

BACK TO THE ARMCHAIR:
SOUND RECORDINGS AS INFORMATION SOURCES IN
ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	v
Preface and Acknowledgements	vi
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
Section I: Citation Study	
Introduction to Citation Study	29
Chapter 2: Quantitative Results of Study	33
Chapter 3: Qualitative Results of Study	38
Section II: Environmental Scan	
Introduction to Environmental Scan	50
Chapter 4: Theoretical Issues with the Reliability of Sound Recordings	60
Chapter 5: Theoretical Issues with the Representational Abilities of Sound Recordings	90
Chapter 6: Theoretical Issues Created by Shifting Paradigms	109
Chapter 7: Theoretical Issues Related to Professionalism	141
Section III: The Consequences for Ethnomusicology	
Chapter 8: Lost Data, Lost Knowledge, Lost Methodologies	158
Chapter 9: Conclusion: Where Do We Go from Here?	198
Endnotes	202
Appendix - Translation from German by Patrick Feaster	206
References Cited	216

List of Figures

Figure 1: Picture of “Exonerate” by Jonathan Sewald (2003)	1
Figure 2: The Four Sound Recording Types and Their More Common Defining Characteristics	28
Figure 3: Increase in the citation of sound recordings in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> between 1956 and 2005 – Five-year totals (forecasted estimate for 2001-2005)	34
Figure 4: Increase in the citation of sound recordings in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> between 1956 and 2005, minus those made by the author – Five-year totals (forecasted estimate for 2001-2005)	34
Figure 5: Increase in discographic citations, not created by the author, compared to non-discographic citations in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> from 1956 to 2005 – Five-year totals (forecasted estimate for 2001-2005)	35
Figure 6: Increase in discographic citations, not created by the author, compared to non-discographic citations in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> from 1956 to 2002 - Yearly totals	36
Figure 7: Increase in average number of discographic citations, not created by the author, compared to non-discographic citations in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> from 1956 to 2002 - Yearly totals	37
Figure 8: Percentage of citation totals consisting of discographic citations, not created by the author, in <i>Ethnomusicology</i> from 1956 to 2002 - Based on yearly totals	37

Preface and Acknowledgements

The idea for this thesis was born through my experiences as an hourly student assistant at the Archives of Traditional Music and as a graduate student in both the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology and the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University.

During my undergraduate studies, I was primarily interested in studying the music of India. I had discovered a CD called “Snake Charmers of India,” performed by Iqbal Jogi and Party, and I was determined to learn more about the intriguing music it contained. When I approached the traditional-minded music faculty with my questions about music from India, they were unable to help me. Although the music department catalog contained a description for a course entitled “World Music,” it had never been taught and two of the faculty members confessed that no one in the department was prepared to teach such a course. I turned next to the online catalog and quickly discovered that the libraries on the Mankato campus possessed little more than Alain Daniélou’s *The Rāgas of Northern Indian Music*, a heady and confusing place to begin, and a handful of CDs by Ravi Shankar. My ventures into Minnesota bookshops and used CD stores (new copies being far beyond my limited financial means as an undergraduate) were equally unsuccessful.

When I enrolled at Indiana University, it was not to study Indian music, although I was still very interested in learning about it, but to become a librarian trained in ethnomusicology so that I could then help others learn about and locate the music of other cultures. I did not want others to encounter the same series of frustrations and barriers that I had encountered and felt that with this academic training I could help provide easier access to relevant materials. During my first few weeks at Indiana University, I found my way to the Archives of Traditional Music and sought employment in the Listening Library. One look through the online catalog and a tour through the vaults, and I was hopelessly captivated by the institution. I felt that I was somewhere I truly belonged.

As I progressed through my coursework for the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, my mind became troubled. The department placed a heavier emphasis on fieldwork than I had anticipated, and I soon learned that generalists, applied ethnomusicologists, and the use of others' sound recordings had a dubious reputation within the discipline. I discovered that students and faculty members in the department seldom used the Archives' treasure trove of recordings, and the Archives seemed to have fallen from its former glory. Additionally, the use of others' sound recordings seemed taboo. Many of the authors I read as part of my required readings dubbed the practice of using others' sound recordings as "armchair analysis." These authors frequently wedded the practice to terms such as "ethnocentric," "Eurocentric," "imperialistic," and "colonialist." I began to wonder if the negative treatment of others' sound recordings in the literature was responsible for the lack of patrons at the Archives. I also began questioning whether my initial vision for my future had a place within ethnomusicology.

Occasionally, I found myself longing for the “good old days” of comparative musicology and cursing my ill luck at being born a hundred years too late. In many ways, my goals seemed to contradict those shaping ethnomusicology as a modern discipline.

When I began *Back to the Armchair: Sound Recordings as Information Sources in Ethnomusicological Research*, it was with three primary intentions. The first and foremost was to champion sound recordings as valuable historic documents and as valuable source material for ethnomusicological research. Closely related, I sought to renew an interest in using these historic documents and to inspire a resurgence of support and patronage for ethnographic sound archives. Finally, I wanted to justify my future career as an ethnographic sound archivist and to counter some of the negative attitudes associated with those ethnomusicologists who have chosen to devote their lives to sifting and sorting or who find the musical behavior of the past as exciting and important as that of the present day. Much work remains to be done, but hopefully *Back to the Armchair* will open some desperately needed dialogue.

A number of people helped shape *Back to the Armchair*. The citation study that forms the bulk of chapter one was undertaken due to the nearly simultaneous advisement from Moira Smith and Daniel Reed regarding the potential value of this methodological approach. Although I was originally dismayed and daunted by the amount of literature the citation study would involve, the results were highly enlightening and provided, in my opinion, strong support for the remainder of my arguments. The current form of chapter eight, “Theoretical Issues Related to Professionalism,” is largely due to Ruth Stone’s encouragement that I expand and flesh out my arguments to more accurately reflect the complexities of the Society for Ethnomusicology. I am extremely grateful to

Moira, Daniel, and Ruth for their support of my research and for both their encouragement and critique of my various proposals and drafts.

Special thanks goes to Jonathan Sewald, Kaitlyn Cox, Eric Moen, Drew Nienauber, Jake Peterson, and Aaron Sanborn, the band members of *Exonerate*, for the use of their likenesses on the first page of my introduction. Additional thanks goes to my brother, Jonathan Sewald, for capturing these likenesses and then sending them to me as an email attachment.

I also extend my gratitude to Suzanne Mudge, Librarian of the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University. Suzanne has shown me guidance as a supervisor and has served as both a good friend and a sounding board for my ideas and frustrations. Many of these ideas and frustrations have revolved around the issue of why so few students and researchers within the field of ethnomusicology have made use of the holdings at the Archives. Our informal conversations and her enthusiasm for my occasional bouts of freeform ranting helped inspire my desire to pursue my research to the end. Her feedback and opinions also helped me to test out and shape many of my arguments.

Finally, I express my gratitude to Patrick Feaster. Patrick not only translated the works appearing in the appendix for the shoddy fee of a few home cooked meals, but has taken part in many late night conversations, read numerous drafts, offered loving support, and withstood and confronted both my abysmal grammar and my fledgling academic prose. For this latter service, my thesis committee should also be thankful, since things improved greatly between my first draft and my first *submitted* draft. It is seldom that

one finds such a perfect companion or such an inspiring academic colleague, and I have been fortunate enough to find both in one person.

Chapter 1

Introduction

One of the phenomena arising in the twentieth century is the use of photographs by ethnomusicologists to depict scenes described in their articles. Turning the pages of *Ethnomusicology*, we find ourselves peering through windows into different places and times, allowing us to experience the smallest sliver of an original performance. Looking at these photographs, we can gain a greater understanding of the visual aspects of the performance. We see the faces of those present, the costumes they wore, the instruments they played, their general proximity to one another, and the environment that surrounded them.



Figure 1: *Exonerate* by Jonathan Sewald (2003)

There are limits, however, to what these photographs allow us to experience. The images we see are frozen and fixed both temporally and spatially, and we are only able to transcend their boundaries or speak about them in the present tense through the use of our imagination and a patchwork of impressions gleaned from the accompanying text and our lived experience with what we perceive to be similar events. There is no movement. We see the positions of the performers at the moment of documentation and it is these positions combined with our conceptions about how the human body *should* move that allows us to create an implied sense of movement. The third dimension is absent from the image as is the depth of detail and color normally perceptible to the human eye. We cannot change our vantage point of the scene in the photograph, only that of the photograph itself.

We are unable to know the thoughts of the performers or those of the researcher beyond what the researcher presents in his or her writing, and we may be unable to ask either party the questions that the photograph has sparked or left unanswered. In addition to all of this missing visual and contextual data, photographs are eerily silent—captured moments of musical behavior that lack both the music and the behavior. They also lack the sensory detail of touch, taste, and smell. Overall, these images are poor and incomplete representations of the dynamic performance traditions they attempt to capture, assuming they are actually representative, and prove to be inadequate information sources when compared to experiencing the actual performance and long-term cultural immersion. It is quite possible, and even likely, that audiences viewing these photographs will develop false interpretations and conclusions about the original

performance experience. They may even confuse the photograph with the performance itself, allowing their experience of the image to substitute for that of reality.

Despite these shortcomings, ethnomusicologists do use and refer to photographs in both their articles and ethnographies. These images, however poor in comparison to lived experience, provide their audiences with a wealth of data that would be difficult to express through text alone. When used properly, photographs allow these audiences to perceive visual details that would be impossible, or at least less efficient, to share through written description. Photographs can also provide valuable information for studying change. If we compare older photographs with more recent ones of the same subjects—locations, performers, objects, and events—we may notice significant changes that escaped the attention of the researcher's pen. These changes can serve as a source of pertinent research questions. Current researchers may also show these photographs of historic people, places, and events to previous researchers' informants or to new informants from the same tradition to elicit comments and modern perspectives on what they see. These are just a few of the possible uses for photographs in research.

Film and video share similar roles and have become popular tools and, despite any shortcomings, ethnomusicologists have supported their use both in research and in presenting research data (See Stone 1978, Stone and Stone 1981, Feld 1976, Zemp 1988, Dornfeld 1992, Titon 1992, Kaeppler 2002). As long as the researcher does not try to extend his or her conclusions beyond what the visual data and its accompanying documentation will support, most of their colleagues will probably accept the use of visual media as valid sources for ethnomusicological research.

Ethnomusicologists have been far more ambivalent about a different recording medium—that of sound. Since well before the publication of the first issue of the *Ethnomusicology Newsletter* in 1953 and the formation of the Society of Ethnomusicology in 1956, many researchers have seen sound recordings as a double-edged sword in ethnomusicological research. On the one hand, ethnomusicologists have praised sound recordings for revolutionizing the fields of comparative and historical musicology and as valuable tools that aid in researcher recall, transcription, pedagogy, and preservation. Several researchers have even claimed that sound recordings are what made ethnomusicology possible (Kunst 1959:12, Nettl 1964b:16-17, Keil 1984:91, Shelemay 1991). On the other hand, many ethnomusicologists see sound recordings as tools of deception or as inadvertently created fictions that are of little use to researchers as sources of reliable and representative data. Oddly enough, it is quite possible for a researcher to see the same sound recording as both a godsend and a siren. All a sound recording needs to do to transform from one into the other is to leave the hands of the original researcher and to enter those of another. This change of hands immediately shifts the recording's role from that of a memory aid, which assists the researcher in remembering the details of a performance previously experienced “live,” to that of a tool for the audile analysis of a documented even, which the researcher never perceived firsthand. Although ethnomusicologists generally champion the former role of sound recordings, they tend either to denigrate or to remain silent about the latter.

When defining the field or writing the introductions to ethnomusicology textbooks, ethnomusicologists have often problematized or even admonished against the use of others' recordings. Alan Merriam dubbed this practice as “armchair analysis” in

his *Anthropology of Music* (1964), relating it to secondhand research performed by earlier anthropologists and to Franz Boas' notion of "armchair anthropology."

Before continuing, I feel that I need to explain my use of two terms for the sake of clarity. Throughout this thesis, I will be using the term "audile analysis" in place of "the use of sound recordings" or "armchair analysis." By using it, I hope to avoid the negative associations and concepts attached to the phrase "armchair analysis." Although armchair analysis may have originally referred to the use of recordings and other documentation used to draw insupportable conclusions about a culture with little to no knowledge of the culture itself, in ethnomusicology the definition has since morphed to mean the use of any recording not collected by the researcher him or herself. Despite the fact that the research practices and mindsets of ethnomusicologists who dare to make use of these materials today are very different from those of researchers at the turn of the century, their work still is often labeled as "armchair analysis" or "armchair ethnomusicology" and takes on part of the negative connotations associated with the practices of earlier researchers. Within the context of this work, audile analysis is a more neutral term referring to the methodology of actively listening to sound recordings in order to obtain information about a performance event that one was unable to experience firsthand. To be successful, audile analysis requires the listener to develop skilled listening techniques that allow him or her to interpret mediated sounds intelligently.

A second issue of language use involves the term "sound recordings." When I refer to the use of "sound recordings" without further designation, the reader should assume that this use is by someone other than the creator of the recordings. When I mean to refer to the use of sound recordings by the original recordist, which will happen far

less frequently in this work than the former usage, I will clearly designate this. My reasoning behind this decision has more to do with the eloquence of language than with conceptual definitions and also with my unsuccessful attempts to apply terms such as “othered sound recordings,” “secondhand recordings,” or “severed recordings.” All of these terms presuppose a loss on the part of the recordings once they leave the custody of the original researcher. The sound recordings’ inherent nature does not change, only the context of their use changes.

The first criticism of audile analysis by a recognized ethnomusicologist came from George Herzog. In his *Research in Primitive and Folk Music in the United States* (1936), Herzog discussed the use of cylinder recordings in music research and stated, “In the past they have sufficed for the student who from actual experience with the material recorded or with similar materials, could at least make allowance for the difference between the original rendition and its record.... For many finer points of study and analysis they are not adequate” (Herzog 1936:14). During a panel entitled, “The Scope and Aims of Ethnomusicology” presented at the Third Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Leonard B. Meyer expressed the need for ethnomusicologists to get out of their chairs and talk to people if they wanted to understand performers’ thoughts on music. Meyer added that no linguist “would dare take a tape of an unknown language and try to analyze it” (Anon. 1959:103). As a participant in the same panel, David P. McAllester echoed Meyer’s view, stressing that “you must experience the music in its setting in order to understand it” (Anon. 1959:103). Merriam himself discussed two kinds of “armchair analysis,” listing one of them as “the analysis by the laboratory technician of materials collected by others in the field.” He considered this form of

analysis as a practice more objectionable than “thinking, speculating, and theorizing from hunches, intuition, or imagination” and expressed his hope that armchair analysis was “a thing of the past” (Merriam 1964:39). Eleven years later, in *The Ethnomusicologist*, Mantle Hood discussed the use of sound recordings in laboratory analysis as a research methodology considered acceptable by past researchers. He added:

In recent years it has become increasingly clear that the field worker and the home worker must be the same man, not only because of the added satisfaction and “aliveness” of the subject that Kunst speaks about but also because of the wide gap in communication between collector and someone else in the role of investigator. (Hood 1971:30)

Hood felt that these gaps resulted in handicaps for the researcher whose “work is confined to the laboratory and the desk, the researcher who lacks firsthand knowledge of the native context of his materials” (Hood 1971:30). Bruno Nettl also supported the need to erase the division between fieldwork and the work of the “armchair ethnomusicologist” (Nettl 1964a:4). In *Music as Culture* (1980), Marcia Herndon and Norma McLeod later stated, “there is a tendency to consider it best not to use material collected by others, where possible” (Herndon and McLeod 1980:125). In case the reader misinterpreted this statement as suggesting audile analysis as an acceptable research practice, they quickly added the following paragraph:

While some still use the materials of others, it is imperative for the full development of an ethnomusicologist that each individual accomplish his/her own field work for many reasons. The most significant reason is that, without personal contact with musicians in a field situation, the scholar is unable to formulate new hypotheses, either working with theories already expounded or resorting to speculation. (Herdon and McLeod 1980:125)

Twelve years later, Helen Myers wrote in the introduction to *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*:

Fieldwork is a hallmark of many social sciences, including anthropology and ethnomusicology. Gone is acceptance of studies from the “armchair,” in which

the musicologist transcribed and analysed material recorded by ethnologists. Today's student is expected to immerse himself or herself in the totality of a foreign culture, usually for a year or more, and experience music first-hand in its diverse settings...Unlike the historical musicologist who gleans data from archives and libraries, the ethnomusicologist must collect and document material from living informants. (Myers 1992:22)

In the Fall 2002 issue of *Ethnomusicology*, Greg Downey informed us that sound recordings make him uncomfortable because:

Music objectified as a recording or transcription skirts a number of troublesome issues and generates its own distortions in our understanding of musical events. One of the most bothersome issues regards the phenomenology of hearing. I fear that by presenting an objectified recording as “the music,” I may seem to imply that the musical object alone determines musical experience, that when my audience hears a mechanically reproduced sound event, they hear the same “thing” as the performers or listeners who produced that performance. (Downey 2002: 487)

If the above statements do not deter the fledgling ethnomusicologist from the idea of using sound recordings as information sources, there are also the horror stories of researchers fooled and embarrassed through their use of them. Ellingson assured us that “some writers have transcribed recording hum as instrument drones or songs recorded at the wrong speed as falsetto” (Ellingson 1992:132). Another mistake made by researchers using tape transfers of earlier media has been the assumption that early songs were two to six minutes long—the same duration that can fit on the average cylinder or early acoustic disc (Brady 1999:6). Yet another is the interpretation of the knocking noise produced by a moldy or cracked cylinder as drum beats or rattles (Roberts and Thompson 1963:5). Transcribing mold as drumbeats is beginning to take on the status of urban legend in ethnomusicology. Despite claims that researchers have made about the existence of such transcriptions, authors never provide citations for examples of transcription errors resulting from the sound of a damaged cylinder, nor did Ellingson

provide a citation for the infamous transcriptions of tape hum as drone. The closest example of this type of error that I have been able to locate is one mentioned by Anthony Seeger and Louise Spear. They explain that student assistants transferring recordings for the Archive of Traditional Music cylinder project would occasionally mistake the sound produced by cracks and mold on the surface of the cylinder as “man sings with drum” or as a rattle (Seeger and Spear 1987:11). These mistakes have not verifiably found their way into any formal publications.

The above examples are a mere sampling of the more prominent statements made against audile analysis. Considering that ethnomusicologists have made a 67-year-old tradition out of doubting the value of sound recordings as information sources and audile analysis as a research methodology, new examples will undoubtedly continue to surface. Despite this lengthy tradition, not one ethnomusicologist has undertaken the task of producing a theoretical explanation for why these aural documents are more deceptive than the average ethnography, interview transcript, manuscript, symposium paper, newspaper, informative pamphlet, travel guide, history, photograph, painting, or even the fictional novel. Helen Myers recommended the following preliminary information sources to students before entering the field:

The prospective fieldworker must master the literature in his or her area—both geographical region and pertinent theoretical studies. This task requires an interdisciplinary search during which the student can compile a full bibliography—from ethnomusicology, anthropology, history, religion, politics and other fields including fiction.... From a systematic search, students will soon identify scholars who have worked before them in the area. Correspondence with these experts, an essential courtesy, may yield advice as well as names of helpful contacts in the field. (Myers 1992b:29)

In the previous chapter, Myers stressed, “each scholar is expected to collect his own material for analysis” (1991a:15) creating the odd implication that even the fictional

novel is of greater value to research than sound recordings and other unpublished materials gathered in the field by another researcher.

The arguments against the use of sound recordings generally take the form of quick asides or appear as items buried in a long list of complaints against the earlier practices of comparative and historical musicologists. In one disheartening instance, Kenneth A. Gourlay compared the practice of excluding the researcher and the informant from ethnography to that of using another researcher's sound recordings. Since the primary point of Gourlay's article was to prove that the exclusion of human interaction is regrettable and damaging to the value of ethnographic texts, this comparison implies that the use of others' sound recordings is similarly regrettable and damaging. Gourlay's closing paragraph further asserted this interpretation:

The Karimojong may yet have the last laugh, as they trudge round the periphery of their land in search of water, driving their cattle before them, and entertaining themselves with a new song to celebrate the mounds of useless motor-cars, the unplayable tapes of their own music rotting in the archives of the West, and a people who have recovered the use of their legs but forgotten how to sing.
(Gourlay 1978:32)

What is interesting about Gourlay's approach is that the warning against audile analysis as a poor research practice is no longer explicit but assumed and subtly ingrained in the text as one of the tropes all readers are expected to take for granted. Not only is the ethnomusicologist to scorn sound recordings as information sources but as doomed objects of limited importance in the general scheme of things.

Inspired by this gleaning of ethnomusicologists' arguments against sound recordings as information sources and audile analysis as a research methodology, I have undertaken the task of exploring the extent of the damage, so to speak, and the theoretical and historical underpinnings that have led many researchers to turn away from sound

recordings as viable information sources. To accomplish this task, I have performed assessments of the following:

- 1) The extent to which sound recordings have been excluded from or inadequately cited in articles appearing in prominent academic journals devoted to ethnomusicological research and published in the United States from 1953 to 2003.
- 2) The reasons provided by ethnomusicologists and their predecessors for their exclusion of sound recordings as serious research documents and their dismissal of audile analysis as a respectable research methodology.
- 3) The possible consequences that could result from a complete avoidance of others' sound recordings and audile analysis and the effect this avoidance could have on ethnomusicology both in the form of undermining future researchers' abilities to assess and apply past research and in preventing the use of a wide range of valuable research methodologies.

To assess the extent to which ethnomusicologists have referred to sound recordings in their research publications, I have performed a citation study of *Ethnomusicology* and the first eleven issues of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter*, the results of which I then compared to the citation practices of *World of Music*, *Ethnomusicology On-Line*, and *Yearbook for Traditional Music*.¹ I based my selection of these journals upon their reputation among ethnomusicologists as published sources of the most current and representative ethnomusicological scholarship. The purpose of this

study was not only to gather quantitative statistical data on the number of citations and references to sound recordings, but also to explore ethnomusicologists' strategies for citing these materials.

To assess the reasons provided by ethnomusicologists for their avoidance of sound recordings and audile analysis, I employed a research approach known as "environmental scanning" (Nichols 1995:363-64, Renfro and Morrison 1984). Environmental scanning is the process of surveying the literature and academic forums used by researchers to define, discuss, and develop their discipline with the intent of learning these researchers' opinions about specific information sources and the role of these sources in their field. Small committees of librarians or archivists generally perform these scans on a regular basis to keep informed about the changing needs and attitudes of their primary users and the possible impacts on the library or archive as an institution. In this case, I have employed environmental scanning to learn the opinions of ethnomusicologists, both past and present, about the use of sound recordings and audile analysis and the influence of these opinions upon their accepted role in ethnomusicological research. As the above definition suggests, environmental scans should be performed periodically and cover a wide range of literature. I consider the following work to be the basis for what should be an ongoing process and one that should later be expanded to cover multiple facets of ethnomusicological research. For this somewhat reduced environmental scan, I have surveyed the core body of literature written by researchers in ethnomusicology and the related fields of early English folk song studies, comparative musicology, and historical musicology from 1890 through 2003. This core consisted primarily of the periodicals listed above as well as relevant

articles in the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society* and *Resound*. When deemed appropriate, I also scanned books and articles included in the “Current Bibliography” section of *Ethnomusicology*. However, my primary attention was devoted to the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* and *Ethnomusicology* as the main forums for presenting and discussing perspectives on the scope, theories, and methodologies of ethnomusicology.

I have also included in this core body of literature introductory textbooks, anthologies of key articles, and books seen by past and present ethnomusicologists as of landmark importance to the field. My expectation has been that the authors of these works will have offered guidance for or arguments against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis and that this commentary will in turn offer both insights into the attitudes shown towards using these materials and their connection to the historical context that generated them.

It is important to examine the arguments for and against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis within their historical context for several reasons. First, ethnomusicology, like most academic disciplines, has a tendency to revive the same arguments with slight modifications in response to situations strongly resembling those from past eras of scholarship. For instance, one of the oldest arguments raised against the use of sound recordings is that it is difficult to match the playback speed, and therefore the pitch of a recording, to the original recording speed. This argument has existed since H. E. Krehbiel criticized Benjamin Ives Gilman’s 1891 pitch analysis of Jesse Walter Fewkes’ Zuñi recordings. In this critique, Krehbiel expressed his mistrust of such research due to the unreliable recording and playback speed of the phonograph and announced that Gilman’s transcriptions were therefore “banished” from his collection

(Krehbiel 1891). This same argument appeared in a different guise in the “Techniques and Devices” section of *Ethnomusicology*. In January of 1960, T. Gerald Dyar published the article “Pitch Control,” which discussed the effect of power fluctuations and equipment flaws on playback speed and the effect of these changes in speed on pitch. This argument regarding the effect of recording equipment on speed and pitch is still alive today. Researchers, however, no longer attach the principal fault of unreliability to the recording and playback equipment but to the scruples of researchers and performers who can now alter the speed and pitch of a performance through digital editing technology, making it impossible to tell if a recording has been changed or if it retains the speeds and pitches of the original performance. All three are valid arguments, but the latter two are the same bitter vintage poured into new bottles. What we learn from an examination of the first argument will be at least partially applicable to the other two.

Another reason for examining the arguments against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis within their historical context is that ethnomusicologists did not shape their arguments in a vacuum. Generally, these arguments have been responses to research trends that ethnomusicologists saw as questionable or undesirable.

Anthropologists began speaking out against audile analysis in the 1950s and 1960s in reaction to the theories of social evolutionism and the work of systematic musicologists. The theories of social evolutionism, which many ethnomusicologists still see as a source of embarrassment, involved taking samples of music with little or no knowledge of the cultural context and using these samples to make sweeping generalizations about the evolutionary state and relative primitiveness of non-Westerners and their music.

Researchers based these conclusions on data such as the numbers of notes in the musical

scales of a given culture or on performers' use of complex rhythmic patterns as opposed to polyphony (see discussions in Schneider 1991 and Marshall 1972). By the 1950s, most researchers had backed away from such theories, and we find that many of the musicologists publishing articles in the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* and *Ethnomusicology* took a purely systematic approach to musical analysis. These systematic musicologists focused on issues such as how often performers used major seconds in a particular musical genre, the directions of melodic movement, or the precise tunings of different sets of gamelan instruments with little to no reference to the musicians and cultures performing the music. As musical anthropologists and anthropological approaches increased in number and influence, many researchers in ethnomusicology began to regard theories of social evolutionism as offensive and felt that systematic musicology failed to provide the profound insights into human behavior and cultural context that were offered by anthropological research. Perhaps because audile analysis was one of the primary methodologies used in both of these theoretical approaches, ethnomusicologists seem to have regarded it as part of the problem or even as the source of it.

Knowing this history, an ethnomusicologist can question the necessity of this particular stigmatization of audile analysis and of the value of sound recordings as information sources. What was at fault for the offensive conclusions of social evolutionism and the lack of satisfaction in the results of systematic musicology? Was it the use of audile analysis, or was it the lack of knowledge about the cultural context and the effort to stretch scientific analysis beyond what the recorded data was able to support? In this case, a historical approach allows us to study not only the reasoning of past

ethnomusicologists for avoiding audile analysis but also the research practices that inspired this reasoning. Although the reasons provided by these ethnomusicologists are not necessarily wrong, the ethnomusicologist who supports the use of sound recordings as information sources should be able to cry foul when a current researcher raises a forty-year-old argument without, ironically, considering the cultural—or academic—context in which it arose.

Finally, surveying the history of ethnomusicology can provide guiding examples of how ethnomusicologists have used sound recordings in a constructive and fruitful manner. These examples can serve as models for future research. For instance, one enduring work is George List's "The Boundaries of Speech and Song" (1963) in which he drew from sound recordings and his own experiences to show that the idea of "music" is a cultural construct as opposed to a universal entity defined by set features of space, time, and timbre. Despite the fact that practically no one seems to *listen* to List's well-selected examples, most ethnomusicologists accept his conclusions, and his article is generally treated as part of the current canon even if the accompanying recording is not. I had List's article assigned in two separate classes between 2000 and 2002, but was not made aware that he had provided a sound sheet of his examples until I inventoried this volume for the Archives of Traditional Music and literally had it fall out into my lap. When I mentioned this discovery to another student in the department, he commented that one of his instructors had assigned his class to read the same article but that the instructor neither assigned nor mentioned the sound recording.

More recently, Cornelia Fales published a well-regarded article on timbral anomalies and the relation of human cognition to the perception of timbre. She

performed much of her research using sound recordings collected by Alan P. Merriam in the Belgian Congo in the 1950s (Fales 2002).

Kay Shelemay's *Let Jasmine Rain Down* provides a third example of how ethnomusicologists can use sound recordings, particularly in combination with their own fieldwork. During her research, Shelemay discovered that "most of the song repertoire of Syrian Jews is today acquired from Middle Eastern recordings" (1998:120). In response to this discovery, she examined not only the *pizmonim* she personally collected, but also analyzed commercial recordings of Middle Eastern music released on the Cairophon and Audio Fidelity labels. To lend greater diachronic depth to her study, she also examined research recordings and commercially released research recordings dating from 1959 through 1987. More importantly, Shelemay recognized these early ethnic recordings as important information sources due to their influence upon her informants and their musical behavior.

In the case of the articles by List and Fales, we find a use of sound recordings in which the researchers were careful not to go beyond the boundaries set by their data and yet were able to draw some very profound conclusions about music in general. In contrast, Shelemay used sound recordings to find insight into the compositional processes involved when creating *pizmonim* and established her findings within a wider historical context by drawing upon recorded examples that she was unable to gather during her own fieldwork. In this second case, Shelemay's knowledge about Syrian Jewish culture is not lacking, but her inability to go back in time would have limited her scope to the date range of her own fieldwork, performed from 1984 to roughly 1993. By using a few recordings, she expanded this scope by twenty-five years. List, Fales, and Shelemay all

cited their musical sources, allowing others to scrutinize their conclusions and audition their data, and improving the applicability of their findings and conclusions to future research.

Once I have established the extent to which researchers have excluded sound recordings from past and present scholarship and have explored the reasons provided for this exclusion, I will examine the possible consequences for the future of ethnomusicology. These consequences include jeopardizing the value of past and present scholarship by preventing reevaluation and restudy, allowing future researchers in both our field and related fields to repeat our mistakes, creating silent holes in our understanding of the histories of various musics, failing to adequately educate other researchers about the aural aspects of musical behavior, and preventing the development and application of numerous valuable research methodologies.

My hope is that this research will both help identify current assumptions from a theoretical standpoint and draw attention to a number of poor citation practices for sound recordings. Many ethnomusicologists undervalue the research potential of these materials for the sake of avoiding the sins of the past. Anthony Seeger probably best defined the situation in his discussion of ethnomusicologists' changing attitudes towards archival collections:

The trend toward confessional anthropology and self-doubting music research leads many contemporary researchers to scorn archival collections as impossibly encumbered with the baggage of colonialism and abandoned theoretical premises. But there are often babies in the bathwater, and it's unwise to abandon the former when discarding the latter. One needn't agree with a previous methodology to use some of the material it reveals—as long as one recognizes the limitations of the resulting collection. (Seeger 1999:3)

As in the case of archival collection, many researchers are throwing sound recording and audile analysis, along with their potential value, away with past methodologies. With 114 years of ethnographic sound recordings stored in our vaults, we could be performing research never before possible, and yet our discourse is oddly silent for a field that studies music, however one defines it.

My choice of title, “Back to the Armchair,” may make a few ethnomusicologists uncomfortable. Let me state very clearly that my intention is not to throw ethnomusicological scholarship back a hundred years, or even fifty years, but to reevaluate whether some of our decisions regarding the proper uses of sound recordings may have lost us as much as they gained, and if it might not be possible to rectify these mistakes for future generations. I am not suggesting that ethnomusicologists should abandon anthropological paradigms or fieldwork, but that we need to reassess the potential value of audile analysis, and sound recordings in general, when used in *combination* with anthropological paradigms and fieldwork. Our current body of literature neither supports this combination nor explains why such a combination is undesirable. My hope is that the following research might open the way for sound recordings to regain their role as one of the important tools of our discipline and to challenge the absence of literature on the potential value of combining audile analysis with current anthropological approaches.

