

Caryl Flinn: Hi, my name is Caryl Flinn. I'm a professor in the department of Screen Arts and Cultures at the University of Michigan. The date is October 6, 2017. We are here in Cleveland, Ohio, at Case Western Reserve University, to conduct a Fieldnotes interview, and today, I will be interviewing Claudia Gorbman, Professor Emerita of U. Washington Tacoma. Dr. Gorbman is widely known for her work in film music and her groundbreaking *Unheard Melodies*, which many rightly consider the work that inaugurated the field of film studies. It's rare for one book to do that.

In addition to co-editing two anthologies on the topic, Dr. Gorbman is known for her longstanding collaboration with Michel Chion, for whom she's translated five books and numerous articles. Her own work has been translated into French, German, Portuguese, Swedish, and other languages. She is the author of numerous essays and chapters on film music, and has given keynote lectures around the world, including countries like Sweden, Japan, Finland, Portugal, the UK, Austria, Australia, and even Lithuania.

Among her most widely known essays include "Auteur Music," "Scoring the Indian," "The Master's Voice" — "The Master," rather — "Rich Songs," and "Artless Singing." This Fieldnotes interview is conducted on the 30th anniversary of the publication of *Unheard Melodies*, and at the same time, it's the second edition, which is coming out imminently from the University of California Press, is in the works as well.

So, Claudia, it's a delight to be interviewing you here today.

Claudia Gorbman: It's a delight to be interviewed, and an honor. Thank you.

Caryl Flinn: It's really wonderful. The first question of the Fieldnotes series is almost always the same, and that ... But the answers are often really different, but basically, what ... How did you get into the field of film music? I mean, how did that interest develop?

Claudia Gorbman: From a very early age, I was excited and interested in music itself. I played, tried different instruments, took piano lessons, was in choruses and choirs, so I was a very busy little musician as a child and an adolescent. But I knew when I got to college, I didn't want to major in music, I thought that would ruin music for me, so, long story short, I became a French major, and was specializing in medieval French literature. And I think there were a number of literature people and, indeed, French people in my era of transitioning into film studies, but perhaps it's the narrative push or something, certainly circumstances in Seattle, where I was going to college, that made film this wonderful thing for me to start studying.

To me, film was both the easiest and the hardest thing to do, and as a medievalist, I was interested in something really intellectually challenging and hard, and film felt like something that was deceptively easy, but led into so

many different kinds of inquiry. So it came time for me to write my dissertation in a French literature department, on something to do with French cinema, so since I was always doing music at the same time, I thought, "Music in French film," and that's ... I realized there was very little to go on, very little literature to go on, except really old stuff from the '30s and '40s. And so I did the research that led, not many years later, to *Unheard Melodies*.

Caryl Flinn: Can you describe for us what it was like working in film music at that period? Because film was already interdisciplinary, and now you're making bridges with music from the perspective of a French department. Can you discuss texts, or institutional structures, or people that help pull this together for you?

Claudia Gorbman: Well, the real jump for me was film at all, right? There weren't film courses or film programs at the University of Washington, and we were even more of an outpost, if not a backwater, in the early '70s. But there was a group, a core group of dedicated and really brilliant film critics in Seattle at the time: Richard Jameson, who became the editor of *Film Comment* years later; R. C. Dale was my advisor in the French department; and there was the Seattle Film Society and various film series on campus, were the kind of institutional encouragements to go into film study. Then, in 1973, in one of its earlier years, I took part in a year of study in the Paris Film and Critical Studies Center, which really was formative for me, and I came back after a year full of jargon from Christian Metz and Raymond Bellour, and talking about "sémiologie" and "psychanalyse" and "diégèse" and all those things that I felt very important, that I'd felt very intellectual as I brought all this back to Seattle.

