

Title of lecture: MPhil – Music and the Materialist Turn

Response from: David Trippett (16 February 2016)

A high proportion of participating students (including both MPhil and Ph.D.) were auditing this class (11), and as a result, the number of evaluations (4) was a little smaller than expected.

That said, it was gratifying that all respondents felt the readings were ‘very well chosen’ / ‘informative and relevant’ and that the contact with major writers and ideas outside musicology was particularly welcome. By the same token, half of respondents felt that the quantity of readings detracted from the time available for discussion, and that the opportunity for longer, more detailed discussion would be useful. This is certainly useful to know, and I will consider trimming the compulsory reading list accordingly, while retaining all texts on the general reading list, for perusal. The risk is that open discussion can become unhelpfully freeform, and unmoored from the texts / writers under scrutiny, but that is certainly something that can be contained, and I agree the opportunity for discussion is centrally important. One respondent praised ‘very high quality, in depth discussions,’ suggesting that any adjustment can be small.

Several respondents requested more musical examples in seminars, and I am very happy to oblige. This can be easily managed.

Overall, it was very encouraging that all respondents regarded the ‘most useful / enjoyable’ aspect of the seminar as hearing new perspectives and being exposed to new ideas, as this was one of the main goals of the course. I’ll aim to build on that in future years.

Many thanks for the helpful feedback.