



September 11, 1995

Washington University
c/o Professor Jeffrey Kurtzman
7605 Balson Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63130-2150

To whom it may concern:

This letter is offered in the hope of providing helpful insights in the matter involving Professor Jeffrey Kurtzman. Since I am an outsider to the situation, it is not my aim to pass judgment. Rather, I would like to share relevant experiences based on almost twenty-five years as a professional musicologist, with teaching experience in four different universities. My background also includes the position of chair of the Committee on the Status of Women of the main scholarly organization in the discipline, the American Musicological Society. I served in this capacity for three years, in the early 1980s.

I would like to address the issue of hugging. It may be difficult for non-musicians to understand, but it is normal practice for members of the musical community to give each other hugs in a congratulatory situation. It probably stems from the ritual of going backstage after a concert and hugging the performer. But musical culture, with its heightened emotional atmosphere and its shared music-making, tends to foster a tactile environment in general--where people might touch someone else's arm or shoulder, for instance, as a typical gesture of communication. Or, as an extension of backstage etiquette, one might give a congratulatory hug to a musical colleague or student for some other event.

Let me illustrate from my own experiences. I have served as a judge for student recitals for almost twenty years. Inevitably after the performance, I go backstage and give the student, male or female, a warm hug. Doing less, in the culture in which I work, might be taken as apathy or coolness on my part. Another example of hugging, with a male colleague, occurs when the music school Dean and I hug after the long summer vacation. Or, when a colleague who only comes to our campus every fourth week sees me after several months--someone I've known for over ten years--he might give me a greeting hug. I recall that when I was promoted to full professor, the Dean gave me a warm congratulatory hug. Sometimes, in the excitement of conversation, the Dean or another male colleague might touch my arm as a way of intensifying the communication process. As for myself, I have sometimes given a student a congratulatory hug in my office, with no one

else there. For example, a male senior musicology major won a major grant, and I gave him a congratulatory hug. And, I might add, when he returned from his year abroad I gave him a hug as a greeting. In all these cases, the touching seemed appropriate to the culture and to the given situation.

It is my hope that these remarks prove helpful toward understanding the situation under review concerning Professor Kurtzman. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



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Professor of Musicology