Anyway, so getting into film was a really big step as an academic subject at the time, and the music part I really did on my own. It's hard to believe right now, but there was no support. I consulted with nobody in the School of Music; I just did my research in the University of Washington library, and listened to a lot of movies. And perhaps it was easier to work with a blank slate than to have a whole long tradition of substantive academic writing on film music. Maybe that's why it was ... It didn't seem like that big a deal at the time.

Caryl Flinn: Well, you filled the slate out very, very well, and you're continuing to do so.

Claudia Gorbman: Thank you.

Caryl Flinn: If everything was so new, and you weren't getting the institutional aid or whatever from music at the time, and you're branching off into all these directions that you've put together, I wonder what it was like for you in your first job, how you presented yourself, and how you ... What kind of courses you were able to teach.

Claudia Gorbman: My first job, after teaching in Women's Studies on an ad hoc basis at University of Washington, was at Indiana University in the French and Italian department. So I was hired to teach French literature and French film, and that was for one

year, and then a position became open in comparative literature the next year, teaching film in general, and I pounced on that application, and thankfully got that job that I was happily ensconced in for 14 more years. I think I taught one seminar on film music once, and the rest of my teaching career has been film, film studies courses, and the occasional literature or cultural studies kinds of courses.

Caryl Flinn: So, throughout your whole teaching career, then, you've been doing the music part, as you say, on the side.

Claudia Gorbman: Right, and that's why meetings, such as the one we're at right now in Cleveland, are so important to me. I really ... My community of discourse is found at conferences and in publications, yeah.

Caryl Flinn: That's interesting. And then more recently, you taught at University of Washington in Tacoma. Was that also as a French or comp lit person?

Claudia Gorbman: The University of Washington Tacoma, where I went in 1970, was a brand-new place. We were 12 founding faculty, and the occasion to invent a new university was just ... It was just too much of a temptation. I left everything at Indiana and moved back to Seattle, Tacoma to do this. You can imagine founding a school with 12 faculty members, that we all had to be much more interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary than at the usual big university where everybody has their turf area. So we team-taught, I was teaching courses I never would have imagined teaching anywhere else. There was one course called International Interactions, which could be anything you wanted, but you had to construct this course to have some content that would educate undergraduates.

And I taught, about half the courses I taught in the beginning were film courses, but I made them really broad, because nobody was going to be a film major for many years, and it was a great way to expand my own horizons, and to get back to what education is for. So it was really a very special time for me, a really interesting move to that kind of very broad curriculum. And as the university grew, and as our departments began to filter out into different directions, I ended up teaching exclusively film courses, and some pretty fun ones at that.

Caryl Flinn: You said just now that it helped open you to a more generalist perspective, teaching film, or teaching those new courses. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Claudia Gorbman: Do you teach students who have the major, who are film majors? Yes. So I never had that, and I thought, "What do I want students to know about in a film course? What should they really be learning that will help them in their ... Whatever future they design for themselves?" And it ended up being very different from, you know, Bordwell and Thompson kinds of disciplinary and stylistic specifics, right? So we really ended up talking about ethics, for example, about culture. A lot of these students were working-class people whose lives are spent in Tacoma, who don't know about Germany or France, so how do you

teach the lives of others to students who haven't been anywhere and don't speak any foreign languages? What becomes important to convey? And it really involved, in a way, leaving the safe boundaries of a discipline of film studies, and rethinking what I conceived education to be about. And it was humbling, and really a great experience.

Caryl Flinn: What sort of tools did you bring to those kinds of classes, whether in terms of articles or traditions or pedagogical styles? Because that does sound like an interesting change in teaching than a lot of us have.

Claudia Gorbman: Well, I had them doing a lot of online exploring, given specific kinds of questions. I was certainly teaching the nuts and bolts of film and film style and film narrative, but on a simpler basis. And some of the insights that they provided me were quite valuable, based on their perspective, which was so different than the perspectives I'd had at larger state universities. This was a campus of the University of Washington, an offshoot in Tacoma, which now has about 5,000 students, but had very few in the beginning. So I was constantly having to check my own desire to teach the discipline of film studies or film theory hardly at all, and determine, usually with the students' lead, what was valuable to them.

