Being a _______ Ethnomusicologist
choosing our adjectives

Welcome to the fourth volume of SEM Student News. In this issue, we highlight the subfields of applied and activist ethnomusicology, questioning how our work as scholars can be connected to the broader social, educational, and research communities in which we find ourselves. As a medical ethnomusicologist researching indigenous health and an activist working in educational documentary media, the relationship between academics and social engagement is one I constantly face in both my professional and personal lives. Colleagues often ask me why I bother with all the ethics reviews, community meetings, and collaborative editing. Community members often ask me why my work should matter to them, what greater purpose I can serve, and what results I can guarantee. How can we reconcile these two often-opposing positions, and foster a productive and meaningful dialogue that not only facilitates our research, but also strengthens it?

Many of our teachers and mentors are conducting community-based, collaborative research and writing that specifically seeks to address this question. And yet, so many times we hear how experimental writing, social engagement, or public scholarship had to wait until they were post-dissertation, post-job, post-book, post-tenure, post-I-have-already-proven-myself-as-an-continued on next page...
Letter from the Editor
... continued

I find myself asking: why? Why should making a difference have to wait, and why is it often viewed as incompatible with rigorous, “objective” scholarship? Why should the years of our life we toil away at coursework, research, and writing yield a product that might only be read by our dissertation committee and maybe the ten or twenty other people in our specializations? Making our work serve a larger community base will increase our relevance and reach as scholars. It will also build a broader and more nuanced network of readers that could, in turn, heighten our sense of accountability, creativity, innovation, and rigor.

In my opinion, this is not only needed but also necessary. In the age of TedTalks, YouTube, Podcasts, tweeting, and blogging, the role of the academic is rapidly changing toward more public-based forms of knowledge production and increasingly general audiences. While some of us may get the perceived holy grail of a tenure-track job at an Ivy school, let’s be honest: those types of jobs aren’t always immediately attainable in our competitive and troubled economy. So what are our options? What are our options? Let’s be open and imaginative to find new ways to apply our work, to integrate the valuable ideas and research we strive to produce into our daily lives. Let’s ditch the dichotomies that have segregated applied from scholarship, activist from academic, community from scholar. We can be all (or some, or none) of these things. Historical, Medical, Latin, Indigenous, Linguistic, Activist, Balinese, Applied: what are your adjectives? We are privileged as the next generation of thinkers and writers to choose new (and multiple) avenues to follow. Let’s begin a new trend.

By Lauren E. Sweetman (NYU)

SEM Student News is pleased to announce the addition of three new staff members Ari, Davin, and Natalie. We are excited to have you on board! We would also like to bid a loving farewell to a much-valued member of the team, co-founder Charlotte D’Evelyn. We wish you all the best for the future, and thank you for your commitment, guidance, and moderation. See below for more on Charlotte’s role as a student leader.

SCC Update
a letter from your co-chairs

By Justin Hunter (Univ. of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)

Hello again from SEM’s Student Concerns Committee (SCC). We are excited for you to see the fourth edition of SEM Student News. The SCC’s primary role is to be a direct representative of the SEM student body to the Society and its leadership. We continue to actively search for new ways to be of help to students. From degree seeking to job seeking, we hope to facilitate communication and to build networks for students to succeed within and beyond the Society.

In this issue of SEM Student News, you will find writings full of exciting ways to get involved with the varied communities we serve. With that, we want to call special attention to someone who has been a driving force behind much of the work the SCC has done over the past few years. At the last SEM conference in Philadelphia, Charlotte D’Evelyn, PhD candidate from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, retired from her leadership role with the SCC. Along with Jesse Johnston and Alyson Jones of the University of Michigan, Charlotte was instrumental in the rebuilding and sustaining of the SCC starting in 2006. During Charlotte’s tenure as a co-chair of the SCC, the committee has grown in scope and focus. Charlotte has also been influential in the creation and promotion of this newsletter, which started as a “simple idea” to communicate with students and has now blossomed into an official publication of the Society. Charlotte served as SCC liaison to the newsletter and was an active contributor in previous issues. Her dedication to both the SCC and SEM Student News will continue to be impactful for years to come.

Though Charlotte has retired from the SCC and SEM Student News, she will remain an advocate for the student body by serving her second term as a Student Representative on the SEM Council. We look forward to seeing Charlotte continue as a productive member of the Society and wish her well in her new endeavors. A big mahalo,谢谢, and thanks to Charlotte for her years of work and continued support.

Charlotte D’Evelyn (Univ. of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)
Community News
updates from your chapters + reps

By Justin Hunter (Univ. of Hawai‘i at Mānoa)

In previous issues, we have included chapter news to keep you up to date with what’s happening around SEM. Last issue, we introduced you to two council reps so you know who is representing you. Now, we’re doing both! Beginning a new column for issues to come, Community News focuses on the current activities in two SEM chapters, and helps you get to know your chapter reps. This volume, we hear from SEM’s Southeast and Caribbean Chapter (SEMSEC) and Southern California and Hawai‘i Chapter (SEMSCHC) via their reps, Tim Storhoff and Kathryn Alexander.