Scope

Throughout the following analyses and discussions, I will be referring to four primary categories of sound recordings: namely, research recordings, commercial

recordings, commercially released research recordings, and acoustic-era commercial recordings. I have decided not to use the term “field recording,” despite the prominence of this term in ethnomusicological writing, due to the large amount of disagreement by researchers over its definition and the fragmentation in definition of terms such as “field,” “research,” “performance,” and “scientific objectivity” upon which the larger definition is often based. My purpose here is not to produce yet another definition for field recordings, but rather to examine ethnomusicologists’ uses of and thoughts about what *they* have classed as field recordings within the context of various paradigms and historic periods. The term “research recording” is intended to serve as a looser, more general category that can encompass the many variable definitions of field recording. I see it as an abstract concept at the opposite end of the spectrum from the equally fuzzy concept of “commercial recording.” The term “research recording” should not be seen as synonymous with that of “field recording,” but rather as built around a core of concepts that frequently occur when discussing field recordings. Within the context of this thesis, research recordings will be defined as recordings made by professional researchers or other parties for the primary purpose of documenting the aural aspects of an event for later use as an analytical tool or memory aid or as a preserved historical document of the event itself. The collector generally makes the recording “in the field” or at the location where the event normally takes place as opposed to in a studio or on a sound stage and generally avoids unnecessary recording and editing techniques that would cause the sound and chronological sequencing of the recording to deviate drastically from that of the original event. The recording itself generally consists of unedited material and is intended to capture and present aural data about the event as opposed to consisting of

highly edited and processed material that has been altered to suit the tastes of a large consumer base. Researchers sometimes copy these recordings for the purpose of archival deposit or distribute them to a select audience of peers or colleagues for research or reference purposes, but they seldom mass-produce or distribute these materials in their original form to larger, less-intimate audiences. As a result, research recordings are generally unique, unedited, and unpublished aural documents that contain part of what the collector experienced during the live event, and he or she often treats them as primary research documents. I have purposely left the definition for research recordings loose enough to include not only field recordings, however defined, but also entities such as home recordings, recorded telephone interviews, recordings made by musicians to analyze their own performance technique, and footage recorded for radio broadcast.

Generally, professionals capture these research recordings, but this is not always the case. Before the 1960s, it was quite common for musicologists to encourage hobbyists and those untrained in musicological research to collect musical performances for analysis by professional researchers. The Berlin School thrived on this philosophy, sending phonographs on numerous expeditions with the expectation that collected musical samples would then be sent to the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv for analysis by its trained musicologists and psychologists (Reinhard 1962:1). In 1908, Percy Grainger suggested a similar methodology for folk-song research, assuring fellow researchers that:

Anyone who knows a folk-song when he or she hears it, and can distinguish stirring tunes from dull ones, can, even if devoid of accurate hearing and experience of the technicalities of musical notation, give invaluable help towards the preservation of the rich traditional treasure of these islands by phonographing peasant and sailor songs, chanties, and dances for future notation, study, reference, and comparison. (Grainger 1908:149-50)

These hobbyists were then to turn their collections over to professional musicologists for analysis. Most ethnomusicologists currently recognize this approach as “armchair analysis.”

What defines a research recording, then, is not the skill of the collector or whether or not the collector is also the researcher, but that the collector made the recording for the purpose of documenting an event for the sake of posterity or scientific analysis as opposed to for commercial or purely aesthetic pursuits. Sound recordings are, in a sense, scientific samples presenting data gathered during a live performance, even if they do so imperfectly.²

At the opposite end of the spectrum, ethnomusicologists tend to treat commercial recordings as entities that are mass-produced and widely distributed with the intention of procuring sales from either a more mainstream audience or a sizable niche market. Commercial gains are often the primary motivation for the recording technician or company making and producing the recording and this can heavily influence the recording set-up, location, and post-production processes. During production, the recording technician or company usually edits and packages the recording in a manner that pleases the aesthetic sensibilities of the intended consumer market or markets as opposed to attempting to produce an unaltered document of the live event for research purposes. This production process often results in sounds and chronological sequences that deviate significantly from those of the original performance and which may never have existed in real life.

Again, the division between research recordings and commercial recordings is not always a clear cut one and I intend to use these definitions of “research recording” and

“commercial recording” as abstract concepts rather than classes of actual objects. Based on the above criteria, recordings such as those that make up the Frederick Starr collection (1906) would fall far towards the research end of the spectrum while the Beatles’ *Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967) would fall far towards the commercial end. The placement of certain recordings, however, is more difficult. The commercial recording industry certainly releases recordings that draw upon the aesthetics of capturing “live” concerts or events, while ethnomusicologists often draw upon commercial recording techniques such as multiple microphones and mixers to capture a certain sound aesthetic, both for their own use and for use as pedagogical tools or even commercial products. Articles exploring the murkiness of the boundary between research and commercial recordings are becoming more common as is the idea that the difference between the two may be based as much upon ethnomusicologists’ aesthetic sensibilities as it is upon economic motives (van Peer 1999, Etzkorn 1992). This blurring of boundaries is particularly evident in the case of commercially released research recordings and early acoustic-era recordings and will be discussed later on as one of the issues affecting researchers’ use and opinion of audile analysis.

Commercially released research recordings and early acoustic commercial recordings form two of the conceptual areas along the spectrum between the ends of research and commercial recordings. A commercially released research recording is basically a research recording formally published by ethnomusicologists, archives, national organizations, or similar parties dedicated to distributing research recordings. The parties involved in producing the commercial version of a research recording often sample the material from a larger collection of recordings and the individual sides or

tracks of the commercial version may actually be clips from a longer performance. These parties also tend to edit the material in other ways such as by adding fade-ins and fade-outs, performing filtering and noise reduction, changing the sequence of events or anthologizing events from different times, places, and cultures, or adding dialogue between clips. In addition to the recording itself, companies like Folkways have often hired the original researcher or another professional ethnomusicologist to write jacket or liner notes which offer a range of information including the ethnographic background for the selections, program notes, transcriptions, explanations of technical terms, photographs, and line drawings of musical instruments. The recording and accompanying documentation are then packaged and offered for sale through various catalogs and academic journals.

Like the terms research and commercial recordings, “commercially released research recording” is also a loose concept as opposed to a firmly bound class of objects. Criteria for what made an ideal commercially released research recording has been defined and redefined throughout the articles appearing in the “Recording Review” section of *Ethnomusicology*, and has often changed as ideas about authenticity, cultural borrowing, and informant authority have changed. Again, ethnomusicologists’ views of research, commercial, and commercially released research recordings will be an area for later discussion.

The final category of recording I will refer to in this thesis is that of acoustic-era commercial recordings, mainly those appearing on cylinders and acoustic 78rpm discs from the late 1880s to the late 1920s. Due to the limitations of early acoustic recording equipment and media, recording technicians had almost no control over post-production

editing and limited control over factors affecting the performance during the recording session.³ During the recording session, technicians could alter the performance by ensuring that performers kept their volume within the minimum and maximum levels required for the equipment and below the maximum time limit dictated by the recording medium. To create an illusion of completeness, technicians could also request performers to subtract or extend material to fit the length of the record. A technician could also add, drop, or reposition performers to create different effects and mixes of sound. If he or she, but more likely “he” before the 1930s, was somewhat familiar with the tradition, the technician could perhaps request changes in instrumentation or ask that performers leave out shouts and other vocables to prevent damage to the resulting recording or to create a sound that he felt was more aesthetically pleasing.

After the technician finished making the recording, the recording company would then sell it to one of two possible audiences. Sometimes the company would market the recording to mainstream American and European audiences, who probably expected little in the way of aesthetics from ethnic recordings and sought instead exotic novelties. However, it was far more likely that the company would sell the recording to audiences for whom the performances were part of a familiar tradition. For example, recordings of Middle Eastern music were often marketed in the Middle East or to Arab Americans. When selling to this second type of audience, the performers probably had a better feel for the aesthetic sensibilities of the audience than did the recording technician.⁴ With either audience, there was little need to adjust the performance beyond shaping certain features to meet the needs and limitations of the recording equipment to produce a commercially viable recording. The resulting lack of intervention in performances of

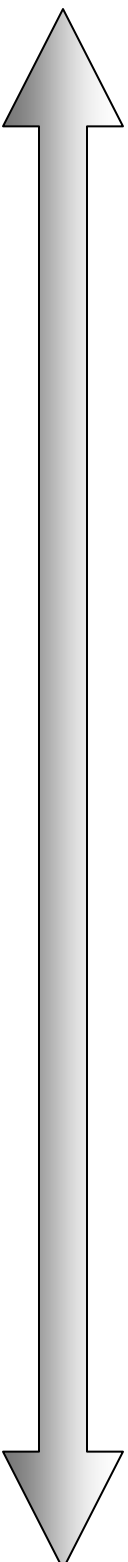
non-Anglo-Saxon traditional music means that acoustic-era commercial recordings are as likely to be unaltered recordings of the original performance as the research recordings made by professional musicologists, anthropologists, and folk-song researchers from this time. Considering the expertise and top-of-the-line equipment used by professional recording technicians, they were more likely to capture a richer and clearer recording than the average researcher, particularly in the case of acoustic 78s since disc cutters were beyond the financial and transportation means of most researchers.

In some cases, these acoustic-era commercial recordings are the only examples we have of a musical tradition from a particular time and place. For instance, there are no existing research recordings of *castrati*, but there are several commercial recordings of Alessandro Moreschi released by the Gramophone & Typewriter Company in 1902 and 1904 (Pennanen 2000:102). Although not as commonly found in ethnographic sound archives as unpublished and commercially released field recordings, these early commercial recordings of ethnic and folk music are found at some institutions and have been used in research by several early ethnomusicologists. I have therefore decided to explore and refer to the uses of these recordings along with the other three categories.

There are, of course, other motivations and intended uses for making sound recordings. People can and do make recordings for personal entertainment or for entertaining others with no thought towards commercial gain or later use. People may also use recordings as a communicative medium as in the case of spoken letters, compilation tapes, answering machine messages, recorded sermons or political speeches or—one of my personal favorites from the days of my childhood—to record a father reading a storybook or singing a lullaby that may then be played to his child at bedtime

while he is away on a business trip. Another interesting use of sound recordings, which arose out of ethnomusicology, is that of researchers making and playing back recordings of their own singing for their informants to familiarize them with the equipment and to induce performance. Another consists of informants and ethnomusicologists performing each other's music (Cassell 1984:5-6). There are probably numerous other uses of sound recordings as well; my point is not to provide a typology but to show diversity. Although one can use these types of recordings as information sources, I have yet to encounter an ethnomusicological article that either discusses their research value or makes use of them as sources. At the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, however, there was one conference paper entitled "Phonographic Anthologies: Mix Tapes, Memory, and Nostalgia" presented by Andy Bennett on the social significance of compilation tapes. Presumably, one may apply many of the results of the following research to these types of recordings, but they did not form any part of either the citation study or the environmental scan.

Until fairly recently, ethnomusicologists also avoided the use of recordings falling far towards the commercial end of the spectrum and they still do so within many of the core journals for the field. Perhaps the most commercial of recordings discussed within the pages of *Ethnomusicology* is Paul Simon's *Graceland*. It served as a study object for an article on cross-cultural musical collaboration (Meintjes 1990). Therefore, in the case of the citation study and environmental scan, I found that commercial recordings really served more as a concept in opposition to research recordings than as a subject for ethnomusicological research in their own right.



Research Recordings

- * Made with intent to document
- * Made for posterity or analysis
- * "Scientific sample" of live event
- * Made in the "field" or on location
- * Generally unedited or "raw"
- * Unpublished
- * Often a unique document
- * Primary documents

Commercially Released Research Recordings

- * Research recording packaged for distribution
- * Made for posterity, analysis, education
- * "Scientific sample" of live event
- * Made in the field but may include additional material
- * Some editing, packaging, and/or supplementary notes
- * Generally published
- * Generally mass-produced on a small scale
- * Value as primary document may increase or decrease

Commercial Recordings

- * Made for financial gain
- * Made for consumer market
- * Differs significantly from live event
- * Studio recorded
- * Significant editing
- * Generally published
- * Generally mass-produced
- * Value as primary document debatable
- * Made with intention to entertain

Acoustic Era Commercial Recordings

- * On early mediums: cylinders, acoustic 78 rpm discs
- * Extremely limited editing possibilities
- * Limited alteration made to performances during production
- * Recording and editing techniques similar to those of early research recordings
- * Made for commercial sale
- * Mass-produced on a small scale
- * Made for commercial market
- * Made with intent of entertainment
- * May be unique recordings with no research equivalent

Figure 2: The Four Sound Recording Types and Their More Common Defining Characteristics

SECTION I: CITATION STUDY

Introduction to Citation Study

Limits of Study

Before I discuss the results of the citation study, it is important that I outline the procedures I followed so as to indicate what the numbers composing the various charts in this section represent. Although I did review every issue of *Ethnomusicology* and the first eleven issues of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* as part of the citation study, these charts do not represent the citations for every article. Before beginning the survey, I decided to exclude articles covering topics that ordinarily do not involve the aural aspects of a musical tradition and are therefore unlikely to make use of sound recordings. My exclusion of articles on these topics from the citation study helps ensure that their bibliographies do not overbalance the number of non-aural documents cited, which would make the situation appear worse than it actually is. The articles excluded included those focusing strictly on the history and study of the field itself, review articles, obituaries, biographies, articles discussing choreography or the purely physical aspects of organology, and articles discussing music existing entirely within historic periods that pre-date the invention of the phonograph. I did include, however, articles on theory and methodology that then apply these theories and methods to case studies, articles discussing the connection between dance and music, articles discussing the tunings and

performance techniques for various musical instruments, and articles that examine both pre-phonographic and post-phonographic musical traditions.

After surveying several issues of *Ethnomusicology*, I also discovered that there are certain musical traditions for which ethnomusicologists frequently and openly cite commercial recordings and commercially released research recordings as sources. These traditions include jazz, blues, gospel, Old-time music (sometimes referred to as “Hillbilly” music), country music, music of the American folk revival, and several other related traditions. It is interesting to note that these traditions share an overlapping set of traits. Upon first obtaining commercial popularity in the United States, these traditions were:

- 1) Performed mainly by musicians of West European or African descent from the southern United States or from the east coast up into the southeastern corner of Canada.
- 2) Predominantly performed by musicians from lower-class economic backgrounds.
- 3) Mostly instrumental in nature or sung in English.
- 5) Recorded by the performers for the purpose of spreading religious or political ideology.
- 6) Traditions widely known to be partially learned or developed by listening to sound recordings made by other musicians.
- 7) Genres often glossed by the term “American folk music.”

It is possible that the combination of these elements plus easy access to a large number of recordings and performances have allowed ethnomusicologists in the United States to

feel more comfortable using sound recordings of these traditions as information sources. Other possibilities for this comfort level are the performer's involvement in the recording process, the acceptance by performers of recordings as surrogate performances, a greater amount of attention received from folklore and cultural studies, or a perception by ethnomusicologists that these traditions exist within the matrix of commercial and popular music as opposed to that of non-commercial and traditional music. Yet another possibility is that these musical traditions were of central interest to Charles Seeger and that both he and his students were more sound recording friendly than other ethnomusicologists who tended to focus on every tradition but these. Although most articles in *Ethnomusicology* rarely cited over nine recordings, one article about Old-time music cited 84 sound recordings in a 92-item bibliography while another on American fiddle music cited 112 sound recordings in a 140-item bibliography (see Barnie 1978 and Goertzen 1985). Such totals were common for articles discussing the traditions listed above but were not at all typical for articles about other musical traditions. Since ethnomusicologists do not tend to problematize the use of sound recordings and even make frequent use of them when researching these traditions, I did not include articles on these traditions in the citation study. I felt that they would overbalance the number of aural documents tallied and would make the situation for other musical areas appear less grave than it is.

I also excluded articles discussing "popular music" for similar reasons. First, ethnomusicologists did not make a regular practice out of studying what they considered to be popular music until rather recently. Although Rhodes mentions popular music as an acceptable area for ethnomusicological research (1956:4), the first article in

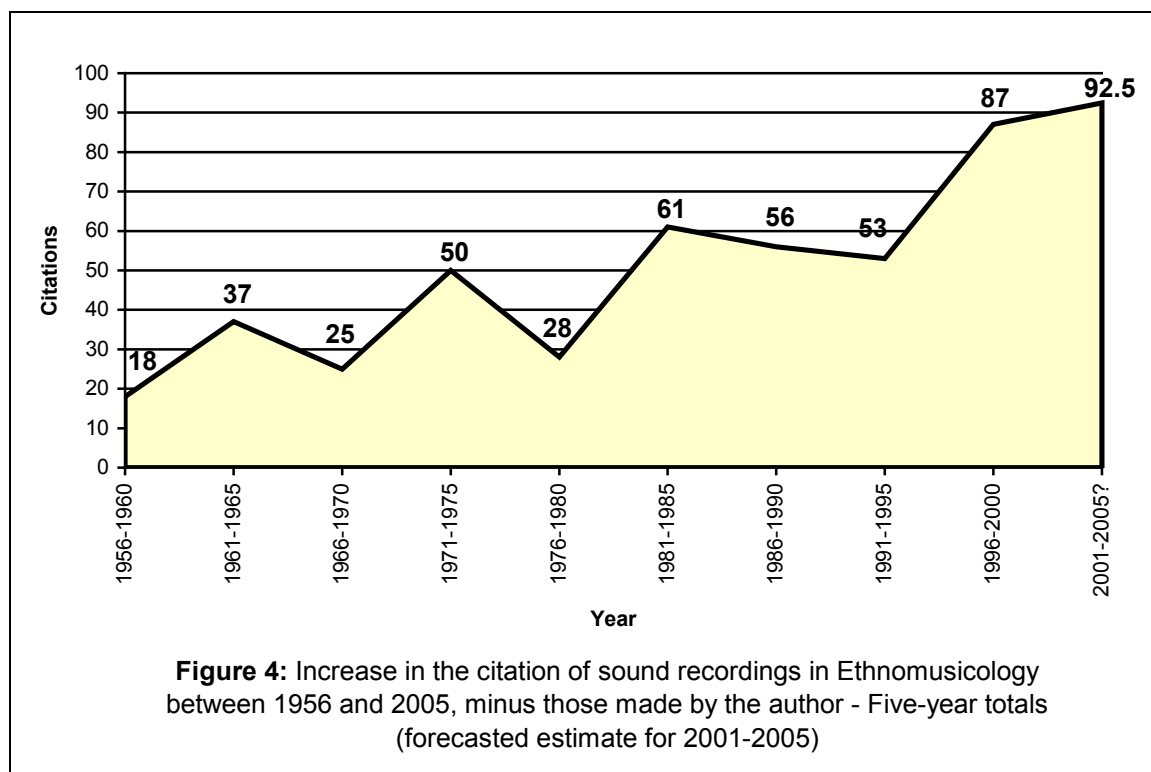
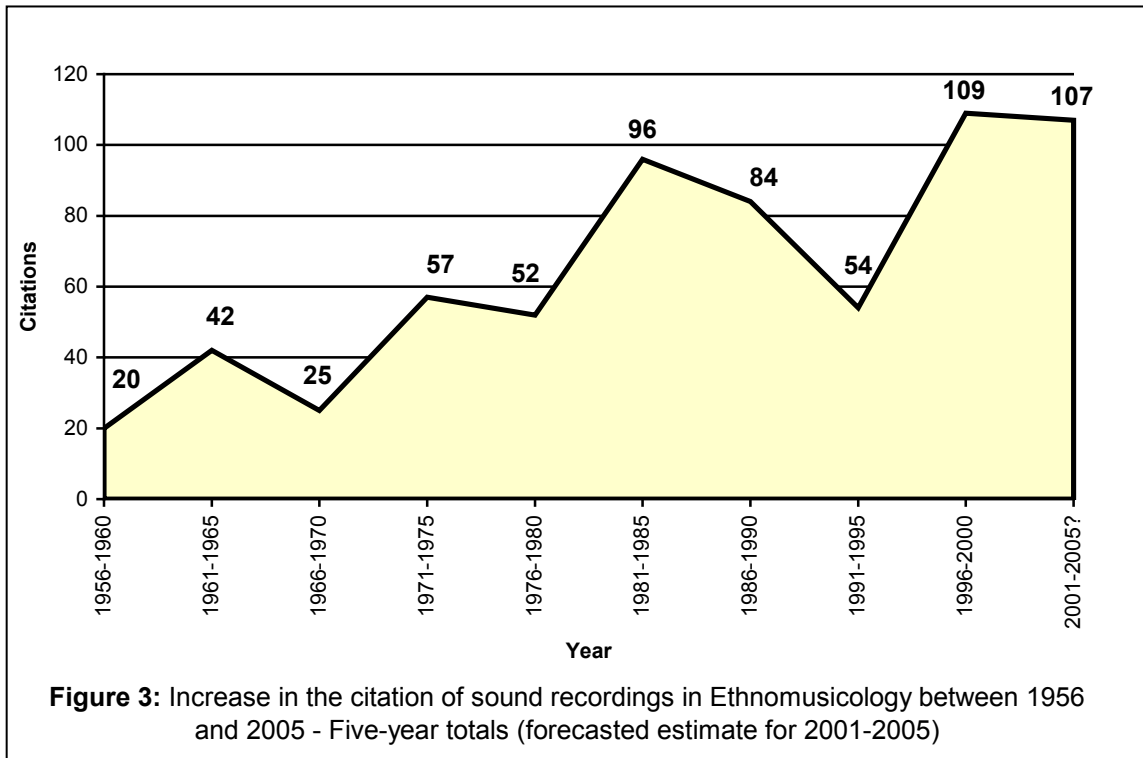
Ethnomusicology that explicitly refers to its topic as “popular” music, Bruno Nettl’s “Persian Popular Music in 1969,” does not appear until 1972. My main reason for excluding articles on popular music, for which I have relied on the designation of the authors either in the title or in the main body of the text as opposed to any particular working definition, is that they seem to be slightly different from the other articles published in ethnomusicology. Authors often treat this music as being heavily mediated or as existing primarily in the form of commercial recordings. Additionally, the performers and producers often consider these recordings as the primary mode of expression as opposed to the sound of the live performance. In cases such as these, ethnomusicologists may have little choice but to use recordings created by the performer in place of live performances, although they may do so in combination with interviews or small demonstrations of musical technique. In addition to the fact that articles on so-called “popular music” often deviate widely from those on other types of music, there are already several ethnomusicologists defending the use of sound recordings of popular music in research (see Gronow 1963, Flanagan 1979, van Peer 1999, Pennanen 2000). To my knowledge, Anthony Seeger is the only comparable defender for sound recordings of music traditions that lack the market size or necessary characteristics for becoming popular music. Although many ethnomusicologists seem to accept the use of sound recordings when researching popular music, not all musical traditions can or will attain a “popular” status. This being the case, I have decided to set aside articles on popular music for the time being so that I may specifically focus on the citation practices for sound recordings of music considered to be more “traditional” by past and present ethnomusicologists.

Chapter 2

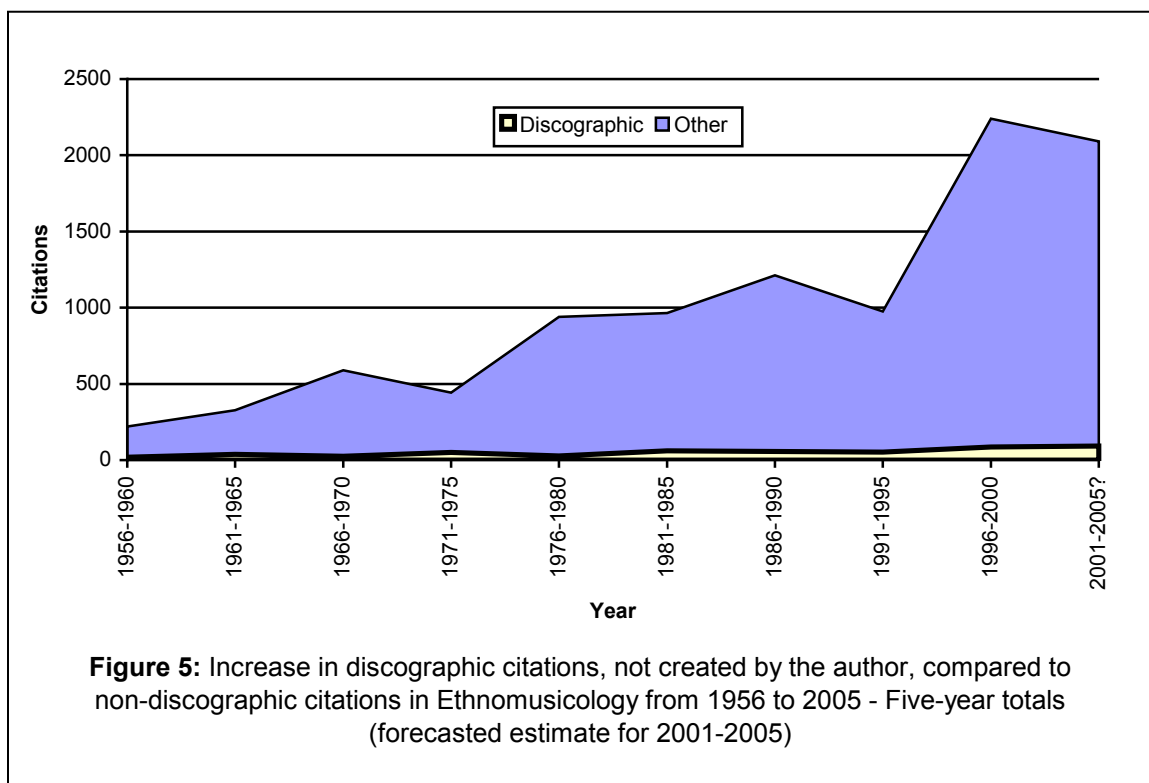
Quantitative Results of Study

When I first decided to undertake a citation study for the entire run of *Ethnomusicology* from its inception as the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* in 1953 through the Fall 2002 issue, I expected to find evidence supporting certain trends. Considering the numerous warnings and complaints against aural analysis, I expected to find authors heavily citing sound recordings within the early issues of the 1950s and 1960s with a steady decrease toward non-existence by the present day. After completing a count of the sound recordings cited in each five-year period between 1956 and 2002, I discovered that this number actually increased while the average number of articles per issue remained relatively constant.¹ Figure 3 shows the gradual increase in citation of recordings from 1956 to 2000 with a forecasted estimate for the period of 2001-2005 based upon the current total for the 2001, 2002, and 2003 issues. Although researchers cited only twenty sound recordings from 1956 to 1960, they cited 109 from 1996 to 2000—more than five times the number from the first five years. After examining this first total, I removed research recordings and commercially released research recordings made by the author of the article from the total. These results appear in figure 4. With the author's own recordings removed, we find that the total for 1956 to 1960 is now 18 and the 1996 to 2000 total has dropped to 87 citations, still roughly five times more than the total for the

first five year period. Overall, from 1956 to 2002, researchers cited 582 sound recordings, 452 of which were created by someone other than the author of the article.



Raw counts of the number of sound recordings cited, however, do not give the full picture. Figures 5 and 6 compare the increase in sound recording citations to the steady increase in citations in general. While the number of citations for recordings made by parties other than the author never exceeded 40 in any given year and never exceeded 90 in a given five-year period, we find that the total number of citations increased from a mere 3 in 1956 to a whopping 653 in 2002, more than 200 times the original number. The five-year trends also demonstrate this disproportionate increase, growing from 221 citations in 1956-1960 to 2239 in 1995-2000, roughly ten times the 1956-1960 total. From 1956 to 2002, researchers cited 8,747 items. Recordings made by someone other than the author make up just under 5.2% of this 46-year total.



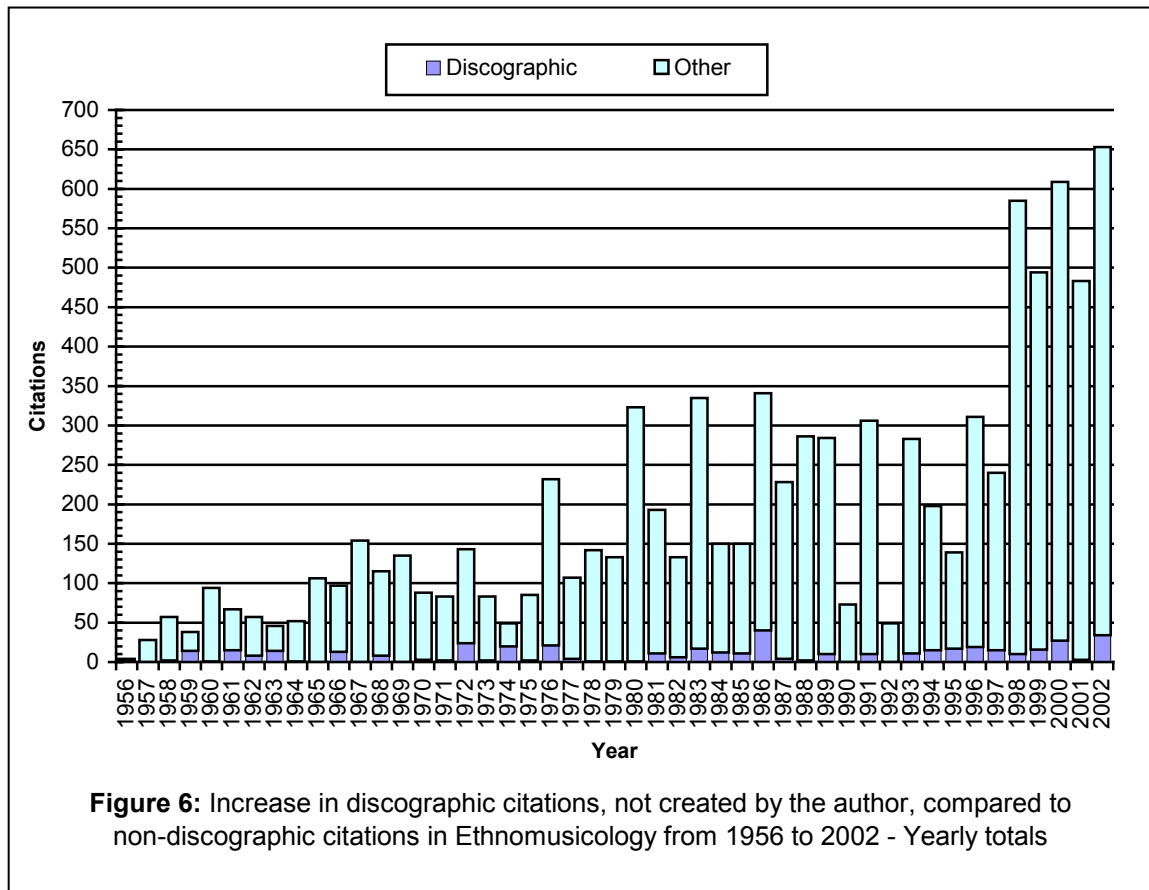
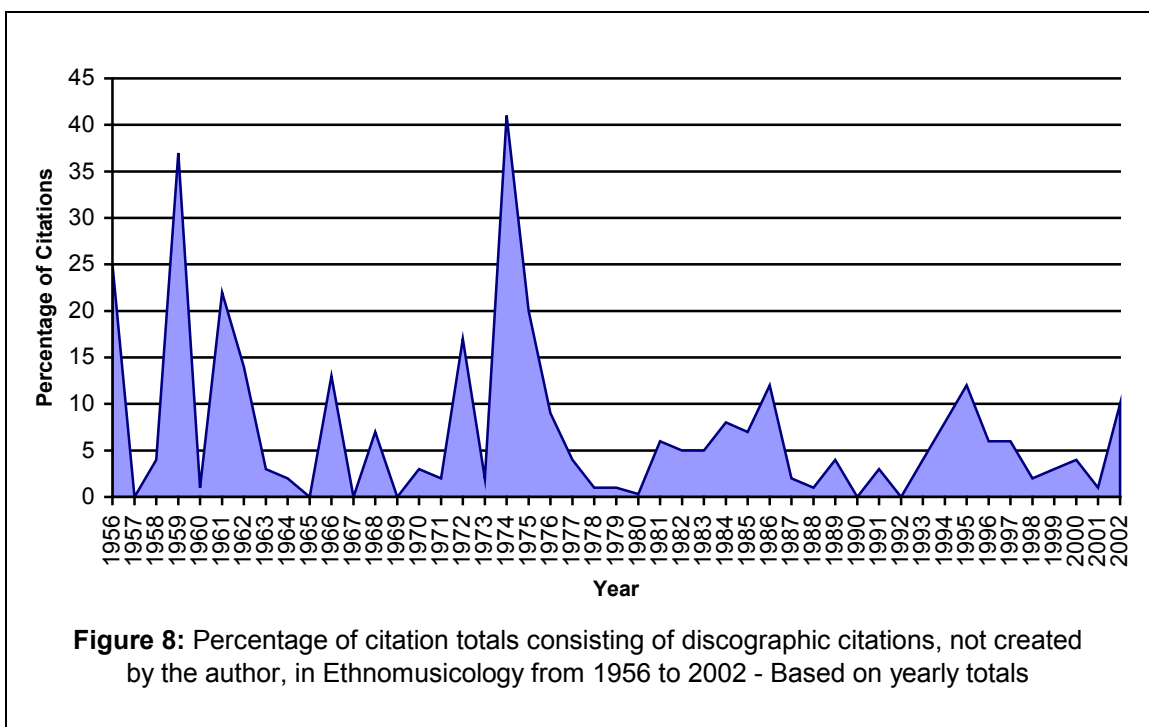
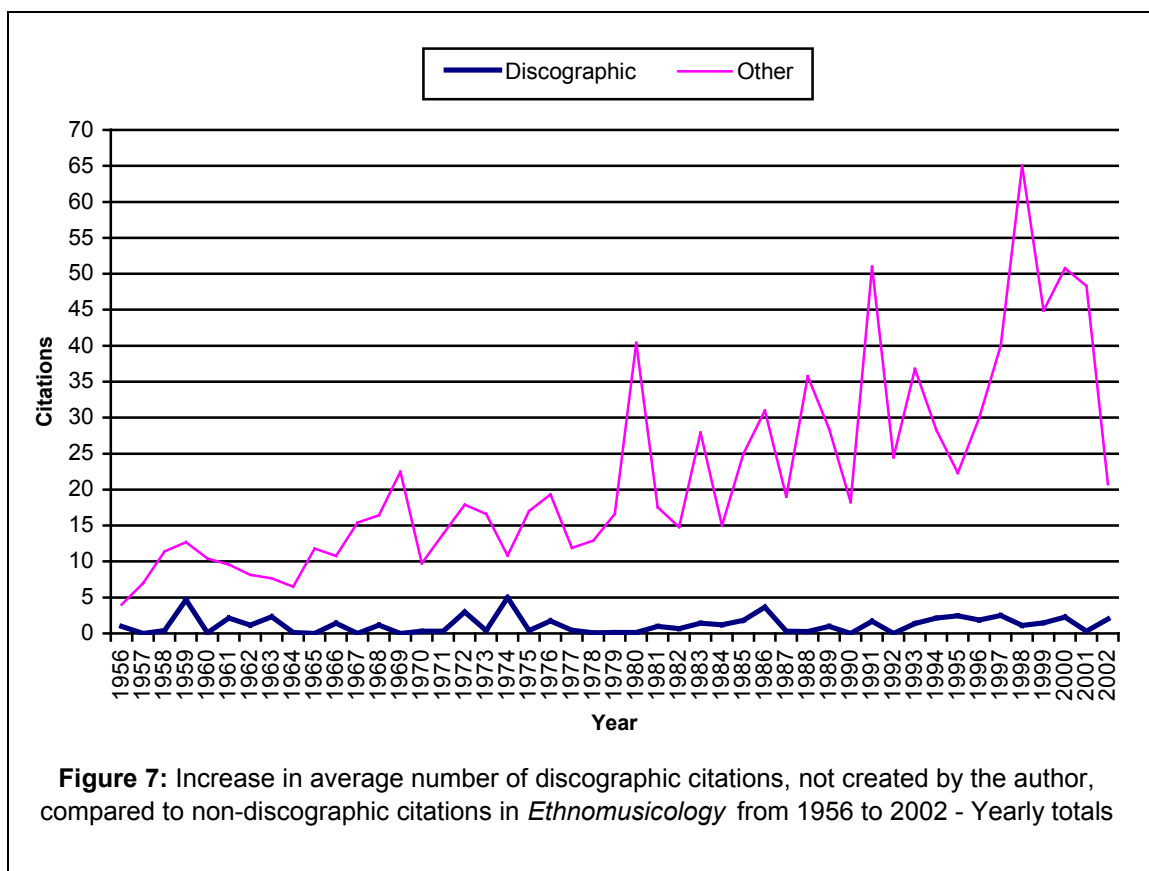


Figure 7 shows that while the average number of sound recordings cited per article consistently falls between 0 and 5 for 1956 to 2002, the average number of total citations per article rises from 4 in 1956 and to an all time high of 65 in 1998. Figure 8 shows that although the percent of recordings cited from 1956 to 2002 has been somewhat erratic, since 1976 sound recordings have rarely made up more than 10 percent of the total citations and have often made up less than 7 percent within a given year. In summary, while the number of sound recordings cited has increased since 1956, this number is not proportionate to the increase in general citations and often breaks down to a very small percentage of the total number of items cited in any given year.