Caryl Flinn: Well, this makes me wonder how that kind of enriching experience as a teacher, how it did or didn't inform your life as a scholar.

Claudia Gorbman: Great question. I think that I became very attentive to the audience, or consumers, if you will. I just gave a talk in Lithuania last week, and I wrote a paper, as usual, and then thought, "Well, I know that the Lithuanians are ... Their university education is in English, a lot of it, but it's probably not idiomatic English." So I went through my whole paper and got rid of those idioms that might be confusing, and I sort of reshaped it thinking about my audience. I know sometimes when I go to conferences and read things, read publications, that the more specialized vocabulary there is, the more academic and intellectual and valid people feel. You know, this is ... I'm vastly overgeneralizing, of course, but I think in general, I've tried to avoid jargon and extremely specialized kinds of studies in my work.

Caryl Flinn: Well, your writing is always very, very clear, and having worked with you once as my editor, that came through. I want to talk now about your first book, the groundbreaking *Unheard Melodies*, and how ... The genesis of it. You said pieces came from your dissertation, but there's a lot more in there. A lot of the terms that you raise are still hotly debated. So how did you put this together, and did you have ... Were there any source, any places you could go that helped you basically build the field?

Claudia Gorbman: I can't overemphasize enough ... Can't underemphasize enough? Overemphasize enough that year in Paris, because if the French academic tradition is ... It is the most Cartesianly organized kind of writing. Even Michel Chion's books look

extremely Cartesian, although I don't think they are very systematic. So I had had this experience in Paris of studying, especially under Christian Metz, who is nothing if not systematic, and I think that influence really helped me organize this whole notion of what music is doing in its interaction with film narrative.

And that dissertation was something that I didn't write for ... I was a little blocked on it, as most of us are. Were you blocked on yours? Yeah, okay. And I finished the dissertation, actually, in ... Once I had the job at Indiana and I had to finish it, of course. So I shut myself up in a room for three months and spilled it all out. And I think it had incubated for so long that it came out, fortunately, in a rather organized way, so ...

Caryl Flinn: When did you know that it had struck a chord, as it were? How did ... Talk about the reaction to your book, general ... Different quarters.

Claudia Gorbman: Yeah, that's a fascinating question, because I wrote most of it to get my PhD, right? And when an entire field started growing in response to a number of really groundbreaking books in the late '80s, early '90s — your book, *Strains of Utopia*, Kay Kalinak's book a little later, Jeff Smith's amazing book on the institutional and economic foundations of a period of film music, Marty Marks's work that really systematized and clarified the different traditions of writing about film music — I just thought that I was doing one of those, and I think, strictly speaking, my book is just one of those. It was part of a discovery in the late '80s of the importance of music in a film, and the importance in so many different ways of music in a film.

So I guess I had very little idea that anything I was doing was particularly important until, you know, you start to get quoted all the time, and I was very glad. You know, this idea of diegetic, non-diegetic music was taken directly from my readings of the French narrative theorists, mostly Genette and Souriau and a bunch of others, and it ... That concept seemed so important for thinking about film music and its functions. It just didn't seem like that complicated a thing at the time at all.

Caryl Flinn: But you were, even in the ... Even then, you were nuancing it in a way that a lot of film scholars were not, and I find it extremely prescient that you were thinking that ... Analyzing in such a nuanced way that other scholars were not at the time, especially in film, and that to this day, we're still debating those issues, and teaching those terms quite differently than at the beginning of our careers.

