When I teach undergraduates, I believe that a large part of my work is helping them to understand who they are—and who they might choose to be. Whether they think of themselves Americans or citizens of a post- or transnational world, they are almost all culturally dislocated people whose environment will daily require them to locate themselves in relation to several, often conflicting traditions and lifeways. By teaching them historical imagination, introducing them to the aural and audible cultures I know well, and teaching them to think about the relationship of the audible to other aspects of culture, I equip them to choose their locations in a self-aware, creative way. Moreover, by teaching them to think well about a wide range of musical experiences, I teach them to think well about the relationship of sensory and emotional experience to a fully realized human life, and to navigate the dynamic force fields we denote by the word "power." By teaching them to think about the formal qualities of music's construction and unfolding in time, I teach them one way in which the parallel universes that all humans imagine can be configured and shared in sound (and in the practices that produce sounds). In the end, I also teach students to respect and respond to others' imaginations, intelligences, and distinct perspectives, so that they can themselves be intelligent, responsive and responsible citizens of the world.

I design final projects that serve both as evaluation instruments and as opportunities for the students to synthesize course material in ways that will be useful to them. In Spring 2008, the final project for my honors seminar "Soundscapes of Contemporary War" was the collaborative design and creation of a website with the same title that, while it was "up" on the web, would teach the general public about the distinctive ways one could know the "war on terror" by knowing its acoustic practices. Students were very highly motivated to do careful, excellent work, because of both the political delicacy of the work they wanted the site to do and the extremely public nature of their work. As a result, their critiques of each other were based in stunningly meticulous reconsideration of readings and discussion from earlier in the term, as well as on brand-new research. In Spring 2010, the final project for a seminar tracing a production of Puccini's Madama Butterfly at New York City Opera was to produce an intervention in the critical discourse about the opera, in any medium, that would address the opera's engagements with economic relations (whether a represented on stage or as intrinsic to production choices). Projects ranged from a rewriting of the third act trio into a punk soundtrack for the trailer of an anime film to be based on Butterfly; to an 8-minute video contemplation of memory as a theme both in the opera and in the items of Butterfly-themed opera-schlock sold on the internet; to a scholarly paper interpreting Cio-Cio-San through the economics of geisha culture. The range, intellectual seriousness, and sheer imagination of these projects told me that I had unleashed these students' abilities to locate themselves in creative relationship to the tangled traditions that constitute their world.

I regret that because of other departmental assignments I have been able to direct only one undergraduate thesis (on gender in Schoenberg's Verklärte Nacht), and to sponsor only a handful of undergraduate research projects.