SEMSEC UPDATE W/ TIM STORHOFF: This spring, SEM’s Southeast and Caribbean Chapter (SEMSEC), which was formed in 1981, had its first ever meeting in the Caribbean. From March 9-11, SEMSEC met at the Academica de Ciencias de la República Dominicana in Santo Domingo. There were 27 paper and film presentations, 13 of which were given by current graduate students. Turnout at the conference was excellent with over 20 students from schools including Florida State University, the University of Florida, the University of Georgia, the University of Illinois, the University of Memphis, and the University of the West Indies in attendance. SEM President Gage Averill gave the keynote address on the repatriation of Alan Lomax’s Haiti recordings. Other exciting events included workshops on Afro-Dominican instruments and bachata, an excursion to San José de Los Llanos, and a concert by Paul Austerlitz y su Quinteto. The chapter hopes to hold future meetings in the Caribbean when there are interested host institutions. To view photos from the meeting in the Dominican Republic, you can visit the SEMSEC website at http://www.semsec.org.

SEMSCHC W/ KATHRYN ALEXANDER: The 2012 SEM Southern California and Hawai‘i Chapter (SEMSCHC) Regional Conference, hosted by Loyola Marymount University, was a successful and productive meeting. The conference was well attended, and proceeded smoothly. Kimasi Browne (Azusa Pacific University) assumed the Chapter Presidency from outgoing President Jonathan Ritter (UC Riverside), and Charles Sharp (CSU Fullerton) was voted in as the new Vice President. UC Riverside will host the SEMSCHC Regional Conference in 2013. George Blake (UC Santa Barbara) succeeded outgoing SEMSCHC Student Concerns Committee Co-President Jason Busniewski (UC Santa Barbara).

Kathryn Alexander is a third year PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of California Riverside. She received a BA in the history of the Near East and violin performance from UC San Diego in 2009, and an MA in ethnomusicology from UC Riverside in 2011. Her current work examines acceptable forms of gendered, sexualized, and racialized embodiment in a traditional expressive cultural environment in Eastern Canada. As one of two representatives for SEMSCHC, and going into her second year of service, she hopes to foster a greater sense of community amongst the graduate students at the Chapter’s various universities by building an online forum for graduate students to share their ideas, resources, and experiences, and to explore collaborations with each other throughout the year.

Tim Storhoff is a doctoral candidate in ethnomusicology at Florida State University. He is currently working on his dissertation, which addresses U.S.-Cuban musical and political interactions in the context of international music festivals. As the new student representative of SEMSEC, he hopes to get more students involved in the planning of next year’s meeting and to encourage more interaction between students in the region.
Redefining “Applied” Ethnomusicology: the challenges of definition

By Meredith Aska McBride (Univ. of Chicago)

As we focus on applied ethnomusicology in this issue of the SEM Student News, I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on the category of “applied ethnomusicology” itself, and its purported complement—“regular” ethnomusicology? “Unapplicable” ethnomusicology? The words themselves betray the problem at hand. I want to question this distinction and propose a new framework for ethnomusicological work.

Essentially, “applied ethnomusicology” is a euphemism for “work done by ethnomusicologists outside of the academy.” Although the types of applied ethnomusicology that get the most attention tend to have an activist or community-oriented bent, ethnomusicology done outside of universities does not necessarily have to be this way. Nor does work done by university-employed ethnomusicologists necessarily have to be divorced from social change.

This dichotomy between the applied and the non-applied has two implications, neither of which are true: first, that applied work is separate from intellectual or scholarly work; and second, that work done from within the academy is only relevant to a scholarly audience. Not only are these implications untrue, but furthermore, neither is most ethnomusicological work rigidly separable into these categories.

In reality, ethnomusicologists are doing intellectually-exciting, practically-applicable projects from a variety of institutional positions. We can make change in a variety of ways; indeed, effecting change is integral to what we do as ethnomusicologists. A survey of the recent activities of our colleagues reveals this reality: ethnomusicologists influence students through teaching; our research projects themselves have an influence within the communities with whom we work, and hopefully a positive one; our research makes an impact on the scholarly community; our research is often disseminated to the public at large and may have an effect in that manner; we perform, teach, learn, and compose music; we curate exhibits and organize conferences, performances, open houses, lectures, and workshops; we work in the policy sphere; we work in partnership with other organizations; we participate in political advocacy and activism; and we consult and mentor a variety of people and organizations.

All of these activities, and more, can be done regardless of where we are employed. Each of the above has great potential to change the world for the better, and there are countless examples of ethnomusicologists investing each of these activities with great meaning and potential. It is the rare ethnomusicologist, working in any capacity, whose work is completely “un-applicable”—irrelevant!—to anyone or anything else.

Young ethnomusicologists, then, do not have to think about our careers in terms of whether we want to do “applied” ethnomusicology or not. We should, rather, be directing our attentions to the kinds of impacts that we wish to make and in what realms. Once we have determined this, we can then assess which types of jobs will be most conducive to our goals. It may well be that some people will be able to do political activism and community organizing as tenure-track professors, while others will write influential articles as museum curators or high school music teachers.

