

**Music: Vocation vs. Avocation;
Limiting of Music Study as a Trade vs. Accessibility to Public; Employment Issues (Part I)**

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There are many wonderful aspects regarding a career in music. Performing great works of art, collaborating with outstanding colleagues, and receiving praise from enthusiastic audiences all immediately come to mind. Therefore, the fact that many young people want to choose a career within the music profession is no surprise. The question arises: should everyone who wants to pursue a career in music have the opportunity?

Conservatories and schools of music have an audition process. However, teachers must maintain healthy enrollments. Without a minimum number of students, a school cannot maintain economic viability or even produce certain types of musical performances. Are students accepted into music programs that should not be? Specifically, are students who do not have a realistic opportunity of success accepted into applied programs? Are students provided with a realistic outlook of a chosen profession and equipped with the skills to succeed in other forms of employment should they not succeed in music? Ultimately, is it not how much work and dedication someone puts into their craft that determines their success. For instance, a five foot five inch man is never going to be a center in the National Basketball Association and a 150-pound man will never be an NFL football lineman. There are similar capabilities needed for a music career, so should someone without the requisite amount of talent and expertise be given the opportunity in a supportive environment?

The United States Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010) presented to you as a link reports the employment outlook for musicians and singers as good. Some details provided regarding the profession are somewhat surprising. While the government does not currently limit the study of music, this has not always been the case. In fact, there were many laws against the unauthorized performing of music and the limiting of music study. The art of performing the trumpet and other instruments for example was governed by a system of guilds (associations founded by craftsmen). The state of Saxony issued mandates "against the misuse of the trumpet" in 1650, 1661, 1714, and 1736. Some of the requirements were quite interesting:

- 1) No one shall be admitted to the noble, knightly art of trumpet playing who was not conceived in a chaste, pure marriage bed.
- 2) No military kettle drummer or field trumpeter shall presume to take on an apprentice except after the elapsing of seven years following his own training, and duly performed campaigns.
- 3) Should a trumpeter who has not been in the field dare to contract an apprentice; he is by all means to be prohibited from doing so. Because of his violation of the gracious Imperial and Royal Privileges, he must also utterly surrender his trumpet as a penalty, until there has been fulfillment of the matter and the attainment of due satisfaction.
- 4) No assumption to or release from apprenticeship shall be performed, unless three or four members of a trumpet corps abide thereby.
- 5) A master, after releasing an apprentice whom he has taught, is to wait two years before taking on a new pupil.
- 6) If an apprentice should allow himself to be seduced by dissolute company during his period of training so that he deserts his apprenticeship, he is neither to be tolerated at court nor in the armies of friend or foe.

- 7) Inasmuch as an apprentice also mingles with womenfolk and should thereby make one pregnant, whether or not a year of apprenticeship has elapsed, not only shall his fee be lost, but also he shall by no means ever again be admitted to the noble, knightly art of trumpet playing.
- 8) No apprentice shall presume to associate with city pipers or horn players, much less teach them field pieces; nor shall he use his trumpet at the beer-bench or at other peasants' revels, but rather reserve his art for emperors, kings, princes, counts, and sovereigns.

Indeed, the student-teacher relationship has changed quite a bit during the past three hundred years to what we have at Towson University today. The *Mandate Against the Unauthorized Playing of Trumpets and Beating of Military Kettledrums* (1736) is provided to you as link to peruse in detail. The regulations and requirements obviously limited the study of music and assured employment for those who completed their training.

The Juilliard School is a historic institution that has produced many of the world's greatest musicians. Based in New York City, Juilliard has an internationally recognized faculty including many members of the New York Philharmonic. "The Juilliard Effect: Ten Years Later" chronicles the lives of the class of 1994 a decade after graduation. Without question, Juilliard is one of the most prestigious institutions and likely has one of the strongest success rates for graduates who are performers. Also, consider that the statistics presented were before the Great Recession, and there are likely even more performers seeking employment than when the article was written in 2004. Yes, unemployment and underemployment are considerations in many fields; however, is Juilliard and other similar institutions that may be less successful in job placement being forthright with its students? Are too many individuals being allowed to study music and attempt to embark on a career that may not provide financial remuneration – even with extensive education and training? Lastly, is the United States Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics informed and accurate? Are young and intelligent people being given a realistic view of their future employment outlook?