposure is the corollary recognition that those without specialized training have a right and a responsibility to participate in political decision making on an equal basis with those who would claim a unique authority to do so. The radically democratic organizational principles of the occupation movement if not specifically formulated in recognition of this reality, would appear to have been at least strongly reinforced by it.

The above discussion has attempted to establish a comparison between the resurgent recognition among ordinary people of their right to participate in the political system, the concomitant undermining of institutional authority which was at its root and the collapse of institutional authority in the musical world some decades earlier. While there is a significant truth embedded within it, it would be foolish to claim that in doing so I have established much more than the grounds for a heuristic, academic discussion. There is one respect, however, in which it may offer some useful guidance for how we direct our energies in the wake of demise of elite expertise and I'll conclude with a reflection on that.

So far, I have focused on the negative side of this comparison, namely on the perception of a fundamental aesthetic bankruptcy at the heart of musical expertise as it was defined within the post-war institutional mainstream. But there is also a positive moral at its base which is that the claims of academic experts would also be undermined by the

recognition that amateurs without access to “modern theory and methods” could produce musical works of emotional power, intellectual substance and structural sophistication. In the musical case, the relevant form of technical expertise available to musical elites was that of musical notation which had for centuries been assumed to be the exclusive medium through which musical works with pretensions to artistic seriousness were required to be conveyed. With the rock and folk music revolutions of the fifties and sixties, the notated score would be relegated to the status of a historical artifact as recordings and broadcasts of performances by musicians became the main medium through which music would be communicated from composer to performer to audiences.²³ The rigorous musical training necessary to produce legible scores and to decode the complex hieroglyphics of musical notation would be seen, in a kind of musical reformation, as a barrier imposed by elites designed to suppress the right of the masses to participate. Pete Seeger would become the seminal figure in this revolution, insisting that the joys of both music and music making should be available to all, not just those who could negotiate music on the page. The removal of the barrier resulted in the art form which has defined the culture of every generation since: Motown, Bob Dylan, Lennon and McCartney, Joni Mitchell, The Last Poets, Kurt Cobain, Kanye West, the canon of contemporary music as it is now uncontroversially defined, virtually all of which has emanated from those who lacked either the means or the inclination to develop conventional musical literacy.

Insofar as the analogy between can be pushed further, we are now at the beginning of a liberation of political energies comparable to that of the musical revolution of the sixties. Elite expertise having been undermined and repudiated, elites of all stripes are increasingly viewed as debased, clueless, cynical and corrupt. And it stands to reason that the leadership structure of the left has reflected this awareness, its own elites having been replaced by a horizontal democracy in which, in principle, all are given a voice and expected to participate. It seems quite likely that at some point, the General Assembly hootenanny will come to an end, and some form of top down organization will impose itself, either under duress or out of practical, political necessity. For the moment, we should recognize the nakba of the elites as the first step and welcome and celebrate the productive anarchy which necessarily accompanies it.

¹ Henry Pleasants, *The Agony of Modern Music*. New York: Simon. & Schuster, 1955.

² Susan McClary, “Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant Garde Composition”, *Cultural Critique* 12, 1989, pp. 57-81

³ Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

⁴ Richard Sennett, “The Twilight of the Tenured Composer,” *Harper's* 269 (December 1984), pp. 70-71.

⁵ Composer Phillip Glass quoted in John Rockwell, *All American Music: Composition of the late 20th Century*, New York: Knopf, 1983

⁶ Cavell, Stanley. "Music Discomposed", in *Must We Mean What We Say?*, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

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- ⁷ For an extreme, albeit not atypical, example, "Twentieth-century music is like pedophilia. No matter how persuasively and persistently its champions urge their cause, it will never be accepted by the public at large, who will continue to regard it with incomprehension, outrage and repugnance." Kingsley Amis, quoted in Paul Fussell, *The Anti-Egotist: Kingsley Amis, Man of Letters*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- ⁸ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/19/science/19brainside.html>
- ⁹ <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2003/nov/06/imitation-of-life/>
- ¹⁰ <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2011/jan/13/rude-ludicrous-lucrative-rap/>
- ¹¹ Salazar, Rothman. "Historicizing Phrenology: Wordsworth, Pynchon, and the Discursive Economy of the Cranial Text." *Raritan* 8 (1988): 80–91
- ¹² <http://www.observer.com/1998/03/on-the-sophistry-of-european-sophistication/>
- ¹³ http://physics.nyu.edu/sokal/transgress_v2/transgress_v2_singlefile.html
- ¹⁴ Paul R. Gross and Norman Levitt, *Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and Its Quarrels With Science*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.
- ¹⁵ <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1999/nov/04/the-decline-and-fall-of-literature/>
- ¹⁶ <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2000/oct/05/twa-800-and-electromagnetic-interference-work-alre/>
- ¹⁷ For example, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n20/david-bromwich/obamas-delusion>
- ¹⁸ <http://chronicle.com/article/Larry-Summersthe/124790/>
- ¹⁹ http://www.apsanet.org/content_64443.cfm
- ²⁰ <http://coreyrobin.com/2011/08/01/572/>
- ²¹ A partial list of those "got it right" can be found at <http://asitoughttobe.com/2010/03/04/politics/>
- ²² See for a classic study, see Noam Chomsky, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, New York: Random House, 1969.
- ²³ See <http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/Meditations-on-a-PostLiterate-Musical-Future/>