As ethnomusicologists, we are fortunate that we have a wide variety of skills that can be used in any number of settings. Let’s open our minds to the range of possibilities that await us when we have our master’s or doctorate in hand. Recognizing that we will make an impact regardless of where we go or what we do, let’s focus on asking how, why, and with whom it will be made and leave the distinctions between “applied” and “non-applied” ethnomusicology behind.
A Community of Writers
from academics to accessibility

By Alex W. Rodriguez (UCLA)

“If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot.” — Stephen King, On Writing

As ethnomusicologists, much of our work involves writing. Even here at UCLA, where the department hangs its hat on Mantle Hood’s vision of bi-musicality and performance study, reading and writing is most of what we do. Later in our careers, of course, it is our writing that will be judged primarily as our contribution to the discipline and our worth as scholars. It is also oftentimes one of the most immediate and public aspects of our work—whether writing grants to support research or artistic projects, publishing the dissertation, or e-mailing friends and colleagues.

If we are to be a community of writers, then, it matters that we aspire to write well. Yet our graduate training does not stress this as a goal; instead, we read dense, impenetrable prose in coursework dedicated to social theory, and (if we’re lucky) actually play music. Sure, we do our fair share of writing—in chaotic bursts against term paper deadlines—but this is no way to train good writers.

Like music-making, writing is a social activity, although it doesn’t always feel like it. The best writing is made in conversations with editors, colleagues, co-panelists, and students taking part in the process, and writing that lacks this quality is easy to spot. I was amazed the first time that I began working with a veteran newspaper editor after many years writing without one—someone else’s take on what I had to say elevated my own prose unimaginably. Even blog comments have a way of finding holes and inconsistencies; thoughtful attention to them has improved many of my posts, and even spawned new conversations.

Our generation of scholars is coming into the discipline during a radical transformation of the academic writing process. Greedy academic publishers are beginning to drive scholars to open access formats, and sites such as Academia.edu, Facebook and Twitter are connecting colleagues and ideas in new ways. The community is no longer bound together solely through journals like *Ethnomusicology* and academic conferences; new ways of engaging with one another and with the public are beginning to take root. All of these new formats are greatly enriched by clear, thoughtful prose. I’ll close, then, with five suggestions along these lines:

1) Be writing. In his manifesto *On Writing* cited above, Stephen King recommends that writers write 1,000 words a day. Clifford Geertz was known to have written his anthropological masterpieces one paragraph at a time, one per day. Don’t save up until the end of the semester when you have to carelessly pump out 75-100 pages of text. Consistency sharpens prose, just like regular practice on a musical instrument makes for better musical accuracy.

2) Be concise. Practice making 600-word arguments. That’s about one page, single-spaced. It might help you get to the bottom of something that you have to say. Plus, these make great blog posts.

3) Be online. If you aren’t up to full-on blogging, get a twitter account and follow what others are linking to and writing themselves. Or, pitch short pieces to other websites or blogs where the infrastructure is already set up. There’s an amazing amount of useful material both in terms of interesting research and grad-school how-tos floating around on the interwebs.

4) Be brave. Don’t be afraid to share drafts of your papers with professors, friends, or other friendly readers. Ask for honest feedback from these people before you’re up against a deadline.

5) Be a part of the conversation. Post short drafts to a blog or share them with friends over Google Docs. Contribute comments and questions to research that others have posted on blogs, websites, or in open-access web journals. Go to conferences, even if you’re not presenting a paper. Write for SEM Student News. Share links to interesting articles via social media.

There are plenty of ways to resist the destructive myth of the Lone Ranger Academic, and it’s up to all of us to actively seek them out. By keeping in mind the social dimension of our own lifestyles (and not just those of our “collaborators” in the field) and taking ourselves seriously as writers, we can work together to continue ethnomusicology as a vibrant, creative, and resilient field of scholarship and activism.
The State of the Field
your views, your visions, your voices

By Ari Ben Mosha Gagné (Univ. of Colorado at Boulder)

As we are consumed with the rigors of academia, it becomes easy to lose consciousness of our initial intentions behind entering the field of ethnomusicology. Seemingly our motives were not those of status, job security, or financial reward, but rather a genuine affinity for music and the diverse groups of people it affects. In searching for experiences that reaffirm our efforts and the purpose(s) of our academic endeavors, we asked students: how have you applied your research/studies in ethnomusicology outside of the academy, and how it has in turn affected your life, your scholarship, and others? We hope these reflections provoke you to consider the power of your research and studies beyond the traditional boundaries of your respective universities, and the potential for you to contribute to a greater collective.

“The notion of applied ethnomusicology resonates strongly among scholars working in Brazil. Graduate students in ethnomusicology—especially those working with marginalized communities—are encouraged to reflect on the impact their research might have on local groups’ ability (or willingness) to articulate their concerns. I believe my research here in Brazil relates to this trend. My study tackles the politics of urban sounds (including noise pollution and noise legislation) in São Paulo. There is an extremely complex sonic universe here and almost infinite ways to think about the implications of my work outside the academy. I'm constantly applying my studies on urban soundscapes, spatial segregation, and everyday auditory practices to better understand intra-urban interaction, as well as my own relationship with such a densely populated environment.”