Claudia Gorbman: And my very first article in 1974 was about Fellini, about Fellini and Nino Rota, and what a great publication to start with, because in Fellini, that diegetic/non-diegetic distinction is so complicated. So perhaps, in large part, in some part, it's the fact that he was one of the filmmakers I started with, who's just constantly playing with the diegetic/non-diegetic distinction. Music is a very interesting film element to consider that distinction with, and especially in terms of the evolution of film and film music in the last 40 years, when I think a lot of films

are just playing less diegetic than they used to be. That sense of a narrative trance, à la *Mildred Pierce*, is gone in a lot of films. So of course the debate goes on about whether the distinction is interesting or important, and I think it certainly is, because it's a very basic cognitive level in which we understand narrative, and those loosey-goosey parts, the fantastical gap, as Robynn Stilwell calls it, are so intriguing. But still, that distinction is a really basic one, I think. It still holds.

Caryl Flinn: Well, speaking of what's still holding, your book is about to come out in the second edition. We've been craving it for years ahead of time, but ... What is different? I know you've added an entirely new chapter on pop songs, but what other changes did you make?

Claudia Gorbman: I decided not to make a lot of changes, because I don't know if it's laziness or ... In part, I wanted sort of the original document to be there in its second edition. You know, I'm changing words like "extradiegetic" to "non-diegetic," and things like that, and I'm adding just a very few more current examples of films, but not much. So really, the main addition is a long chapter on song in film, and also a relatively short meditation on heardness and unheardness in the 21st century, which I think has evolved greatly. The advent of popular song into films as a common thing, starting in the '70s, and especially '80s, has really changed the way audiences listen to film in general. I think people notice scoring more, and it's because of a greater attentiveness to music. And of course, the whole media universe in which we exist has radically transformed, so there are all kinds of influences on the way we listen to audiovisual media that I think needs a bit of attention in the book, but not so as to make it a whole new book.

Caryl Flinn: In terms of these changes in consumption patterns and technologies, what would you want people to think about, like your students, people who aren't in film music? How would you ask them to approach the issue? What terms and issues would you want to raise or suggest they consider?

Claudia Gorbman: How would I want them to approach film music?

Caryl Flinn: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Or music in media, perhaps.

Claudia Gorbman: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It's seeming more and more clear that since I'm an old person now, approaching 70, that I don't listen to films and other media the same way other people do, the way younger people do. In fact, recently, watching four student projects that were ... The students were assigned to put a soundtrack onto a sequence in *Dracula*, five-minute sequence, and they were allowed to suppress any original sounds or leave them in, or add other sound effects and music if they wanted. In two out of those four, the music that I heard them put to the film had absolutely no relation to the visuals, and I realized, "Wow, I'm expecting music to have something to do with the visuals. That's such an old aesthetic."

There are so many possibilities now, in terms of what is acceptable film music, and what is exciting film music, to the point where these students, presumably with a kind of rave aesthetic, right, are seeing the visuals as just this bunch of light and shadows to be projected as this sort of musical and soundtrack unfurls that they've done. So I wouldn't know what to say to students. I mean, I learn from students, and now that I don't have students anymore in the last two years, I have a feeling that my main sustenance will be reading the work of younger scholars and hearing what they have to say. It doesn't really answer your question, does it?

Caryl Flinn: That's fine. I hear you with the ... The technologies are changing so quickly, and the viewing patterns. But your answer makes me immediately think of Michel Chion's term of anempathetic music, which, through your translation and collaboration, helped introduce to English-speaking scholars. So I am really curious about that collaboration, which has been sustained over decades, and you're not simply his translator. Could you talk about how you met, and the way you work together, the process of collaboration?

Claudia Gorbman: Yeah, what a happy accident that was in the early '90s, that somebody thought of me as a possible translator for *Audio-Vision*, and it has become a kind of lifelong collaboration with Michel, who's such a lovely, lovely man. So yeah, I was ... I thought, you know, "What a great thing." I love this guy's mind, the originality, his ways of putting things, the ways he invents words and terms and concepts. So I happily translated that first book, *Audio-Vision*, and the way we worked was I found out that he was very happy to answer the minutest questions I had, and it was such a fortunate thing for me to be working with not only a living author who can answer the questions I have about fine points of translation, but one who was so responsive.

