

What Did Women Sing? A Chronology concerning Female Choristers

Laura Stanfield Prichard

Northeastern University, Massachusetts, USA

Women have been professional soloists throughout the history of church and dramatic music, but have not always participated in choral singing. This paper explores the roots of women as equal partners in mixed choral music, and brings to light several historical moments when women “broke through” older prejudices and laid the groundwork for the modern mixed chorus.

The Early Church

In ancient Egypt, music was under the patronage of male gods. Osiris was said to have traveled to Ethiopia, where he heard a troupe of traveling satyrs who performed with nine musical maidens, perhaps the prototype of the Grecian muses. Since ancient Greek poetry and music were inseparable, there are many examples of female performers ranging from the mythological (the Muses and the Sirens) to slave girls and the lyric poet Sappho (c630-570 BCE). Antiphonal religious singing came from Jewish temple practice and was introduced to Christian gnostic worship by Bardesanes (154-222 CE) in Persia, who composed psalms and hymns for the Edessa congregation (in imitation of David’s Psalter). The early Catholic Church found it necessary to confront and reinterpret this movement, which spread from Persia into Antioch and thence through the Orient. The Synod of Antioch in 379 specified that men and women could not combine together on the same melody, so most congregations were divided into two demi-choruses, one of men, the other of women and children, each delivering a verse of the psalm then uniting for refrains only rarely. This highly regulated process was called *antiphonia*, and was introduced to Rome under Pope Damasius (reigned 366-384), to Milan by St. Ambrose around 386, and to Constantinople by St. John Chrysostom in 390.

The singing schools established in Rome by Pope Sylvester I (reigned 314-335) and Pope Hilarius (reigned 461-468) were devoted solely to the training of male voices. Church documents proscribed singing by women in the churches of early modern Europe. The Synod of Auxerre (578) restricted the dress of women and banned girls from singing, and St. Boniface (c675-754) and Pope Leo IV (reigned 847-855) forbade female choirs from singing in church. The first boychoirs in Europe were established as residential schools: the Regensburger Domspatzen in 957; St. Paul’s London in 1127, and the Thomaskirche Leipzig in 1212. Bernard of Clairveaux (1090-1153) specified in his regulations for chant at Cîteaux, where male soprano and alto voices were in use: “It is necessary that men sing in a virile manner and not with voices shrill and artificial like the voices of women, or in a manner lascivious and nimble like actors.”

By the early Renaissance, male choirs featuring boy sopranos were adding notoriety to pilgrimage churches. In 1469, Canterbury Cathedral developed a choir of monks and boys designated “singers of the church,” conducted by John Nesbett. William Cornyshe was hired in 1470 to form a choir of boys and men for Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal. Emperor Maximilian established the Vienna Hofmusikkapelle Choir in 1498 with eight men and twelve boys (performing mainly four-part music in the Brabantine/Flemish style). In 1483, the Sistine Chapel Choir was formed by Pope Sixtus IV (based on *schola cantorum* model of unison Latin chant) with twenty-four adult male voices hired to sing *a cappella* music. The first castrato singer to sign the Sistine employment register was in 1599; this reinforced a trend toward the use of multi-part *a cappella* motets at the Vatican, and the Italian preference for the castrato voice

that completely replaced the previously favored “Spanish falsettists.” The castrato voice became known as the “soprano naturale” in opposition to the “soprano falsetto.” The Sistine Chapel maintained a tradition of employing castrato singers until 1903.

The French established *maîtrises* (sacred choir schools), La Saint-Chapelle Royale du Palais (1514-1792) and La Chapelle Royale, Versailles (1665-1792). All three possessed an elite choral foundation of “Gentlemen and boys,” based on the British model. Most Catholic musical establishments in England were dispersed during the reign of Henry VIII, but roughly a dozen of the major choir programs were re-established under the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559.

Women participated in early European religious music when men were not present, and some early Church leaders encouraged female singing. Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch from 260-268, “trained women to sing psalms to himself” (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, c320). During the Medieval period, Hildegard von Bingen, the German abbess, composer, and poet composed many sacred Latin texts and Gregorian chant-style melodies. Her *Ordo virtutem* (1151) is the oldest surviving medieval morality play with music, and was created, along with sixty-nine other sacred songs, for the nuns at Rupertsberg. Venetian choirs of female voices were a prime tourist attraction in Renaissance and Baroque Venice (1525-1797), but the performers were visually obscured and spatially segregated from mixed audiences and occasional male collaborators (such as trumpeters, who were required to be male by Venetian guild rules).