– Leonardo Cardoso (University of Texas at Austin)

“I participated as a graduate student researcher for the Holy Cross Cemetery Restoration Project to promote an historic Nova Scotian Irish Catholic cemetery. Aligning with my dissertation, the non-profit organization invited me to write about the history of Irish traditional music in Halifax. As my contribution will be on display at the cemetery, this solitary pro bono publico contribution will reach a local community readership in a capacity that my scholarly writings would not otherwise reach so directly. This, of course, delights my parents as I prove able to contribute to the home town local community despite teaching abroad.”

– Peter Fielding (UMass Amherst)

“Hood and countless others have insisted that fluency in performance can make us better scholars. Fewer voices have articulated the ways in which the cerebral rigors of scholarship can make us better, more feelingful, more musical performers. As a DJ who was spinning to club crowds before I began studying them, I’ve found that my academic research, more than any technique learned on the turntables, has increased my proficiency at rocking a dance floor. Ethnographic observation in nightclubs has deepened my sense of what gets dancers moving, a sense highly prized among DJs. And there is a musicality to academic writing, an engagement with elements of composition and remix that, over time, hones the mental facilities and lays the necessary psychic groundwork for intuitive improvisations on the wheels of steel. Why divide the ethnomusical self in half, ‘drastic’ versus ‘gnostic,’ assigning affect, sensitivity and delight to the experience of performance, lucidity and content to the realm of scholarship? We can be musical in our writing, bookish in the DJ booth, at once intellectually astute and fully present within our bodies on the dance floor.”

– Sarah Hankins (Harvard University)

Want to share your take? Have photos from your fieldwork? Send us your sound bytes and images at semstudentnews@gmail.com.
Dear SEM,

From your experiences, what advice do you have for students doing applied and/or activist work?

MURIEL E. SWIJGHUISEN REIGERSBERG: My advice will centre on academic content and dissertation presentation. When I was conducting my applied PhD research in Australian Aboriginal choral singing as a music facilitator, there were two questions that I kept asking myself: “How is what I am doing research?” and “Why is this not just applying my choral facilitation skills to help revive the activity of choral singing?” The answers: a) I am creating new knowledge about choral singing in an Indigenous Australian community and b) I am applying my already existing skills and knowledge to create new knowledge, which is what research is all about: creating new knowledge and communicating it. This distinction is not always clear to practitioners, students, and assessors alike and well worth remembering.

My last answer raised further questions when writing my dissertation. Applied research generally relies more heavily on personal experience and a researcher’s skills than other types of research. My new nuggets of gold were based on performative experience, reflective project evaluations, interviews, surveys, and singer feedback. Research outcomes included shared musical experiences, new choral conducting knowledge and performances. None were easily communicated in academic writing. Whilst all forms of knowledge have the potential to be equally valuable, I still had to fulfil assessment criteria by writing at least some of my dissertation. I therefore decided to use performative, creative narratives and storytelling whilst still incorporating participant interview and questionnaire responses into my creative style. It conveyed the shared, personalised nature of my experiences and new knowledge. I also added audio visual media. The result was well received by examiners. I therefore advise students in the applied sector to consider using alternative modes of presentation. They may be better at communicating the highly personalised, experiential applied knowledge gained. Provided presentation styles are adequately theorised, framed, and justified there is no reason why they should not be well-received.

ERIC USNER: I recently defended ethnomusicology while speaking with a colleague who works for a large grant-making organization for the humanities and social sciences. Reviewing hundreds, if not thousands of proposals each year, they have an enviable vista of the landscape of North American higher education. And they have all but given up on ethnomusicology. In their words, “Ethnomusicology has become predictable, formulaic, stale… I have a proposal on my desk right now. They are always the same, ‘The [Music/Dance] of [Group X] and [Identity Marker].’”

I countered with examples of a shift I’ve recently witnessed, one in which emerging scholars are intuitively critical of this epistemology in their approaches. Current papers, panels, and publications increasingly manifest a language of advocacy, activism, engagement, and indeed, “justice.” They distinguish a new ethnomusicology from something more normative—neither modernist, nor post-modernist, but, critical humanist. There is a turn taking place in the discipline. If ethnomusicology is distinguished from other musicologies by method, ethnography, then a new grassroots ethnomusicology is querying theoretical and methodological status quo and re-orienting around issues of ethics and social justice. This ethical ethnomusicology has an allegiance no longer first and foremost to a field, rather it is responsive to the real human conditions witnessed in the field, of our world. It works to understand how music and performance offer pathways to solve problems. Indeed, the President’s Roundtable in Philadelphia, which lifted up work on HIV/AIDS in Africa, and the choice of Randy Martin, whose keynote brilliantly examined the stakes of a larger critical juncture in a neo-liberal corporate co-optation of higher education, brought the ethics of disciplinary and academic praxis center stage.