Chapter 3

Qualitative Results of Study

Since 1956, ethnomusicologists have shown a high degree of inconsistency in form when citing sound recordings. Perhaps this is due to the inadequacy of the fifteenth edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* which provides a mere three pages worth of guidelines for citing sound recordings. These guidelines fill a mere three pages and provide no advice for how to cite individual items on a recording, unpublished or archival recordings, or mixed media collections.

Even when ethnomusicologists fully cite sound recordings, it is somewhat uncommon for them to place these citations in the bibliography or in a separate discography. During the past 57 years, 103 articles have cited sound recordings but only 48 of these articles included the citation in either the bibliography or discography. In the remaining 55 articles, ethnomusicologists have occasionally relegated sound recording citations to the endnotes or footnotes but have more commonly used in-text citations or used partial citation information as captions for the transcriptions appearing in the article. This has not been the case with books, articles, and other printed or visual sources which have, almost without exception, appeared in the formal bibliography following the article.

Ron Grele, Director of the Oral History Program at Columbia University, also noticed the lack of sound recording citations compared to textual citations within oral

history research. He comments, “It is doubtful that a published work based upon written sources which are secreted and unavailable to others would be greeted without some kind of skepticism by the procession. Yet, with oral histories, ‘source monopoly’ as David Henege calls it, is common practice” (Grele 1983:13). That ethnomusicologists have excluded sound recording citations from the formal bibliographies of more than half of their articles suggests this double standard for the treatment of aural and textual documents currently exists in ethnomusicology as well.

Other citation practices provide further evidence of this double standard. Numerous authors have carefully pointed out that what they are citing is not the recording itself, but the liner notes or other accompanying textual material (See Cadar 1973, Manuel 1989, Doubleday 1999, Hoffman 2002, Witzleben 1987). In one curious instance, Joseph Lam cited the same album twice. First, he cited the accompanying booklet in the formal bibliography, and then he cited the recording itself in the discography, treating sound and text as two separate items as opposed to two components of the same multimedia entity (Lam 1993:89). Even more curious is Katherine Hoffman’s statement, “The only recordings of Anti-Atlas women’s wedding *tizrrarin* available were made by Miriam Olsen at an Ida ou Zeddout wedding in 1977 and are commercially available on a CD *whose liner notes include examples* of numerous Anti-Atlas and High Atlas musical genres” (2002:537, emphasis added). Is this to say that the recording itself lacks examples of these genres, or was this an example of favoring a textual document over an aural one as an authoritative information source?

The double standard shown toward sound recordings is not limited to liner notes. Ethnomusicologists have often used texts describing musical performances or musical

transcriptions in place of the recordings themselves (See Christensen 1964, Kolinski 1965, Kolinski 1967, Roberts 1989). Perhaps the most interesting instance of a transcription taking predominance over the sound recording was William Tallamadge's decision to cite his own transcription of a recording as opposed to the recording itself (1968:237).

In other cases, authors have cited numerous textual and visual sources, and the sheer variety of formats makes the absence of sound recording highly conspicuous. One extreme example of this practice occurred in an article by Charlotte J. Frisbie. Her formal bibliography included 142 citations for books, articles, correspondence, interview transcripts, journal entries, liner notes, musical transcriptions, and her 1963-1967 field data but there is not a single mention of sound recordings in the entire article. The article is entitled "Vocables in Navajo Ceremonial Music" (1980). Certainly there must have been at least one aural example of Navajo vocables recorded between 1896 and 1980, the timeframe covered by Frisbie's textual sources. The Indiana University, Archives of Traditional Music alone holds over fifteen collections containing Navaho performances from this period. The Library of Congress undoubtedly holds even more. Although it is always possible that these pre-1980 collections and those of other institutions have completely failed to capture Navaho vocables, this seems an unlikely possibility considering that Frisbie cited liner notes for several recordings in her bibliography and musical transcriptions by other researchers. To take another case, Veronica Doubleday has cited 87 visual and textual sources including books, articles, her fieldwork, photographs, postcards, ancient paintings, and three accompanying booklets, which she has carefully distinguished from the recordings themselves (1999:131-34). Other authors

have cited novels, pottery, organizations, pamphlets, album covers, and websites, again without making a single reference to sound recordings.

Another questionable citation practice demonstrated by ethnomusicologists has been the provision of vague references to one's use of sound recordings without formally citing any of these aural documents. This practice has several different variations. One variation involves the author referring to the informants' production or use of specific sound recordings but then failing to provide a single hint of bibliographical information. Arnold Perris has provided one such example in his "Feeding the Hungry Ghosts: Some Observations on Buddhist Music and Buddhism from Both Sides of the Taiwan Strait." In the article, he first described his disappointment at discovering that the Buddhist monks of the *Shih-t'ou* temple were away visiting their families on holiday and that he would be unable to hear them perform a service. He spent the night at the temple and then experienced the following situation:

About five-thirty the following morning, as light slipped in my window, I heard a bell toll and the morning service begin. From my window I could see the huge doors into the temple had been opened. I was surprised and excited; there was to be a service afterall [sic]! I dressed and hurried outside. Loudspeakers, hung from the trees, carried the song into the courtyard and gardens. I entered the prayer hall. There was no person in sight. Since no one was present to inhibit an investigation, I went searching for the source of the chanting. Behind the main altar I located a cassette deck and amplifier. In the absence of the monks the service was supplied by a commercial religious tape. Again the essential action was reiterated: the sacred words intoned by consecrated persons at the appropriate hour filled the ambient air. (Perris 1986:438)

Although Perris witnessed several people engaging in their usual ritual practices to the sounds of this cassette, he gave it no further attention in his article. There was no citation for the cassette and no delving into the significance of a sound recording substituting for live performers during a religious ritual. Perris' initial excitement at hearing the morning

service seems to have fizzled into confusion and bemused wonderment when he discovered that the cassette and not the live performers were the source. The cassette itself was of no further interest.

Marcello Sorce Keller mentioned that the Alpine choirs of Trentino produce their own commercial recordings, but his sources consisted of scholarly texts, musical transcriptions, and his own field recordings as opposed to these performer-produced documents (1984). J. Lawrence Witzleben (2002), Richard Cornelius and Terence O'Grady (1987), and Veronica Doubleday (1999) all stated that students of the tradition they study use commercial recordings as pedagogical tools, but they failed to cite a single sound recording. In his 1989 article on gamelan tuning, Roger Vetter explained how a gamelan smith used a commercial cassette produced by government radio to tune the instruments, but Vetter did not provide a citation for this cassette (1989:221-22). Pi-Yen Chen discussed the effects that commercial CDs released by two Chinese Buddhist temples have had on performances of the daily service at temples throughout the region but, once again, we are not provided with any formal citations (2002). The authors of these articles all mentioned the use or production of sound recordings by students, performing groups, and congregations during rehearsals, performances, lessons, and personal practice, but they did not treat these sound recordings as information sources in their own right.

Another common practice is the inclusion of musical transcriptions without a formal citation of the source (See Merriam 1962a, Touma 1971, Becker 1980, Kauffman 1980, Slawek 1988, Tokita 1996, List 1997,¹ Manuel 2000). Considering that many ethnomusicologists distrust musical notation as an accurate representation of musical

sound, particularly since the 1963 “Symposium on Transcription and Analysis: A Hukwe Song with Musical Bow” presented at the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, this practice of providing transcriptions and then preventing the reader from accessing the sound recordings used for making the transcriptions is rather puzzling (England 1963). A fairly recent example of this type of citation practice is found in Bar-Yosef’s “Musical Time Organization and Space Concept: A Model of Cross-Cultural Analogy” (2001). In his article, Bar-Yosef performed a detailed analysis of the rhythm and meter of several pieces of art music from Java, Western Europe, the Middle East, North India, and late medieval Europe and then used the results to draw generalized conclusions about the temporal and spatial concepts held by the members of each represented culture. His stated source for each transcription consisted solely of the title and genre. I question this particular citation practice, not only because it is widely agreed that Western musical notation does a poor job of expressing rhythm, but also because this practice suggests a high degree of consistency in performance technique and style among performers and across times and regions. Can one assume that the temporal and spatial execution of Schubert’s A Major Sonata would be the same when performed by a German piano student in 1940 as it would be when performed by a professional Japanese pianist today? Would a professional Javanese gamelan ensemble perform the same way as a student gamelan ensemble from UCLA? Can we hold a transcription, particularly a prescriptive transcription, as representative of every performance of the piece to the point that it is no longer necessary to anchor the transcription to a single performance? Additionally, if Bar-Yosef was drawing from prescriptive transcriptions, can they truly serve as authoritative sources considering his chosen topic of rhythmic and temporal

conceptualizations? If Bar-Yosef created these transcriptions through the use of sound recordings, even if they were his own research recordings, I question his decision to withhold the citations for these information sources and with it the basic information about the who, where, and when of the performances.

Another citation problem arises when authors fail to cite the sound recordings they used to draw specific conclusions or for creating musical descriptions. In many cases, I suspect that the author was using his or her own research recordings to make these conclusions and descriptions and that he or she simply expected the reader to assume this was the case. Sometimes authors have actually mentioned their fieldwork as the primary information source, but do not provide the citations or instructions for how to access this material. Since ethnomusicologists may collect hundreds or even thousands of hours of recorded material during their careers, such vagueness can make locating the specific recording or recordings that inspired the author's conclusions like the search for the proverbial needle in a haystack. In cases where the reader is unsure whether the source was the author's recordings or those of another researcher, locating these sound recordings may become impossible.

One example of the difficulties caused by this type of citation practice originates from my experience as a student assistant at the Indiana University, Archives of Traditional Music. One semester, a professor came to me seeking assistance with the task of compiling a demonstration CD for one of his classes. The professor wished to compile a CD of the various musical events discussed and transcribed by researchers in the earlier issues of *Ethnomusicology* and he needed help identifying and locating the recordings of these events. I remember asking him at one point for more information on

a particular performance discussed in a specific article. He admitted that the only information the article provided was that the piece was a Dhrupad from India.² We were, of course, unable to locate the specific performance based on this information.

Occasionally, authors have referred to the collection from which they obtained the sound recordings used for the article but, as with the researcher's own recordings, these collections may be so large as to make this information almost useless. In one of their articles, Dalia Cohen and Ruth Torgovnik Katz described the source of their information as a large number of recordings from the Israel Broadcasting Service (Cohen and Katz 1960:68). Claude Charron referred to a corpus of 900 songs from the Belcher Islands without citing specific examples (1978). Richard Keeling mentioned drawing from a "broad musical corpus including historical recordings" recorded from 1902 to 1975 (1985:208) but then cited just one recording. Manuel Peña mentioned that Arhoolie alone has published over 100 sound recordings and that recordings made since the 1940s reveal many of the influences on current performers. In his bibliography, Peña cited the liner notes for one recording (1985). Jean Mulder informed us that a wealth of Coast Tsimshian music stored on sound recordings is in need of transcription and publication (1994:123), but she failed to refer to or cite a single one of these recordings in her article. Peter Manuel described at some length the importance of 78rpm discs of Indian music within Indo-Caribbean culture, but then referred to only one sound recording in an endnote (2000:117). Yoshitaka Terada apparently used cassettes and 78rpm discs for her article on the role of Indian musicians and their performance techniques, but only cited those cassettes from which she took photographs (2000:487-90). In all of these cases, the reader can narrow the search to a specific collector, genre, format, or performer, but

would have great difficulty replicating the specific set of sound recordings used by the researcher.

A slight improvement over no citation at all is the inclusion of partial citations (see Tallmadge 1961, Klymasz 1972, Sutton 1985, Byerly 1998). In most cases, these citations have consisted of the title and perhaps the performer of the piece. Occasionally, one finds articles that list just the catalog number for a commercially released research recording. Such citations are probably sufficient except in situations where a performer has made numerous recordings of the same piece or in cases where the catalog number is somewhat generic and has been used by multiple companies. Even in these situations, a partial citation is certainly better than no citation at all and greatly improves the reader's chances of locating the author's source material. Other times, these partial citations prove more nebulous. In one instance, Amnon Shiloah and E. Cohen used an endnote reference to refer the reader to a "commercial cassette, produced in New York" of a thirteen-year old boy named Yehiel Nahari (Shiloah and Cohen 1983:249).

Hypertext has created new opportunities for poor citation practices. Now, instead of including citations, some authors have begun to include URLs for online examples (See Lassiter 2001, Henry 2002). While I applaud this new effort to provide online links to sound recordings, I wonder who will maintain the personal homepages of researchers like Edward O. Henry in fifty years. Will these researchers be willing to use precious server space to maintain these links indefinitely? What happens if or when these links die? The only information Henry has provided about his online example is that the piece is a *nam kirtan* he recorded in 1971 near Varanasi. Is this enough information for his readers to locate the performance among Henry's many field tapes once the link is gone?

By excluding citations from the article itself, ethnomusicologists may be unconsciously limiting future access to these sound sources just as surely as if they had provided no link at all. Although the current “Multimedia Appendices” offered by the *Society for Ethnomusicology* offers a sense of greater stability, again I wonder how long this site will be maintained.³ This is not the first time that the editors of *Ethnomusicology* have tried creating audiovisual supplements. In May of 1978, Fredric Lieberman announced an experiment to make cassette tapes “containing musical examples selected by the authors of individual articles to accompany, clarify, or enrich discussions or analyses” (Lieberman 1978:iv). This informal experiment was short-lived, lasting for only one issue. The Office Coordinator in charge of the SEM central office and the current Executive Director for the Society for Ethnomusicology were unaware of this cassette and knew of no existing copies. Upon contacting Lieberman, I learned that those involved in the project made and sold very few copies of the tape (Lieberman 2004). Although the authors of the five articles appearing in the issue packed their works with transcriptions and detailed music analysis, *not one of them* cited a single sound recording. Fortunately, with the aid of Lieberman, I was able to locate the master audio reel for the cassette. The cassette is part of the holdings of the University Washington Ethnomusicology Recordings Archives and is identified as item 1978039.⁴ Without this tape and its accompanying documentation, however, the links would be broken and it would be extremely difficult to identify the original source material for the articles in the May 1978 issue. Even if today’s online sites are preserved indefinitely, what if the reader is interested in the performance as a whole and not just a thirty-second clip? Without

citation information, fitting these clips into their larger aural context could prove to be an insurmountable challenge in many cases.

Although there are ethnomusicologists who have provided adequate citation information for sound recordings, many have not, and the ethnomusicologists who I have listed as examples are not the only ones who failed to do so. The reader should not mistakenly associate poor citation practices with poor research. As their publication in one of the leading forums for ethnomusicological research suggests, these articles are all of great value to the field. The value of these publications only serves to increase the importance of creating clear citation standards for future ethnomusicologists to follow. That only 48 articles provided full formal citations for sound recordings out of the 103 articles *citing* sound recordings suggests that well over half of the researchers in ethnomusicology are engaging in poor citation practices. When one compares these same 48 articles to the 372 articles examined for this citation study, the numbers suggest that more than eighty percent of ethnomusicologists have either avoided using sound recordings as information sources or have engaged in poor citation practices. A quick glance at the *Yearbook for Traditional Music* and *World of Music* reveals similar trends. Although articles in the *Yearbook for Traditional Music* appear to cite a higher number of sound recordings than *Ethnomusicology* in the 1950s to the 1970s, these citations have decreased over time. *World of Music* has experienced an increase in sound recording citations since the 1990s, but such citations were far less common in pre-1990 issues.

Ethnomusicology Online (See <http://www.research.umbc.edu/eol/eol.html>) is comparatively young compared to the other three journals. In many ways, this virtual journal opens the door for some exciting changes in ethnomusicology's use of sound

recordings. The greatest of these changes is the ability to link sound clips directly to the text and to make them easily accessible to the reader. Unfortunately, the journal is already experiencing two major problems. First, the articles published in later issues are already failing to cite the sources of the audio clips. It is probably safe to assume that the general source of these clips is the researcher's own research recordings, but this does not make it any easier to locate the clips within the larger aural context of what could be a very extensive collection. Additionally, if the links ever break down we lose the short clips as well. Second, *Ethnomusicology Online* currently seems to be having trouble attracting submissions. Between 1995 and 1997, the journal published eleven articles. Between 1998 and 2002, it published only three. Neither the 2000 or 2001 issue contained any articles. Although I wish this journal much success in the future, things currently look grim (last accessed July 15, 2003).

The findings of this citation study could suggest serious consequences for the future of ethnomusicology, or at least for the numerous published articles which either completely lack or fail to provide adequate references to their aural sources.

SECTION II: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Introduction to Environmental Scan

Practical versus Theoretical Use Issues

Throughout the history of ethnomusicology, researchers have presented numerous reasons for excluding sound recordings as information sources and audile analysis as a serious research methodology. It is possible to break the majority of these reasons into six categories, four of which focus on theoretical issues and two of which focus on the practicality of using sound recordings during ethnomusicological research. In the following sections, I will focus on and explore the four categories that deal with theoretical issues. Although the pragmatic issues are important, particularly those of physically accessing materials and overcoming barriers related to intellectual property rights, I have not made these issues the central focus of my research, and I will not be performing an in-depth exploration of these issues within this work.

I have decided to favor an exploration of the theoretical issues for several reasons. First, although issues of access, ownership, and intellectual property rights do serve as barriers to use in some cases, there are plenty of exceptions. There are currently thousands of commercially released research recordings and early acoustic recordings

available through agencies such as Smithsonian Folkways, Rounder Records, Nonesuch Records, national and international auctions, and various other sources. The means of locating and accessing these materials have also greatly improved over the past century. Librarians and archivists have been hard at work organizing and cataloging materials and many institutions have created finding aids, online catalogs, and even digital libraries that allow researchers to search for and access materials at the item level. Complaints that archival research often involves the hassles of travel time and hours of sifting through recorded data and manuscripts, while arguably justified in an age of instant document delivery and immediate online access, seems odd from a discipline that prides itself on surviving the difficulties of fieldwork and in the interpretation of information gathered from live human behavior and cultural performances. Access to archival materials may prove difficult sometimes but, in most cases, it is neither impossible nor more difficult than performing fieldwork.

When dealing with intellectual property rights, there are far fewer complications and restrictions when simply referring to material than there are when publishing verbatim transcriptions, copies of the sound recordings, or reproductions of the accompanying textual materials. For most ethnomusicologists, intellectual property rights should rarely become an insurmountable obstacle. Since much of recent ethnomusicological research has moved away from musical and textual transcription and towards the analysis of human musical behavior and its relation to the cultural context, the number of verbatim texts and transcriptions appearing in professional articles has greatly decreased. Issues of ownership and intellectual property rights generally only come into play when researchers wish to publish verbatim transcriptions, photographs,

lengthy passages from fieldnotes, or copies of the sound recordings and accompanying materials. At this point, the ethnomusicologist needs to contact the original researcher and sometimes the originating community to receive permission to publish. An ethnomusicologist generally does not need permission when simply referring to material unless he or she is dealing with secret or restricted information.

During my experience as an assistant at the Indiana University, Archives of Traditional Music, I have encountered only a few highly restricted collections and hardly any of these prevented researchers from simply referring to the concepts and musical styles that composed the collection's contents. Although mass distribution of non-restricted recorded material might improve access for one's readers, it is not an absolute necessity. The ethnomusicologist can always refer readers to the archival collection in the case of research recordings and to a specific publication in the case of commercially released research recordings or early ethnic recordings.

My second reason for showing preference toward the theoretical issues is that both the archiving community and ethnomusicologists are already well aware of the need to improve access¹ and to clarify ownership and intellectual property right restrictions for both unpublished and commercially released research recordings.² Much of the 2003 *Building Bridges with Folklore Archives* conference in Provo, Utah focused on issues of access and intellectual property rights. Several institutions and organizations, perhaps most notably the American Folklife Center (AFC) and the World Intellectual Property Right Organization (WIPO), are working to set new guidelines for permissions forms and for working with informants and collectors to ensure that the materials they donate are handled in a manner deemed appropriate by both the originating community members

and the collector. To dwell on the fact that such issues exist seems superfluous when they are only part of the overall problem and are already being dealt with by the archival community and by numerous ethnomusicologists and folklorists.

A third reason for my focus on theoretical issues over practical ones is that current attitudes towards the use of sound recordings, and particularly toward that of archived research recordings, may serve to increase the number of practical barriers.

Ethnomusicologists who assume that their materials will be of little value to future researchers may fail to provide adequate documentation regarding a collection's contents, provenance, and intellectual property status. This lack of documentation not only makes use difficult for future researchers, but it may serve as a serious obstacle for the archivist wishing to catalog these materials. If the documentation of a collection is poor enough to prevent an archivist from cataloging these materials, this in turn may prevent researchers from accessing the materials or from even knowing that they exist. If ethnomusicologists feel that future use of their materials is of little value or even undesirable, they may even decide not to deposit their research collections and therefore completely limit access to themselves and a few select individuals of their choosing. Depending on the researcher, the preservational care shown towards the materials, and the researcher's plans for their materials after his or her death, retaining materials in a private collection may limit the life of the collection and ultimately result in a complete lack of access for other parties.⁴

Anthony Seeger makes the following comment about undeposited field collections:

Those ethnomusicologists who do not place their collections in archives with all due care have a negative effect on the future of the discipline. Reanalysis is reduced, repatriation of the recordings is made more difficult, eventual documentation is weak, and the transformation of archives into centers for the preservation and rapid dissemination of material is impeded. (Seeger 1991a:43)

Grele connected the sloppiness of collections and citation practices to a lack of concern by researchers in the future use of their collections:

The audience for the historian is himself or herself. There is little guesswork involved and this is, I think, why historians are generally so unconcerned about legal niceties or about the preservation of their tapes after they themselves use them. It may be also why historians are not always concerned about future use, about the physical surroundings of the interview or about the quality of recording. We have sought out tapes done by historians for their books and have been appalled at the sloppiness of citation and the lax attitude toward recording and preservation. The response of the historian to our concern has been a shrug and an admission that they never thought about someone else using their work. (Grele 1983: 14)

Grele is discussing historians in this case, but his references to the “sloppiness of citation” calls to mind the results of the previous citation study. When one fails to look beyond one’s own research, it results in loose ends and missing information that are particularly valuable to future researchers and which may bar future use of a recording altogether.

Finally, I have given preference to the theoretical issues surrounding the uses of recordings as opposed to those regarding practical issues, because the theoretical arguments are more fundamental and will not resolve themselves once the obstacles of limited access and intellectual property rights are overcome. Although archivists can facilitate access to and use of the sound recordings that make up their holdings, they cannot force ethnomusicologists to use them or even necessarily convince them of the value of these materials. Although ethnomusicologists do make use of sound recordings for pedagogical purposes, often they need only brief examples from specific cultures or countries and they can meet this need more efficiently by using material from their own collection or a few commercial recordings as opposed to obtaining items from their local ethnographic sound archive. Additionally, when ethnomusicologists have expressed their

opinions regarding the use of others' sound recordings, it has generally been in terms of using these materials in ethnomusicological research and directed towards fellow professionals and advanced ethnomusicology students. These opinions do not necessarily reflect how ethnomusicologists feel regarding the use of others' sound recordings for pedagogical purposes. Pedagogical uses of sound recordings are beyond the scope of the current research.

Since 1953, ethnomusicologists have created numerous theoretical barriers, which have served to discourage the use of sound recordings and audile analysis. As a result of these barriers, many ethnomusicologists may avoid using sound recordings as research sources even if the items are in hand and the problems related to intellectual property rights are negligible. Since ethnomusicology has yet to delineate and explore these theoretical barriers, it is here where I will devote most of my energy.

The Reasons: Reliability, Representation, Paradigm Shifts, and Professionalism

The first set of reasons ethnomusicologists have presented for their avoidance of sound recordings and audile analysis centers around the issue of reliability. The reliability of sound recordings has been heavily called into question over the past 112 years, both in relation to their perceived degree of completeness and the procedures used for their creation. Reliability is perhaps the oldest category of reasons against the use of sound recordings, having existed since H. E. Krehbiel criticized Jesse Fewkes' pitch analysis of Benjamin Ives Gilman Zuni recordings in *Zuñi Melodies* (1891). In general, these arguments question how accurately the reproduced sound resembles that produced during a performance event and whether one is able to judge this accuracy from just the

recording and its accompanying documentation. Luciana Duranti, one of the leading intellectuals from the field of archival science has worked out a careful definition of “reliability” and its role in assuring the usefulness of a document. According to Duranti, a document is reliable when it can be treated as fact or as evidence. The factors affecting the reliability of a document are its “degree of completeness” and its “procedure of creation.” Since Duranti’s article refers to text, it requires some modification when applied to sound recordings. For Duranti, the degree of completeness refers to a document maintaining the attributes deemed necessary by the originators of a document for it to serve its original intended function. In the case of documents, completeness refers to either keeping the original intact or to making an adequate copy. For many ethnomusicologists who seek to document a live event, however, the original “document” becomes the performance and the sound recording is its “copy.” Both ethnomusicologists and their predecessors have shown concern over the ability of sound recordings to reach the degree of completeness necessary for them to serve as reliable evidence of, or even as a substitute for, the original performance. Procedure of creation has likewise been a concern. For a document to be reliable, the creator must meet certain standards established by his or her field or institution to ensure that a complete record is created. If the creator fails to meet these standards, the excluded information may make the resulting document unusable due to its unreliability (Duranti 1995:6).

The second set of reasons revolves around questions of representation. Researchers began to raise questions of representation, mainly regarding the capture and study of song variations, as early as the first decade of the 1900s. Two of the questions under this heading that most ethnomusicologists are familiar with are “Is it authentic?”

and “Is it the most authoritative version?” The intention of the first question is to determine whether a performance event accurately represents the performance traditions of a given group and that of the latter is to establish whether the performance event is the most representative of the tradition or at least representative enough to serve as the most reliable research source. For the first question, we can again draw from Duranti. For Duranti, a document is authentic when “it is the document that it claims to be” (1995:7). One can easily apply this definition to sound recordings. A recording of Tijuana nightclub music presented as the traditional music of Mexico can be a *reliable* record of Tijuana nightclub music, but whether it is an *authentic* record of Mexican folk music is questionable depending on one’s definition of what constitutes “traditional” and whether Tijuana nightclub music is seen as a form of folk music.

The issue of whether a recording is an authoritative version is more a product of the social sciences and existentialism than of archival science. Within ethnomusicology, “authority” often raises the issue of multiple truths and whether even an authentic and reliable document can serve as evidence of a complex and multi-faceted reality. Since recordings tend to fix and present a single performance, ethnomusicologists sometimes feel that a recording privileges this one version over the many other variations within a musical tradition.

The third set of reasons against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis in ethnomusicology came to the forefront during the various paradigm shifts that arose from an increased role of anthropological methodologies and theories in the discipline. These reasons tend to associate sound recordings and audile analysis with older and “passé” fields of study and often with the discredited theories or practices of these fields. Early

researchers in American musicology and from the Berlin School made heavy use of sound recordings and audile analysis. As ethnomusicology redefined its central goals and study objects, these research tools were often targeted as a characteristic part of these older fields, theories, and practices and their abandonment was encouraged as a way of invoking many of the paradigm shifts deemed desirable by an ever increasing number of ethnomusicologists from strongly anthropological backgrounds. Eventually, many ethnomusicologists came to see sound recordings and audile analysis as inextricably linked with theories such as social evolutionism and diffusionism, rather than as a neutral tool used to support cultural biases and ethnocentric ideas.

