

# A Web-Based System for Teaching, Learning, and Discussing Music History and Culture

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“Public Musicology” (?) – Definition of “public” (adjective) from [merriam-webster.com](http://merriam-webster.com):

1. a. exposed to general view: open; b. well-known, prominent; c. perceptible, material
2. a. of or relating to people in general: universal; b. general, popular
3. of or relating to business or community interests as opposed to private affairs; social
4. devoted to the general or national welfare; humanitarian
5. a. accessible to or shared by all members of the community;  
b. capitalized in shares that can be freely traded on the open market
6. a. of, relating to, or affecting all the people or the whole area of a nation or state; b. of or relating to a government; c. of, relating to, or being in the service of the community or nation
7. supported by public funds and private contributions rather than by income from commercials

**Software Development** – Studies (2009-10) and Related Work (2010)

- Bowdoin International Music Festival – web-based program notes: [ams-net.org/bimf](http://ams-net.org/bimf)
- American Musicological Society – *Doctoral Dissertations in Musicology*: [ams-net.org/ddm](http://ams-net.org/ddm)

**Music Discussion Network (MDN)**: [music-discussion.net](http://music-discussion.net) (2011- , developed with Drupal)

- The Music Discussion Network makes it easy for students, teachers, musicians, and enthusiasts to explore music history and culture. MDN features a wide variety of music: popular, jazz, blues, world, theatre, film, TV, and classical. MDN offers instructional videos (informed by various ideas), complete pieces (as streaming media), other resources (such as lyrics, reviews, and sheet music), and additional information (about recordings, etc.) – and you can contribute to discussions (by opening a free account).
- The home page always shows MDN’s Most Recently-Added Topics, a link to all topics, etc.

**Instructional Videos**: [youtube.com/musicdiscussionnet](http://youtube.com/musicdiscussionnet) (can be opened up to full screen; also on MDN)

Other Aspects

- **Dynamic and Data-Driven**
- Each Topic Has One Page
  - Instructional Video—top-centre (embedded from YouTube, can be opened up to full screen)
  - **“Internal” Information Fields**—left-hand column (linked as tags into MDN’s database)
  - **“External” Content Fields**—right-hand column (embedded or linked; media, other websites, etc.)
    - embedded piece-recording (can also be opened up to full-screen)
    - lyrics, official website, purchasing, articles, works consulted, related recordings
  - **Discussion Area**—bottom-centre (topic-specific & threaded—on the same page as everything else)
- **Getting to Related Material**: from a topic link or search/genre-browse (for a relevant results list)

**Inspirations**

- **Khan Academy**: [khanacademy.org](http://khanacademy.org), [youtube.com/khanacademy](http://youtube.com/khanacademy); **Smarthistory**: [smarthistory.khanacademy.org](http://smarthistory.khanacademy.org)  
3000+ videos, 130 million views, “classroom flipping,” user-base (high school vs. univ.), public/open, funding MDN Phase 2 (premium/paid) of example test questions, automated tests, essay subjects, course-specific blogs
- **Center for History and New Media**, George Mason University: [chnm.gmu.edu](http://chnm.gmu.edu), incl. D. Cohen, T. Scheinfeldt  
Ph.D. program in digital history (2001- ), academics and IT professionals, 100+ web projects, 16 million users  
music’s “special skills and interests,” “digital musicology” slowly starting to appear in 2012 (Hildegard, Josquin)

**Broader Issues and Contexts**

- Cohen, re digital humanities: (1) in-/ex-clusivity (‘cave’), (2) validation (‘tribe’), (3) sustainability (‘marketplace’)
- Also: peer review, fair use, common licensing; hiring rate in musicology of < 33%; “non-academic” careers
- Cohen: “[C]uration becomes more important than publication once publication ceases to be limited.”
- Cohen/Scheinfeldt: “[T]he digital humanities ... requires more attention to methodology than theory.”