Those interested in applied work too often assume that there is a shared common purpose in our field and our work place. From a modernist practice of privilege, to a late Marxist critique and corrective work, to at worst, a clever and solipsistic imitation of the logics and practices of neoliberal corporate culture where, without a sexy brand, you ain’t making it, we need to occupy ethnomusicology and academia. We need to question privilege, the what and why of what we’re doing that simultaneously restores the original service mission of the university while reimaging the praxis as ethical and responsible, responsive and accountable. In the creative spaces compelled by our present post-neoliberal moment, let’s learn from the field, at home and abroad, dedicating ourselves to an imaginative nurturing of deep and critical reflexive praxes (of thinking—action—reflection—action), that offer up a multitude of models for a fair trade ethnomusicology, part of a larger sustainable academia.

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Advocacy Activism Responsibility and the Ethnomusicologist

By Gregory Barz (Vanderbilt University)

I recently finished teaching Nick Kristof and Cheryl WuDunn’s journalistic tour de force, Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide (2010) to a freshmen seminar at Vanderbilt University. The students were moved and felt a strong call to action as they consumed chapter after chapter that exposed them to a variety of human rights violations specific to women; they were each in their own way ready to respond to a perceived call to activism. As I read along with the students, I paused to consider the responsibilities ethnomusicologists have as scholars versus the advocacy many now experience in their scholarship (a brief focus on responsibility may very well re-position the agency of the scholar, while simultaneously bracketing the very real issue of the responsibility of scholarship). Kristof and WuDunn highlight critical issues of violence and inequity experienced by women globally, while simultaneously offering reflections on the ways in which they as journalists interpret their personal responsibility in regards to the issues they uncover. Similarly, scholars actively engaging field research in the nascent field of medical ethnomusicology frequently find themselves immersed in the politics of responsibility, specifically regarding healthcare-related topics, in my case, HIV/AIDS and music in a variety of African contexts. In the brief reflection that follows, I raise what might seem to be an overly simplistic issue, albeit one that that gives me pause. The issue concerns the responsibilities we ethnomusicologists share in regards to our very identity as researchers; does an inherent culture of responsibility in fact feed and generate our responses of activism in ethnomusicology?

Why raise such a seemingly convoluted issue in regards to advocacy? For me, the issue was raised several years ago following a paper I delivered at Indiana University on music as a medical intervention regarding HIV in Africa. A graduate student stood after the paper and publically questioned whether I really was more of an activist than a mainstream ethnomusicologist. After an audible gasp in the room I searched for an appropriate response. Not prepared to address the ramifications of such an accusation at that time, I chose to respond simply—“thank you.” That comment seemed to amuse several colleagues, and it has taken several years to frame a proper response that addresses what I understand to be a critical context for personal activism—responsibility. In the intervening years since the initial activist accusation, I believe (perhaps falsely) that openly addressing activism in ethnomusicology is no longer off limits (and perhaps it never truly was). But, hold on! Don’t many (if not all) ethnomusicologists advocate at some point and on some
level for the musics, cultures, and individuals with whom they work, even if through their publications and their teaching. Translating advocacy to activism, however, reveals a newer and perhaps more politicized agenda of reception, and an agenda of responsibility.

The concept of responsibility within ethnomusicology exists within a linear, experiential progression. Musical information in the form of speech, performance, or instruction is often communicated to ethnomusicologists in such a way that the ethnomusicologist reacts in predictable ways. Such cause-and-effect reactions typically manifest themselves in action or advocacy; in the past, value may have been placed on the ability of the ethnomusicologist to not react or intervene. Interventions (frequently labeled in the past as “emotional”) may still be understood as a pollution of data or as a potential violation of relationships in the field that ultimately lead to, yes, reflexivity (if we intervene or advocate, we then study the very intervention that we instituted). There is, however, legitimate concern within such a stance; positioning the ethnomusicologist within his/her gaze on the object of study has long been a source of contention. Yet, it is worth considering, even in a preliminary way such as this, the ways in which our individual and unique human identities impact the very production of knowledge we receive. But, I am getting ahead of myself...

The overly simplified model represented in Figure 1 (left) reflects a typical progression from knowledge/experience acquisition—in the form of an initial stimulus—to action in the form of advocacy. Knowledge/information/experience in this model is transmitted through “us”—the ethnomusicologists—and results in advocacy that leads again away from “us” (we advocate for something outside of ourselves). Ethnomusicologists are at the center of this linear mode of transmission; they are neither the cause nor the effect of the stimulus or the response.

Kristof and WuDunn underscore the transmission of this advocacy model outlined throughout *Half the Sky*. For example, they highlight the story of Zach Hunter who founded LC 2 LC (Loose Change to Loosen Chains). When Hunter was 12 years old he was presented with knowledge about global slavery in his school (the stimulus experience). In response he founded a student-run campaign to advocate for victims’ rights (2010, 54). This progress from stimulus to action/advocacy through the individual reflects a typical reading of how many respond to the identification of a perceived need for social action.

A simple conceptual shift in regards to where the experience of reception occurs allows a repositioning of the ethnomusicologist within the exchange. In the second advocacy model (right), the ethnomusicologist is positioned with an outgoing arrow pointed at the original musical event/experience. Thus ethnomusicologists could easily acknowledge bringing something of themselves to their interpretation and experience of the original reception event.