The Baroque Church

The middle seventeenth-century was a turning point in the male-dominated sacred choral tradition. Oliver Cromwell’s Commonwealth (1649-1662) destroyed organs and disbanded choirs. French royal chapels began to employ women as soloists under Louis XIV as early as 1650. Some choral music was still segregated by gender, but composers blurred this distinction for the operatic stage. In the 1680s, Lully’s *petit motets* were composed for the nuns at the convent of the Assumption, rue Saint-Honoré, and he wrote many motets for choirs of boys and men for La Sainte-Chapelle Royale. Jesuits missionaries (especially the French) founded Guarani choirs of boys and men in the Amazon. Michel-Richard Delalande was *sous-maître* and later *maître* at Sainte-Chapelle (1714-1728); his wife and daughters sang there professionally as early as 1683 and appeared (one per part) in ensemble portions of sacred cantatas and staged operas.

German-speaking churches also began to innovate, although more slowly in areas in which the populace was Lutheran but the nobility Catholic (like Saxony). Johann Sebastian Bach was reprimanded in Arnstadt for refusing to train their boychoir and for allowing a *frembde Jungfer* (strange/foreign young thing) in the Arnstadt organ loft unchaperoned (this may have been his fiancée, who was a singer, but it was not during a choir rehearsal). The Leipzig Thomaskirche used only boys as sopranos during Bach’s career; women were not incorporated into that choir until 1940, under Günther Ramin.

Barbara and Margarethe Keiser were the first women to sing as members of an urban German church choir (in Hamburg); during a Sunday service in 1716, Barbara was formally presented to the congregation by composer and theorist Johann Mattheson from the organ loft as the “new sound of a female voice.” Women (called *Adjutantem*) began to be incorporated into northern German choirs in smaller towns throughout Thuringia in the late 1710s, as long as no local Boys’ Latin School was present. Gottfried Scheibel’s publications from the 1720s advocated for women to be added to Protestant choirs in order to allow for more complex and theatrical music. The Dresden and Vienna Court Chapels employed three (from 1721-1727) and five (in 1729) female soloists

respectively (listed as married *Sängerinnen*). Of Bach's sacred cantatas (1707-1735), nine are for solo soprano and five for solo alto, although all were written for male singers, with the exception of *Jauchzet Gott* (BWV 51, 1730), which may have been intended for Faustina Bordoni, an Italian soprano who was frequently featured in the (Catholic) Dresden Court Chapel and in the operas composed by her husband, Johann Adolph Hasse (1699-1783).

Romantic Trends

By the Romantic period, American composer and educator Lowell Mason kept records of the vocalists he heard while traveling: he noted with surprise that an all-male quintet was still present in Leipzig in 1853. Richard Wagner evaluated the Dresden *Staatskapelle* and strongly recommended it add women choristers in 1843 (they declined). Musical advertisements for female professional church singers began to appear in the 1850s: in 1859, *The Musical Times* advertised for female sopranos and a female contralto for a London church and for a contra-alto (female?) and basso for a parish church in Manchester. Female organists (although not yet choir directors began to become common, and female church musicians began to appear in literary works: *The Incumbent of Axhill* (the second of Mary Leith's popular *Chorister* novels, 1875) deals with the new minister of an Anglican parish getting the female organist to quit so he can start a choir of men and boys.

The United States had a long tradition of mixed genders singing sacred music together: since the time of colonial singing schools, in which men and women (even the unmarried ones) could sit intermixed, some congregations and denominations (like the Methodists and Shakers) encouraged it. Professional female choristers even sang in the (mixed choir) choral dedication of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York City (1876). But in England, the controversy continued: from 1887-1889, *The Musical Times* published six dozen letters discussing why female voices, that were valued in choral societies and oratorio choruses and in congregational singing, should be less valued in the chancel of a church. *The Daily Telegraph* did an 1889 survey regarding attitudes toward mixed choirs in church: they printed ninety-two comments (out of hundreds of letters), and supporters/non-supporters were split five/four (although not split evenly by gender of voter).

