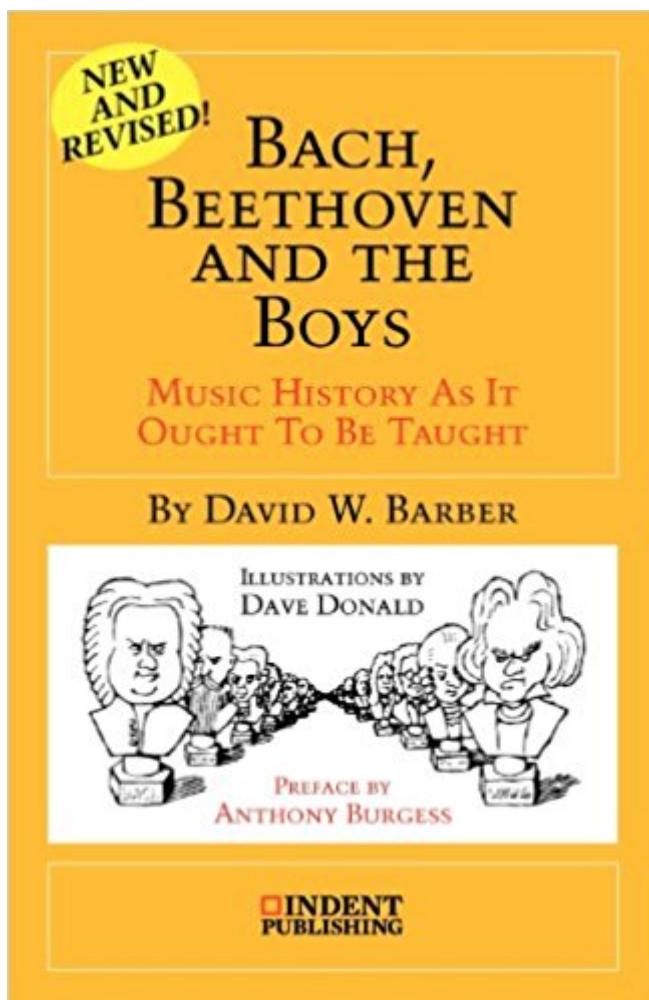


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# Bach, Beethoven, And The Boys: Music History As It Ought To Be Taught



## **Synopsis**

David W. Barber has delighted readers around the world with *Accidentals on Purpose*, *When the Fat Lady Sings* and other internationally bestselling books of musical humor. His bestselling *Bach, Beethoven and the Boys* chronicles the lives of the great (and not-so-great) composers as you've never read them before - exploring their sex lives, exposing their foibles and expanding on our understanding of these all-too-human creatures. Filled with information, interesting facts and trivia, this hilarious history covers music from Gregorian chant to the mess we're in now. From Bach's laundry lists to Beethoven's bowel problems, from Gesualdo's kinky fetishes to Cage's mushroom madness, Barber tells tales out of school that ought to be put back there. (Think how much more fun it would be if they taught this stuff.) As always, Dave Donald had provided witty and clever cartoon illustrations to accompany the text.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Facts and trivia abound in this gentle expose of music history. From Bach's laundry lists to Handel's unexpected success in Italy, this provides a lively, involving format which treats musicians as human beings and which reads almost like an action novel in exploring their lives and approaches to music and its marketing. -- Midwest Book Review --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

David Barber is a journalist, author, composer and performer who lives and works in Toronto. Dave

Donald works as an art director for a Toronto-based national magazine. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Funny, entertaining & and a good mix of trivia (e.g. Bach's silver coffee & teapots) with important stuff about their compositions, personal histories, etc. From other sources I've read the past 50 years, I can vouch for the accuracy of Mr Barber's info, dates, etc. One could only wish the book could give even more detail, trivial & important, about his subjects. Don't know how much he tells about Rossini and more recent composers, as I haven't quite finished reading the whole book. Any music lover who has any sense of humor at all will enjoy this tome. I'm eager to read his other books, as well. Highly recommended!

As a person who enjoys classical music but has not been trained in that field, I greatly enjoyed this book. Several times, statements by the author sent me to an internet site, such as Wikipedia, to confirm that what he had stated was true. I was not sure if it was tongue-in-cheek or factual; turns out all the things I looked up were factual. That is the charm of this book. The author tells the reader things in such an outrageously funny manner that one does not know for sure whether to believe it or not. Well, believe it! That's the fun. I know two classically trained musicians, my wife and her sister, who both have read this book, and have also found it to be very amusing, fun, and easy to read. Whether you are a trained musician, or just a music lover, I recommend this book.

This book was exactly as described - perfect as a graduation gift for my piano student who just completed high school! This book has everything in it that I actually remembered from my college music history classes, and helps to illustrate that composers were real people. They're just as quirky as you are, and perhaps more so.

This is a very brief survey of the composers of western art music and it is a must read for anyone who appreciates music. Can't think of anything bad to say about it!

One of the funniest music books I've ever read. Beloved by my students. I give these as awards for outstanding practice in a semester. Terrific presentation of music history .... all true, but not the tales of the history books!

This is one of the funniest books I've read in a while, which would be reason enough to praise it, but

I actually learned a lot in between the laughs. The book is written in a very conversational tone, as opposed to something dry and academic, or (worse) rife with hero worship. Since the book covers a lot of ground, the entries are necessarily brief, but they serve as great introductions and still manage to convey quite a bit of information. Barber has fun with the subjects, and seems to take delight in cataloguing eccentricities with a playfully acerbic tongue. Obviously, there is some debate over just how "true" some of the information in this book is. A couple of the claims seemed too bizarre to be real, such as Richard Wagner once writing a pamphlet stating there were vegetarian panthers in the swamps of Canada. I actually spent a few minutes Googling that, and yes indeed he did (in a tract called "On Art and Music.") So Barber passes a couple of accuracy spot-checks, but I can't vouch for the entire book. If you love classical music, it's a fun resource to give you trivia about some of your favorite composers. If you hate classical music, it's likewise invaluable for giving you the quirks and foibles of the "greats" you loathe so much. Highly recommended, and if you like this one, Barber's other books are equally enjoyable and informative.

This was recommended to me by a friend. I'm planning to use the information in some of my general music classes.

Twenty years after its original publication, this wryly humorous history of classical music stands up well, and renders a heavy subject as light as a feather!

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