Closely related to this third set of reasons for not using sound recordings and audile analysis is a set of reasons revolving around professionalism. These reasons also arose out of the shift, beginning in the 1950s, from musicological to anthropological methodologies and involved establishing definitions and boundaries. In this case, the definitions and boundaries did not ensure the existence of ethnomusicology as a new, improved, and unique discipline, but served instead to outline the requirements for professionalism within the discipline. Often the struggle for establishing these definitions and boundaries took place along the divide between musicologists and anthropologists, with each side fighting to establish its tools, theories, and methodologies as the requirements for obtaining professional status. During the struggle, fieldwork eventually gained a reputation as the predominant requirement for professionalism. Audile analysis gained a negative reputation as a research practice used by amateurs, hobbyists, fledgling students, and historical or comparative musicologists. The researcher who engaged in audile analysis threatened his or her reputation as a true ethnomusicologist, particularly if

he or she failed to perform fieldwork and, as shown in the opening section, rhetoric stating as much has made its way into textbooks and key theoretical articles.

Combined, these four sets of reasons have served to hinder ethnomusicological research by creating numerous internal barriers against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis and have often prevented the full acknowledgement of their potential value. If ethnomusicology is to again make use of these materials and of a methodology that has become associated with the some of the theories and practices most reviled by ethnomusicologists, we must study and remove the theoretical barriers. Otherwise, it is pointless to remove practical barriers since researchers will use this material as part of their research only if it can be theoretically justified. Theoretical justification in turn may serve as impetus for devising means for removing practical barriers.

Chapter 4

Theoretical Issues with the Reliability of Sound Recordings

Researchers have critiqued the use of sound recordings and audile analysis on the grounds of reliability since as early as 1891. For the earliest researchers, this mistrust tended to focus on the limitations of contemporary recording equipment and recording mediums. As of 1953, ethnomusicologists mistrusted not only their equipment but also came to mistrust the methodologies and recording techniques used by a generation of researchers often perceived as less enlightened about cultural and empirical issues than they themselves were. When reading recent articles and textbooks on the early history of historical and comparative musicology, one often receives the impression that these predecessors to ethnomusicology showed little discretion in how they recorded musical performances or in how they judged the quality and accuracy of the resulting recordings. Many of today's ethnomusicologists criticize their predecessors for everything from their failure to supply an adequate amount of documentation to their involvement in staging a more easily recordable performance. These ethnomusicologists often treat the recording process behind the creation of these early aural documents as either naïve or as deliberate manipulations made to suit the ethnocentric mores of the collector. However, long before ethnomusicologists appeared on the scene, musicologists, folksong researchers, and anthropologists had already called into question the reliability of sound recordings and

their ability to capture accurately and completely the aural aspects of the original musical performance. The first person to publish such a criticism against the use of sound recordings as a tool in musical analysis was H. E. Krehbiel in response to Benjamin Ives Gilman's 1891 pitch analysis of Jesse Walter Fewkes' Zuñi recordings. In this critique, Krehbiel expressed his mistrust of Gilman's research after experiencing the unreliable recording and playback speed of the then treadle-powered phonograph at the Frankfurt Exhibition. He stated that this one flaw in the playback and recording mechanism could indicate other "vagaries" in the recording and he admonished students of ethnology and musicology to use care if they chose to employ the phonograph as part of their studies. Krehbiel ended his critique with the announcement that the instability of speed and pitch exhibited by the phonograph had forced him to banish Gilman's transcriptions from his collection (1891:117). These statements by Krehbiel clearly express his opinion that sound recordings were unreliable information sources.

Similar complaints about the phonograph's ability to create reliable documents were voiced by several members of the Folk-Song Society in England. Lucy Broadwood commented:

Although the words noted on one occasion direct from the singer differ only very slightly from the phonographed, in a few places the latter are very indistinct but obviously, according to the accent and number of syllabus [sic], are different from those taken down from the actual voice. Thus, in verse 2, "you're of higher degree" might be "you're of a high degree" ; in verse 4 it might be "well lined," and at the close of the song, where "For the last cruel wars it caused many a lads away" called is usually sung, the very indistinct words and accents of the phonograph sound more like "called thousands of lads away." (Broadwood 1913:307)

Although authority of recordings in representing a performance would not be raised as serious issues until later on, Ralph Vaughan Williams questioned the use of sound

recordings as authoritative sources for transcription before 1910. According to Erika Brady, Vaughan Williams denounced Grainger's use of the phonograph for the transcription of individual performances as "mad" and "a waste of time" (Brady 1999:63) since the nuances would vary from performance to performance even if the same musician rendered the same song each time. For Vaughan Williams, it was not the performance itself but an idealized performance that served as the authoritative entity in need of capturing. Thus, it was not the phonograph but the musicologists who had the ability to capture this "complete" idealized performance. Vaughan Williams' assessment of the phonograph's reliability in capturing the complete performance is subtly present in the introduction to several of his transcriptions published by the *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, which reads "Noted (and corrected from a phonograph record)" (see Vaughan Williams 1909a:298 and 1909b:311 for two examples). In her dissertation, *The Box That Got the Flourishes*, Erika Brady mentioned numerous other skeptical reactions to the use of the phonograph by researchers at the turn of the twentieth century. Anne Geddes Gilchrist expressed her reservations about the machine's abilities to accurately capture dynamics, timbre, sibilants, and pitch in a letter to Lucy Broadwood. Percy Grainger's excitement and proposal for the use of the machine in collecting folk songs met with a cold reception at the 1906 meeting of the Folk-Song Society (Brady 1985:132-33),¹ but this did not deter either him or Lucy Broadwood from using the phonograph, and even Cecil Sharp grudgingly used the machine on occasion. Sharp, however, wrote to Grainger arguing that the machine made performers self-conscious, that the recordings lacked clarity, and that the voices of many "weaker" singers failed to register on the phonograph. Although Grainger was one of the staunchest supporters of the use of sound

recordings as aids to musical transcription and as a means of capturing and preserving the personality of the singer, he agreed with Sharp's assessment that the phonograph was unable to accurately record the prominence of certain consonants and that the words lacked clarity. Grainger suggested that researchers should not only record the performance, but also transcribe the lyrics on site (1908:150). Overall, Grainger was not discouraged by Sharp's comments. In the same article, he still recommended to his colleagues that they encourage hobbyists to collect recordings for later transcription and analysis by trained musicologists, a practice already firmly in place at the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv (Grainger 1908).

The enthusiasm shown by Fewkes and Grainger towards the potential value of sound recordings was the exception rather than the rule among the predecessors of ethnomusicology from 1890 well into the first third of the twentieth century. Musicologists' lack of enthusiasm was quite understandable for a number of reasons. First, most musicologists were well-trained in Western notational practices and could make transcriptions from a live performance, or rather from a number of performances of the same piece by the same performer which they could then cobble into one transcription. Some researchers, including Helen Roberts, felt that transcribing music by hand allowed performers to demonstrate their full musical abilities and intelligence and that this method was therefore preferable to the use of sound recordings (Brady 1985:125). Second, most musicologists found the quality of the recordings to be extremely poor in comparison with live performances and felt that it was necessary to make written transcriptions in addition to the recording if they were to capture all of the information they deemed to be pertinent. Additionally, like the patience of many folk

singers, cylinders began to wear out after several repetitions, making it extremely difficult to transcribe the contents of an already acoustically poor recording (Howes 1932:42).

Another shortcoming of the phonograph was that the difficulty and expense of mass-producing cylinders and acoustic era disc recordings made them a poor medium for exchanging one's findings and ideas with other researchers. Only in rare cases, such as the publication of Grainger's recordings of Joseph Taylor through the Gramophone Company in 1908, were musicologists able to publish and distribute their sound recordings.² Lectures on music that made use of sound recordings occurred as early as September of 1893, but ethereality still limited the distribution and permanence of the recording as an academic document.³ Generally, researchers needed to transcribe or describe the performance in writing before they could share it with distant colleagues in a way considered as academically valuable (see also Sterne 2003:317).

Another disadvantage of the phonograph discussed by Brady, is that musicologists sometimes found the resulting recordings to be too detailed. I have already mentioned that Vaughan Williams held this view. Cecil Sharp also complained that the machine captured a single performance with too much detail (Brady 1985:63, 133). Brady explained that such detail was undesirable because researchers wanted to capture texts that they could then use to construct an overall "paradigm for song, story narrative, or myth in a given culture" (Brady 1985:146). Even when a musicologist made use of a phonograph, he or she was likely to alter the text to suit his or her idea of the paradigm or to present what they felt the performer had "intended" to sing (Brady 1985:143-46).⁵ In many cases, musicologists saw their sound recordings as a means to an end and not as

items of value in themselves. Once they transcribed the contents of these recordings, many musicologists literally shaved off the recording to prepare the cylinder for reuse during the next session.

Overall, the barriers described above not only discouraged early musicologists from making and using their own recordings but they also became formidable obstacles to secondary researchers due to the recordings' poor acoustic quality, tendency to wear out quickly, and limited accessibility. During the first half of the 1900s, there was much more excitement over the possibility of a machine that could automatically commit sounds to paper than there was over the existing machines that could commit them to wax. Even Grainger, with his strong support of sound recordings as a means of capturing "personality" and increasing collecting capabilities, proposed his own version of a music-writing machine (Grainger 1902-1903). At best, most musicologists of the cylinder era saw sound recordings as an unwieldy tool and not as a preferred research medium or as a substitute for transcribing the live performance.

In the case of American anthropologists and the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv, the situation was somewhat different.⁶ The phonograph suddenly provided a means of collecting the music of remote groups—a feat that had previously proven difficult or impossible for any anthropologist lacking the necessary skills in musical transcription (Brady 1985:136). For the American musicologist to whom access had formerly been denied by distance, poor transportation, possibly a poor physical physique, and the time demands of their academic positions, the phonograph enabled the sounds of these remote groups to make their way into the academy for analysis. Simply put, the technology performed different tasks for people trained in different disciplines: for anthropologists,

the phonograph provided a new tool for documentation; for musicologists it provided access to new areas of musical study. Since most anthropologists were unable to transcribe the cylinders any more than they had been able to transcribe the live performances and, since transcriptions were still an indispensable medium for distributing music outside of the lecture circuit, the symbiotic relationship that formed between musicologists and anthropologists was often seen as necessary if not exactly optimal. Members of the Berlin School and contributors to the *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Musikwissenschaft* realized the desirability of experiencing musical performances firsthand, but felt that most people lacked the talent and training to perform both successful fieldwork and musical analysis. Fox Strangways discussed the existence of two types of workers, those who have the necessary charisma to collect material from live informants and:

those who sit at home and sift and sort. Materials come in from diverse places and very various minds. How much credence are we to attach to each? How are we to fill the lacunae? How reconcile contradictions? What advice is to be given to young collectors? The bare facts are not of much use without the ideas on which to string them, and the natural enthusiasm of the collector benefits by being set in the proper proportions. (Strangways 1933:2)

From his questions and comments regarding the reliability of such an approach, one gets the impression that Strangways and perhaps other comparative musicologists saw the analysis of recordings collected by other researchers as an unavoidable evil as opposed to an invaluable research strategy. Since anthropologists and musicologists still saw transcriptions and written documents as the desired outcome and needed to rely on each other's specialized abilities, this symbiotic relationship made the use of sound recordings and aural analysis more acceptable than it did for the researchers of English folk song who could more easily access the musical traditions of their chosen research area.

Recordings served a similar purpose for the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv. Researchers such as Carl Strumpf, Erich von Hornbostel, and their various students could now access music brought back by expeditions from the remote regions of the earth in the form of cylinder recordings. Although transcription was one of the research tasks performed in Berlin, of greater central importance were the classification and a comparative analysis of the content of these recordings in an effort to reach general conclusions about the world's music. Unlike many institutions, the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv had invested in its own means of reproducing materials. Shortly after 1906 it was able to mold copies from copper negatives of the original cylinders, facilitating an international exchange of materials with other institutions (Reinhard 1962:1). This exchange suggests that there were at least enough researchers making use of sound recordings and audile analysis outside of the Phonogramm-Archiv to warrant the expense and effort of duplication and distribution.

Although the researchers in Berlin may have been more active in audile analysis, this does not mean that they were unaware or neglectful of the phonograph's limitations. According to Kurt Reinhard, Hornbostel tried to supply each collector with a copy of the chapter entitled "Musik" from the 1908 edition of *Anleitungen für ethnologische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika und Oceanien* as a guideline for how to document each recording. At the beginning of this chapter appears a list recommended guidelines for recording performances. Unfortunately, the copy of the 1908 list I was able to obtain was missing the first page, and so items a) through f) are actually taken from the 1904. The 1908 edition may have made minor changes to the wording of these items:

- a) Wind up clockwork all the way before *every* recording.
- b) Usually make the clockwork run at medium speed; with very high, very soft or very fast music, high speed.
- c) The apparatus is to be fixed in place and *not* shifted during the recording.
- d) Every recording shall begin with the blowing of the “a” on the pitch-pipe into the apparatus, then the journal number and the title of the recording shall be spoken in [to the phonograph].
- e) Bring the resonator of the instrument, or the mouth of the speaker or singer, as close as possible to the horn without touching it.
- f) The player (singer) may, if feasible, mark the time with hand-clapping (as close as possible to the opening of the horn).
- g) The individual parts of musical pieces in which several persons perform together not in unison are to be recorded, each one by itself, and specifically in such a way that the one part is placed directly in front of the funnel [of the phonograph] and the others in the background, so that all of them play for each recording, but by changing places each time another part is always coming into the foreground.
- h) After records of singing, to record the lowest and highest tone of voice (vocal range).
- i) Instrumental musicians may play the complete scale of their instrument into the phonograph in the order usual for them (cf.5.D.). With string instruments the open strings are also to be recorded by themselves.
- k) After records of singing, the spoken text is to be recorded as occasion offers. Likewise with drum language.
- l) If the cylinder runs out before the conclusion of the melody, then this is still to be recorded separately.
- m) Every recording is immediately to be reproduced once all the way through as a test. (Generally gives pleasure to the natives and encourages them to further productions). Avoid further reproductions as much as possible in order to preserve the cylinder.
- n) Noting down the journal number and title of the recording on the cylinder box.
- o) The most careful filling out of the journal possible.

p) It is advisable as occasion permits to make two recordings of a piece of music on two different days (also by different musicians). (Königliches Museum 1908:2, von Luschan 1904:61 - Chapters appear in Appendix).

Although some of these recommendation such as “H” and “I” were probably also intended for purposes of classification, many of the other items in the list were clearly intended to aid in overcoming the acoustic limitations of the phonograph in an orderly and scientific manner. “A” through “D” clearly are intended to help regulate speed and pitch while “E” is intended to make it easier for the equipment to register the performers. “G” deals with issues of balance in instrumentation. “K” would help resolve problems with the clarity of text. “L” relates to the problem of the limited duration provided by early cylinder recordings. And “M” and “P” create a means of checking both the quality of the recording and the similarity of its content to another performance of the same piece. These guidelines also established standards for a specific “procedure of creation” which could then be used to measure the reliability of the resulting recordings.

Starting as early as the 1950’s, ethnomusicologists began to become very critical of the reliability of recordings made by early American researchers. Ter Ellingson offered one of the most concise listings of complaints in his chapter entitled “Transcriptions” appearing in *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*:

Recordings of course have aided the accuracy of transcription, but they have also led to distortions. Some writers transcribed recording hum as instrument drones or songs recorded at the wrong speed as falsetto. Other distortions were deliberate. Densmore trained her singers to sing clearly for the phonograph. Many fieldworkers forced performers to shorten pieces, rearrange or drastically reduce the size of ensembles, and make other compromises to adjust to the limitations of recording technology at the time. (Ellingson 1992:132)

Additional problems mentioned by ethnomusicologists are mold spots and cracks which produce a “knocking noise...that is easily confused with drum beats” (Roberts and

Thompson 1963:5). Another is the false conclusion drawn by modern researchers, using copies of cylinders and discs dubbed to magnetic tape, that early songs were only two to six minutes in length (Brady 1999:6).

Ethnomusicologists have been quick to point out that early researchers requested performers to adjust the structure and style of a musical performance to meet the limitations of early media. In his paper “Thoughts on What a Record Records,” presented at the conference “The Phonograph and Our Musical Life,” Roger Reynolds pointed out that because of cylinders “Tempos were adjusted, repeats deleted, sections excised.... Demands made by the medium resulted in evident artistic compromise in interpretive, stylistic, and structural matters” (1977:29). Ali Jihad Racy described similar cases of manipulation by the commercial music industry of Middle Eastern music performances from the 1910s through 1930s. The recording industry often neglected to record less popular genres, discouraged improvisation, and encouraged the performance of shorter, strophic structures. Racy also informed us that “after 1904 the recording medium prompted the recording artists to make important concessions with regard to place and time of a performance, physical posture, length of performance, and above all musical content” (1978:49). Brady’s view of the musical adjustment required by the limitations of early sound recording technology was less negative. She expressed the view that the researcher and informant generally negotiated such compromises as opposed to the researcher making the specific decisions and directly manipulating the musical structure and style (Brady 1985:215-17). Suman Ghosh similarly analyzed adjustments made to Hindustani classical music recorded to commercial 78rpm discs as

changes made by performers creatively meeting the demands of a strict time limitation as opposed to changes forced by a manipulative recording technician (2000).

In addition to changes in the style and structure of a performance, several researchers have also mentioned issues of reliability in relation to the speed and pitch of older recordings. List described making copies of a cylinder collection of Mescalero Apache material for the original researcher. Since List was unfamiliar with the group's singing traditions, he was unable to determine whether the material was of men's voices, women's voices, or of men singing falsetto. After making copies of the material at three different speeds, he sought Herzog's advice on which version to send only to learn many years later from a student who worked with Apaches that he "had it all wrong" (Interview in Spear 1978:31). Brady described a similar problem with transferring cylinders of certain Native American groups and states, "I generally try to check my estimates of the speed with someone more familiar with the tradition" (Brady 1985:219-20). Bruce Jackson, however, assured us that:

Ethnomusicologists working with early field recordings made on cylinders are often unable to know what the performances on those early recordings really sounded like because the cylinder recorders had no fixed recording or playing speed. Both could be adjusted every time the machine was used. For recordings without a tuning fork or known pitch sounded, modern users can only guess at the proper playback speed—which means they can only guess at the pitch and tempo of the original performance. (Jackson 1987:125)

I would argue that since musical traditions tend to be somewhat continuous, a researcher familiar with modern traditions would at least be able to approximate the speed and pitch in most cases even if they were unable to determine the exact settings—a level of precision that is of little importance to the large majority of today's ethnomusicologists.

One hundred years is a very short time for a culture to change completely the acceptable singing ranges and/or performance style used in any given tradition.

A more common complaint raised by ethnomusicologists is the effect of the researcher and his or her equipment upon the performance and that both their recording and recording techniques made the performance artificial. Jonathan Sterne used several terms for this effect including bronzing, freezing, artifactualizing, and embalming, all of which serve to preserve an “artifact of an event, not simply the event itself” (2003:319). The idea of early and modern researchers “collecting specimens,” “freezing” or “preserving” performances, gathering isolatable artifacts, and objectifying or reifying musical events through the use of sound recording technology is very common in post-1960 ethnomusicological literature. Not only is the recording itself seen as dead and artificial, but the researcher is transformed into a mortician. Authors often treat the involvement of researchers in the making of a recording as rendering the performance artificial, particularly during the phonograph era of the 1890s through the 1930s. Sterne mentioned the “artifice” of both Alice Fletcher’s and Frances Densmore’s studio arrangements. He stated, “Densmore’s approach refined the artifice of recording, and she explicitly understood it as artifice, as a document of the music rather than as music itself” (Sterne 2003:323). While other researchers such as Fewkes and Lomax have received similar treatment, one statement by Densmore has received a disproportionate amount of attention:

The singer is shown how to sit in front of the horn, and to sing into it from the proper distance... He is also told that he must sing in a steady tone and not introduce the yells and other sounds that are customary to Indian singers. The recording is not intended to be realistic, but to preserve only the actual melody. (Densmore, quoted in Sterne 2003: 323-24)

Again, Herndon and McLeod interpreted this quote as meaning that Densmore taught her informants how to “sing properly” (1980:i) as opposed to teaching them how to use the equipment properly. They went so far as to label Densmore’s decisions on what instruments and vocal timbres to include and her instructions to singers about how to perform for the phonograph as “atrocities.” Curt Sachs stated more mildly that he deemed her decisions as “rather dangerous and inadmissible” (Sachs 1962:170). Through this one quote, Densmore has come to represent the epitome of Western colonialism and ethnocentrism. Today’s ethnomusicologists often use Densmore as an example of why modern researchers should not treat recordings made by earlier researchers as reliable documents, due to the influence of the researcher’s cultural baggage on the creation procedures.

The mistrust displayed by today’s researchers toward the reliability of early sound recordings is somewhat understandable. The commercial recording industry of the 1880s through the 1920s had also noticed the acoustic peculiarities wrought by the phonograph upon musical performances, and much of its early energies were devoted to the development of specialized techniques for capturing a product that audiences would accept as sounding more realistic than a recording of an unaltered performance. Recording companies carefully selected singers who could both project their voices and adapt them to the necessary enunciation style and timbres that best resonated with the early acoustic machines. To make a natural sounding recording, the singers needed to compensate for the insufficiencies of the acoustic recording mechanisms by enunciating vowels in a forceful and even manner and by exaggerating consonants. Particularly problematic were R’s and S’s, and commercial artists generally rolled the former and

enunciated the latter as a forced “Sh” (Copeland 1991:10-12). Brady mentioned that the machine favored voices that were lower or harsh and brassy and that researchers may have sometimes selected singers for these vocal qualities as opposed to the performer’s knowledge of the tradition (1985:218). Mentioned earlier was Sharp’s assessment that many singers with weaker voices did not register well on the phonograph, supporting this possibility (Sharp, quoted in Grainger 1908:148). Considering that all of these vocal stylistic changes were necessary to produce a “natural” sounding recording and that the average folksinger was not trained to sing for the phonograph, it is not surprising that researchers of the past felt early acoustic recordings poorly or incorrectly captured the pronunciations of words or that the captured words themselves were incorrect. Nor is it surprising that other researchers, including Frances Densmore, would attempt to make performers sing more clearly for the phonograph. It is even likely that researchers of the day based their recording techniques on popular manuals for home recordings such as *The Phonograph and How to Use It* (National Phonograph Company 1900), which in turn drew from commercial recording techniques (Brady 1985:218). *The Phonograph and How to Use It* contains a brief section of recommendations for how to best record the human voice. This section explains not only that loud voices can cause the cylinder to “blast” but also provides recommendations for how to position the singer in front of the horn and that he or she should “Avoid singing with too much expression” because the voice “will record best that has an even quality throughout the entire register” (National Phonograph Company 1900:156). Densmore’s decisions to use a “studio” set-up as opposed to recording a live performance, her instructions to singers to sing in a particular manner, and her instructions not to shout were probably based on the recommendations

of *The Phonograph and How to Use It* or on instructions from similar published sources of advice.

The need for adjustments when using early acoustic recording equipment also applied to the timbre of musical instruments. The timbres of metallic sounding instruments such as banjos, brass instruments, bells, and xylophones were more easily captured than the timbres of woodwinds and strings. The commercial recording industry had created special and very artificial seating arrangements for larger ensembles and often had to alter musical arrangements or the instruments themselves to capture a blend of instruments and voices that would suit the aesthetic sensibilities of their consumers. To capture the sounds of the piano, the sound technician used a special horn for recording the grand piano or, the preferred solution, ripped the back off an upright piano. The phonograph was also unable to capture the extreme lower and upper frequencies of audible sound. Since many percussive instruments played within these lost frequency ranges, they proved highly problematic and many recording technicians chose to exclude standard percussive instruments, such as the drum kit, from most of their recordings (Copeland 1991:13). This perhaps explains Densmore's decision to "substitute a stick and cardboard box for the drums and rattle which record poorly" (Brady 1985:169) as well as her decision to remove the bells from the performers' dresses during a *hitla tuluwa* dance session (Draper 1982:336). Perhaps Densmore's decisions should not be treated as ethnocentric atrocities, but as early experimentation by one of our predecessors with recording techniques recommended by commercial recording experts long before there were modern ethnomusicologists to point out that such experiments were undesirable. Despite the rough treatment received by Densmore's work from

ethnomusicologists, the National Recording Preservation Board added her 1907-1910 Chippewa/Ojibwe cylinder recordings to the 2003 National Recording Registry, reflecting their importance as cultural and historic national treasures.

Since the commercial industry needed to make such drastic changes to a performance to capture what we now consider to be extremely low-fidelity recordings, one should perhaps not be too hard on early ethnomusicologists for deciding to alter the instrumentation of songs or to record music outside of its usual performance context. Although the changes described by Ellingson and others are unarguably “distortions” of the original performance, we should explore the matter further before fully discrediting the reliability of the resulting recordings. As already discussed, for most researchers before the 1910s, sound recordings served as an aid in transcription and the scientific measurements of specific musical features, particularly melodic and harmonic intervals. Although researchers played sound recordings at lectures as early as 1893, musical transcriptions continued to serve as the predominant means of preserving and distributing information about the aural aspects of musical performance. Mass duplication and distribution of sound recordings was still a dream and cylinders were quickly ruined by the repeated playbacks required for transcribing them. The central foci of these transcriptions, and of much of the research from this era, were melody, text, and rhythm. To capture these aspects, it was more important to the researcher to capture clear recordings and to preserve their equipment than it was to capture accurate instrumentation, timbre, or the song within the context of the live performance.⁷ Researchers could easily note details regarding the instruments excluded and the typical performance context in the written documentation accompanying the recording or

transcriptions. Indeed, many of these researchers have provided this documentation and it is one of the main reasons we know they made these changes in the first place.

Considering the limitations of the phonograph, leaving the original performance unaltered would have resulted in inadvertent “distortions.” The resulting recording would not only have failed to capture the sound of the performance as heard by the original audience but it would have most likely been unusable for transcription and analysis as well.

An interesting case to consider is that of A. T. E. Wangemann’s 1888 experience with recording the court orchestra of Emperor William II:

Mr. Wangemann explained to the conductor that he would like to place the band a little differently, putting certain instruments a little further back and bringing others more to the front. But the conductor, a hot-tempered German, flatly declined to change the position of his men,—they had always been placed so, and even the phonograph, or the great inventor himself, he was not going to alter them. In vain Mr. Wangemann argued with him that for the making of a successful record the instruments had to be arranged according to their power and quality, the less obtrusive tones being nearer and the loud or shrill tones more distant. But it was no good, the conductor was unconvinced, and the band would play according to his views or not at all.

Then Mr. Wangemann appealed to the Emperor, and to convince his Majesty he took a cylinder of the playing of the orchestra in the positions the conductor insisted they should be. His Majesty listened critically to the result. Nothing but a confusion of sounds assailed his ears. Was that his own matchless orchestra? Impossible. He ordered the conductor to place his men in any position Mr. Wangemann desired, and the musician sadly obeyed. Then the phonograph was adjusted and a record made. The difference was extraordinary, all the beauties of tone and orchestration being clearly brought out. The conductor apologized and in compliment to Mr. Wangemann, his Majesty ordered the orchestra to play that evening in the position it would be if performing for the phonograph. For later functions, however, the musicians returned to their ordinary places, greatly to the relief of the conductor and the comfort of the audience. (Jones 1931:124-25)

Which of the two recordings described above is the greater distortion of the performance?

The first recording captured the sound of the Emperor’s court orchestra in its traditional

performance arrangement while for the second recording, and for the sake of his equipment, Wangemann had the musicians alter their performance practices to such an extent that both they and their audience felt uncomfortable about the changes. Since Wangemann forcibly rearranged the ensemble against their wishes, the second recording clearly represents a distortion of traditional performance practices. Based on current ethnomusicological standards, this would make the performance for the first recording the more reliable of the two. However, one must take into account the actual responses to the results of both recording sessions. Jones describes the content of the first cylinder as a confusion of sounds that the Emperor found displeasing and hardly recognizable as his court orchestra while the second brought out the “beauties of tone and orchestration.” Taking the reactions of the Emperor into account, can one truly treat the first recording as more reliable when those present for the live performance and familiar with the orchestra’s sound and abilities expressed that they found it a poor likeness compared to a live performance? Can we consider it as more reliable than the second recording, produced by altered performance practices, when these same judges selected the second recording as the more authoritative document?

I realize that I have placed an unfair puzzle before my reader. Even by Duranti’s standards of reliability, we find a direct conflict between completeness of form and procedure of creation. The simplest solution is that the first recording represents more reliable procedures of creation by preserving the traditional performance practices at the cost of the sound of the performance, or the completeness of form. The second recording aimed for completeness of form but in order to capture a more complete record of the sound, the band’s performance practices, or procedures of creation, Wangemann had to

severely alter the arrangement of the performers. Although performance practices certainly reside at the core of ethnomusicology, it is not necessarily the role of sound recordings to capture the physical arrangement or movement of an ensemble, a job for which they are ill suited. Rather, the role of sound recordings is to capture an aural document of sound that serves as a reliable record of the aural aspects of the performance, such as pitch or melody, that are of the greatest importance to the collectors' research. In the case of early recordings, although it is also true of the latest creations of sound technology, this often required a weighing of greater and lesser evils. Many earlier researchers chose to capture a more complete record of the aural aspects of a performance as opposed to the distorted sounds of music during the throes of a dance or ritual. In many cases, they also made judgment calls as to which sounds were more important for creating a more complete and reliable record of the aural aspects that were central to their own research.

Another related occurrence from more recent times was a recording session led by Martin Fisher and Patrick Feaster on Friday, November 7, 2003 as part of the Archives of Traditional Music Noon Concert and Lecture Series. The featured recording media for the session consisted of a selection of early brown and black wax cylinders and the recording apparatus, of an Edison Home phonograph. It was an amazing event to watch. Fisher would occasionally move the performers, all volunteer musicians from the Bloomington community, closer to or farther away from the horn. On occasion, he would ask them to play louder. When the cylinder neared the end, he would make a gesture for "wrap it up" and then another for "stop."

During the course of the recording session, I noticed several interesting things about the various performances:

1. Although some of the performers clearly felt a bit awkward around the horn, the awkwardness waned with each successive performance by the same performer.
2. Performers had little problem with the two-minute duration. With a few of the longer pieces, negotiations were made with Fisher to extend the performance onto a second cylinder.
3. Performers and members of the audience were delighted by the quality of the recordings. Although a few of the cylinders were faint, several garnered comments such as “this sounds better than what I get with electrical equipment” and “Oh! I thought he was the one playing. It’s the machine!”
4. No one seemed angry, frustrated, manipulated, or even overly nervous during the session. People were clearly amazed and excited about the opportunity and many stayed long past the end of the official session.

Of course, it is hard to say if the emotional reactions would have been the same at a turn-of-the century recording session between Densmore and her informants. Such modern day examples, however, do offer ethnomusicologists opportunities to observe and study the ways in which early recording equipment may have affected performances into the 1930s. These examples may provide us with a deeper understanding of the treasures that currently reside in archival vaults throughout the world. Unfortunately, another thing I noticed about the recording session was that, besides myself, only three

ethnomusicologists attended the session and these were graduate assistants who had been delegated the responsibility of documenting the lecture (Fisher and Feaster 2003).⁸

With the rare exception of the items produced by the event described above and similar recording sessions hosted by cylinder enthusiasts, most cylinder and acoustic disc recordings are approximately 80 to 115-years-old. As these early acoustic recordings have aged, the obstacles to using them have increased.¹¹ Wear, mold, chemical deterioration, and other forms of damage have increased the amount of surface noise (Herzog 1936:20, Roberts and Thompson 1963:54, Heth 1975:338, Wachsmann 1982:198, Brady 1985:220). With multi-generational copies, the sound has grown further distorted and is often faded, clipped, poorly edited, or has taken on the familiar hum of magnetic tape (List 1959:3-4, Carneal 1960:4, Roberts and Thompson:1963, Ellingson 1992:132). In many cases, the accompanying documentation has been lost or mismatched, making it difficult even to identify the content of the recording (List 1983:181, Gray and Lee 1985:4). In other cases, even our knowledge that such documentation existed is quickly fading. How many ethnomusicologists today are aware that Hornbostel gathered, or at least attempted to gather, an extensive list of background information about the originating community?¹⁰ These additional distortions, edits, and documentation issues slightly shift the arguments regarding the reliability of sound recordings. Not only does today's ethnomusicologist need to worry about whether the original researcher followed solid research procedures and captured the performance to a certain degree of completeness, but also about the effects that various alterations have had on the completeness of these aural documents. If the damage has obliterated the content or poor editing has altered it or missing documentation has made it unidentifiable,

what sort of conclusions can the researcher accurately draw about the performance and its context?