American choirs, both in and out of church, commonly included women's voices by 1900. When Pope Pius X issued his *Motu Proprio Tra le sollecitudini* of 1903, excluding women from singing with men, barring piano and percussion for services, and reasserting a preference for Gregorian chant, American Catholic musicians panicked. The Archbishop of New York raced to the Vatican to debate the issue, but by 1904 all female professional singers had been fired from the major US cathedrals; some East Coast newspapers (like the *Baltimore Sun*) even ran articles listing where "your favorite soloist" had relocated (mostly to Protestant church choirs and Reform temple choirs). The 1903 *Motu Proprio* was probably written by Don Lorenzo Perosi, director of the Sistine Chapel choir under Pius X. It put in motion the Solemn chant project that resulted in the publication of the *Liber Usualis* and encouraged "Sunday laws" restricting concert performances on Sundays in cities such as New York. In 1907, the Metropolitan Opera provoked a legal case over this issue by performing Verdi's *Requiem* on a Sunday, in a church, with a full orchestra, using a mixed choir that included women.

Pope Pius XII's Papal encyclical *Musicae Sacrae Disciplinae* (1953) allowed women to sing during Mass, although "only outside the presbytery or altar precincts" (clarified in the later *Instructio de musica sacra*, 1958). By 1983, the Codex of Church Law, Canon 230, §2 reverses this by stating, "All lay persons can fulfill the functions of commentator or singer." Due to this

kind of formal relaxation of centuries of restrictions, several new Anglican “girls and men” choirs have been established in England, Ireland, and the USA (1980s-1990s) and Lincoln Cathedral accepted their first female chorister in 2011.

Notable Female Voices

During the Medieval and Renaissance periods, noblewomen and gifted amateurs took part in chamber music and other forms of domestic music-making. Female professionals were rare, but one *canso* melody by a female trobaritz (Beatriz de Dia) survives in a manuscript owned by the brother of Louis IX from 1270 (published as *A chantar* in the Norton and Oxford anthologies). In the *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), the characters of Dioneo (lute) and Fiametta (viol) play dances and accompany songs sung by women and men. Eleanor of Aquitaine (c1122-1204), the widow of Louis VII and later wife of King Henry II, composed troubadour-style songs that were admired by Bernard de Ventadorn. Marie de France (late 12th century) was a *jongleuse* and poet. Renaissance courts such as Ferrara employed professional women singers and players: the “three ladies” of Ferrara (Lucretia Bendidio, Isabella Bendidio, and Laura Peperara, active from 1579-1597) often accompanied themselves in trios designed specifically for female voices.

By the early seventeenth-century, the castrato voice began to appear regularly in Italian operas, and female virtuosi (such as Francesca Caccini and Barbara Strozzi) were featured in chamber work more often than theatrical roles. Charles II of England issued an ordinance in 1662 that forbade male actors to take (serious) female roles, but this did not substantially affect musicians. The ordinance was completely ignored by the time of Henry Purcell (1659-1695) and then overtaken by the sexual ambiguities of eighteenth-century theater. Purcell is said to have premiered his English tragic opera *Dido and Aeneas* at a girls’ school in 1688 with men singing the solos (Purcell sang both Dido and Belinda in rehearsals and the original Sorceress was a bass), but new research shows that *Dido* and Blow’s *Venus and Adonis* (1682, with Lady Mary Tudor singing the (male) role of Cupid) were written as companion pieces, and *Dido* was merely revived for the girls’ school. *Dido* did not include female voices in the chorus until the revival, due to the special occasion.

The “first” French opera, *Pomone* (1671) with music by Robert Cambert, featured a female soprano in the title role and ran for 146 performances. Jean-Baptiste Lully followed, as the Director of the Académie Royale de Musique at the Palais Royal from 1672-1687; he produced annual operas, using some women as soloists, but only employed men in his opera choruses (following common practice in the royal chapels). The first French opera by a woman was produced in 1694 (Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre’s *Céphale et Procris*), and Anne Bracegirdle (a professional actor from 1689) famously played Acis (as a breeches role) in John Eccles’ 1702 *Acis and Galatea*.