I think I've thrown them away now, but the mountains of faxes — and it was faxes in those days — the mountains of faxes that we sent each other were just ... It was a pleasure to get his answers. You know, "What did you mean in that sentence?" Or "Which meaning of this term do you want to convey, because it's a little vague in English?" And every once in a while, he made me feel really happy by saying, "Well, you know, I'm not sure what I meant in that sentence, so I'm going to write it better now," and he has maintained that the English translation, because it has such an obsessive-compulsive reader in me, that his books are better in English. I'm not sure if that's the case.

So it was a sheer joy to translate *Audio-Vision*, and then Jennifer Crewe at Columbia University Press, a few years later, "Will you do this one, will you translate this?" And a few years ago, after the monstrous, the huge task of translating *Film, A Sound Art*, which is a book about this thick, I decided I wasn't going to do any more translation of Chion. I had to be working on my own stuff. But that wore off after three or four years, and I just last year finished *Words On Screen*, which is ... Have you seen that book?



Caryl Flinn: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Claudia Gorbman: I love it. It is, again, so original, by this author who is kind of systematizing an entire new subject, but then again, it's not systematic, it's how Chion is. There's this passionate ... What? This passionate fake systematicity that reveals so much in how original it is. So I did that really gladly, and now that I'm retired, finally, the second edition of *Audio-Vision* in English will be done pretty soon. It's already the fourth edition in France, and so it has a lot of changes and additions to it.

And over the years, of course, we've gotten to know each other on my visits, mostly my visits with my partner to Paris. One year, Michel was very ill, and we weren't close friends yet. He was very ill, my partner and I were in Paris for Christmastime, and I found out that he was in the hospital, and so of course we found our way to the hospital. I brought balloons or flowers or something, and he was just there with his wife; I somehow thought he'd be surrounded by well-wishers. But I went every day for the time I was there — a little flower one day, you know, a little something the next day — and we just ... We were kind of like siblings by the end of that. I mean, we look at each other with great love now, and I really ... He's a very special friend, as well as a wonderful, wonderful colleague and brilliant writer.

Caryl Flinn: That's wonderful.

Claudia Gorbman: Yeah.

Caryl Flinn: Can you think of an example of where your ideas have really intersected with each other, mutually developing a concept, or his impact on your work, yours on his?

Claudia Gorbman: Well, he says that *Unheard Melodies* has had an impact on him; I'm not sure where or how. But I think his willingness to not ... I mean, he certainly has read all kinds of theory, and quotes it, but there's a kind of Chion core to him, the way he conceives formal and ... Yeah, formal kinds of things in the films he's talking about; the way he will think about space and its representation; inventing a term for what a character's voice sounds like if the character isn't facing the camera, but away from the camera. I mean, who thinks of this stuff? Who thinks of eight or ten categories of voices heard on the telephone? So just his ... It's a kind of playfulness that he's applying to his love of films, which is the basis of everything. And that playful imagination, I think, rubs off sometimes on the way I think about what I'm writing, that I'm allowed to write this, even if I don't have some preexisting scholarly system to base it on, which is freeing and wonderful.

Caryl Flinn: I saw that at work having ... In your chapter on songs in the new edition, that there's a space for all sorts of approaches, all sorts of uses and incidents of different ways that songs are used, and in the end, you say you don't want to



sum it up. Same with "Artless Singing," your article. So perhaps that's a connection between the two of you, because you've got an openness to things that most people don't listen to, and has been there throughout your career. And I know I'm supposed to be a polite interviewer, but I have to disagree with you about *Unheard Melodies* being one of a generation of books that came out, because yours was first, and we are all standing on your shoulders, so you need to be less modest.

Claudia Gorbman: I just find it difficult to be, but thank you very much. Thank you, yeah.