Fortunately, some of these problems have tended to decrease with improved recording technology and archival practices, but new technology and higher fidelity have not resolved all of these issues. While one would expect that these improvements would have helped eliminate many of the problems inherent in early acoustic recordings, a quotation by Helen Myers suggests that the recordings of the 1970s through the 1990s were equally rife with problems:

In fieldwork, the results of cassette recordings of music are disappointing at best, but in some 20 years I have never heard anyone comment about the quality of an audio recording at a meeting of the Society of Ethnomusicology or the International Council for Traditional Music. This insensitivity to recorded sound in our profession is difficult to explain. (Myers 1992d:52)

In May 1959 a special section entitled “Techniques and Devices” made its first appearance in *Ethnomusicology*. The following September, T. Gerald Dyar used this section to state the prime interest of the field “recordist” as ensuring that “his recordings will be usable by anyone interested, whenever they are needed. In short, he wants maximum intelligibility over an indefinite period of time” (1959:124). This article seems to strongly support the idea of future researchers making use of sound recordings.

Unfortunately, the ones following were probably highly discouraging to ethnomusicologists wishing to use earlier materials. In May of 1961, Dyar wrote about the lack of equalization and calibration standards for recording equipment and the resulting difficulty of matching the playback settings to those used by the original researcher. In January of 1962, Dyar presented an article on easily avoidable problems that detract from the use of sound recordings, namely: “A) Mechanical defects in tape, B)

Distorted tonal characteristics in program material, C) Extraneous sounds picked up by the microphone, [and] D) Background noise caused by faulty equipment or improper storage and handling” (1962a:25). Dyar’s recommendations to ethnomusicologists about how to avoid such pitfalls imply that these defects already existed in the recordings of the magnetic tape era. While such explorations of technology’s failings are appropriate and encourage a healthy respect for the limitations of one’s equipment and earlier recordings, Dyar’s article from September of 1962 probably encouraged skepticism about the overall reliability of sound recordings:

One of the three most important points that we have tried to present in these pages has been the development, in our readers, of an awareness that sound recording is not an absolute medium for study purposes. It should always be approached with the awareness that the sound you hear is not always what it seems and that every caution should be observed when making deductions from a recording for ethnomusicological purposes to prevent errors as a result of the inherent limitations of sound recording as a technology. (Dyar 1962b:189)

One should note that although Dyar detailed several ways of avoiding problems when making sound recordings, he did not provide advice on how to discover and identify these problems when using others’ sound recordings. He has presented ethnomusicologists with a stern warning that they need to watch for problems if they intend to make use of sound recordings but his advice stops here. One is reminded of Krehbiel’s fear of “vagaries” that prevent a researcher from confidently performing audile analysis due to a lack of knowledge about whether the recording presents a reliable record of the musical aspects of the original performance. Apparently, at least a few of the problems regarding reliability found their way into the era of modern ethnomusicology and transferred successfully from cylinder to tape.

Microphones and sound engineering have introduced additional questions regarding the reliability of sound recordings. In 1963, Mantle Hood described the multi-track tape recorder as a “dangerous tool in the hands of the inexperienced collector” (Hood 1963:20). As a case in point, he describes an experiment carried out at UCLA that involved recording a sitar performance:

We recorded a sitar player with four different machines, four different microphones, and about thirty different mike placements. The thirty recordings were all remarkably different and revealed that the man behind the tape recorder can perform either white or black magic, depending on his experience and desires. It is probably common knowledge that most recording companies record the Indian sitar by placing a microphone directly behind the gourd resonator near the peg box and another microphone behind the large resonator at the base of the instrument. This produces a brilliant sound which could only reach an Indian audience if the performing artist were to turn his back on them and lean forward until his head was just above waist level. (Hood 1963:190)

Although Hood expressed the value of these various aural perspectives for analysis, he also mentioned that these multiple perspectives make it difficult to determine what is musically significant when the “recordings are the primary—not to mention, the sole—source of information” (1963:190).

By 1971, Hood’s concerns had found their way into an introductory textbook and the accompanying notes for a series of LPs consisting of recordings of non-Western music. In *The Ethnomusicologist*, Hood stated that due to their departure from the reality of a live performance, “Recordings of music that is totally new to the listener place him at a great disadvantage” (1971:33). The liner notes for the LP discussed Hood’s belief that sound recordings present an illusion of reality and not reality itself:

No field recording—nor studio recording, for that matter—can be considered a complete and accurate record of a musical performance. Under the very best circumstances, with one or multiple microphones, a recording is a selective transcription limited by the characteristics peculiar to a wide variety of equipment, the taste and experience of the collector, the acoustical hazards of the

environment, and other variables that account for the difference between the live and the recorded musical experience. For this reason our series of I.E. Records makes available to the ethnomusicologist who has recorded in the field—often under the most difficult circumstances—refinements of sound engineering that allow him to improve the sound of his original recording, guided solely by his experience and taste, so that it may give a better simulation of reality.” (Hood 1971:31)¹⁰

This disclosure regarding the difference between the sound of the original performance and the resulting recordings is an acceptable and, in fact, healthy disclosure, to make as is mentioning that a sound engineer re-mastered the recordings. Hood stated clearly his reservations about the reliability of sound recordings due to their failure to be “a complete and accurate record of musical performance.” What is troubling about the above statement is Hood’s use of the term “reality” and his thought that sound recordings place the listener at a “disadvantage” due to their inability to completely replicate the lived experience. In response to the first issue, I would question whether the point of making a sound recording is really to replicate reality or to simply provide a listener with a relatively complete record of the aural data from a specific performance event. In response to the second issue, I would question why the sound recording is seen as a disadvantage as opposed to a boon for the new listener. If the listener is unable to attend live performances, surely in most cases a recorded version of the performance is an improvement over a complete lack of access to the tradition. For some listeners, recordings are the only means of access possible. Racy mentioned that in Egypt before 1904, “the *‘awālim* (female professional musicians) customarily performed only for female audiences, the *ālātiyyah* (male musicians) before male audiences. After 1904, however, regardless of recording artist, a musical recording was capable of entertaining either male or female listeners and of being reproduced any time as often as desired”

(Racy 1978:51-52). In some cases, a sound recording may provide the listener with a more complete aural experience, and one that is closer to the performer(s) intentions, than would a live performance. Consider a parade in which a crowd distances the listener from the performers and drowns out the sound of the music, or a large concert hall in which the sound is muted by the time it reaches the back row, or a rock concert where the volume is painfully loud or the equalization of the sound system is poorly balanced. In such cases, the recording may be able to provide the listener with an experience closer to what the performers intended than what was possible during the live performance. If the recording is the only access to a performance and is delivered in a way seen as acceptable by the performers, then one should not automatically treat it as a disadvantage. True, the recording may not prove to be as intense and interactive of an experience as a live performance, but this becomes a moot point if access to a live performance is impossible.

Another example of a discussion about the limitations and liabilities of modern sound technology and the resulting recordings appears in Bruce Jackson's *Fieldwork*, a book used by some ethnomusicology programs to help instruct students in the use of their equipment and in conceptualizing fieldwork. Jackson assured the reader that during fieldwork:

the machines and their products are allowed on the premises only because they're in the service of something else. For fieldworkers, no recording strip or film or videotape is an end in itself; the machine and their products are never more than tools to capture information which in turn will add to our knowledge and increase our understanding. (Jackson 1987:108)

Placed in context, it is clear that Jackson's "our" referred not to humanity or to the academic community in general, but to the community of fieldworkers. Jackson treated research recordings as thoroughly enmeshed with the fieldworker's observations and

stripped of any inherent value as a historical document. These recordings are reduced to memory aids for the fieldworker or possibly to finished, consumable products for a mainstream audience. Jackson disregarded the potential value that recordings possess for future researchers and to their ability to verify published research results. Instead, Jackson treated recordings as a necessary evil that can later benefit the original researcher as long as he or she does not rely on the recording in place of lived experience.

Throughout the book, Jackson pointed out the limitations of recording equipment. He discussed the effects of equipment on performers and on the researcher's decisions about what to document and how to document it. He pointed out the inability of recording equipment to "duplicate human senses" and a similar inability to reproduce volume, pitch, and duration at their original values. Again, understanding the limitations of recording equipment and how it has affected the resulting sound recordings is healthy but overstating these points and failing to balance them with the advantages of using sound recordings can threaten ethnomusicologists' trust of the aural documents created by one's predecessors and even those created by informants.

The problematization of the use of sound recordings without further exploration of their research value has continued into the present day. The following are statements from the abstract for Dan Sharp's conference paper "I Like Scratchy Records vs. 'It's Not Preservation Quality': Issues of Sound Recording Technology in Ethnomusicological Fieldwork":

"Sound recordings have traditionally been considered to be transparent, objective documents that facilitate the scientific analysis of non-western musical styles."

"Musical ethnographies don't consist only of words and pictures—they are based on sounds as well. Therefore, while many have addressed issues of power

surrounding textual and visual representation, few have transposed these questions to sound recording.”

“By questioning ‘objective’ documentary realism within sound recording during fieldwork, I argue that fieldworkers should acknowledge that, just as a camera shoots from a point-of-view, a tape recorder captures sound from a positioned point-of-audition.” (Sharp 2003:115)

The voices of Hood, Dyar, and Jackson are resonant within these statements. Sharp has again questioned the reliability of sound recordings as information sources. The remainder of the abstract offers little hope that Sharp will advise us on how to improve our current techniques for audile analysis or on how we can make use of sound recordings in future research. Although he may not have intended to discourage the use of sound recordings and audile analysis, his current rhetoric is far from encouraging.

One of the most balanced presentations of the limitations of sound recordings that I have encountered appeared in Anthony Seeger’s “After the Alligator Swallows Your Microphone: The Future (?) of Field Recordings” (1991a). Seeger began his article by presenting a list of sounds found on archived research recordings that neither the researcher nor his informants intended to capture as part of the original performance. Such sounds include a glissando in pitch due to dying batteries or a wound-down motor, background noise, commentary or noise made by the collector, musical errors, and the silence of performances lost to mechanical mishaps. Seeger balances this list with the statement that “in spite of the errors, this ‘fieldwork in the raw’ can also provide very valuable material *if it is documented*” (1991a:41, emphasis in original). What Seeger proposed was that errors do not necessarily detract from the value of a recording as long as the researcher notes and explains these errors in the accompanying documentation. When a future researcher uses the collection, he or she can then use the accompanying

documentation to identify these sounds as stray artifacts as opposed to part of the intended musical performance.

Unfortunately, even if every ethnomusicologist in the field had immediately and flawlessly adopted the suggestions of Seeger, Dyar, and the many other researchers who have sought to improve standards for documenting one's recording procedures, research intentions, and perceived results, this still would leave us with nearly a hundred years of problematic recordings. If ethnomusicologists are to learn more about the events documented by these recordings, how do the limitations of the original recording equipment, the original researcher procedures for creation, and the gradual decay of these materials affect the reliability of these materials? How do these factors affect the way today's ethnomusicologists can use these materials? Before tackling this question in full, we need to obtain a fuller understanding of the other theoretical issues surrounding the use of sound recordings by examining the three remaining sets of reasons. For the moment, my response is that the first step in using sound recordings is to move away from seeing them as surrogates for performance events and to begin treating them as what they really are: incomplete historic documents containing aural information that we can use to create contestable reconstructions of past performance events and to explore the past thoughts and beliefs of the performers and recordists involved in creating them.¹²

Chapter 5

Theoretical Issues with the Representational Abilities of Sound Recordings

Another serious theoretical blow against sound recordings and audile analysis arose out of issues of representation. Appearing within this category are arguments of whether individual recordings were authentic, or represented what they claimed to represent, and whether they could serve as authoritative representations of a living and dynamic musical tradition.

Although the ability to distribute commercially released field recordings may have proven useful for gaining access to recordings of musical performances from around the world, the sometimes dubious origins, intentions, and production work behind the creation of many recordings quickly began to cause problems. Researchers started questioning the authenticity and authority, and hence the research value, of commercially released research recordings. Many of these researchers' questions were due to the gradual blurring of boundaries between commercial recordings and research recordings. This blurring made it difficult to determine whether individual recordings were produced through legitimate research efforts and by authoritative performers of musical traditions or if they were mere fabrications of the music industry created solely to serve commercial aims. This loss of distinction between commercial and research recordings was a result

both of the rise of commercially released research recordings and an increase in commercial imitations produced by various record companies in an attempt to capture a share of a growing world music market. The recording reviews appearing in *Ethnomusicology* and the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* are perhaps the richest information sources for the thoughts of ethnomusicologists about issues of authenticity and authority and their impact on the value of sound recordings to ethnomusicological research.

One can find evidence of questions about authenticity even before the appearance of the first full-fledged recording review published in the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter*. In September of 1956, the *Newsletter* included not only a “Recordings” section but also a subsection called “Records which are considered questionable from the standpoint of ethnomusicology” (Anon. 1956:24-25). The title of this subsection suggests not only that ethnomusicologists found it necessary to cull through commercially released research recordings, but that commercial publishers may have drawn upon the aesthetics and appeal of commercially released research recordings as a marketing ploy to sell their products to a growing audience for world music as early as 1956. In this 1956 issue of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter*, some of the reasons provided for questioning the authenticity of a recording included:

- 1) The songs were taken off the air by the collector and have a “souped-up” choral arrangement while the songs themselves were specially composed and arranged for the performance event.
- 2) The rhythms of the songs are unidentified and the genre labels are questionable.
- 3) The performers appear to be a nightclub group.

4) A “steamy picture on the jacket” suggests the recording is unscientific. (Anon. 1956:24-25)

This list suggests that ethnomusicologists were already subjecting new commercial releases to mild scrutiny to determine the authenticity of their content.

By the early 1960s, longer recording reviews began to appear in *Ethnomusicology* and served as an important forum for reviewing the value of the latest recordings. When reviewing commercially released research recordings, ethnomusicologists performed a thorough review of both the sound recording and its accompanying documentation. For the recording, the reviewer evaluated the fidelity and sound quality, the role of editing in the removal of important material or in obscuring important musical data, whether the sample accurately represented the genres and performances of the indicated musical tradition, whether the items on the recording were unique in comparison to earlier releases, and whether the recording was authentic.

The first few areas of critique touched upon in recording reviews return us back to issues of reliability. Fidelity, editing, and a proper selection of material all affect the degree of completeness offered by an album. Poor sound quality and excised material, whether from an individual song or an entire music tradition, reduced the completeness of the album as a record of a live musical event and threatened its role as a reliable document. Although complaints regarding the sound quality or fidelity of recordings occasionally referred to low quality results obtained by poor recording equipment, more commonly it referred to background noise captured by the original collector (Waterman 1963:146, Olsen 1974:186) or the amount of surface noise retained in reissues of earlier material that served to obscure other aural aspects deemed more central to the recording (Merriam 1963b:58, Heth 1975:336). Most reviewers, however, were also quick to

compliment recordings they considered to possess a high caliber sound quality (Malm 1963:58, Kimberlin 1974:177, Briegleb 1977:166, Goodman 1981:163).

Poor editing decisions also resulted in reviewer complaints. Occasionally, a reviewer would praise a recording that was “unscarred by editing” or would compliment the sound engineer’s decision to leave a longer piece unedited (Leeds 1961:224, Briegleb 1977:166). Usually, however, reviewers only mentioned edits when they judged them as inappropriate. Numerous reviewers complained about fade-ins and fade-outs that obscured the opening and closing musical structures of a performance (Krader 1961b:226, Kauffman 1974:474). They also complained about cuts that edited down longer structures, thereby removing important musical data or preventing the researcher from studying the performance in full (Malm 1963:58, Olsen 1974:186, Garfias 1987:336). In one case, a reviewer complained that the recording involved far too much editing for him to even consider it as an authentic document of the original performance (Greenhouse 1961:141). In the case of editing, we see that the line between reliability and authenticity is somewhat indistinct. If a recording claims to represent a live performance but then consists of partial performances or a cobbling together of performances and synthesized sounds, it is possible to question whether this recording serves as an authentic representation of the live performance or whether it is a different entity altogether.

In addition to sound quality and editing choices, issues of selection also received a high degree of scrutiny from reviewers. Presenting a balanced musical sample from the tradition was of key importance. If the reviewer felt the selections on the album were too obscure or that they failed to represent an adequate selection of important genres, songs,

instruments, and styles, he or she might state that the recording presented the listener with an incomplete sample and/or question the researcher's reasoning for choosing these selections. Barbara Krader commented, "Very few recordings issued thus far in this category [traditional/folk music] can be used for scientific purposes. The fault lies most often in the inadequacy of the sleeve notes, but sometimes in the selection of examples" (Rosen, et. al. 1968: 35). In extreme cases, the reviewer could even dispute the collector's knowledge of the tradition (Malm 1963:58, Briegleb 1977:165, Garfias 1987:335). On the other hand, if an album presented only selections that were highly representative and easily accessible through live performance venues or earlier recordings, the reviewer could question the recording's value to the field (Tewari 1977:154).

Although recordings that demonstrated low fidelity, poor editing, and a poor selection of samples received negative comments from reviewers, in the 1950s through 1970s proving the authenticity of a recording was of the utmost importance if it was to be of use to researchers and students of ethnomusicology. Today, many ethnomusicologists would probably question the criteria and perhaps even the idea of authenticity, but the recording reviews of the 1950s through the 1970s reveal that authenticity was indeed important to earlier ethnomusicologists. Some of the more popular criteria used to determine the authenticity of a recording included the following:

1. Were the performers from a rural or urban background? (Anon. 1957:30, Krader 1962:138)
2. Were the performers paid professionals, conservatory trained, or Western educated? (McColleston 1960:89, Krader 1962:138, Hickerson 1964:89, Anon. 1956:25, Baud-Bovy 1977:165)
3. Do the performances show traces of Western influence? (Anon. 1957:30,

McCollester 1958:81)

4. Were the performers actual members of the represented culture and did the culture accept them as authorities on the tradition? (Anon. 1956:25, McCollester 1960:89, Waterman 1964:77)

Overall, literature from the time provides the following breakdown in criteria:

Authentic Performance

1. The performer is from a rural background.
2. The tradition was learned through apprenticeship or community involvement.
3. The performance shows no signs of Western or popular influence.
4. The performance is played on traditional and acoustic instruments.
5. The performer is an accepted authority in the tradition by the community.
6. The performer is not a paid professional.
7. The performer is skilled in the tradition.
8. The performer is capable of a dynamic performance and/or improvisational performance.
9. The performer plays in traditional venues.

Inauthentic Performance

1. The performer is from an urban background.
2. The tradition was learned through a conservatory, school, government propaganda, or popular media.
3. The performance shows signs of Western or popular influence.
4. The performance is played on non-traditional or electric instruments.
5. The performer is not considered an authority in the tradition or is from outside the community.
6. The performer is a paid professional.
7. The performer is not skilled in the tradition.
8. The performer is only capable of presenting a static or by-rote performance.
9. The performer plays in non-traditional or commercialized venues.

Although one or two characteristics associated with inauthentic performances did not entirely transform a performance into inauthentic traditional music or popular music, they did serve to blur the boundaries between popular/commercial recording and traditional/research recordings and could make it difficult for a reviewer to determine if the album was an eligible candidate for ethnomusicological research. If the reviewer felt this blurring was severe enough, he or she was likely to comment that the value was of the recording was questionable or even to dismiss the material as inauthentic. Barbara

Krader provided us with one example of such a critique in her review for an album of Russian folk music:

It is not ‘authentic folk music,’ for the performers are professionals, singing music from many regions, and are subject to various pressures to adapt to urban tastes (both those of the Soviet Union and abroad). However, until the Soviet Union provides authentic traditional recordings for the public, as our Archive of Folk Song does, I think one may try to gather some hints of the traditional styles from these professional artists. (Krader 1962:138)

Joseph Hickerson provided another fine example of the questioning of the authenticity of a recording in his review of a Riverside release of Tinker music. He declared that the content was inauthentic because the singer went on the commercial circuit and chose to give up her career as a Tinker singing at pubs and fairs (Hickerson 1964:89).

As a rule, there seem to be three different levels of authenticity recognized by reviewers. As seen above, some albums were labeled as completely inauthentic and seen either as tainted by commercialism or as fabrications created by the popular music industry. George List referred to one highly-fabricated commercial album as an example of “fakeloristics” (1964:88). At the opposite end of the spectrum, reviewers treated a few recordings as stunning and authentic representations of legitimate musical traditions that were worthy of scholarly attention—generally meaning worthy of transcription and analysis or adding to one’s personal collection. The remaining majority of the recordings reviewed fell into a gray area. Reviewers felt that some were authentic enough for pedagogical purposes or that ethnomusicologists could use them as “authentic” examples of Western influence and sources of information on cultural change. In many cases, reviewers who doubted the authenticity of an album would warn ethnomusicologists to “use with caution” and to verify the contained information against additional publications.

One issue arising out of the criteria established for judging commercially released research recordings was the creation of a “field aesthetic,” or a particular sound quality that many ethnomusicologists came to identify with unaltered, authentic performances gathered in the field. There has been little comment on this aesthetic by ethnomusicologists until very recently, but parties from outside the discipline made scathing comments about the commercially released research recordings of the 1960s and 1970s. Although Edward Tatnall Canby, a writer for *Audio* magazine, forgave the results obtained by Densmore because of the limitations of sound recording equipment at the time, in the January 1970 issue of *Audio*, he published a harsh critique of the “ethnic” recordings made by ethnomusicologists. He commented that these recordings were poor not only due to the collector’s use of outdated equipment but also...

...via sheer ineptitude in the use of newer recording machines. A bit of dis’a and dat’a, full of hum, overloaded, off-mike. An African chant rudely cut into, as rudely broken off moments later. A verse and a half of an Irish ditty, crudely faded out in mid-song, which should have run a dozen verses to make any musical sense. A brief blast of dance music, snatched away just as your foot began to tap. Dreadful. (Canby 1970:74)

Canby went on to explain how magnetic tape and the mass-reproductions of LPs only made things worse as researchers crammed dozens of short clips onto an album that possessed a “sound quality [that] was strictly ethnic, which is to say, often inept” (1970:54). Contrary to many beliefs expressed at the time by ethnomusicologists that longer clips would turn off those from outside the field, Canby questioned the widespread practice of “mini-sampling” and suggested that albums of music by one group or from one event at a time would have resulted in a more effective musical experience. He asked:

Did we really *have* to sample the whole musical menu? It is right here that Nonesuch and the other more modern ethnic record people are taking off. Open-ended series. All the time that's needed. Sonic spotlight on only one or two items, not dozens. A pleasure, I assure you, and saleable too, which is more than any Grand Ethnic Survey will ever be. (Canby 1970:75)

In Canby's response to commercially released research recordings, we find not only disapproval of the sound quality and editing techniques evidenced by most of the recordings, which was shared by at least a few ethnomusicologists of the time, but also of the current selection structure evidenced by many of these recordings.

In an index of recording reviews, Kurtz Myers and Donald L. Leavitt expressed a similar low opinion of the recordings made by both ethnomusicologists and folklorists:

Once again a word of caution is in order in the interpretation of the symbols. A folklore scholar writing for JAF does not measure a record with the yardstick employed by a reviewer with less academic aims. Consequently their conclusions may differ vastly over one disc that is a superbly engineered "folksy" production, tricked out with echo chambers and a symphony orchestra, and another that may be acoustically wretched conglomeration of slit drums, constituting an ethnic document of the first magnitude. (Myers and Leavitt 1962-1963:92)

Although the authors' cultural biases for what constitutes appropriate content are clearly evident, what is of more interest is their labeling of ethnic documents as "acoustically wretched."

Either oblivious or unconcerned that outsiders saw the sound quality of commercially released research recordings as a sign of ineptitude as opposed to that of an unaltered, authentic performance, many ethnomusicologists strongly rejected anything resembling a studio aesthetic. While Canby referred to Lomax's earlier work as "one of the folk music scandals of the century" because of its poor sound quality (1970:74), Joseph Hickerson complained about the polished commercial quality of the recordings on *Southern Journey*. He commented that phrases such as "field recordings" and "recorded

in the field” meant little more than “not recorded in the studio” and “by no means [could] be equated with the anthropologist’s (and thence ethnomusicologist’s) term, ‘field work’” (Hickerson 1965:320). He also complained that:

Lomax seems mainly interested in obtaining stereophonic high fidelity recordings of the musicians, so that the lay listener and folksong enthusiast can hear the music as it ‘really’ is. His gauge, therefore, is the nature of the market for his recordings. These certainly are not the gauges of the scholar. Though certain aspects of these albums (e.g., notes, the music itself, availability) make them somewhat useful to the ethnomusicologist, we must understand that their main *raison d’être* lies elsewhere. (Hickerson 1965:321)

One wonders if this desired field aesthetic comes from an effort to distinguish one’s work from the commercial recordings of the day, an effort to use equipment to capture unaltered performances in their live context (again, an endeavor for which sound recordings are poorly suited), or if Canby, Myers, and Leavitt simply misunderstood the research value obtained by recording the performance “as is.” If the latter is the case, other ethnomusicologists shared this misunderstanding, as well. Waterman complained of crowd background noise drowning out the solos of the ritual leader and even the singing of the chorus on *Cult Music of Trinidad* (Folkways FE 4478). To be honest, this balance of noise to music is probably more representative of the sound of a musical event performed in a large, crowded setting than is a recording with little or no crowd noise (Waterman 1963:146). We also have Helen Myers’ commentary that the recordings of the 1970s and 1980s were “disappointing at best” and that there was a lack of commentary about this poor sound quality and an overall “insensitivity to recorded sound” on the part of ethnomusicologists (Myer 1992:52). Other ethnomusicologists such as K. Peter Etzkorn and René van Peer discussed the difficulty of balancing technical prowess while resisting the influence of the commercial music industry as a

tricky endeavor involving blurred boundaries, overlapping aesthetics, and issues of ethics (Etzkorn 1992, van Peer 1999). Etzkorn saw ethnomusicologists as torn between overcoming the limitations of fidelity while not giving in to the other limitations of recorded sound that reinforce the illusion that music can exist apart from its social context and serve as an exact substitute for live performance (Etzkorn 1992:58-59).

We find that the sound recordings must maintain a precarious position. On one side, ethnomusicologists have desired high fidelity for its accuracy in representing the sound of the original event and have criticized low fidelity for presenting misleading artifacts and poorly representing the abilities of the performers. On the other, ethnomusicologists have expressed feelings that high fidelity seemed too real and the fear that they were creating an illusion that the recording could substitute for the live performance. Low fidelity was a means of preventing this illusion and helped ensure researchers that the performance had suffered little alteration. Perhaps this balancing act was the source of the punk-like aesthetic commented on by Canby (1970:74). Although the sound quality was not so bad as to be unusable, many collectors tended to leave their commercially released research recordings somewhat raw so as to include the markers of authenticity which one came to expect from a research recording (talking, background noise, odd acoustic irregularities caused by performers in motion or the natural elements). Too many distractions and lost information turned an album into a bad recording, but just enough proved its contents genuine. We find an odd nexus where the desire for an authentic, reliable recording conflicted with the fear that listeners would see the recording as a surrogate for live performance and as a more reliable and authoritative experience than that produced by the live event.

In addition to the recording itself, accompanying written documentation was another important component in determining the value of commercially released research recordings to researchers and students of ethnomusicology. In many cases, the descriptions and scope notes included in the documentation could affect the reviewer's perception of whether the included selections presented a representative sample. For instance, if one defined the scope of an album as "Mijwiz music from Syria," it allowed for a narrower and less varied selection than would "Instrumental music from the Middle East." In a sense, the range of areas and genres covered by an album was not as important for obtaining good reviews as was representing on the album what one claimed to represent in the documentation. If there were discrepancies between the declared and covered material or errors within the documentation, the recording, or both, the album would be likely to draw criticism.

Other aspects of documentation critiqued in reviews included the following:

1. Inaccurate spellings or incorrect Romanizations of foreign terms (Malm 1963:58, Kaufmann 1974:474).
2. Errors in the musical transcriptions (Goodman 1981:163).
3. Factual errors (misnamed instruments, generalizations about instruments or performance traditions, mislabeled genres, etc.) (Malm 1963:58, Goodman 1981:163-65, Kimberlin 1974:178, Tewari 1977:153, Briegleb 1977:166).
4. Lack of photographs or line-drawings to illustrate material (Anon. 1961:227, Kimberlin 1974:177, Goodman 1981:163).
5. Inclusion of information on instruments or songs not appearing on the album (Briegleb:166).
6. Lack of background information on the recording conditions (Anon. 1961:227, Kimberlin 1974:177, Goodman 1981:163).
7. Lack of background information on performers and performances (Anon. 1961:227, Malm 1963:58, Kimberlin 1974:177, Porter 1976:392).

8. Lack of ethnographic data (Merriam 1971:302, Olsen 1974:186).

9. Too much ethnographic data (Kaufman 1973:565-66).

If the reviewer felt that any of these areas were extremely poor or that several were inadequately covered, it could extremely effect his or her evaluation of the item's value. "Insufficient documentation" was one of the most common critiques appearing in recording reviews (Waterman 1963:146, Hickerson 1964:89, Peek 1970:370, Olsen 1974:186, Porter 1976:392, Briegleb 1977:166). One of the most extreme critiques of insufficient documentation appeared in Barbara Krader's review of A. L. Lloyd's "Folk Music of Albania":

It is a pity, with all the helpful information Lloyd has given us, that he did not choose to give space to the details of his collecting trip. Knowing why he chose the examples he did, for instance, would have made it possible to use the record as a document for study. And, how long did he stay in the various villages and towns; how difficult of access were they? How isolated from radios, urban life, foreign contacts, were his informants? How much did he ultimately learn of the informants whose music we hear? This kind of documentation is expected of all modern field expeditions, and we hope that, more and more, it will also appear in the notes provided with records like this one. Lloyd's notes would have been far more valuable if the expedition had been described and the opening generalities (not always convincing) had been omitted. (Krader 1968:300)

Krader also stated the importance of providing information about the background and occupation of each informant, how they learned the songs, and "how much they traveled" (1968:298). Lloyd was not exactly negligent with his documentation. The accompanying booklet did offer texts, transcriptions, social and political contexts, pictures of instruments, tunings, measurements, scales, and descriptions of the performance occasions. I suspect that the purpose of Krader's review was not simply to criticize Lloyd's work, but also to raise the bar for how much documentation researchers were to include with their published albums.

Taking both the sound recording and the documentation into account, the reviewer would express his or her overall opinion of the item and state recommendations for use and what they felt were appropriate audiences for the recording. In earlier reviews, there was a strong tendency, perhaps inspired by Barbara Krader, to classify recordings in terms of their value to different constituencies: scholars, students, and/or the general public.¹ There also appears to have been a tendency for reviewers to associate entertaining recordings as appropriate for the general public and longer, less “appealing” recordings as appropriate for true scholars. It is almost as if reviewers saw recordings that tested the limits of the ethnomusicologist’s endurance as the ones with the highest research value. I have noted a similar tendency in the field of literature where one gains a badge of honor by suffering through James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* or all of the whaling details included in Melville’s *Moby Dick*. Fortunately, this trend seems to have faded over time.

How do these reviews tie in with arguments against the use of sound recordings and audile analysis? After all, the fact that ethnomusicologists were, and still are, reviewing recordings would suggest there were also ethnomusicologists waiting to make use of these recordings and who were seeking guidance in selecting appropriate materials. Consider the complexity of the criteria discussed above for reviewing commercial releases. Not only does it require the reviewer to carefully evaluate every aspect of the recording and the documentation, it also requires him or her to have a great deal of knowledge about the information presented in the recording so that he or she can adequately assess the quality, accuracy, authenticity, and general reliability of the item. With time, the number of commercially released research recordings and their

commercial imitations began to rapidly increase and so did the blurring of the boundaries between research and commercial products. Additionally, as recordings spread around the world, cross-cultural borrowing often helped to blur the boundaries between popular and traditional music. This breakdown of clean-cut divisions must have made it extremely difficult to assess each new album. What had once been a disappointing trickle of 78 rpm discs and cylinders before 1950 was now an onslaught of endless LPs which all needed to be carefully evaluated and sifted free of inauthentic, unreliable, or commercially influenced products.

One of the difficulties involved in distinguishing popular commercial recordings from commercially released research recordings was discussed in René van Peer's "Taking the World for a Spin in Europe: An Insider's Look at the World Music Recording Business" (1997). In this article, van Peer explored how knowing whether the source of a recording was a private corporation, a government organization, or an academic institution is no longer useful for distinguishing commercially released research recordings from those which are solely commercial. He explained that many corporations have found there is an audience for commercially released research recordings and have released a significant amount of this material. Conversely, van Peer informed us that government-supported labels, such as Ocora, base selection and production decisions on the advice of a committee of scholars and "world music connoisseurs." The committee partially bases its decisions upon the desires of a mainstream consumer audience (1997:374-75).