Although choirs of Handel’s time were drawn from sacred ensembles of “Gentlemen and boys,” Handel called for male falsettists, male castrati, and female singers for the soprano and alto roles in his Italian operas. His first opera, *Almira* (1705), included soprano roles for castrati and women. His *Rinaldo* was first presented in 1711 with the castrato Nicolini singing the title role, and the male role of Goffredo was sung by a woman. However, when the same work was revived in 1713, the title (male) role was sung by “Mrs. Barbier,” and by 1717, Goffredo was sometimes sung by a castrato. Faustina Bordoni and Francesca Cuzzoni starred in Handel’s *Alessandro* (1726) opposite two castrati (including Senesino). The resulting choral finales of

these operas had mixed complements of male and female (solo) singers, as they rarely called for additional choristers.

Composed in English, often for Lenten performances, Handel's oratorios (1732-1757) usually employed leading female soloists, both Italian and English, never female choral singers, and only rarely castrati. For *Judas Maccabeus* (1747) and *Solomon* (1748) the leads were 4/7 female, with four roles sung by Italian mezzo-soprano Caterina Galli. Handel's only formal examples of octave transposition of arias are "Thy rebuke" and "Behold, and see": tenor arias from *Messiah* (1741) rewritten with new accompaniments for soprano (1748). George Mattocks (c1738-1804) was a noted counter-tenor who sang mainly in falsetto, and often dressed as a woman. He and his wife, Isabella (née Hallam) sang as a duo for a quarter century at Covent Garden (1758-1784), and appeared together in "mixed" ensemble finales.

Classical operas usually featured women in half of the leading roles, and Mozart's wife Constanze soloed with an all-male choir in Salzburg for the premiere of the *Mass in C*, causing a minor scandal. Choral music in the Vienna of Mozart and Haydn's time did not incorporate women (except as soloists), although Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* was premiered in St. Petersburg, Russia, and women contributed soprano and alto choral parts for that performance. The peripatetic Charles Burney lauded the singing of female soprano virtuosos Gertrud Mara (née Schmeling) and Faustina Bordoni in 1773; he contrasted their technical mastery with the lower standard of all-male choral singing in England and German-speaking Europe at the time. English ballad operas also provided leading roles (and choral finale ensemble singing) for women: a new (1777) production of *The Beggar's Opera* added a scene with the leading (male) Macheath suffering in prison, played by a woman ("Mrs. Farrel, counter tenor" according to *The Morning Post*). There was an increasing tendency throughout the late eighteenth century for women to play Macheath.

Georges Bizet's aunt, Rosine Charlotte Andrien (1817-1891), was appointed "Adj. Prof. of Solfège" at the Paris Conservatoire at the age of fifteen (1832). She taught voice to individuals and groups, and later married François Delsarte (1811-1871, author of *Méthode philosophique du chant*, 1833 and the "Delsarte method" of acting). Castrato sopranos also taught voice in Paris during this period, passing on their technique and experience to an emerging type of dramatic soprano: for example, the castrato soprano Mustafa taught Madame Calvé in 1875. In 1887, Annie Patterson was the first female recipient of a music degree in the British Isles (Ireland).

The Emergence of the Mixed Choir

When the Delalande family was employed professionally in the Académie Royale de Musique opera chorus (1713), they drew an annual salary of 6,000 livres, and the institution became known as an early ensemble that employed women (twenty-two men and twelve women on average in the 1710-1720s). Although the Three Choirs Festival began as a consortium of three cathedrals (boys/men only) in 1718, Roger North (1653-1734) began to publish articles that enthusiastically supported the idea of women choristers both in church and on the opera stage ("after the French manner"). By 1754-1757, Friedrich Marpurg reported women singing in the chapels of Gotha, Dresden, Mannheim, Paris (both the Opéra and the Concerts Spirituels), and in the Schwarzburg-Rudolfstadt Chapel.

A sea change began to occur in the last third of the eighteenth century. Although notable British choral festivals were founded with contingents from choirs of boys and men (Leeds, 1767; Birmingham, 1768; and Norwich, 1770), women began to gradually displace boys as

sopranos. *Judith* (1773) by Thomas Arne was the first at which an oratorio was performed in London with a female chorus: the women sang soprano parts only, alongside male altos. London newspapers first reported seeing and hearing women in the Drury-Lane oratorios directed during the 1778 season by Stanley and Linley. The huge 1784 Westminster Abbey Handel Commemoration Festival included forty-five male altos, listed as “counter-tenors,” with six professional female sopranos sitting in front of fifty-three boy trebles (and two adult male handlers/managers).

