Conference Announcement: “Beyond Tokenism” Symposium

Pre-Conference Event,
Teaching Music History Conference,
9 June 2022

We invite you to submit your ideas for the inaugural “Beyond Tokenism” Symposium scheduled for 9 June 2022, presented in partnership with the Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music. The Symposium will occur in collaboration with the Teaching Music History Conference (10-12 June) as a one-day pre-conference event, with presentations on site at the University of Missouri, Kansas City.

“Beyond Tokenism” is dedicated to helping music history instructors develop equitable and relevant pedagogies. To create equitable classrooms and develop relevant and equitable music history pedagogy—including courses for non-majors, and core and elective courses for majors—we need to move beyond tokenism, or the addition of a few works by non-White and non-male composers into traditional historical narratives. We need, instead, to rethink the purpose of teaching music history, highlight alternative historical narratives, and improve equitable instructional design. Two significant barriers to making meaningful changes in music history pedagogy are:

- The institutional structures (accreditation organization, entrance exams, textbooks, recruitment, outreach, attitudes, etc.) that condition the types of historical narratives that are taught, promoted, and reproduced;

- The traditional training that many music history instructors have received.

In order to effectively learn new materials and to manifest alternative narratives, we often need guidance—people with whom we build relationships, or a person who tells us what articles we need to read first, or resources that help us synthesize the new information we are receiving, and so on.

A CFP will be issued on the Beyond Tokenism website by 1 October 2021. After presenting and workshopping materials at the symposium, we aim to publish each participant’s work on the “Beyond Tokenism” site for pedagogical use.

If you have any ideas for the symposium that you want to share, please email musichistoryredo@gmail.com. Please submit abstracts no longer than 250 words to musichistoryredo@gmail.com by 1 January 2022. Topics that explore social justice and ways in which race, class, LGBTQ+ topics, nation, and disability intersect with music history are preferred.

You can click here to view the resources currently available on our site.