To complicate matters even further are disagreements about what makes a performance an authoritative representation of a tradition. We can find early traces of

these discussions in Ralph Vaughan Williams' critique of Grainger's use of sound recordings and his view that Grainger's work was madness since every performance of a piece was slightly different. Theodore Grame argued along the same lines as Vaughan Williams. He presented us with the following puzzle:

There have survived into the 20th century at least two barrel organs that play a certain air composed by Thomas Arne; the two versions are very different in every way—in tempo, in ornamentation, and in pitch. Which is correct? Both, obviously, but neither would be if it were laboriously copied note for note and nuance for nuance by a modern performer. Moreover, there is little doubt that if the same music were available played on a musical watch, say, the different idiom would cause still greater changes. These examples show, I think, that music is not able to be frozen into an authorized version, and that the scholar who views it thus is misinterpreting the nature of the art, which is, after all, vibrant and kaleidoscopic. (Grame 1963:203)²

According to this statement, even a live performance cannot be authoritative since it cannot adequately represent every performance of the piece at all points in history and in every possible medium. From this perspective, sound recordings, which tend to fix a single performance and represent it as the authoritative version, will undoubtedly misrepresent an ever-changing and dynamic tradition. This means that even a high quality recording considered to be of authentic origins and presenting an adequate sample from a set of musical traditions would be of little use to a researcher since a sound recording cannot be treated as an authoritative source.

One argument that I would make in response to Grame's perspective on authority is that the purpose of sound recordings need not be to document and provide information on every performance within a given tradition but only on a specific performance. Once we explore and interpret this recording, we must then compare our interpretation to that of other performances or in combination with other information sources to determine how accurately it represents the tradition as a whole. In the case of Grame's two barrel

organs, they are both reliable and authentic records of the barrel organ performances they contain. They are *not* reliable and authentic records of the performance as rendered by live performers from the 21st century or by a musical watch. How could they be when these performances would occur long after the creation of these particular aural documents? Whether barrel organ performances of Arne's piece can be considered authoritative representations of the tradition as a whole is another matter. When reconstructing 19th century musical behavior, these barrel organ performances must certainly be more authoritative than performances by musicians who were not yet born or those rendered by devices that never produced the performance for the audience that is the object of study.

Grame's argument threw historical and social context out the window and tried to suggest that imaginary performances are as equally authoritative as existing ones. Although he raised an interesting point about whether we can use one performance to represent the whole of a tradition, this does not affect whether a recording, or any aural document, is an authoritative representation of the performance it recorded. This only becomes an issue when multiple recordings were made of the same event, such as in the case of Hood's UCLA experiments. In this situation, I would venture that all of the recordings are authoritative although some may be less so, in whole or in part, depending on their reliability as a relatively complete record of the event.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Pekka Gronow claimed that even a heavily edited recording of a popular music performance can be authoritative and that he is reasonably certain that an ABBA recording is an authentic and authoritative representation of ABBA music (1963). Again, although I approve of Gronow's greater

flexibility as to what can constitute as an authoritative representation of performance, it is clear that he is treating the resulting recording as the original performance and not as the performance itself. Although this is acceptable if it was what the performer(s) intended, one cannot share Gronow's perspective in all cases. If a producer heavily edits a research recording and creates an aural document that deviates significantly from the sound of the original performance, this document is a less reliable and authoritative representation of that performance than the original unedited recording.

Falling between the arguments of Grame and Gronow is an array of varying viewpoints on what makes a performance, let alone a recording, an acceptable and authoritative information source for a tradition. As a result, convincing everyone that a recording is authentic, representative, and an authoritative source of data on the music and musical behavior of a given cultural or social group—or of a single performer for that matter—can prove a tricky business. Again, many of these viewpoints treat sound recordings as performance surrogates as opposed to evidence of a specific historic performance. The result of this treatment is that sound recordings have been criticized for failing to serve a purpose they could never adequately serve.

Due to 1) the increase in published recordings, 2) the difficulty in differentiating between commercially released research recordings and commercial recordings, 3) the controversy over what constitutes “authentic” sound as opposed to one aesthetically subjectively chosen and modified by the recordist through the use of electroacoustic or other “non-traditional” technologies, and 4) conflicts over whether one can use a single recording of a performance as an authoritative representation of a musical tradition, the use of commercially released research recordings became a complicated and somewhat

risky venture. It is quite likely that many researchers shied away from the use of commercially released sound recordings solely because of the perceived difficulty of determining which recordings could serve as acceptable research sources.

Chapter 6

Theoretical Issues Created by Shifting Paradigms

Since the ability to mass-produce research recordings after 1950 was as responsible for the rise of modern ethnomusicology as Edison's "perfected" phonograph was for planting the seeds of the discipline after 1888, it is somewhat ironic that an increase in commercially-released research recordings would eventually discourage ethnomusicologists from making use of others' sound recordings in their research. To understand this shift requires a partial examination of the history and development of ethnomusicology as a discipline. Although ethnomusicologists have generally hailed Hornbostel and the students of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv as their ancestors, closer examination reveals that there was actually a sharp break between this school of comparative musicology and the discipline of ethnomusicology as it first appeared in the early 1950s. The Berlin School was highly active in the collection and analysis of the world's music from roughly 1900 through the early 1930s and served as one of the major academic centers for comparative musicology. Hornbostel and many of his students were active in the Gesellschaft für Erforschung der Musik des Orients, which was founded in 1930 and chaired by Johannes Wolf (Anon. 1953:1).¹ The members of this society were also active in producing and contributing to the society's publication, *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Musikwissenschaft*. From 1933 through the 1940s, the Berlin School and

the members of the society suffered a number of devastating blows. In 1933, the events surrounding Hitler's rise to power forced Hornbostel, Curt Sachs, Robert Lachmann, and Mieczyslaw Kolinski to emigrate from Germany (Bose 1963:262). Work at the Phonogramm-Archiv was disrupted, but a scattered network of scholars located in the United States, the British Protectorate of Palestine, and Europe continued to maintain the society until 1935 at which point both Wolf and Lachman resigned office and shifted the base of the society to the United States. Immediately following this shift, the society was renamed the American Society for Comparative Musicology and was chaired by Charles Seeger.

The newly named society was to survive several more tragedies during its short American life. On November 28, 1935, Erich von Hornbostel passed away while staying in Cambridge, England for health-related reasons. During 1935 and 1936, three of the principle officers of the society changed residences and their professional connections (Anon. 1953:2-3). And on July 7, 1936, Henry Cowell, one of the leading members of the society, was charged with "homosexual morals" and sent to San Quentin prison to serve out a three-year sentence (Boziwick 2000:50-51). These misfortunes were in addition to the hardships caused by the political events in Germany and those of World War II. From 1936 to the end of the war, the Third Reich severely disrupted international communications between scholars and made the formal study of world music nearly impossible. During the war, a significant portion of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv's holdings were destroyed by fire or carried away by the Soviet Army (Bose 1963:262-63). By the end of 1936, the American Society of Comparative Musicology had become defunct and along with it the main outlet for comparative musicological research.

When the first issue of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* appeared in 1953, it was born from the remaining treasury of the American Society for Comparative Musicology if not exactly from its ashes. Whereas the members of the former two societies had been a mixture of musicologists, psychologists, linguists, and scholars from a variety of fields, this new society was shaped largely by anthropologists during meetings and special panels supported by organizations such as the American Anthropological Association (Rhodes 1963a:178, Nettl 1988:23). The collaborative efforts of David McAllester, Alan P. Merriam, Willard Rhodes, and Charles Seeger were particularly instrumental, and ethnomusicologists often credit them as the “four founders” of the Society for Ethnomusicology (Nettl 1988:23). The first issue of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* consisted of little more than an attempt at re-establishing communications between scholars and a tally of recordings carried back from the field by Kunst’s newly dubbed “ethno-musicologists.” The last two pages of the issue, however, included a list of vendors offering commercially released research recordings. This list included the familiar corporate and organizational names of Esoteric, Folkways, Riverside, the International Library of African Music, the Library of Congress, and Musée de l’Homme. In issue two of the newsletter, there appeared an early attempt to break away from the former practices of comparative musicology:

Again, I am concerned about . . . the question of methods and methodology of ethno-musicology . . . I have come to believe that the whole system of comparative methods is obsolete and inadequate, and that something else and much better will have to replace it if we are going to expect any significant progress in the future. (Kuttner 1953:3-4 ellipses in original)

That the creation of this new publication and the Society for Ethnomusicology arose from an anthropological base during the years of 1953 to 1956 makes perfect sense

considering the climate of the music industry during that time. The ability to mass-produce recordings had removed one of the major obstacles that had previously prevented many anthropologists from publishing their own musical findings without the aid of a musicologist skilled in musical transcription. Anthropologists could now mass-produce and distribute their recordings without first making a musical transcription. The Great Depression, World War II, and shellac rationings were over, making small-profit ventures more viable for commercial record companies. Following the war, the International Folk Music Council and UNESCO established programs for the preservation and dissemination of “authentic” folk music. Magnetic tape revolutionized the ability to record, copy, edit, and transport music. The vinyl LP, which was a more suitable length for publishing research recordings than either the 78rpm disc or the cylinder, began to sweep the commercial market. And in 1948, Moses Asch struggled out of bankruptcy to found Folkways Records and placed Harold Courlander and later Henry Cowell in charge of the Ethnic Folkways series. Moses Asch not only became one of the earliest members of the Society for Ethnomusicology, but also ran advertisements for the Ethnic Folkways series in numerous issues, offering his fellow members an attractive, if somewhat hokey, 33 1/3 percent discount (Goldsmith 1998). By 1955, the Carnegie Corporation began providing grants for the release of LPs containing authentic American folk songs and folk music originally recorded in the field. With the primary organizations and networks for comparative musicology defunct, the major obstacle of mass-reproduction and distribution removed, and new sources of government and private funding readily available, anthropologists gained a major foothold in the study and representation of the world’s musical traditions. A trend in academia during the 1950s and 1960s of providing

better funding to researchers in anthropology than to those in musicology may have further strengthened anthropologists' foothold over musicologists (McAllester 1963:183-184).

Many of the theoretical objections that arose against sound recordings as viable information sources and audile analysis as a legitimate research methodology are a result of the paradigm shifts in the 1950s caused by the increased presence of anthropological theories and methodologies. While anthropologists were quick to claim the Berlin School as their predecessor, they were equally swift to declare a break from its theories, practices, and methodologies. George Herzog, one of the members of the Berlin School and a teacher of many among the first generation of ethnomusicologists, seems to be one of the first researchers to encourage more involvement from anthropologists:

It seems necessary that the intimate connection with anthropology should be kept and cultivated as heretofore. Only so can the background of the material receive its due consideration. It is hoped that in addition the field will benefit by a growing interest on the part of the musicologist and the musician proper. The musical anthropologist or "comparative musicologist" shares with the musicologist his historic interest, and many related problems; with the musician his esthetic appreciation of the "exotic" products. (Herzog. 1936:42-43)

Herzog suggested neither an actual break in methodologies nor the formation of a new discipline but simply outlined the possible benefits of establishing a greater sensitivity toward context and an equal synthesis of musicology and anthropology.

While many ethnomusicologists shared Herzog's vision for an equal synthesis of the two fields, others did not. When the second issue of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* appeared in August of 1954, it included the above quotation by Kuttner. Kuttner's statement suggested not just a desire for synthesis, but for the replacement of past methodologies. Willard Rhodes, one of the founding fathers of the *Ethno-musicology*

Newsletter and the Society for Ethnomusicology, pitted ethnomusicology against comparative musicology, stating that researchers from the latter focused on “purely musicological problems” and on developing means for scientific analysis and classification of musical data as opposed to “ethnological interpretation” (1956a:5). Jaap Kunst, in his *Ethnomusicology: A Study of Its Nature, Problems, Methods and Representative Personalities*, discussed “comparative ethnomusicology falling into disuse” (1959:1) and the need for fieldwork to replace audile analysis (1959:20). Merriam echoed this sentiment in 1960 in an article entitled “Ethnomusicology: Discussion and Definition of the Field.” In this article, Merriam compared the practices of “old comparative musicology” to the earlier practices of archaeology, which fell from favor due to their focus on descriptions, data, and “things” as being of central importance (1960:107).

In September of 1963, Rhodes published another article entitled, “Musicology and Musical Performance: (Comments on Hood, ‘Musical Significance’)” that compared the materials, methodologies, and techniques used by the “historical musicologist” as in opposition to those of the ethnomusicologist. It is in this article that we find the first association of sound recordings with the ways of the past in *Ethnomusicology*:

Whereas the historical musicologist, largely by necessity, but also by choice, has confined himself to the treatises and musical scores, which are nothing more than the composer’s blueprints of music, the ethnomusicologist has concerned himself with music itself. A score is not music, nor a phonograph record until it is played. Music is living sound and exists only in performance...Does not this dependence upon performance constitute one of the most distinguishing differences between our own discipline and that of historical musicology? (Rhodes 1963b:198)

Rhodes assured readers that his intended implication was not that ethnomusicology is not “concerned with historical record” but rather that “reliable records of the past are

extremely sparse and in many cases non-existent” (1963b:198). Although this statement suggests that ethnomusicologists should use historic recordings when available, the following statement contradicts it: “The researcher must work with the music of the present and rely upon supporting evidence from the archaeologist, anthropologist, linguist, and historian” (Rhodes 1963a:168). Furthermore, not only should ethnomusicologists draw their historical data from the work of other fields, but they should then “supply data to the historical musicologist so that they can rewrite the history of world music” (Rhodes 1963a:168). This article suggests that researchers of ethnomusicology should focus primarily on synchronic study and rely upon the researchers of other disciplines to provide a diachronic perspective of musical traditions and their originating communities. Additionally, Rhodes associated the work of Curt Sachs with historical musicology and the evolutionary school. He informed his readers that Sachs’s work was primarily important because it made other historical musicologists aware of the value of “ethnomusicology and its vast wealth of non-European music” (Rhodes 1963b:199). The main danger that Kuttner, Rhodes, and Merriam saw in sound recordings and audile analysis is that much of the value of sound recordings lies within their nature as historic documents and in their role as tools for comparative and historical study. If ethnomusicologists limit themselves to the music of the here and now, it eliminates many of sound recordings’ more practical uses.

Additionally, efforts to earmark sound recordings as one of the tools of past and of a passé field placed them in the position of the baby in the proverbial bathwater (see Seeger 1999:3). When ethnomusicologists sought to break away from these older fields, they often targeted sound recordings and audile analysis as key elements to be done away

with rather than the theories and research goals of historical, comparative, and systematic musicology.

In the same issue as Rhodes' 1963 article, Merriam published his next article defining the scope and purpose of Ethnomusicology. Entitled "Purpose of Ethnomusicology, an Anthropological View," this article presented four undesirable concepts that had carried over from comparative musicology and folk music studies and proposed the need for their reassessment and/or removal. The first concept, which Merriam dubbed the "White Knight Concept," involved protecting non-Western music from abuse. The second, called the "Duty of Preservation Concept" was also heavily associated with the use of sound recordings. Merriam argued that the world's music was not disappearing and, in a slightly later article, that there would be little value in preserving it as museum pieces if it were (Merriam 1963a:207-08, Merriam 1966b:342). The remaining two concepts that Merriam labeled as outdated were the "Communication Concept" and the "Shotgun Concept," neither of which focused specifically on the use of sound recordings, but still represented a break from past theories and methodologies. Merriam closed his article with the critique that ethnomusicology had focused too much on "musical sounds as a thing in themselves" and the suggestion that music should be studied as an integral part of human behavior (Merriam 1963a:211). With this article, Merriam not only questioned the value of systematic studies of music but also set the stage for the ideas that: 1) sound recordings should not be studied because they are mere sounds isolated from human behavior and therefore not among the central study objects of ethnomusicology and 2) sound recordings are the study objects of other fields unconcerned with cultural context. Merriam's attempts to distinguish ethnomusicology

from other musicological disciplines drew criticism from Charles Seeger, who pointed out that the idea of studying music as “text” in context was not a new idea among the current members of the society (Seeger 1963:215). Bruno Nettl questioned whether Merriam’s proposals actually served to distinguish ethnomusicology from similar fields (Nettl 1963:221).

Perhaps in response to Seeger and Nettl’s criticism, Merriam further defined his theories and published them in *The Anthropology of Music* the following year.

Considering that Merriam had just finished a three-year stint as the president for the Society of Ethnomusicology and before that had filled the role of either editor or vice-president since the publication of the first issue of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter*, his book probably drew a considerable amount of attention from his colleagues. In this landmark text, Merriam defined his vision for the field in great detail and clearly dismissed the practice of using others’ research recordings as an inappropriate methodology for ethnomusicological study:

Despite the fact that ethnomusicology is both a field and a laboratory discipline, and that its most fruitful results must inevitably derive from the fusion of both kinds of analysis, there has been both an artificial divorcing of the two and an emphasis on the laboratory phase of study. Reference is made specifically to the regrettable tendency to resort to armchair analysis. There is, of course, no objection to thinking speculation, and theorizing from hunches, intuition, or imagination, for this is all a vital part of the development of a discipline. However, two kinds of armchair analysis are objectionable: the failure to take theories to the empiric test of the field materials, and the analysis by laboratory technician of materials collected by others in the field. (Merriam 1964:38-39)

Although ethnomusicologists were expected to perform laboratory analysis, the material was to come from their own fieldwork and not from that of others.

Another point of interest is the absence of sound recordings in Merriam’s chapter entitled, “Music and Culture History,” which discussed the role of texts, transcriptions,

and archeological evidence in reconstructing cultural and musical history. Merriam's one mention of sound recordings was in reference to the "large and reliable samples of music transcribed from phonograph records." The records in question were made by Hornbostel and other researchers of the Berlin School through the use of materials gathered during scientific expeditions. Merriam praised the improved reliability of transcriptions made from sound recordings over earlier ones made during live performances. Hence, Merriam denounced the value of audile analysis and sound recordings on one hand and on the other claimed that transcriptions produced through audile analysis were more reliable than earlier transcriptions made on site (Merriam 1964:279). In the same chapter, Merriam also explored the value of excavated musical instruments in the reconstruction of early cultural history of ancient times, which creates an odd contrast in comparison to his disapproval of using recent recordings made by another researcher to serve similar research purposes.

Despite these contradictions, Merriam's assessment of audile analysis drew a number of supporters. Nettl referred to Merriam's emphasis on fieldwork and mentioned the importance of an ethnomusicologist collecting his own raw material and observing performance in its "live" state. Nettl did not deny Merriam's critique of audile analysis, but rather questioned what the future role of the American ethnomusicologist would be "if he is replaced by the native field worker" (1964a:4). He suggested that this future role could involve digesting the result of the native researcher's findings through audile analysis. Although Nettl did not echo Merriam's sentiment that the age of audile analysis was past, he did feel that the increased availability of mass-produced sound recordings

had created a sentiment among ethnomusicologists that the need for transcription and analysis of sound recordings had become greatly reduced (Nettl 1964a:13).

By 1972, a few ethnomusicologists had gone from merely associating sound recordings with the controversial theories and attitudes of early twentieth century comparative and historical musicology to treating them as the cause. In an article reprinted in *Ethnomusicology: History, Definitions, and Scope*, Christopher Marshall discussed the role of sound recordings in the removal of songs from their “living context” and in the reification of music into static objects. He explained that once recordings made it possible to freeze and separate music from its cultural context that:

Evolutionary theories of music became possible—since music was structure, was there a pattern of growth from a simple structure to a complex one? Diffusionist theories were even more popular—since music consisted of discrete items (songs, scales, and so on), might not these items be borrowed successively outwards from certain areas? Music could be separated from culture, and items of music could ne [sic] separated still further from others; thus it became possible to use the comparative method, abstracting isolated features from various bodies of music. Just as philologists were attempting to collect units of language for their dictionaries and grammars, music scholars were interested in collecting units of music (rather than observing their social context or talking to the musicians). The origins of music were traced, not to present culture processes, but to the distant human past. (Marshall 1972:140)

Marshall saw the humanistic movement, anthropology, and the birth of ethnomusicology as among the entities that saved many musical traditions from the fate of reification and placement in an evolutionary continuum.

In the same year as Marshall’s article, Dorson published his introductory text to folklore and folklife studies. One of the articles appearing in this volume was List’s “Fieldwork: Recording Traditional Music.” List remarked, “In general, field collections made by the scholar who will himself study and publish the music collected are of greater value than those made by others” (1972:445). This comment seems somewhat odd

considering that in the same article List also recommended the use of others' sound recordings in preparation for research (List 1972:449) and also considering that his research has made extensive use of commercially released Hopi Katchina music.

In 1980, Herndon and McLeod also supported Merriam's turn away from audile analysis in favor of fieldwork and stressed the break between ethnomusicology and historical musicology. They wrote, "Undoubtedly, the most important aspect of ethnomusicology today is the actual gathering of information in the field. This is so because, ethnomusicology, in contrast to historical musicology, places most of its emphasis on synchronic rather than diachronic studies" (Herndon and McLeod 1980:125). Here, not only are sound recordings reduced in importance but the role of diachronic study as well. Roxane McCollester also favored fieldwork over audile analysis. In a review of Robert Günther's *Musik in Rwanda*, she stated:

Although the reviewer retains a distinct bias in favor of using one's own field recordings for an analytical study of this nature, it is evident that Günther must be respected for not having constructed broad comparative generalizations based solely on the foundations of the materials he presents here. (McCollester 1966:223)

One should note that McCollester was not accepting Günther's use of sound recordings, but rather praising him for not drawing on additional outmoded methodologies.

In 1983, Bruno Nettl published *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-Nine Concepts*. In Chapter 18, he provided a breakdown of the history of ethnomusicology and its predecessors into roughly five overlapping schools of thought. The first school of thought extended from 1890 to 1930 and involved the practice of: 1) treating music as an artifact and 2) studying small song samples collected by other researchers. Nettl commented that the researchers of this school gathered sound recordings for "analysis

and preservation elsewhere, something that sounds a bit like colonial exploitation” (1983:252). This first school of thought overlapped with one beginning in the 1890s and extending further into the twentieth century. The primary goal of this second school was to record and preserve a “total musical corpus” (Nettl 1983:252). The third school of thought stretched from 1920 to approximately the 1960s and was characterized by the following aspects:

(a) continued concentration on the recording of musical artifacts, (b) extended residence in one community, (c) greater sensitivity to the cultural context and study of music in culture, and (d) attempts to comprehend an entire musical system. (Nettl 1983:253)

The fourth school of thought stretches from the early 1950s to the present and emphasizes both participant observation and the value of attempting to obtain bi-musicality and/or insider knowledge. Finally, the fifth school of thought stretches from approximately 1960 to the present and is marked by a breakdown in any attempt by researchers to be comprehensive or to undertake general studies. In place of generalist studies, many of the ethnomusicologists participating in this fifth school of thought undertake “a strictly limited project whose task is to make a specialized contribution” (Nettl 1983:254).

These five schools of thought show a move away from general studies, sound recordings, audile analysis, and the acceptance of music as artifact, and toward contextual studies, fieldwork, cultural participation, and narrower areas of specialization. Nettl associated the earliest school of thought and the practice of audile analysis with “colonial exploitation” and saw the increased emphasis of later schools on contextual studies as showing a “greater sensitivity” and an effort to make a “specialized contribution.” Nettl’s use of language creates a negative connotation for the use of research recordings, as does his introduction which states, “it is possible that in the future there will again be

more research done with the use of other people's field data" even though it is "taken for granted that each ethnomusicologist must have *some* field research experience, and that most studies are based on the researcher's own fieldwork" (1983:6).

In 1992, Helen Meyers declared in *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction* that the armchair had been "abandoned." She assured us that "scholars now conduct their own fieldwork, and experience firsthand the cultures whose music they analyze. Inevitably, this development has improved the standard of work and led to new understanding of the role of music in human life" (Meyers 1992a:11). A more recent comment accompanying a cooperative book review of major musical ethnographies stated simply that regardless of the ethnomusicologist's anthropological or musicological orientation "most musical ethnographies are based on information gathered through fieldwork" (Sakata, Russell and Levine 2001:158).

In many of these cases, the shift from audile analysis to fieldwork seems to serve the same purpose as poor audio fidelity in post-1953 research recordings. It operates as a token assuring researchers and students of ethnomusicology that if they avoid the use of others' recordings and perform fieldwork that they will have escaped the clutches of comparative and historical musicology and the colonialist attitudes and practices that accompanied them. The methodology of audile analysis has become a scapegoat for the ethnocentric theories and mindsets of earlier researchers, and that of fieldwork has become the "hallmark" or "*sine qua non*" of modern ethnomusicology (Meyers 1992b:22, Nettl 1983:6). Many modern ethnomusicologists have targeted earlier methodologies, as opposed to theory and attitudes, as a way of both demarcating the past from present and creating neat boundaries between ethnomusicology and other musicological disciplines.

Sound recordings and audile analysis are threatened not only by their association with the past and the passé, but also by the changing definition of music and the scope of ethnomusicological study. Two significant changes to the paradigms of early ethnomusicology were the placement of greater emphasis on the need to study music in context and a redefinition of music as human behavior or culture rather than as an isolatable art form. A more recent reason for avoiding the use of sound recordings revolves around the difference between listening to a performance and “hearing” one, a concept born out of the recognized importance of cognitive context.

The first person to raise the issue of context within the pages of the *Ethnomusicology Newsletter* was Henrietta Yurchenco in 1955. Yurchenco accepted sound recordings as information sources and even found them “indispensable.” However, she also felt that sound recordings by themselves could not “present the full story.” She wrote, “The investigator must fill in the outlines but to evaluate the facts correctly he must be a penetrating observer of human behavior as well as a capable technician” (Yurchenco 1955:6). For some time after this remark, not much was said about contextual study and I suspect that the resurgence in commentary on the topic was partly due to Alan Lomax’s “Song Structure and Social Structure.” In this article, Lomax assured researchers, “Unlike the musicologists of the past, we need no longer evaluate the varied music of the peoples of the world from a perspective of the fine-art music of Western Europe, for we now have adequate comparative data and can examine them at leisure on their own terms” (1962:228). What followed this statement was a description of Lomax’s infamous cantometrics, the ultimate survey of decontextualized music from the latter half of the twentieth century. For researchers seeking to break away from the

ethnocentric generalizations and evolutionary theories of the past, statements such as “Cantometrics is a system for rating song performance in a series of qualitative judgments; one day it may be a way of using song as an indicator of social and psychological pattern [sic] in a culture” (Lomax 1962:228) probably raised a few hackles. Rhodes’ examination of the duties of historical musicologists and ethnomusicologists, Merriam’s redefinition of music and rejection of audile analysis, and the Symposium on Musical Transcription all appeared within two years of Lomax’s explanation of cantometrics. In 1964, Gertrude Kurath wrote, “it is the duty of the ethnomusicologist to advocate the study and comprehension of the most minute details of the ethnographic background of musical practice and to warn the musicologist that a lack of interest in the ethnographic background may prevent an understanding of the musical object itself” (1964:181). Later in the same article she wrote:

The anthropologist looks at music as a phenomenon of human behavior which arises out of the culture of which it is a part and which is shaped by the values and beliefs held by the members of that culture. Thus concepts and behaviors, on the one hand, and music sound, on the other, are not only interdependent but are, in fact, inseparable from any but the outside observer’s theoretical viewpoint. To look at music as an object in itself without reference to its culture background is thus to reify the results of behavior without a sure knowledge of how the object has been shaped. (Kurath 1964:182)

Like Rhodes and Merriam, Kurath strongly emphasized that music cannot be studied in isolation from its context, which is exactly what was proposed by Lomax’s cantometrics.

Kurath was not the last to speak on the matter. In 1966, McColleston warned, “no reader can judge what Ruanda musicians are doing in all detail solely from a written description or from a tape recorded performance witnessed by another fieldworker” (1966:223). Finally, in January of 1970, *Ethnomusicology* published a direct response to

Lomax's cantometrics system. In a review of *Folk Songs Style and Culture: A Staff Report on Cantometrics*, James C. Downey not only questioned the criteria for determining the authenticity and representiveness of the sample recordings but also asked, "Can musical performance styles be described in terms other than those which define musical structure?" (1970:66).

Lomax's research not only drew attention to the issue of studying music devoid of context, it also provided the anthropologists in the discipline with yet another reason to be suspicious of sound recordings and audile analysis. The past was threatening to repeat itself, and this threat most likely strengthened the resolve of many ethnomusicologists to bar the old methodologies of comparative, historical, and systematic musicology and to insist upon the study of music in context as one of the requirements for ethnomusicological research. By using cantometrics as an example of the possible dangers, these ethnomusicologists could easily challenge the appropriateness of studying music removed from its context.

Commentary about the effect of absent context on the usefulness of sound recordings continued well past 1970. In his contribution to Dorson's *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, Robert E. Warren commented, "one could hardly isolate harvest songs, for instance, and study them outside their context without missing a great deal of their meaning" (Warren 1972:432). Jumping ahead to the May 1982 issue of *Ethnomusicology*, one finds the following testimonial by Klaus Wachsmann regarding his experience of listening to wax cylinders in place of fieldwork:

Working with musicians who have nothing to say is frustrating. When as a student, I listened for the first time to a sample of African music—of xylophone playing, from the Cameroons if I remember correctly—it was through the medium of a wax cylinder. I was deeply frustrated partly because the recording was

technically inferior (the cylinder was also badly worn), partly because my expectations were too high, and partly because I could not see the players in my imagination; I knew nothing of their kinesthetic behavior. I had to be content with the stereotypical notions such words as “the Cameroons,” “African” and “xylophone” evoked in those days... My attempts to theorize about the music from the Cameroons by speculating on the texture of the rhythm, the tuning of the instrument, and the manifold aspects of context were similarly fruitless. What I really needed was to know what went on in the minds and hearts of the players when they recorded the cylinder. I want to understand *their* human experience—their experiencing—as performers, as much as *mine* as listener. By experiencing is meant the “condition of a person when he is using his programs for sensing, thinking, or dreaming.” (Wachsmann 1982:198)

It is understandable that Wachsmann ended up frustrated by his first experience with sound recordings. As he stated, his expectations were too high. Sound recordings only capture the aural aspects of performance and not the thoughts, feelings, or human experiences of its performers unless they venture into oral history. Even direct interaction with performers can only partially illuminate these cognitive elements. Although ethnography may come closer to capturing these elements than sound recordings, text fails to capture the nuances of music’s aural aspects. But sadly, this is exactly Wachsmann’s point. For him and many others, the heart of music resided not within the sounds of the performance but within human thought and behavior, which recordings only capture indirectly through the sounds of music and language. Although I applaud Wachsmann’s desire to study cultural context, I question whether this goal must be contrary to the study of sound.

In the same issue, David E. Draper discussed not just recordings removed from their context, but *recorded* out of context. Referring to Densmore’s recordings of Mississippi Choctaws, he remarked:

Since these albums were recorded out of context, the style of performance may be misleading to those unfamiliar with this repertory. The length of the examples would have been extended considerably in actual performances; yet the form for

each piece is established despite the shortened versions. Furthermore, the dress for *hitla tuluwa* occasions includes small sleigh bells, attached in a cluster through the belt loop, and probably modern adaptations of an earlier idiophone. Since all performers wear the bells, these instruments produce an additional layer of sound not heard on the recordings. From my research, it is unclear whether the bells are cognitively considered as part of the costuming or of the musical system; they are not included in recordings made out of context. The use of the drum to separate the recorded piece would have been useful in providing listeners with a sense of the occasion. (Draper 1982:336)

In the case of a live performance, I question whether it is possible to completely remove the music from its context. I would assume that the performers themselves must provide some of the performance context, or as much of it as is provided by the bells on their costumes. At the very least, one could insist that Densmore's recordings were created in an altered context as opposed to being created in no context at all.

In 1984, the entire September issue of *Ethnomusicology* was devoted to responses to Lomax's cantometrics. Far more scathing than the two primary articles was a short response by Kenneth Gourlay:

Like Feld I have listened to the cantometric training tapes, those disembodied abstractions of nonexistent reality, and, by comparison with field and teaching experience, reached two conclusions: (1) from the receiver's viewpoint, what the tapes communicate is only partial compared with what would be received were one actually there; (2) from the teaching angle, taped examples, even with visual support and verbal description, cannot convey the experience of what happened. As this is what really matters, genuine teaching of ethnomusicology is impossible because the experience necessary for its inception is nontransferable. (Gourlay 1984:456)

There are several familiar arguments in this quote. Sound recordings are presented as "disembodied," failing to represent reality, and as incomplete and, therefore, unreliable records of a past performance event. Gourlay's second point is troubling. It reflects not only on the value of sound recordings to the field but also on that of all forms of secondhand experience. Based on Gourlay's perception of the relationship between

musical experience and ethnomusicological pedagogy, one not only wonders about the purpose of sound recordings, but about the purpose of ethnographies, lectures, and the field of ethnomusicology in general.