The first mixed choir independent of any connection to religion in the United States was the Stoughton Musical Society (Massachusetts), formed in 1786. The Berlin *Singakademie* was founded largely by women and amateurs in 1791, and grew to over 200 female and male singers by 1815. In the same year, Boston’s Handel and Haydn Society performed its first concert with ninety male and ten female choristers. Lowell Mason co-founded the Boston Academy of Music in 1833, and this co-educational institution set a new standard for the training and encouragement of female (public) musicians, both in sacred and secular settings.

European opera companies expanded their chorister rolls during the early Romantic period: the resident opera company in Leipzig was founded in 1817 with a mixed chorus of twenty and orchestra of twenty-seven (this grew to 30/33 by 1830). By the 1820s, the King’s Theatre in London had been using women in the chorus (Maria Malibran joined in 1823 at age fifteen), the British Royal Academy of Music opened to train boys and girls (including singing), and the New York Choral Society and New York Sacred Music Society (seventeen men and thirteen women) were founded (although women were still usually labeled “sopranos” in both concert and operatic works). Composers such as Berlioz and Wagner usually omitted the voice part “alto” from their scores to ensure that women would sing the upper parts and men would sing those labeled tenor and bass. A new voice type, the contralto, started to gain prominence, especially in England.

Mendelssohn gave the contralto prominence by writing solos for Madame Sainton Dolly in *Elijah* (1847). The 1859 Great Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace (by then moved to Sydenham) featured 2,765 choral singers (accompanied by 460 players) of which 419 were labeled “male altos” and 300 “female contraltos.” Women began to be listed as “sopranos” in opera choruses by mid-century, and usually, the voice type “alto” or “contralto” was omitted, as in the operas of Berlioz, Wagner, and even some of Verdi. Johannes Brahms led many women’s and mixed choruses, including his Hamburg *Frauenchor* and the professional SSAA quartet that evolved from it (1859-1862, featuring two contraltos). By the time soprano Pauline Viardot (1821-1910) soloed in Karlsruhe for Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* (1864), with Brahms accompanying on organ, there were no male sopranos or altos left in the supporting chorus.

The Royal (Albert Hall) Choral Society was founded by Charles Gounod with 1,000 singers in 1871, and included no male sopranos or altos. This event set off a tidal wave of protest, with dozens of letters to *The Musical Times* insisting that it was a great mistake to do away with [male] altos. The 1883 Leeds Festival chorus combined forty-two male altos and seventeen female contraltos; by 1886, the ratio had shifted to sixteen male altos and fifty-seven female contraltos. The 1895 Purcell Commemoration Choir in Westminster Abbey included only eighteen male altos to forty-four female contraltos, although the event was conducted by staunch Purcellian Sir Frederick Bridge. Bridge was Head Organist at Westminster Abbey and used only male soloists in the event, but was unable to “field a full choir consisting only of men’s voices.” Bridge also took over the directorship of the Royal Choral Society, leading the group from 1896-1922. In a January edition of *The Musical Times*, the group comprised “242 [female] sopranos,

174 [female] contraltos, 174 [male] tenors, 236 [male] basses, and 16 [professional, male and female] “superintendents,” arranged as two separate choirs, one on each side of the (Albert Hall) organ.” All ladies wore white dresses, “those of the right choir adding red sashes and those of the left choir blue ones.”

The twentieth century brought increased diversity of genre, type, and gender to mixed choral ensembles. A notable addition was the 1900 founding of *Der Arbeiter Ring*, which created and supported Eastern European secular singing societies and commissioned a distinct repertoire of Yiddish choral song, popular throughout Eastern Europe until World War II. Mixed choruses including women had become the norm for large public concerts, and the 1903 Crystal Palace Handel Commemoration Festival Choir was the last to feature any significant number of male altos (only twenty-three) before the mid-century revival of interest in the historic countertenor voice and the founding of “Early Music” and “Period instruments ensembles in the late twentieth century. Even though falsettists had disappeared from mixed choruses by the time of the Norwich Festival in 1924 (seventy-one female contraltos with a slightly larger number of female sopranos), Toscanini specifically requested ten male falsettists to “lighten the sound of the upper voices” in his 1951 performance of Verdi’s *Requiem*. He wanted, ironically, “a more *mixed* mixed chorus sound.”

