

To Whom it May Concern:

There are few educators who have positively impacted my life as much as Dr. Erin Brooks has. I had always had a keen interest in musicology, but as an undergraduate student navigating the complex and confusing world of music school, I was unsure of what my future could look like in the field. Dr. Brooks exemplified what it meant to be a musicologist to me and became a role model who I continue to be inspired by.

I met Dr. Brooks my sophomore year at Crane when I enrolled in her Music History II class. I distinctly remember how engaging and thought-provoking her lectures were—even at 8:00 in the morning! I tried to absorb as much as I could from her, both in subject matter and pedagogy. She modelled the type of teacher I wanted to become—someone immensely knowledgeable in the subject, while also being approachable, encouraging, and invested in her students' success. As a young woman interested in pursuing musicology, I also looked up to her as someone whose poise and intellect made her a force to be reckoned within the often-misogynistic structures of academia.

In my junior year, I enrolled in her Music, Gender, & Sexuality seminar, a course that completely shifted the way I think about music. It was a taste of the type of work I would later pursue, and I reveled in the nuanced and intellectually stimulating discussions Dr. Brooks led. In my senior year, as a Musical Studies major, I was required to complete a capstone project of sorts. When it came time for me to choose an advisor, it was a no-brainer. Despite the fact that I wanted to research issues of genre construction in hardcore punk and heavy metal (Dr. Brooks being an opera scholar), I could not have asked for a better mentor for the project. I still reflect fondly on hours spent in her office talking through my scattered ideas; I remember leaving each meeting so energized and feeling like *this* is what I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing. She pushed me further as a scholar than I believed I was capable of, eventually writing a 30-page thesis paper that would become the basis for much of my later research.

Once I had made the decision to pursue graduate school, it was once again Dr. Brooks who provided guidance and support throughout the entire process. She spoke candidly with me about life in graduate school and helped guide my choices of programs to apply to based on the type of experience I was looking for. She graciously met with me via Zoom, read drafts of writing samples and personal statements, and wrote letters of recommendation for me without hesitation. When I was accepted to multiple programs in musicology—an accomplishment I attribute in large part to her guidance—she also supported me in choosing the best fit for me. And when I decided to transfer to another school after my first semester, she was again ready and willing to help me in any way possible. In the entire time I've known her (almost ten years now!), she has been a steadfast supporter of me and my work, and I know the same is true for countless other students. I firmly believe that she played an integral role in my decision to pursue musicology and my aspirations of becoming a professor. Now in my first year of my PhD, I still draw from everything I learned from Dr. Brooks—not only what it means to be a musicologist, but also what it means to be a mentor. I can hardly think of anyone more deserving of the position of full professor.

Sincerely,
Paige Carter Dailey, MM
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