In 1992, *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction* included a suggestion from Ter Ellingson that audile analysis and the paradigms of the Berlin School were things of the past, replaced by the preferable study of music in context. Ellingson wrote that earlier approaches:

Maintained an artificial separation between acoustical and cultural aspects of music that would break down only with the emergence of a new paradigm. This paradigm, which emphasized field research that related musical sounds to elements of culture such as history, ideology and the conceptual and theoretical systems of the culture being studied, was derived from the work of Jaap Kunst in the later part of the century. (Ellingson 1992:131)

Ellingson also complained about the artifice involved in early recordings and that both the “studio” aesthetic brought about by commercial technology and the “ethnographic” aesthetic of documentary film served to “rearrange musical reality,” turning recordings into text removed from context and into “works of ethnomusicological fiction” (Ellingson 1992:132). Hood’s concerns regarding the multiple perspectives obtained by different recording setups and Bruce Jackson’s assessment that recordings lack “the referents needed to let us know how to see and hear what they preserve” (Jackson 1987:127) also suggest a tenuous connection between sound recordings and reality.

Many ethnomusicologists have felt they could not assess how reliably a recording captured and represented the original performance without the context of lived experience. Others have felt that recordings are incapable of capturing the type of information that is of true value to ethnographic research. Still others have warned that it is dangerous to listen to recordings out of context because an inexperienced listener is

unable to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic materials. Yang Mu wrote in a recent issue of *Ethnomusicology*, “‘Armchair’ scholars who do not base their research on their own fieldwork but depend on ready-made recordings and transcriptions may also be misled by using them” (Yang Mu 1994:316). In this case, the main opportunity for error lies in mistaking government issued or altered performances with authentic folk music due to one’s lack of fieldwork experience.

Ethnomusicologists have brought up not only the loss of cultural context as barrier to the audile analysis but also the loss of the full synesthetic context and that of the greater performance event. In the case of synesthesia, some ethnomusicologists have focused, and continue to focus, on performance traditions such as capoeira in which music is combined with dance, martial art, gesture, and material culture, pointing out how much of the sensorial experience intended by the performance is lost if one limits it to its aural aspects (Downey 2002). Other ethnomusicologists have focused on performances in which the stimulation of the non-auditory senses is not a controlled nor even an intended part of the performance. They argue that these other sensorial experiences still effect one’s perception and interpretation of the performance. For instance, Hood complained that a recording of Karnatic music was incapable of capturing and expressing synesthetic elements such as the smell of cooking, local sounds, the feel of one’s clothing, and the feel of the “warm humid nights of Madras” (Hood 1971:33). In *World of Music*, Ton de Leeuw did not limit the effects of recording to the removal of cultural or sensorial contextual data but complained that sound recordings make it possible even to “eliminate the performer, in the sense that his physical presence is no longer necessary” (1978:26).

In addition to synesthesia, there has been a shift in focus from the song as the basic unit of study to that of the performance event. Although the invention and availability of magnetic tape probably encouraged this trend, one of the first ethnomusicological articles to suggest the value of studying the full performance event and not just the songs was Ruth Stone's "Motion Film as an Aid *in* Transcription and Analysis of Music" (1978). In this article, Ruth Stone discussed an occurrence of miscommunication between her and Verlon Stone, who was operating the tape recorder during a longer musical event. As a result of this miscommunication, Verlon failed to turn off the tape recorder between songs, and Ruth was able to discover that audience members provided valuable feedback and commentary about the performance between songs. Although more modern recordings on magnetic tape and CD are somewhat safe from this shift in focus due to their longer duration, earlier recordings that contain only songs or that were recorded outside of their usual contextual setting may be of little use to researchers seeking to explore the larger performance context.

Other arguments involving context look beyond the cultural, sensorial, temporal aspects and focus on the contexts of cognitive frameworks. John H. Mueller assured his readers that music serves a functional purpose for the originating culture but when those outside the culture listen to this music, they can only experience it as aesthetic object due to their lack of a shared conceptual framework. Mueller stressed to his readers that although they can *listen* to a piece by Mozart, they "do not hear Mozart as his own audience did. Indeed, the *more* faithfully we duplicate the circumstances of his 18th century performances, the *less* faithful we are to Mozart's intentions" (1963:216). In 2002, Greg Downey followed this same train of thought in his article discussing capoeira.

Downey explained that “culture shapes the way one hears” and that “sensing is an inherently social and cultural phenomenon” (2002:490). Additionally, Downey expressed his fear that not only do recordings fail to capture every sensorial and cognitive aspect of capoeira, but that playing them for listeners implies “that the musical object alone determines musical experience, that when my audience hears a mechanically produced sound event, they hear the same ‘thing’ as the performers or listeners who produced the performance” (2002:487).

We find that the paradigm shifts resulting from an increased emphasis on anthropological theories and practices have brought about new reasons for avoiding sound recordings and aural analysis. Many of these reasons are related to reliability and point out that recordings are unable to capture all of the cultural, sensorial, and cognitive data that accompanies a performance and that the absence of this data affects both our ability to trust what the collector captured and the reliability of any interpretations based on these aural documents. Again, sound recordings can create only a partial picture—or rather an auricle—of an event. Capturing the other aspects of performance becomes the job of visual aids, textual documents, and the imagination. What sound recordings present is not reality, but partial aural evidence about a performance event, which will undoubtedly fail to trigger the same thoughts and interpretations that it did for the performers and participants from the originating community. According to the above arguments, the student or researcher relying on sound recordings as information sources risks not only being associated with outmoded methodologies and forms of musical scholarship but also the possibility of reaching false conclusions and interpretations due to the missing contextual information. Again, I would emphasize that these risks are

equally as great when relying upon ethnographies and other audiovisual media, and yet these visual formats remain among the arsenal of tools used in ethnomusicological research.

Another controversy closely related to the study of text in context is the redefinition of music *as* human behavior or even as culture. Because of this new perspective of music, many ethnomusicologists see sound recordings as poor research sources because what they contain is a mere sound object, an isolatable art form, as opposed to the music itself. Instead of existing as sound, music is treated instead as existing in, or at least as resulting from, human behavior. Sound is merely a “musical product” resulting from this behavior. An early form of this argument appeared in 1949 on the first page of the first issue of the *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*.

The editor wrote:

We must consider methods of recording and notation, so as to give as faithful a reproduction as possible of the art as presented to us in its natural state. Then in the interests of musical science and history we must analyse, classify and study comparatively the material thus collected. But in any analysis we must always remember that the whole is more than the sum of its parts and also that the living organism of folk music is not to be found in the stereotyped notation or even in the mechanical recording, but only in the fleeting creation of the singer, dancer or instrumentalist. Our work in the laboratory will therefore be of little use unless we can relate it to the study of folk music as a live social and artistic manifestation. (Anon. 1949:1)

The idea that music is not to be found on a “mechanical recording” is particularly interesting for the sake of this essay, as is the assertion that laboratory work is of little use without the study of music as a “live social and artistic manifestation.” These ideas clearly expresses that music is not to be found on a recording but within the context of human behavior.

In 1960, Merriam wrote along these same lines, assuring us that “music does not exist by and of itself but is part of the totality of human behavior” (1960:188). In 1963, which was just a year after Lomax’s article on cantometrics, several other researchers either echoed or voiced their own versions of this idea. In his “A Decade of Progress,” Rhodes wrote:

Though we recognize the importance of sound musical analysis as an essential step in our research, we have widened our horizon to the point where we consider music not merely as an esthetic object, but as a product and symbol of human behavior, inextricably associated and interrelated with the other elements of culture. This approach stresses the anthropological aspects of the discipline and demands of the research an acquaintance with the economy, religion, politics and social life of the society in which the music plays its role. (Rhodes 1963a:179)

Although Rhodes’ argument still closely resembles the arguments for studying text in context, in this case the context is specifically that of human behavior.

In the same 10-year anniversary issue as Rhodes article, Merriam presented the idea with more force, though not necessarily with more precision. He wrote:

For music is, after all, human behavior. No musical sounds, with the debatable exception of the wind in the trees or the singing of birds, can exist, without, first, the production of that sound by a human being, and second, the reception of that sound by another human being. Music does not exist unless some individual or group of individuals produces it. (Merriam 1963a:212)

In addition to this statement, Merriam made evident that music is much more than sound. Although he defined music as “human behavior” and as “a product of human behavior,” it is apparently to be distinguished from the “sound product” and “musical sound,” which are also produced by “by musical behavior” as is “music sound.” As demonstrated by this spattering of terminology, Merriam’s use of language was vague, and his new definition of music positioned it as an abstract creation both existing in and produced by

human behavior. Additionally, music was something vaguely related to, and clearly distinguishable from, a “sound product.”

Merriam continued to shape his idea of music as human behavior in *Anthropology of Music*, now asserting that:

Music is a uniquely human phenomenon which exists only in terms of social interaction; that is, it is made by people for other people, and it is learned behavior. It does not and cannot exist by, of, and for itself; there must always be human beings doing something to produce it. In short, music cannot be defined as a phenomenon of sound alone, for it involves the behavior of individuals and groups of individuals, and its particular organization demands the social concurrence of people who decide what it can and cannot be. (Merriam 1964:27)

Kolinski disputed Merriam’s definition of music in “Recent Trend in Ethnomusicology.” He complained about Merriam’s confusion of music with social framework and the renaming of the music itself as “sound product.” He also questioned Merriam’s assessment of the musicologist’s role as analyzing isolatable sound products as “closed systems,” which operate “according to principles and regularities inherent in itself and quite separate from the human beings that produce them” (Merriam, quoted in Kolinski 1967:5). Additionally, Kolinski accused Merriam of degrading “the whole musicological discipline, both in its historical and comparative division, to an auxiliary branch of musicology” (1967:6). He declared Merriam’s dismissal of audile analysis as having harmful consequences for the future of ethnomusicology due to the fact that many anthropologists were incapable of analyzing their own musical material and of presenting both their musical and cultural findings.

Kolinski’s reactions were somewhat justified. Merriam’s new definition of music threatened to push aural documents from the scope of ethnomusicological study. At an initial glance, cylinders, records, and magnetic tape appear to lack any form of human

behavior or interaction when compared to live performances and seem much more akin to Merriam's definition of "sound product" than to that of "music." Not only did *Anthropology of Music* bring disrepute to audile analysis as a methodology, but it also made sound products, easily seen as recordings or transcriptions, the study object of musicologists and not that of ethnomusicologists.

This theoretical move aroused a great deal of controversy at the time. Robert F. Spencer applauded Merriam's efforts to inseparably link music to human behavior and made a show of adopting his language: "In music, as, in fact, in all the arts, there has been overmuch concern with the product, too little with the concept underlying the product" (1964:119). William Malm was less enthusiastic in his review of *Anthropology of Music* and referred to it as, "an unashamed statement on how one operates in a behavioralist orientation towards music" (Malm 1964:12). He felt that Merriam's perspectives slighted the role of the musicologist—a brief taste of the turf wars to be discussed later.

Soon after the publication of *Anthropology of Music*, Merriam began using his new definitions of music and the scope of the field while reviewing the work of other researchers. In his review of *Pattern in Cultural Anthropology*, he commented on the author's definition of the field of ethnomusicology:

Perhaps most puzzling is that the discussion of ethnomusicology is restricted almost entirely to technical music sound aspects of the discipline, while its anthropological dimensions are virtually ignored. In speaking of the artist, Jacobs says: 'An anthropologist as anthropologist needs to do unprecedentedly intensive field research on how natives learn one or the other of their arts, on what happens at a point of attainment of mastery, on how a community rallies around, encourages, and recognizes originality, on the status role, and self-identity of creative artists, on their feuds, competitiveness, and esthetic values' (p. 298). Some materials of this kind are found in ethnomusicological writings, but Jacobs apparently does not know these works and, more's the pity, writes about the

discipline in precisely the terms he otherwise spends so much time deploring—as though structure were all-preoccupying, and the study of music as human behavior did not exist. (Merriam 1966:132-133)

This statement shows a clear denial by Merriam that he had just redefined the scope of ethnomusicology as the “study of music as human behavior” two years earlier and met with strong resistance from many of the musicologists in the field. In 1969, Merriam published his “Ethnomusicology Revisited” and again asserted that “the purpose of ethnomusicology is to study music, not simply music sound; that it is to view music sound as a human product and not as an isolate which has taken to have an objective reality of its own” (Merriam 1969:226).

Although arguments regarding music as sound versus music as behavior were limited in the 1970s, there was a general shift toward anthropological approaches and away from solely systematic approaches when analyzing music. In the 1980s, this topic received a bit more attention. J. H. Kwabena Nketia published in *World of Music* an article entitled “Integrating Objectivity and Experience in Ethnomusicological Studies” (1980). The article recommended a combination of musicological and anthropological approaches. Despite Merriam’s publications of the 1960s and the steady increase in the number of publications favoring an anthropological approach focused on musical behavior as opposed to the “sound product,” Nketia did not discuss maintaining a balance of approaches but the need to establish a proper balance. He expressed a need for increased study of “the processes related to music making in different socio-cultural contexts, as well as what Palisca suggests for all musicology, namely, ‘everything that can shed light on the human context’” (1985:10). In fact, Nketia did not give the structural study of music a place in ethnomusicology but treated it as the “traditional

preoccupation of comparative musicologists” (1985:9). Nketia saw anthropology and humanism as the disciplines responsible for the following aspects of ethnomusicological study:

- 1) ““Understanding what music is and does’ for humankind.” (Merriam 1964:28 quoted in Nketia 1985:9)
- 2) For studying ““what lies behind’ aurally experienced sounds.” (Merriam 1977:11 quoted in Nketia 1985:9)
- 3) For examining “problems of meaning, values and the norms of a musical style as well as the mechanisms for ensuring continuity of tradition, or for controlling stability and change, and historical processes in different musical traditions.” (Nketia 1985:9-10)

Nketia’s claim that the application of humanistic and anthropological theory to musical traditions was responsible for ethnomusicology’s adoption of studies in continuity, change, and historical processes seems somewhat strange considering the efforts of earlier anthropologists to shift ethnomusicology away from diachronic and comparative approaches and away from the sound recordings that would have allowed them to explore these areas effectively. As demonstrated earlier, comparative and historical musicology actually received criticism from the anthropologists in the Society for Ethnomusicology for undertaking research in these very areas, the study of which Nketia now proposed as one of the happy results born from the combination of anthropology and humanism.

Timothy Rice also suggested a curious remodeling of ethnomusicology in which the researcher attempts to answer the question of “How do people make music?” or “How do people historically construct, socially maintain and individually create and experience music” (Rice 1987:473). One notes that there is no mention of questions such as “How do people define music?”, “What are their theories on the structure and use of music?” or “What is their music like?” Rice’s focus was solely upon human behavior and not upon

the so-called “sound product” itself, although one wonders how an ethnomusicologist can study historical construction and continuity of music making without examining at least some of the aural aspects.

By the late 1980s, complaints about soundless texts began to appear in the book review section of *Ethnomusicology*. Shapiro referred to these texts as an “age-old problem.” In Shapiro's case, the problem was the absence of an accompanying record, now out of print, for the reprint of a text (Shapiro 1989:391). Although the book was apparently considered valuable enough to reprint, reissuing the recording either involved unconquerable obstacles or was simply deemed as unimportant. For Amy Catlin and Ellen Koskoff, these silent texts were the result of the frequent absence of citations for the materials transcribed and discussed by the author (Catlin 1988:136, Koskoff 1988:157). All three reviewers complained of being unable to hear the music, which they felt was vital to their understanding of the author's research. Yet, despite the absence of aural details provided with many publications, complaints in theoretical articles continued to run in the opposite direction. Christopher Waterman remarked, “the irreducible object of ethnomusicological interest is not *the music itself*, a somewhat animistic notion, but the historical situated human subjects who perceive, learn, interpret, evaluate, produce, and respond to music” (Waterman 1991:66, emphasis in original). Slobin presented the generalization that even performers find musical behavior of greater value than sound recordings. He told us:

If Arab-Americans in Detroit or Yugoslavs in Germany absorb their music live, it has a subtly different meaning as cultural nourishment, akin to preparing dishes from fresh ingredients instead of eating out of a can. Measuring your self as immigrant or “ethnic” against a group of homeland musicians who are standing right in front of you is not the same as flipping on a cassette of voices from somewhere in space and time. (Slobin 1992:47)

One wonders if these performers would really use the phrase “eating out of a can” to describe the experience of listening to a recorded performance by their father, instructor, or favorite ensemble. Would they truly prefer the “fresh ingredients” supplied by live musical behavior even when they are produced by a group of strangers or by semi-skilled amateurs?

Anthony Seeger, generally a friend to sound recordings, wrote that:

Radios and stereo systems apparently spin out sounds without human agency, but that is an auditory illusion of the medium, not a feature of music. If we, in the 20th century, confuse music with sound, it is partly because most of our recording media capture or reproduce only the sounds of music. Records, tapes and radios do not make music, people do. And other people listen to them. (Seeger 1992b:89)

Thomas Porcello confessed:

Like the phenomenologist, then, I suspected that the ultimate significance of music resides not solely in musical texts per se, but rather in sociological and individual processes of musical encounter. Yet the phenomenology of music has remained largely text-centric, at least to the extent that the particulars of textual structure are implicitly positioned as the agents driving the listener-text relationship. (Porcello 1998:486)

Porcello then proceeded to describe print-through on magnetic tape as a sensual “Dionysian strip-tease” and its removal as imperiling the sensuality of the ghost of Roland Barthes and his teenage self by placing them in the hands of a *tonmeister* rigidly protecting the purity and integrity of the music. Porcello’s point was that the chronological flow and sound of recorded music is in the hands of competing forces, and that each has different agendas and perceptions for how to turn a phenomenological encounter into an “objective” recording.

Between insisting upon a lived experience of context (physical, cultural, and cognitive) and redefining music as human behavior or culture (interaction,

communication, music making), various anthropological theorists in ethnomusicology have gradually shuffled sound recordings offstage. In the case of context, recordings are seen as partial and inadequate surrogates for lived performances. In the case of the redefinition of music, sound recordings are seen as “product” in a field concerned with “producer” and “production.” Sound recordings, therefore, are often regarded as study objects beyond the concerns of ethnomusicology and as objects to pass along to other disciplines once the original researcher has exhausted their mnemonic value. Despite the fact that more and more ethnomusicological publications appear to meet this strict set of criteria, there continues to be a constant stream of warnings and reminders that ethnomusicologists should avoid sound recordings and audile analysis if they are to fit the scope and missions of the field.

Chapter 7

Theoretical Issues Related to Professionalism

Part of the insistence on anthropological theories and methodologies as central to ethnomusicology was inspired and maintained by a constant territorial struggle between musicologists and anthropologists for dominance of the field. Rosemary Lévy Zumwalt explored a similar struggle that took place between the literary and anthropological folklorists of the American Folklore Society from the 1880s through the 1940s. She described an almost parasitic attack upon folklore by anthropologists who apparently used the field to “strengthen their professional base, as a source of publication in the *Journal of American Folklore* and a means of organizational power in the American Folklore Society” (Zumwalt 1988:xii). This, of course, was not the case with ethnomusicology. As mentioned above, ethnomusicology may have named itself as the successor of comparative musicology, but members of the American Anthropological Association created the Society for Ethnomusicology and its related publications as part of a new field of anthropological study. I would speculate, however, that researchers of traditional and non-Western music among musicologists saw this new field as filling the vacuum left behind by the defunct American Society of Comparative Musicology and the older Gesellschaft für Erforschung der Musik des Orients. Kolinski and Lomax were model examples of such researchers. Both made heavy use of sound recordings and

transcriptions while giving little attention to the cultural context, pointing back to earlier, more musicological approaches.

During its early formative years, ethnomusicology had trouble establishing itself as a serious discipline and its members experienced additional difficulties in securing a professional status as ethnomusicologists in the world of academia. These difficulties were largely due to the discipline's dual nature and scope. In 1956, Willard Rhodes described ethnomusicology as a "stepchild" to both cultural anthropology and musicology and as a "second class citizen in the society of the social sciences and the humanities" (1956b:249). To complicate matters further, Rhodes felt there were few scholars within the discipline properly trained to meet the methodological demands of both parents.

David P. McAllester found that the nature of the professional opportunities open to ethnomusicologists provided an additional challenge. As of 1963, the majority of the academic positions were in musicology with only a few available in anthropology. Grant money for ethnographic research, however, came primarily from anthropology. Although synthesis between musicological and anthropological approaches may have been desirable, the difficulty of obtaining both an academic appointment that supported musicological research and funding for ethnographic fieldtrips may have encouraged an early polarization between musicologists and anthropologists. The time and effort required for obtaining sufficient training in both of the parent disciplines, only served to increase this polarization (McAllester 1963:183).

The affiliation and acceptance of ethnomusicologists within the professional organizations of the two parent disciplines proved less problematic, if far from ideal.

Alan Merriam quickly rejected the International Folk Music Council (IFMC) as a professional base due to its primary interest in “music sound.” Additionally, he seemed to disapprove of the large number of folk singers and dancers that made up the society and the tendency of the members at the time to focus on the practical understanding and performance of music as opposed to serious ethnomusicological research (Nettl 1988:23).

Although the American Musicological Society (AMS) took a more research-oriented approach to music, it placed ethnomusicology in a marginalized role. Qureshi felt this marginalization might have been due to the positivistic and conservative nature of AMS during the 1950s and 1960s. Following World War II, many American musicologists were concerned with their responsibility to their “European humanist heritage” as opposed to the larger picture of music and culture from around the world (Qureshi 1995:332). Ethnomusicologists appointed within American musicology departments often found themselves assigned the department’s unwanted “table scraps,” which covered the wide and overwhelming range of topics falling outside the central core of Western art music (Myers 1993:6-7). Although musicology occasionally hired ethnomusicologists and AMS sometimes welcomed conference papers and publications on ethnomusicological topics, the goals and scope of ethnomusicology were peripheral to those of musicology and of AMS and thus neither the field nor the organization offered the necessary support and encouragement needed for ethnomusicology’s development.

In the 1950s, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) welcomed in the new discipline and gave it the means to build its professional foundations. According to Nettl, as a result of this early anthropological-basis “the intellectual leadership of ethnomusicology rested (and to a substantial extent still rests) with scholars with an

anthropological background or at least considerable knowledge of anthropology”

(1988:23). Qureshi also pointed out that ethnomusicology’s early development within anthropology might have influenced its scope and methodology:

Its relative isolation from musicology possibly facilitated a pragmatic search that led ethnomusicologists toward the tools of anthropology and a paradigm of relativity, holism, and cultural reflexivity, often with counter-hegemonic undercurrents. (Qureshi 1995:332)

This early foundation in anthropology undoubtedly gave anthropologists a slight advantage for establishing their methodologies and approaches as central to the discipline, a monopoly that remained unbroken until the establishment of the ethnomusicology program at UCLA by Mantle Hood in the later 1950s.

In addition to ethnomusicology’s early association with anthropology, its efforts to break away from the past also resulted in a heavier anthropological emphasis. In the previous section, I discussed the role of paradigm shifts from the theories and methodologies of various branches of musicology to those of anthropology. Since many musicologists continued to rely on their previous theories and methodologies, the anthropologists sought to redress the imbalance between the study of music as sound and the study of music as behavior. This action not only served to separate the field from the past practices of comparative musicology, but also weakened the position of the more traditional musicologists, particularly systematic musicologists, who had found their way into ethnomusicology. Again, “armchair” analysis and the failure to do fieldwork received heavy criticism from the anthropologists. Those researchers who employed traditional musicological methodologies were encouraged to shift their approach to more anthropological models or to risk relegation to the discipline of musicology.

As we have seen, these paradigm shifts were taking place as early as 1953 and by 1956 Rhodes had already delineated the following three stages of ethnomusicological development:

STAGE 1: Investigation of musicological problems.

STAGE 2: Ethnographic analysis and description.

STAGE 3: The attempt to study music in its proper relation to culture. (Rhodes 1956b:459-60)

Rhodes felt ethnomusicologists had been successful within the first stage of development, but that the second and third stages required more attention. He warned, “Ethnomusicologists are in constant danger of becoming isolated and insulated in a musical vacuum where they pursue the study of music without reference to man and his culture” (Rhodes 1956b:460).

Researchers such as Kolinski and Rose Brandel, who both drew primarily upon musicological methods and audile analysis, undoubtedly felt the effect of this paradigm shift. Kerman referred to the commentary of the time as the “rattling of social-scientific sabers” that was “calculated to make musicologists nervous” (1985:170). Although Kolinski continued to publish essays in *Ethnomusicology* well into the 1980s, Brandel’s last article in the journal appeared in 1962. A sizable number of musicologists remained within the society, but those who were unable to meet the new anthropological requirements, or to move on to McAllester’s next two stages, may have felt pressured to leave the discipline. Again, a similar struggle over the requirements for professionalism occurred in folklore. Zumwalt stated, “the anthropologists formed a united front within

the society; and the literary people either maintained a defensive stance, or withdrew from the society” (Zumwalt 1988:xii).

1964 marked a turning point for the musicological/anthropological balance. Writers from the 1970s through as late as 1993 have often praised Merriam’s *The Anthropology of Music* as the source of the turning point in the struggle between musicology and anthropology, or occasionally in the struggle between musicology and ethnomusicology. For our present purposes, the most interesting aspect of these tributes is their treatment of audile analysis as a thing of the past that Merriam’s innovative work had at last done away with. Christopher Marshall considered the work of the Berlin school, and of all musicologists who studied music as an isolatable art form, as directly related to evolutionism and diffusionism. He felt that both of these theoretical schools arose from the ability to remove music from its “living context as wax cylinders” (1972:77-78). Marshall credited Merriam with challenging the idea of music as art, a concept Marshall felt was both detrimental to the discipline and responsible for the high “dropout” rate of anthropologists in the 1950s and 1960s. Additionally, Marshall praised Merriam for opening the field to anthropologists who often lacked “any formal training in music sound” and for elevating the discipline from the role of a “curious, obscure little field straddling the bounds of anthropology” (Marshall 1972:82).

Norma McLeod echoed Marshall’s essay two years later. She began her article by pointing out ethnomusicology’s early emphasis on music sound and criticized Kolinski’s work as an example of music studied in isolation from its cultural context (1974:100). Like Marshall, she discussed the Berlin school’s application of evolutionism and diffusionism to music and named several researchers who made use of these theories,

including Curt Sachs, Rose Brandel, Erich von Hornbostel, George Herzog, Helen Roberts, Bruno Nettl, and Alan Lomax. McLeod complained that both of these approaches served to lift music from its context and failed to take into account the impact of this context upon the content (1974:101-02). Later, McLeod also raised Marshall's complaint regarding the study of music as art and clearly labeled the approach to music as an isolatable and aesthetic art form as an act of ethnocentrism (1974:107). She too praised Merriam's *The Anthropology of Music*, stating, "it offers the student of music a series of choices for study which do not depend upon a knowledge of music, and thus it allows scholars without musical background to envisage investigation into the nature of music as culture rather than as form or style" (McLeod 1974:103).

Helen Myers raised points similar to McLeod's and Marshall's accompanied by the triumphant declaration that the "armchair" had "been abandoned" (1993:8). Carole Pegg merely credited Merriam's book as a "significant landmark for ethnomusicology" (1980:61) and his scholarship as one of the key factors in establishing ethnomusicology as a "relatively new branch of anthropology" (1980:60). Pegg goes so far as to claim:

Before Merriam, both musicologists and ethnomusicologists had considered only the technical aspects of musical analysis, concentrating on the structure of the sounds produced and taxographical details of the instruments producing those sounds. The human factor had been totally ignored. Merriam pointed out the importance of considering the behavior which produced the sounds, that is, of investigating music not as an aesthetic object in itself but seen in relation to both its performance and social context (Pegg 1980:61).

Putting aside for the moment that ethnomusicologists other than Merriam were aware and interested in the study of cultural context and human behavior, it is important to point out that not all ethnomusicologists felt as excited about Merriam's work as the musical anthropologists of the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. Malm's reaction to Merriam's *The*

Anthropology of Music included statements such as, “At last we musicologists have a concrete view of the anthropologist’s view of what music actually is” and “His conclusions are not necessarily those of all of us but we can be grateful that he took such care in presenting them. They will enable the dialogue between the musicologists and anthropologists to continue on a firmer basis” and “Of course, one could construct a seminar showing how the musicologist might approach the same data differently or perhaps even say ‘so what’ in the manner anthropologists tend to say ‘so what’ about much that we do” (Malm 1966:120). These quips represented, in part, an effort by musicologists to defend their territory and to reassert the value of the study of music as sound. There is also evidence of a long-term tension in Malm’s statements. He was reacting not just to Merriam but also to anthropologists in general and to their tendency to downplay the value of musical analysis.

Hood tried to address the methodological imbalance presented by Merriam in a book entitled *Musicology*. Gertrude Kurath turned his efforts on their head:

It is clear that Hood feels his anthropologist colleagues have underestimated, undervalued, and underplayed the importance of music style as such, and he says: “In other words, it is a duty of the ethnomusicologist to advocate the study and comprehension of the most minute details of musical practice and to warn the anthropologist that a lack of interest in the object itself (the individual musical piece) may prevent an understanding of what the object symbolizes” (pp. 272-73). With certain reservations to be discussed below, I should say this is quite true, but I would add that in all fairness the statement deserves also to be re-arranged in precisely the obverse position. That is: “In other words, it is a duty of the ethnomusicologist to advocate the study and comprehension of the most minute details of the ethnographic background of musical practice and to warn the musicologist that a lack of interest in the ethnographic background may prevent an understanding of the musical object itself.” (Kurath 1964:181)

In 1964, Nettl complained that since 1950, “the American ethnomusicologists coming from anthropology seem to have favored the study of musical culture over

detailed work with music itself” (1964b:19). In 1979, George List expressed the opinion that Merriam’s work presented only an anthropological approach to the discipline versus a musicological or interdisciplinary one (1979:3).

Perhaps because of *The Anthropology of Music* controversy, researchers looking back on the 1960s and 70s have tended to treat ethnomusicology as divided into two “camps.” Many researchers have defined these camps as the “musicologists” headed by Mantle Hood and the “anthropologists” or “ethnomusicologists” led by Merriam (see Myers 1993:7 and Marshall 1972). In addition to the musicologist/anthropologist divide, Joseph Kerman and Ruth Stone have suggested additional points of disagreement within ethnomusicology. Issues that often sparked debates included: 1) whether to take a social cultural approach or an internalist approach, 2) whether to apply context musicology or product musicology, 3) whether the central focus was the study of music sound or music behavior, and 4) whether research was to be performed in the humanities or the social sciences (Kerman 1985:163-64, Stone 1979:1-4). Stone’s research did not recognize a clean split between these factions, but rather an atmosphere of constant communication, struggle, and compromise.

Stone’s view appears to fit with the ideas expressed by several of the more prominent researchers of the sixties and seventies. Nettl has expressed in several articles that ethnomusicologists agreed upon the scope of the field and the importance of studying both musical structure and cultural context (Nettl 1964:7-9, 1983:5, 1988:22). Additionally, a number of ethnomusicologists spoke of their desire for true synthesis, a goal seldom realized (see Rhodes 1956b:462, McAllester 1963:184, Kurath 1964:181).

What may be responsible for the appearance of controversy between anthropologists and musicologists during the first two decades of the discipline's existence, beyond the exclusion of traditional musicologists unwilling or unable to adopt the study of music in relation to its cultural context, are attempts to redress the balance by both sides. Kerman pointed out that although Merriam addressed the "'sound' aspect of music in his own work... to others the flow looks to be largely in one direction—from sound to society" (1985:165). Looking over Merriam's publications, one is struck by the differences between the theories expressed in *The Anthropology of Music* and Merriam's actual research practices. In *Prologue to the Study of the African Arts*, Merriam presented the following question and answer:

In short, can the social sciences tell us all that we need to know about Africa? I am a social scientist, and I doubt it.