Caryl Flinn: But if you ... Let's go back to the *Unheard Melodies*, and talking about the field in general. Other than diegetic/non-diegetic at the time, what were the jumping-off points from *Unheard Melodies*, would you say, that people really ran with?

Claudia Gorbman: Hm.

Caryl Flinn: Or ones that maybe lay fallow.

Claudia Gorbman: I think that the ... Probably the most quoted parts of that book had to do with the classical Hollywood model. I was sort of transposing people like Bordwell and Bazin and others into thinking about what the model of — if there is one — model of music composition and scoring and mixing and recording and all that was in that period of the '30s through the '50s. And it was fun to invent. It didn't take very long to invent that particular part of the book, but it certainly seems to have been influential, and it's a general enough model that it is picked apart and challenged all the time, which I love. I love providing a model that subsequent scholars can question and take exception to.

What the book doesn't do, really, is the kind of exacting and beautiful historical research that I think is the main ... One of the main fields that film music scholars are going into now, the kinds of surprising discoveries of people studying the transition to sound in the early sound film, and of course, Jeff Smith's work on the '50s, the late '50s, and the song craze, and so on. So the book doesn't do any of that; it really doesn't pretend to, just is trying to understand music's narrative functions, so ... Yeah, I'm often surprised at how that focus on the classical model is the main thing that people seem to have been working off.

Caryl Flinn: Yeah, because there's a chapter in there on music in the silent film too.

Claudia Gorbman: There's a little bit on music in the silent film.

Caryl Flinn: Which no one was thinking about at the time.

Claudia Gorbman: Well, let's see, I'm trying to remember when Gillian Anderson wrote her first book on music in the silent film. I'm not sure now.

Caryl Flinn: And there's Marty's work too.

Claudia Gorbman: Of course, his subsequent work.

Caryl Flinn: This is Marty Marks we're talking about.

Claudia Gorbman: Martin Marks, who is not only a brilliant and encyclopedic scholar, but a brilliant music accompaniment ... Film accompanist.

Caryl Flinn: Yes.

Claudia Gorbman: Yes.

Caryl Flinn: Yes, very delightful. If you had to ... If you were writing the first book now, I guess this is a way of asking you, what are some of the major shifts? And rather than talking about listening practices, how do you see the methodologies and the approaches to film music over the last 30 years? How would you characterize that trajectory?

Claudia Gorbman: There have been so many, haven't there? I'm not sure I could write the book now. I don't imagine I would be as obsessed with the idea of unheard melodies, because as a modern filmgoer, it just ... I don't feel that imperative, it's just ... You know, the composers and critics in the '30s and '40s lived by that rule that film music should be unobtrusive, "unheard" meaning unnoticed. But you don't hear that now, you know. I don't think Hans Zimmer, with his whooshes and thumps and all that stuff that happens in action movies, would be talking about unheard melodies. So that whole kind of psychoanalytic apparatus that I brought into *Unheard Melodies* isn't as important.

I think there is still a tendency for us, when we get rapt in that narrative trance, to not notice music. I think there's still some truth to what is in *Unheard Melodies* about that psychoanalytic apparatus, but it just probably isn't the approach I would take now. If I were a more careful archival historian, I think I would do a lot more with that marvelous work that's been done in the last 20 or 30 years. I think the kind of work that you've done, that really talks about cultural kinds of meaning in music, is absolutely key, which I was not as well versed in as a young scholars.

But, you know, there's something interesting, which is that I still perceive a little bit of a divide between the film people and the music people, that music people tend to still want to do musicological analyses of film music, and the film people really want to talk about the film and what the music is doing in the film, if we can make that enormous and inaccurate distinction. I would certainly want to write more about the media landscape of the 21st century, and just the phenomenon of the audiovisual in general, and how film-musical tradition has or hasn't affected music for games, music for television, music for web series,

music for this and that. And I would certainly also want to talk about how those related audiovisual media have affected film itself.