Partially-Annotated Bibliography Concerning Female Choristers and Related Performers

Singers and Singing

Ashbee, Andrew. *Records of English Court Music (multiple vols.)*. Ashbee/Scolar Press, 1988.

Rewarding collection of information, vol. III is 1625-1649.

Baldwin, David. *The Chapel Royal, Ancient and Modern*. Duckworth, 1991.

Brenet, Michel. *Les Musiciens de la Sainte-Chapelle du Paris*. 1910; facsimile edition Minkoff, 1973), *The Musical Antiquary* iv (1912-13), pp. 59-60.

Six centuries of lists of singers/instrumentalists with names and dates of service.

Burney, Charles. *A General History of Music*. Four vols. published in London, 1776-1789.

Burnsworth, Charles. *Choral Music for Women’s Voices: An Annotated Bibliography of Recommended Works*. NJ: Scarecrow, 1968.

Dart, Robert Thurston. *The Interpretation of Music*. London: Hutchinson, 1967.

Discusses lower intonations used in pre-1850 music, suggesting most Baroque works should be sung as much a whole step lower, and early nineteenth-century works a half-step lower.

Di Grazia, Donna. *Nineteenth-Century Choral Music*. NY: Routledge, 1988.

Emerson, Isabella Putnam. *Five Centuries of Female Singers*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005.

Giles, Peter. *The History and Technique of the Counter-Tenor: A Study of the Male High Voice Family*. VT: Ashgate, 1994.

The first one hundred pages of this book are a treasure trove of quotations and illustrations. The countertenor has its roots in pre-Mendelssohnian music, not just “early” or cathedral music. Traditional Chinese music-drama and some Arabic music featured falsetto, and the Moorish invasion of Spain in the eighth century resulted in falsetto passing into Spanish medieval musical cultures. Giles details the transition to female contralto singing with statistics and quotations.

Henderson, William James. *Early History of Singing*. NY: Longmans, Green & Co. , 1921.

Discussions of casts for operas and an overview of notable castrato voices.

Lysons, Daniel. *History of the Origins and Progress of the Meeting of the Three Choirs*. Gloucester, 1812.

Traces the origins of the festival from the first collaborations of the choral vicars of Gloucester, Hereford, and Worcester Cathedrals (partnering from 1707), through the addition of women in 1759, to 1812.

Marek, Dan H. *Singing: the First Art*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2007.

Page, Christopher. *The Christian West and its Singers: The First Thousand Years*. New Haven: Yale, 2010.

Scheibel, Gottfried Ephraim. *Zufällige Gedancken von der Kirchemusic*. Oels (Olesnica, Silesia), 1721.

Somerset-Ward, Richard. *Angels and Monsters: Male and Female Sopranos in the Story of Opera, 1600-1900*. New Haven: Yale, 2004.

Tortolano, William. *Original Music for Men's Voices: A Selected Bibliography*. NJ: Metuchen, 1981.

Introduction and several articles clarify specific pieces and styles intended for male voices only.

Walther, Johann Gottfried. *Musicalisches Lexicon*. Leipzig, 1732.

Wolff, Christoph et al. *J. S. Bach: the Learned Musician*. NY: Norton, 2000.

Wulstan, David. *Tudor Music*. London: Dent, 1985.

Performance Practice & General Choral

Brown, Howard Mayer and Stanley Sadie. *Performance Practice: Music after 1600*.

Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music. NY: Norton, 1989.

Chapter 5: Voices in the Baroque Era (20 pages) by Ellen T. Harris

“In assigning castrato roles, the historically correct decision is to use a woman.”

“Bach certainly did not use female voices in his choirs.” 11

Chapter 15: Voices in the Classical Era (35 pages) by Will Crutchfield

Chapter 21: Voices in the Nineteenth Century (30 pages) by Will Crutchfield

Brown, Howard Mayer and Stanley Sadie. *Performance Practice: Music before 1600*.

Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music. NY: Norton, 1989.

Chapter 8: Introduction to the Renaissance (20 pages) by Howard M. Brown

Chapter 10: Sacred Polyphony (15 pages) by Christopher Reynolds

Chapters 11-12: Secular Polyphony in the 15th-16th Centuries (38 pages) by Fellowes & Newcomb

Donington, Robert. *A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music*. NY: Scribner's, 1973.

Chapter 9: The Voice (27 pages) details the progress of *bel canto* technique (requiring some vibrato), the revival of the countertenor voice, and the decline of the castrato singer. However, he has strong opinions: “there was and is no place for the so-called “white voice,” the notorious *voce bianca* so disapproved of by all traditional teachers,” and that giving castrato roles to women is “tolerably satisfactory.”

Elliott, Martha. *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practice*. Yale, 2006.

Sharp, Avery T. and James Michael Floyd. *Choral Music: A Research and Information Guide*. NY: Routledge, 2002.

Smither, Howard E. *A History of the Oratorio*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1977.

Steinberg, Michael. *Choral Masterworks: A Listener's Guide*. Oxford: Oxford, 2005.

Swain, Joseph P. *The A to Z of Sacred Music*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2006.

Vollen, Gene Earl. *The French Cantata: A Survey and Thematic Catalogue*. North Texas State, 1970.

Zaslaw, Neal. *Mozart's Symphonies: Context, Performance Practice, Reception*. Clarendon, 1991.

An inspirational documentary volume with detailed list of court orchestras and performers in Mozart's time.

Female Pioneers in Music

Ammer, Christine. *Unsung: A History of Women in American Music*. Westport: Greenwood, 1980.

Bowers, Jane and Judith Tick, eds. *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986.

Chase, Gilbert. *America's Music: From the Pilgrims to the Present*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1992.

Fuller, Sophie. *The Pandora Guide to Women Composers: Britain and the United States, 1629-present*. London: Harper Collins, 1994.

Jezić, Diane P. *Women Composers: The Lost Tradition Found*. CUNY: The Feminist Press, 1988.

Lowens, Irving. *The Choral Music of America before the Civil War*. NY: NY Public Library, 1958.

Rosewall, Michael. *Directory of Choral-Orchestral Music*. NY: Routledge, 2007.

Appendices including: double and multiple chorus, female and male voices, and female composers

Sadie, Julie Ann and Rhian Samuel. *The Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers*. Norton, 1995.

Stevenson, Robert. *Protestant Church Music in America: A Short Survey of Men and Movements from 1564 to the Present*. NY: Norton, 1970.

Tick, Judith. *American Women Composers before 1870*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983.

Williams, Carolyn D. *Woman to Woman: Female Negotiations during the Long Eighteenth Century*. Cranbury, NJ: Rosemont, 2010.

European Dancers & Dance Music

Bellman, Jonathan. *The Exotic in Western Music*. Boston: Northeastern, 1997.

Blasis, Carlo, (1797-1878). *Traité élémentaire, théorique, et pratique de l'art de la danse* [Elementary, Theoretical, and Practical Treatise on the Art of the Dance] Paris: 1820.

Blasis invented the pose "Attitude" after studying Spanish dance, and published this first analysis of ballet techniques (including a lengthy description of Spanish dances). This forms the basis of the modern Cecchetti ballet method. He presents etiquette and style guides for men and women performers.

Feuillet, Raoul, c1653-c1709. *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de décrire la danse*. Paris, 1700.

This Renaissance dance master noted figures, fashion, castanets, and French/Spanish dances for both men and women.

Guest, Ivor. *Gautier on Dance*. London: Dance Books, 1986.

French writer and critic Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) provided excellent records of dancers and dance music in nineteenth-century France.

Guest, Ivor. *The Romantic Ballet in England*. Middletown: Wesleyan, 1972.

Grut, Marina. *The Bolero School: an Illustrated History of the Bolero, the Seguidillas and the Escuela Bolera Syllabus and Dances*, including *A Prologue* by Alberto Lorca and *The Escuela Bolera* by Ivor Guest. London: Dance Books, 2002.

Woodall, James. *In Search of the Firedance*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992.

This book traces the European history of Spanish and gypsy influences in music/dance, emphasizing female performers who often sang while dancing.