In this model, additional arrows are located between advocacy and the original event as a gesture to indicate the (perhaps) inherent nature of advocacy in any given musical experience. The ethnomusicologist thus brings a predisposed attitude of advocacy to her reception of the musical event, and thus re-inscribes a context of responsibility. Model No. 2 may further destabilize the perceived agenda of advocacy by coupling it with research, indicating that advocacy is inseparable from our effort, our products, our writing, and our field research.

As ethnomusicologists we are activists because we must be. We advocate because we must. To do otherwise would be to deny the central location of responsibility in both our perception and reaction to musical stimuli, and… in what we bring to initial fieldwork stimuli. That Model No. 1 may very well feel more comfortable to many of us might not be surprising. Acknowledging that Model No. 2 has most likely always been present in our work and efforts would ultimately allow for expanding and rethinking the position of responsibility in our work, thus leading to a very necessary re-evaluation of our efforts in activism and advocacy as inherently scholarly by our academic institutions.
I am an ethnomusicologist who wants to connect music to social justice. Ultimately, this field is important in and of itself, but I believe that applying ethnomusicology, making it public and accessible, using it as a tool to engage the world at large in critical thinking are the keys to making it relevant and useful for communities. You might be surprised to learn that as graduate students in ethnomusicology, you have been cultivating skills to work beyond academia, to make those connections. Ethnographic skills enable productive interaction with all different kinds of people in diverse settings—musicians, arts patrons, students, fans—to interpret how they function and why. Regular critical analysis facilitates assessment of what an organization or group of people needs. Your extreme focus and discipline as researchers and students yield dependable, reliable employees and your musicianship is vital for community engagement, creative thinking and arts integration.

While I often suspected that I would work in applied ethnomusicology, I didn’t know how soon that would happen. In early 2008, I was a doctoral candidate at the University of Texas at Austin and had recently returned from a year of fieldwork studying popular music in the urban Amazon of Peru. I held a graduate assistantship as the Assistant Editor for a journal while I plugged along on the dissertation. I had been a teaching assistant for the History of Rock for years before leaving for Peru and I had worked at a non-profit arts organization in Austin for a few summers, which led several friends to forward a job posting in the Education Department at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum (a 501(c)3 organization). At the time, I assumed that I would finish the dissertation and find a gig at a small, liberal arts college somewhere hopefully near a city. I hemmed and hawed and ultimately decided to send over my resume and a cover letter. After a phone interview and an on-site interview that included teaching a class, I moved to Cleveland, nervous at the prospect of leaving Austin for the Midwest, especially before finishing the dissertation.

Despite my fears, as the Education Instructor at the Rock Hall I learned to work in a remarkably collaborative department filled with brilliant critical thinkers who regularly challenge and inspire me—I’m the only ethnomusicologist among five pop music scholars in my department (two musicologists, a cultural studies professor, a performer, and me). We bring research, analysis, criticism, and performance to nearly every arena of our jobs, making constant efforts to engage all levels of learners in formal and informal environments. I teach K-12 students both on-site (free for schools in Northeast Ohio of which many students are “at-risk”) and through distance learning via videoconferencing around the country and around the world. I also teach teachers how to use popular music in their classrooms, adults about the history of rock and roll, and I co-teach the occasional writing-based seminar at Case Western Reserve University. I help coordinate public programs for which we bring artists and other members of the music industry to the Museum for interviews about their careers in front of a live audience, and I direct our American Music Masters Conference during which scholars, journalists, and artists explore the life and career of iconic American musicians (e.g. Aretha Franklin, Fats Domino and Dave Bartholomew). In one day, I’ll teach 5th graders and college students, design curricula and work on a conference paper, play drums for inner-city 6 year olds, and film an interview with Smokey Robinson. I get to bring ethnomusicology to Cleveland daily.

At a time when the arts are in crisis due to drastically reduced funding across the board, we as ethnomusicologists have opportunities to lead by example and to demonstrate the importance and application of our field, connecting communities to music in meaningful ways.

Feel free to email me at kmetz@rockhall.org. And take a look at www.idealist.org for some interesting job postings.
When the bell rings for dismissal at an elementary school in a large city in the Pacific Northwest, twenty-four Kindergarteners gather together in one of the classrooms. As the four and five-year-olds finish their snacks and socialize with one another, many of their parents and siblings arrive. We, the facilitators of the group, are two graduate students, one of ethnomusicology (Morford) and one of music education (Howard), and each of us comes with training in both disciplines. We position ourselves on a large square of red carpet at the front of the classroom. The room begins to churn and bubble. All are ready to get to the music-making. Over the next hour, we engage the children and their parents in an energetic flurry of rhythmically-centered musical activity—playing, dancing, singing, chanting, and drumming. At the conclusion of the weekly hour-long session, everyone is exhausted and satisfied. As the facilitators of the group, we know that the collective expression has not really ended; we have only “pressed pause.” Next week, we will gather again to re-sync our bodies and voices in the rhythmic expression of our musical community.

The Get-in-the-Groove! Kindergarten Music Project (GGK-Music), funded through a grant from the Jubilation Foundation, is “ethnomusicology, applied,” a community music project dedicated to supporting and enriching the holistic learning and development of young children through the expressive-performative arts of music, dance, and poetry. As certified teachers of music, we are both grounded in a purposeful pedagogy essential for engaging children in participatory experiences. We explicitly design activities utilizing music that is stylistically and culturally diverse.