Caryl Flinn: I think this idea of an immersive experience, not ... We don't ... It's not around, it's not as dominant as it used to be, although it's not disappeared. There's still the growth in affect studies, would be maybe one way to go, because it works even with these shorter texts or non-narrative texts, because there is that connection that music still ... There's a pull, and maybe not, it's no longer a pull down into unconscious saturation or whatever. How would you think about that? Because you write beautifully in your book, with the aid of semiology and psychoanalysis before anybody was, of that founding, the connection between spectators and narrative, and through the music. So how might you work with that in the media landscape of today?

Claudia Gorbman: Great question. I think I'm doing some of it, as I write these days. But, you know, one film that blew me away this summer was *Okja* by Bong Joon-ho. It's Bong's latest film, which is financed and released by Netflix, and it is such a fairground ride, it is such an exciting roller coaster of emotions. I don't know how you can write about it without talking about affect and identification and so on. And I'm perplexed by it, but I'm absolutely drawn to it. I don't know what it means to be a Korean director using John Denver's "Annie's Song" in the middle of an action sequence. I mean, I just ... But I know that it gives me incredible feelings as I watch the film, and that's what I would want to write about in general. It's truly ... Yeah, I don't feel like an academic writing anymore, I feel like somebody who's engaging my experience and my emotions, but trying to not sound crazy as I do so.

Caryl Flinn: I guess this leads to an inevitable question, and that is, what have been the film texts or the scores that, over your career, have been especially meaningful to you?

Claudia Gorbman: As a film music scholar, or in general?

Caryl Flinn: Any one of your identities.

Claudia Gorbman: Oh boy. It's so hard to say. I remember one day in Indiana, realizing I had finally had enough of Renoir's *Rules of the Game*, which I was always ready to say was my favorite film. I had my fill after teaching it about 20 times, but that, to me, is one of the great movies of all time.

Caryl Flinn: So, the-

Claudia Gorbman: So there's *Rules of the Game*. *The Conversation*. For some reason, I always return to *Mildred Pierce*, which is such an odd movie when looked at from today's perspective, and of course, the remake by Todd Haynes. You know, all of Japanese cinema, all of French cinema. I tend to be less excited about American,

contemporary American film, except for Paul Thomas Anderson and a few others. But there are just so many films that keep us busy, aren't there?

Caryl Flinn: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I guess I'd like to maybe return to a question that I posed earlier, and that was about how the field has evolved, and maybe this can be our closing question.

Claudia Gorbman: I remember a moment around 1998 or 1999 when Kay Kalinak referred to "film music studies." It was the first time I heard that phrase, and I thought it was hilarious. It would be like if you said "banana studies," you know what I mean? It was so specific, and she was declaring a field, right, by using those three words together. And it clearly has become a discipline, enthusiastically embraced by universities and by film scholars, and especially by music scholars, and there's still so much to do in it, isn't there? You know, I think of Richard Dyer, who recently wrote a book on Nino Rota. We don't think of him as a film music scholar, but there he is, and one of his articles that influenced me deeply is the one about entertainment and utopia. What is it that makes films pleasurable, that makes ... And of course, he was talking about TV programs and any kind of entertainment, but returning to films.

That still remains a marvelous question to me, and I think that there needs to be some kind of revision to his hugely influential essay about what makes us love something, what makes ... Is it his group of things, like ... What is it? Plenitude and energy and transparency and authenticity, or whatever his criteria are. Because I think of moments in recent Chinese films, and recent other Asian films, or in a lot of moments in Paul Thomas Anderson, where there isn't energy and abundance and the criteria that he names, but which are enormously entertaining and affecting. So I hope that people can carry that question forward in film music studies, and I really look forward to seeing what the next generation of scholars is going to bring.

Caryl Flinn: Well, thank you for basically putting the field on the map — film music studies, banana studies — for putting it on the map, because you have, and it's been an honor to talk about your work with you today, so thanks.

Claudia Gorbman: Well, thank you so much. Thank you.