Our work as PhD students at the University of Washington entails coursework and interests that cross over the imagined boundaries between ethnomusicology and music education. Collaboration between the two fields is critical for exploring and illuminating children's musical cultures, and participation in interdisciplinary projects will provide us with valuable skills as we move forward in our careers. As both ethnomusicologists and music educators, we are interested in how children use music in their lives, and hope to increase and nurture music-making within the families by modeling numerous ways that they can interact with music outside of the GGK-Music sessions. We are concerned with understanding how participation in these high-energy and community-centered “rhythmicking” (Campbell and Kassner 2013) sessions reinforces the natural tendencies of children who, given enough interactive experience, co-evolve ways of grooving with others (Keil 2006).

Keil recommends after-school programs of *ngoma (drum-song-dance-drama-healing ‘clubs’) that maximize the possibilities for children’s exuberant socially-connective expressions (ibid). Patricia Shehan Campbell advises heavy doses of rhythm among the musical activities, and recommends the joining in of parents in these sessions so that they can help to remember and encourage the continuation of musicking at home and in the family (2006). The Jubilation Foundation funds projects that “help young people feel fully alive through rhythm as expressed in dance, music, and poetry” (“Jubilation Foundation” 2012), and our GGK-Music squarely fits and meets this aim.

The program is enriched by the occasional visit of a guest artist, Kedmon Mapana, a Jubilation Foundation fellow and master musician from Tanzania. Mapana acts as a culture-bearer, representing the music and dance of the children near his home of Chamwino in the Dodoma Region of Tanzania. The three of us drum, sing, and dance for and with the participants of the class. Even though the children and parents do not necessarily understand the words of the songs (although Mapana provides translations), they show their understanding of the music through their united movements and voices.

The immersion process of this *ngoma experience is producing astounding results in the rhythmicking and broader musicking (Small 1998) behaviors of the young participants. As educators with many years of experience, we felt that we already knew what to expect for achievement and understanding with four and five year olds. However, as the project progressed, we allowed ourselves to change our more typical classroom-style teaching approach. Our altered approach included longer playing sessions, more opportunities for improvisation with movement and drumming, stepping up the difficulty level of activities, more freedom of expression and movement for the children involved (less of “everyone do... continues on next page...
A Musical Exploration in Rhythmic Immersion
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it like this”), and riffing off of the spontaneous responses that erupted during the lessons. One example of this kind of interaction involved a piece inspired by Ghanaian Borborbor recreational dance-drumming. The children were only expected to walk to the beat in a circle, and then change direction when the teacher vocalized the drum signal. To our surprise, the children walked to the beat, clapped the bell pattern and vocalized the drum call. Because of their age, neither of us expected the children to be able to handle such a challenge.

Project sessions are recorded and shared with the families of participating students through the use of a private YouTube channel, allowing everyone in the GGK-Music community the opportunity to revisit experiences. One of our goals for the program has been to encourage musical activity in the daily lives of the families in the group. The videos act as a tool for bringing the music into the homes of the participants, and as a reminder of what we learned. Repetition is important for young children, who ask for their favorite chants, dances and songs again and again.

Feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive, many of whom consistently attend and participate with their children and most importantly, continue the musicking outside of class. We are delighted to implement our understandings of music, culture, and pedagogical know-how in ways that define one more pathway of applied ethnomusicology.

References:
Organizations + Resources

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Center for World Music (and Related Arts). Non-profit organization whose purpose is to foster awareness and understanding of the world’s performing arts traditions through study abroad programs, teaching, and performance. http://www.centerforworldmusic.org/

City Lore. Organization that aims to document, present, and advocate for grassroots cultures to ensure their living legacy in stories, histories, places, and traditions. www.citylore.org

Ethnographic Video for Instruction & Analysis Digital Archive (EVIA-DA). A digital archive of ethnographic field video established for preservation and use by scholars, educators and researchers. www.eviada.org

Folk Alliance International. Aims to foster and promote traditional, contemporary, and multicultural folk music, dance, and related performing arts. www.folkalliance.org

Folkstreams. National preserve of documentary films concerning American folk or roots cultures. www.folkstreams.net

International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM). Non-governmental organization aiming to further the study, practice, documentation, preservation and dissemination of traditional music and dance of all countries. www.ictmusic.org

ICTM Applied Ethnomusicology Study Group. International network of scholars working on applied ethnomusicology. www.ictmusic.org/group/applied-ethnomusicology

Inishowen Song Project. A collaboration between the Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA) and Inishowen Traditional Singers’ Circle (ITSC) to host song material collected in Inishowen, and to provide local, national, and international access to Inishowen song material in a professional archival and web-based environment. www.itma.ie/digitallibrary/about/inishowen

Maryland Traditions. Statewide program of the Maryland State Arts Council that supports communities to discover, share, preserve and sustain traditional arts and culture. www.marylandtraditions.org

MBIRA. Non-profit organization devoted to Shona mbira music; celebrates and helps to sustain the music traditions of Zimbabwe. www.mbira.org


Philadelphia Folklore Project. Sustains vital and diverse living cultural heritage in communities in the region, and creates equitable processes and practices for nurturing local grassroots arts and humanities. www.folklorepotject.org

SEM Applied Ethnomusicology Section. Devoted to work in ethnomusicology that puts music to use in a variety of contexts, academic and others. http://webdb.iu.edu/sem/scripts/groups/sections/applied/applied_ethnomusicology_section.cfm

Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. http://www.folklife.si.edu/

Smithsonian Folkways Global Sound. Aims to support cultural diversity and education by documenting, preserving, and distributing audio and video recordings and educational materials. www.folkways.si.edu

Talking Ethnomusicology. Blog continuing conversations of Ethnomusicology’s implications and applications following the National Graduate Conference in Ethnomusicology at the Institute of Music Research in London in 2010. talkingethnomusicology.wordpress.com

Texas Folklife. Non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the diverse cultures and living heritage of Texas. www.texasfolklife.org

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Organizations + Resources  
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**UCLA Ethnomusicology Archives.** One of the largest ethnographic sound and audiovisual recording archives in North America, aimed at acquiring, preserving, and providing access to its content. [http://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/archive/](http://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/archive/)

**US Regional Arts Organizations.** Six non-profit organizations (Arts Midwest, Mid-American Arts Alliance, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, New England Foundation for the Arts, South Arts, Western States Arts Federation) created to encourage development of the arts and to support arts programs on a regional basis. [www.usregionalarts.org](http://www.usregionalarts.org)

**Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.** Encourages discovery and connection through the humanities by supporting and producing cultural, civic, local, and global education programs for broad public audiences. [www.virginiahumanities.org](http://www.virginiahumanities.org)

**Western Folklife Center.** A regional non-profit organization that works to expand understanding by celebrating the everyday traditions of people who live and work in the American West. [www.westernfolklife.org](http://www.westernfolklife.org)

**West Plains Council on the Arts.** Provides programs and services to artists and organizations in the West Plains region. [www.wparts.org](http://www.wparts.org)

**Wisdom of the Elders.** Organization committed to Native American cultural sustainability, multimedia education, and race reconciliation. [www.wisdomoftheelders.org](http://www.wisdomoftheelders.org)

**World Music Institute.** Through its concerts, WMI seeks to educate, entertain, and provide spiritual nourishment. Its programs aim to reinforce the cultural values of the community and to communicate the power of each individual culture. [www.hearttheworld.org/World_Music_Institute](http://www.hearttheworld.org/World_Music_Institute)

**RESOURCES**


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Lauren E. Sweetman, editor, contributor + design/layout

Lauren is a PhD Candidate in ethnomusicology at New York University. She received her BMus and MA from the University of Toronto. Lauren’s doctoral research is currently focused on the intersection of Māori music, health, and governance at an indigenous-led forensic psychiatric facility in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Lauren is particularly invested in advocacy-based, collaborative research, and serves as the Assistant Director for The Paradigm Shift Project, a non-profit organization that works to promote education on environmental and social justice issues through documentary film.

Justin Hunter, SCC liaison + contributor

Justin is a third year PhD student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. Currently, his dissertation focuses on the Ainu, Japan’s indigenous people, and how they use tourism as a space for identity construction through music and dance in modern Japan. Justin is active with the SEM Student Concerns Committee serving as co-chair and SCC liaison to SEM Student News.

Meredith Aska McBride, contributor

Meredith just finished the second year of her PhD in ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago. Much of her research lies at the intersection between the history of American Jewish popular music and critical whiteness studies; she is also interested in Irish-American popular music and contemporary music education, especially children’s European classical music education in the United States. Meredith is a violinist and violist and an active teacher of both instruments.

Ari Ben Mosha Gagné, state of the field columnist

Ari is currently a PhD student at the University of Colorado at Boulder in ethnomusicology and is also pursuing his graduate certificate in ethnic studies. Ari’s current research involves the intersections of race, gender, class, and sexuality in New Orleans bounce music. Recently, Ari has presented his research at the National Queer People of Color Conference and is currently a contributing writer for the feature length documentary Bounce Queen.

Davin Rosenberg, researcher

Davin is currently in his first year of his MA degree in musicology at Northern Arizona University, with previous graduate study in trumpet performance. He received his BMus in trumpet performance from Bemidji State University in Minnesota. His current ethnomusicological research is focused on the sociocultural issues emerging within the flamenco diaspora in Phoenix. Davin is also an active private teacher and instrument repair technician.

Natalie Brown, facebook manager

Natalie is currently an orchestra director at Cedar Rapids Washington High School. She received her BMus in violin performance at the University of Iowa, studying with Leopold LaFosse, a Music Education certification from Coe College, and most recently, an MEd from the University of Northern Iowa. Natalie performs and records with a variety of groups, ranging from a bluegrass band to a fusion jazz trio. In the fall, she’ll be attending the University of Aberdeen’s graduate program in ethnology and folklore, focusing on NE Scotland fiddle traditions.

Thank you to Rebecca Sweetman and The Paradigm Shift Project for providing the cover photograph for this issue. To view more of her photography please visit www.theparadigmshiftproject.org.