I feel constrained to say that I do not intend to imply that economic, political, and social studies are fruitless. Quite to the contrary, such studies have taught us much about Africa and they will continue to do so; indeed, I have made such studies myself, and doubtless I will continue to do so. But if there is a neglect in African studies—and I am convinced that there is—it is the almost total neglect of the study of the humanities. For it is in the humanities that we reach most quickly and surely to the heart of the matter, to the basic values, beliefs, and sanctions which activate the phenomena we call social, political, or economic. (Merriam 1962b:5)

The next twenty-seven pages presented various approaches to both the study of music in culture and of the study of the humanities alongside the social sciences. The remainder of the book also included several sections addressing the study of the "sound product."

In the *Ethnomusicology of the Flathead Indians*, published just three years after *The Anthropology of Music*, Merriam cited Kolinski and Richard Waterman as two of the researchers who helped inspire his analytical models. The book included 155 pages of musical transcriptions as well as detailed musical analysis. Merriam also mentioned

using sound recordings made by Bennett H. Stein as well his consideration of several other field collections containing performances by the Flathead Indians (1967:162). All three practices go against what Merriam presented in *The Anthropology of Music*, namely the use of a musicological approach, the treatment of music as product, and the performance of “armchair” analysis. The contradictions between these two works and *The Anthropology of Music* can perhaps be explained by the possibility that Merriam used *The Anthropology of Music* to redress the balance between musicology and anthropology. Additionally, Merriam may have been playing devil’s advocate in favor of anthropology or attempting to give his colleagues a taste of what one could do with a purely anthropological approach. The problem is that many anthropologists and ethnomusicologists came to see *The Anthropology of Music* and Merriam’s more controversial essays as his complete perspective on the duties of ethnomusicology. Rather than treating these works as representing the anthropological methodologies of a dual-natured discipline, many saw them, and continue to see them, as a means of liberating anthropologists from the use of sound recordings and from the need to study and understand music sound as part of ethnomusicological research. Although Merriam’s own research presented a more balanced approach, his other works are not as well known and generally are studied for their specific content as opposed to as models for new research.

Merriam’s reaction to the discipline in 1975 was far from pleased. In “Ethnomusicology Today,” he described invasions by “ethnomusicological groupies” (1975:55), presumably a crowd similar to the one he had once avoided along with the IFMC. Next, he lamented over musicology’s fragmentation into smaller units and the

increased difficulty of uniting anthropologists and musicologists against the new influx of non-academics. He stated that “while we certainly have much more awareness of each others’ points of view, we have not done a great deal about it” (1975:58-59), expressing his continued desire for true synthesis. Merriam then complained of the decreased emphasis on “the sounds of music” in favor of emphasis on “music phenomenon” (1975:59). Finally, Merriam seemed dismayed by the growing complexity of anthropology. This dismay was in part due to anthropology’s rapid progression through new theories, which undermined the formation of a firm theoretical basis, but was also due to the increased inability of ethnomusicologists 1) to relate their resulting detailed data to macroethnography, 2) to verify their results, and 3) to perform comparative and generalized studies (1975:64). What Merriam found before him was not a happy synthesis of music with culture or the humanities with the social sciences, but a discipline that leaned as heavily toward the anthropological side as it had once leaned toward the musicological.

Although both musicologists and anthropologists repeatedly claimed that they desired an all-encompassing approach to the study of music, there have been occasions when open struggles have occurred over the theories, methodologies, and study objects that define the discipline and shape the criteria for professionalism. On one occasion, the figurative turf war between the two sides turned literal. A particularly vicious spat occurred between Richard Moyle, a musicologist, and Adrienne L. Kaeppler, an anthropologist, both of whom performed research on Tongan music and dance and occasionally observed the same performance events. After commenting on her own work in comparison with Moyle’s, Kaeppler made the following critique:

According to my friends at the Tonga Radio Station, Moyle spent innumerable hours listening to tapes, and he also spent much time reading in the archives of the Tonga Traditions Committee, while I spent minimal time in both. I am not suggesting that one should not take advantage of recorded music and written documents, but make these points in order to try to understand why we have developed different understandings of the same material. (Kaeppler 1989:354)

Later, Kaeppler stated “Moyle’s preoccupation with the past blinds him to Tongan music of today” (Kaeppler 1989:355). She attacked his use of aural documents more directly toward the end of the review, making comments such as “He even tried to notate the poetic texts from tapes,” and “How can one understand Tongan music by recording and listening to tapes?” (Kaeppler 1989:357). She closed her review with the following comment on Moyle’s musicological approach:

I am sure that there is much important musical information here. But the lack of an analysis of events and the contexts in which the music are embedded, coupled with my familiarity with the subject and my anthropological bent, stands in my way of appreciating it. Maybe it is true that the twain of the musicologist and the anthropologist will never meet. (Kaeppler 1989:358)

Kaeppler questioned not only Moyle’s musicological approach but also his use of archives, sound recordings, diachronic study, and musicological analysis. While she stated that her purpose was to illuminate these aspects as the reason she had developed a different understanding of the same material, the rest of her review was quite harsh and not so subtly suggested what she thought of Moyle’s “understanding.”

Moyle responded to Kaeppler’s review in a letter to the editor, assuring readers that he not only performed fieldwork but that his “innumerable” hours at the radio archive had been spent using his own materials. His reaction to Kaeppler’s accusing him of using archival materials was extremely defensive: “Small wonder I was a familiar face around the studio,—but not for the reasons Kaeppler wants to believe!” (Moyle 1990:272). In turn, he criticized Kaeppler’s own work and commented that she was

“unequipped” to deal with his musicological analysis adding, “this in a journal devoted to ethnomusicology!” (Moyle 1990:274).

Kaepler returned fire with a response entitled, “Musicology Plus (or Minus) Anthropology Does Not Equal Ethnomusicology.” She again insisted that her main point was to show how musicological and anthropological approaches could result in different understandings of the same material. She then turned her rebuttal into a general commentary on the field:

In recent years, it appears that differences within our Society between the musicological point of view and the anthropological point of view have been swept under the proverbial rug, so that by now it may appear that all “ethnomusicologists” agree with each other on *what* we study and *how* we study it. In fact, we do not—and if this exchange does nothing else, I hope that these philosophical differences will once again be retrieved from the closet and brought to our collective attentions. (Kaepler 1990:275)

Considering Kaepler’s choice of title and her use of “ethnomusicologists” in quotes, one senses which of the two understandings she considered to be of greater central importance to the field. Kaepler went on to attack both the absence of synesthetic context in Moyle’s work and his focus on musical sound. To emphasize her perceived inadequacy of Moyle’s focus and his understanding of *kātoanga*, Kaepler stated:

As I saw Moyle in the recording van during the 1975 *kātoanga*, I could only assume from reading his book that he was acting as a technician and not ‘experiencing’ the *kātoanga*—a point on which I wish to enlarge. A *kātoanga* does not just consist of (or even feature) ‘musical sound.’ (Kaepler 1990:276)

Following this comment, she labeled his approach as coming from a “historical musicological point of view” (Kaepler 1990:276). Although this label seems neutral when by itself, her comment that his book focused “largely on obsolete musical instruments and performance genres” (Kaepler 1990:277), as opposed to “historical” instruments and genres, provided a more negative connotation.

These exchanges between Kaeppler and Moyle clearly demonstrate a musicological/anthropological turf war and present a few of the more popular blows exchanged between the parties. Sadly, Moyle's reaction to Kaeppler's review was not to defend his use of recordings and archives or even his diachronic approach, but instead to downplay his use of these tools almost to the point of utter denial.

It is also interesting to note that, like Merriam, Kaeppler has presented a view of ethnomusicological research that contradicts with her own research practices. Although she downplayed the role of music sound and musical analysis, her *Polynesian Dance: With a Selection for Contemporary Performances* (1983) presented eighty-two pages of musical transcription in combination with dance notation, analysis, and lyrics. Although she presented anthropological overviews within this work, they are short and neatly compartmentalized. Many of her other works have focused on Polynesian material culture, including artifacts collected by Captain James Cook, which suggests that Kaeppler has made use of historical and product-centered approaches during her research. That Kaeppler is open to these approaches is further supported by her use of ethnographic film, specifically *silent* black-and-white film, captured by Douglas Campbell during his 1937 field expedition (see Kaeppler 2002). Much like Merriam's *The Anthropology of Music*, Kaeppler's review and response to Moyle's work on Tongan music appears to have redressed the imbalance between anthropology and musicology. However, her proposed theory leans farther toward a purely anthropological approach than what she has presented in her personal research.

The struggle between musicology and anthropology has continued into the present. During his presentation at a 2003 Folklore Conference at Indiana University,

Bruno Nettl mentioned that the large majority of practicing ethnomusicologists are musicologists but that the majority of those who have published under the auspices of ethnomusicology are anthropologists. This suggests that the struggle between the two sides is not only alive and well but that future students and scholars may find themselves dependent on a primarily anthropological body of literature and, as shown by the citation study, one increasingly devoid of references to sound recordings. I know of several current ethnomusicology students who feel a great amount of pressure to use anthropological theories and methods in place of musical analysis. These feelings seem to have originated both from class lectures and from the required theoretical readings, many of which emphasize anthropological and ethnological approaches.

Whether more musicological ethnomusicologists are conceding unconsciously to the greater anthropological will or are avoiding publication in *Ethnomusicology* altogether, musicological approaches are largely absent from the core ethnomusicological literature. When researchers do take a more musicological approach, they usually do so without audile analysis. Although the struggle for dominance in the field has been complex and involved several shifts in balance, anthropologists almost immediately earmarked sound recordings and audile analysis as the tools of comparative and historical musicologists and as the source of social evolutionism and diffusionism. As a result, sound recordings and audile analysis became early casualties. Whether as a willful concession or as a hastily abandoned disadvantage, the use of sound recordings in research continues to carry a stigma as belonging to musicology versus ethnomusicology. The presence of audile analysis within a work may be treated as a warning sign by anthropologists that ethnomusicological research is again leaning toward the

musicological side and that it is once again time to adjust the balance. As seen in the cases of Moyle and Kaeppler, the reaction to such a transgression can be severe and even result in the questioning of one's professional status as an ethnomusicologist.

SECTION III: THE CONSEQUENCE FOR ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Chapter 8

Lost Data, Lost Knowledge, Lost Methodologies

Having now reviewed the results of the citation study and the environmental scan, this section will examine the consequences of excluding sound recordings and audile analysis from ethnomusicological research and the possible impacts on the future of the field. These consequences include the failure to reveal or examine primary evidence, a split between music and its context, a creation of historic awkwardness, a lessening of our abilities to approach and understand certain aspects of musical behavior, a dismissal of emic categories and concepts, a shift in authority from performer to researcher and from reader to researcher, a reduction in the usability of archival collections and commercially released research recordings, and the loss of numerous valuable research approaches.

The most immediate and obvious consequences of either not using available sound recordings or failing to cite one's use of sound recordings, are those of neglecting primary evidence and failing to disclose one's research sources. Despite their limitations, sound recordings *are* historic documents and capture nuances of sound that other forms of documentation are simply unable to capture or do a poor job of representing. Even written transcripts and musical notation fail to capture the subtleties of rhythm, inflection,

emphasis, and timbre and often fail to convey the intended meaning and sentiments of a performance. One example I recall from an undergraduate linguistics course was a Chinese story about a tiger. Transcribed, the story took the form of one Chinese character written repeatedly. Spoken, subtle differences in inflection distinguished the words from one another and created a clever story as opposed to the same word intoned repeatedly. How does one adequately capture such nuances in writing alone? In other cases, researchers have created and edited transcripts, musical transcription, and textual interpretations to serve their own agendas as opposed to attempting to reflect the actual performance. Again, Erika Brady speaks of earlier researchers altering data to represent an idealized text or to capture what the performer “intended” to sing (Brady 1985:143-46). Additionally, and as explored in the section on paradigm shifts, a sizeable number of ethnomusicologists have discredited the theories of these earlier researchers or questioned the ability of transcriptions to capture performances, and yet many still include lengthy bibliographies composed of texts and transcriptions by earlier researchers as opposed to historic sound recordings.

Many researchers, most notably those from oral history, treat the practice of ignoring sound recordings as a neglect of primary documents in favor of secondary or even tertiary ones. Edward Colby writes:

Recordings of music and speech, whatever the date of the score or literary work performed, are, of course, products of approximately the last eighty years, although efforts in the direction of re-creation of earlier music and speech practices are not to be discounted. These recordings constitute the documentation in sound of music and speech practices of the twentieth century (and the last decade of the nineteenth) and as such are a primary resource for the study of a major aspect of the culture of this period. (Colby 1972:9)

Fredrick Stielow, author of *The Management of Oral History Sound Archives* presents the following solution to the dilemma over whether to use transcripts or recordings as evidence of a historic event:

The obvious answer to the dilemma of transcripts is simply to recognize that they are a secondary resource—that the tape itself is primary. Such an answer is definitional and logically an unassailable rejoinder to theoretical debates over the problems of transcribing. At the same time, the specious debate over the validity of oral testimony should also be summarily dismissed. That residue of print dependence flies in the face of common logic and our legal system of oaths. Moreover, it somehow supposes that the human behind the written record is more prone to ‘truth’ than the same individual in speaking. (Stielow 1986:23)

Unfortunately, many archivists and librarians have found that researchers often overlook the importance of sound recordings as primary sources. Ernst Hein lamented of this problem as experienced by the ‘Jaap Kunst’ Ethnomusicology Center at the University of Amsterdam, and his search for answers echo those offered by the environmental scan:

The last point I want to make is that as scholars we prefer our own recordings over those made by others. Our archives hold miles of recorded tape, deposited there by former recordists or our colleagues. They are hardly, if ever, used by other people.

They just sit on shelves, need a lot of care and take up much space. Why don’t we use other people’s recordings? My guess is that making recordings is such an idiosyncratic subjective activity, that only the recordist himself feels completely free to use, analyze and edit his own recordings. He does not know the motivations behind his colleagues’ recordings and therefore feels inhibited to use them as primary data. (Heins 1982:56)

Norman Hoyle, in a 1972 article on oral history, mentioned that the requests for transcripts at Columbia University at that time outweighed those for sound recordings by a ratio of 1000 to 1. Researchers also tended to erase their tapes after transcribing them (Hoyle 1972:73). As discussed in the second section, during the early days of folk music studies and comparative and historical musicology researchers also destroyed their materials after having made transcriptions. Hoyle also mentioned that for these

historians, “the sound recording was considered only a necessary evil, sort of a sound equivalent of shorthand. It was not until the late 1960s that some oral historians realized something which should have been evident from the start—that some aspects of the taped interview could not be transcribed into print” (Hoyle 1972:73).

Although ethnomusicologists made efforts to preserve their recordings long before the 1960s, preservation is only half the battle. There is little value to saving material if it goes unused. The tendency to discredit sound recordings as information sources has already been discussed, but here is an extreme example from the field of political science:

Blame for the low status of special collections must also be shared by faculties and scholars in the areas of the humanities [sic] and social sciences, strongholds for the tradition Marshall McLuhan has identified as the “Gutenberg galaxy.” Perhaps this is best illustrated by an incident that took place a few years ago at the University of Washington. Milo Ryan, Curator of the Phonoarchive at the University, reported that a student majoring in political science learned of the abundant resources stored at the Phonoarchive and decided to prepare a major paper on the Moscow Conference of 1943. The Phonoarchive had not only material which covered the conference, but also had the extensive recorded report which Secretary of State Cordell Hull delivered to Congress at the conclusion of the meeting. The student made considerable use of these resources for his paper, reporting first hand on what Secretary Hull had told the American people about the conference. The student received a failing grade for his paper with an appended note from his professor explaining that the research procedure was not acceptable, a sound recording was not a valid research tool, and only written materials could be considered as valid research sources. The rationale for the failing grade was so ludicrous that Ryan and other faculty members promptly intervened and managed to demonstrate the validity of the student’s research.” (Hagen 1972:32-33)

To my knowledge, ethnomusicology does not offer any real life situations as extreme as the one printed above, but the statement “a sound recording [is] not a valid research tool, and only written materials [can] be considered as a valid research tool” is reminiscent of:

Gone is acceptance of studies from the 'armchair', in which the musicologist transcribed and analysed material recorded by ethnologists. Today's student is

expected to immerse himself or herself in the totality of a foreign culture, usually for a year or more, and experience music first-hand in its diverse settings...Unlike the historical musicologist who gleans data from archives and libraries, the ethnomusicologist must collect and document material from living informants. (Meyers 1992b:22)

In place of text alone, many ethnomusicologists favor a mix of fieldwork and ethnography. Unfortunately, if an ethnomusicologist wishes to study a historic event, lived experience is not a possibility. If ethnomusicologists forbid the use of sound recordings, then this leaves the researcher with no other source but text... another manifestation of the “Guttenberg galaxy” and one that saturates the pages of *Ethnomusicology*. Many other fields have gradually accepted the sound recordings as primary sources containing data that is either difficult to capture in the form of text or that must undergo a significant transformation at the hands of the researcher’s cultural biases, interpretations, and research agendas along with its transformation from aural to visual data. Ethnomusicology, however, continues to push for the exclusion of sound recordings from one’s pool of information sources. In some cases, it is difficult to describe this failure to consider sound recordings during one’s research as anything other than a neglect of primary evidence and as an unsound research practice.

The failure to cite sound recordings used during one’s research also disadvantages readers by preventing them from accessing the author’s primary aural sources. In some cases, ethnomusicologists’ poor citation practices even have made it difficult to identify their selected study objects. The presence of poorly identified transcriptions or general statements about unidentified recordings leave readers with questions such as:

- Who were the performers?
- When and where did the performance take place?

- Which part of the performer's career is the author discussing?
- Which songs or genres is the author discussing?

(See Racy 2000, Terada 2000, Bar-Yosef 2001). Since most ethnomusicologists agree that there is an immense amount of variation in the renditions of a piece across times, regions, stylistic schools, and among performers, it seems an unwise practice to leave unidentified the specific performances that influenced one's conclusions. The resulting lack of precision may be as detrimental as, or even synonymous to, leaving one's research subject unidentified.

Another consequence of failing to cite one's sound recordings, including those made by the author him or herself, is that future researchers will be unable to locate these aural documents for the purposes of reexamination or for undertaking a restudy of the given musical tradition (See Seeger 1986:264). As a result, the conclusions presented by the original researcher about various aspects of music and musical behavior may become difficult to verify, disprove, or apply when one does not have access to all of the data used to draw these conclusions. For instance, it is extremely popular at the moment to state that Western popular music is heavily influencing and/or destroying the world's diverse musics and that this in turn is causing cultural gray-out and a reduction of numerous rich traditions down to one globalized music. This topic is almost as popular as failing to provide a single example of the claimed assimilation, leaving readers to rely solely upon the researcher's academic authority as evidence or, if one generally disagrees with such statements, leaving them feeling justified in completely dismissing these conclusions as unfounded. After all, how can one prove long-term musical change, particularly if it extends beyond the temporal boundaries of one's fieldwork, without

comparing current and historical sources? Similarly, if one is not able to trust the abilities of a researcher to show good judgment and skill when capturing, presenting, and/or interpreting the data of an aural document, why should one trust the researcher's abilities when he or she is handling data gathered via lived experience or gleaned from textual documents? Such a favoring of text and a dismissal of sound when citing sources serves only to disregard a particular form of data, making it inaccessible to future researchers, and demonstrates a double standard towards the use and interpretation of textual versus aural documents. When judging the value of information sources, we must be careful to base our decisions on the care shown by the original researcher, the quality of the document, and the completeness of information and *not* solely upon the format of the document.

A third consequence of poor citation practices is that archived and commercially released research recordings are left unlinked to the many rich textual sources produced by ethnomusicological scholarship. It is foolish to think that the general public or researchers from other fields will ignore recordings just because many ethnomusicologists do or because some ethnomusicologists warn against doing so in their articles and textbooks. Oddly enough, when one considers the intended audience for most of this specialized literature, ethnomusicologists do not appear to direct the majority of these warnings towards outside audiences, who are encouraged to use sound recordings, but towards students and professionals in ethnomusicology who should already have an understanding that a recording is not the same as a live event. So not only are outside researchers and interested members of the general public encouraged to

use sound recordings, but these recordings may have little to no connection with scholarly works published by ethnomusicologists.

One of the first impacts of these broken links between sound recordings and published research is that they can make it impossible for researchers from other disciplines to tell which academic textual documents relate to which sound recordings. If the role of musicologists is to first analyze the “sound product” and then relate their findings to our findings, it would be helpful if we as ethnomusicologists would tell them which recordings go with which of our textual documents. If there are a number of recordings that we see as poor, inauthentic representations of a tradition, then we should provide guidance to other fields and *particularly* to the general public about how to identify these recordings as opposed to simply being doomsayers and leaving them to identify these material for themselves. What good does it do when a researcher of Chinese music informs us that government sponsored recordings “do not genuinely reflect the reality of Chinese folk song and folk song performance in ordinary people’s daily lives. They should not, therefore, be declared authentic original folk songs and performances, or used for academic study and research in such a sense” (Yang Mu 1994:316). Since the ethnomusicologist has not explained how to identify these inauthentic recordings, the reader interested in studying the music from a non-anthropological perspective or who is unable to perform fieldwork—referred to as “armchair scholars” by Yang Mu—only knows that he or she risks being “misled by such materials” (1994:316). Such knowledge merely leaves the reader in an uncomfortable position and discourages him or her from using sound recordings as information sources in their own research.

Another problem with breaking the link between “music” and “sound product” and relegating the latter as the study object of musicologists is that it relies on some risky assumptions about musicology. First, this approach assumes that musicologists from outside of ethnomusicology, who often have been criticized for their narrow focus on Western art music, will suddenly either be interested in or in a position to study non-Western music. Through battles of professionalism, ethnomusicologists have created a situation in which musicologists interested in non-Western music are left in a limbo between the two fields. Either they have found that their musicological approaches draw criticism from ethnomusicologists as focusing on the “sound product” and falling outside the scope and professional expectations of the field or they find that their focus on traditional and non-Western music draws criticism from other musicologists for falling outside of the genres, musical systems, and artistic standards of Western musicology. The result of this uncomfortable positioning is that on one side the musicologist is pushed toward anthropological approaches and on the other is pushed towards topics mainstream to Western musicology. Although there are those who manage to navigate their way between Scylla and Charybdis, the number of musicologists receiving a place of prominence in either field for their study of non-Western music is limited and probably too small to make significant use of the backlog of materials that began accumulating at a rapid rate in the 1930s.

Another risky assumption is that musicologists are interested in studying recordings completely devoid of information about the cultural context. A large number of historians and contextualists in musicology find cultural context invaluable to their studies of the meaning, function, and role of music in relation to the people who created

it. Without this information, one may be able to write the equivalence of a textbook in Western music theory but one certainly cannot write a history book or explain the reasons for why a musical system is the way it is, what it means to the culture, or why certain musical aspects have changed over time.

Perhaps the riskiest assumption involved in breaking the link between “music” and “sound product” is the assumption that other fields have also discredited and dismissed theories such as social evolutionism that the break between ethnomusicology and comparative musicology was partially intended to discourage. In 1976, Ida Halpern published an article in the *Canadian Journal for Traditional Music* about the possible values of a relationship between aural history and ethnomusicology. These values included the ability to answer questions such as: “Where does a specific culture belong in the evolution of world cultures? Do these stages run parallel? Do some cultures develop faster than others, and if so, why? Do they develop through the same stages? Each style in music should be studied in its historical position. Can we find similar stages of development?” (Halpern 1976).

For those who explain away Halpern’s questions as those of a researcher hanging on to a dying school of thought, I advise them to review the table of contents for a new MIT publication entitled, *The Origins of Music* (Wallin, Merker, and Brown 2000). The following are titles of select articles in this publication:¹

- An Introduction to Evolutionary Musicology
- Origins of Music and Speech: Insights from Animals
- Gibbon Songs and Human Music from an Evolutionary Perspective
- Can Biomusicology Learn from Language Evolution Studies?
- Toward an Evolutionary Theory of Music and Language
- Hominid Brain Evolution and the Origins of Music
- The “Musilanguage” Model of Music Evolution
- Synchronous Chorusing and Human Origins

- Evolution of Human Music through Sexual Selection
- Simulating the Evolution of Musical Behavior
- Human Processing Predispositions and Musical Universals
- The Question of Innate Competencies in Musical Communication

There is only one article by an American ethnomusicologist appearing in this volume, namely one by Bruno Nettl entitled “An Ethnomusicologist Contemplates Universals in Musical Sound and Musical Culture” and at least one by a European ethnomusicologist. These articles deal with human evolution in general as opposed to attempting to rank the progress of various groups based upon the aural features of their music. The editors of *Origins of Music* find fault not within evolutionary musicology or biomusicology but within the “racialist notions present in much European scholarship in the social sciences before the Second World War” (Brown, Merker and Wallin 2000:3). Still, one wonders how long will it be before someone draws the conclusion that since a musical trait developed during a given period of time and that a culture exhibits this trait but not another trait developed during a later period it must therefore be at an earlier point in its musical development than another given culture. By eliminating the link between academic texts and research recordings, we have not prevented the reappearance of evolutionary theory in application to music but left it to the hands of researchers in other fields. The editors see *The Origins of Music* as a “long-overdue Renaissance on the topic of music origins” (Brown, Merker and Wallin 2000:4). On one hand, refusing to deal with the issue of evolutionism and disconnecting our sound recordings from actual cultural data about the originating communities may allow these researchers to repeat our past mistakes. On the other, we may have cut our field off from making and sharing beneficial insights about the nature of the relationship between music and human behavior. I should add that this book is enjoying at least mild popularity. Not only was I

unable to get my hands upon the University's copy of the book, but Amazon.com had sold off their entire stock and I ended up purchasing my copy through a small online retailer.

In addition to a loss of primary evidence, another consequence of avoiding the use of sound recordings is that it contradicts the idea stated by ethnomusicologists that music should not be seen or treated as an isolatable art form. By marking the "sound product" as the one aspect of a musical performance to avoid, one is doing exactly that through the process of exclusion. How can one claim a holistic approach to music if one refuses to acknowledge, let alone study, the aural aspects? Not only have many ethnomusicologists isolated sound as an artistic art form or object, they have thrown it out.

Another negative impact created by the avoidance of the use of sound recordings is that it creates a historic awkwardness in many academic documents. There are, of course, those who see ethnomusicology as a purely synchronic study. Gourlay expresses the sentiment that ethnomusicologists work with the living while the job of conversing with the dead belongs to the historian (1978:13). Although there is certainly a need for synchronic study, this does not mean that ethnomusicologists should completely dismiss diachronic research. After all, one's own publications quickly become historic documents and such an approach would make them immediately inconsequential to the work of future researchers. Examining past articles, we find that ethnomusicologists have not tended to avoid diachronic approaches completely but rather the use of certain formats when using these approaches. If ethnomusicology involved a purely synchronic approach, ethnomusicologists would also avoid the use of older textual documents. This is not the case. Very few of the articles appearing in *Ethnomusicology* draw from textual

sources covering a date range of *less* than 10 years. Since the inception of the journal, the average date range for published textual sources cited within a formal bibliography covers a span of 58 years.² The range for just the past five years, Volumes 42(3) through 47(2), is slightly lower with the citations covering an average span of 54 years. Whether it is intended or not, ethnomusicologists are taking a diachronic approach to research simply by using these older textual documents as information sources. Unless we assume that the average publishing ethnomusicologist is in his or her late 70s, it appears that researchers are using published textual sources from before the beginning of their professional careers and, in some cases, from before the year they were born. Articles that cite only contemporary articles or none at all are extremely uncommon.

In other cases, ethnomusicologists have used historic texts to study past musical practices and to demonstrate change in their social context and function over time while ignoring sound recordings that could evidence changes to the aural aspects and lyrical content of these musical traditions. One example of this exclusive use of textual documents is Ingrid Bianca Byerly's 1998 discussion of the changing role of music in apartheid South Africa. Since Byerly was born in South Africa and performed her fieldwork there, we can perhaps treat her exclusion of cited sound recordings as the result of having first hand experience with the musical traditions. However, Byerly stated her focus as *1960* through the late 1990s. She also cited textual sources published as early as 1935 and analyzed the influence of outside musical traditions and political events on South African music from as far back as 1900. Even if we trust Byerly's perception and memory of musical performances back to the moment of her birth, her experiences certainly cannot reach back to 1900. Either she is using historic texts to interpret more

recent musical traditions, or she is studying the role of music in relation to political, social, and cultural change while ignoring changes in the aural aspects and lyrical content of the music. In this case, it would probably prove difficult to locate appropriate sound recordings going back to 1900, but there would certainly be a few from between 1900 and the 1990s.

Both Jacques Attali and John Blacking put deep consideration into the connection between music and change. Attali described music as a “herald” because “change is inscribed in noise faster than it transforms society. Undoubtedly, music is a play of mirrors in which every activity is reflected, defined, recorded, and distorted” (2002:5). If what Attali told us is true, and music serves as a vehicle for the ideas and messages inspiring social change, ignoring the aural aspects of musical performance not only prevents ethnomusicologists from studying aural changes but prevents them from studying social change. Blacking argued in “Some Problems of Theory and Method in the Study of Musical Change” (1977) that social change does not necessarily equal or even parallel musical change and therefore we cannot allow our knowledge about one to substitute for our knowledge about the other. Although musical and social change are related, they are not equivalent, and so we must regard each on its own terms. Blacking warned that “Music-making should be treated as problematic, and we should resist attempts either to reduce it to a purely sociological phenomenon or to regard it as an autonomous cultural sub-system” (1977:1). According to Blacking, reducing music to either its sociological or acoustical aspects also reduces our ability to understand the interrelation between these aspects and to thoroughly understand change over time. Whether one agrees with Attali or Blacking, there seems to be a relation between sound,

society, and change that many ethnomusicologists are currently ignoring when they use long lineages of texts and past contexts in isolation from their resulting musical products.

A second set of historical dilemmas created by the avoidance of sound recordings occurs not within ethnomusicological articles themselves but during their use by future ethnomusicologists. Our failure to study and present the aural aspects of music, both in our published texts and in the form of accessible sound recordings, may leave gaps in the overall aural record for future researchers. In her presentation as the Charles Seeger Lecturer at the 1993 meeting for the Society of Ethnomusicology, Bess Lomax Hawes described her distress over these gaps:

But what, in another fifty years, will be there for us insider or outsiders, or our insider and outsider grand-children [sic], to study? When I look at a record or tape or CD these days and note the date when the recording was actually made, I begin to wonder. Most were made so long ago. Even the new ones tend to be re-releases. In fact, when I talk to people today about the necessity of field work, especially recording, many inform me gently that all that kind of thing has already been done. And I laugh, but then I wonder, what are they telling me?" (Hawes 1995:186)

Although the commercial music industry does publish some music that could be considered as traditional, its aim is generally to reach a wider commercial market and its selections lean towards the popular and the mainstream. Unfortunately, the majority of the diverse range of musical traditions in the world will never become "popular" in a mainstream sense or attract the attention of the commercial music industry. If ethnomusicologists fail to make this material accessible, through either academic publications or archived recordings, they cannot rely on the commercial music industry to make it available for them. Many ethnomusicologists seem to view their sound recordings as unimportant or of little use to future researchers and they remain squirreled away in private collections. Those collections that are deposited are often poorly

documented and received sans fieldnotes. I recall one conversation I had with an ethnomusicologist who was in the process of filling out the indexing sheets required for depositing her collection at the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University. She asked me how much information she needed to include on the indexing sheets. When I explained that the more information she could provide, the more valuable her collection would be to future researchers she replied, “Yes, but how much information should I include?” I told her, “Well at least information such as song titles, dates, performers, performance locations, etc.” She seemed unhappy with this bare minimum, and I doubt she provided us with even that much information—another poorly documented collection to puzzle future researchers. I sometimes wonder if future researchers will consider the 1970s through the present as the dark ages of ethnomusicological studies and not the 1890s through the 1960s. So many texts are heavily theoretical, lacking both descriptions of and references to non-textual sources, both audio and visual. The number of deposited research collections and commercially released research recordings seems small when compared to the prolific days of the Ethnic Folkways series or even those of the Berlin school. The CDs that now accompany ethnographies provide only short excerpts, often not even full songs, and provide scanty information even compared to the LPs released in the sixties and seventies. Often these accompanying CDs seem to serve more as illustrations of the ethnographer’s theories and conclusions as opposed to the ethnography serving as an explanation of the music contained on the CD. Additionally, considering how the sound sheets and vinyl records included with the 1963 and 1964 volumes of *Ethnomusicology* have fared, I suspect that their less robust digital cousins will survive in scant numbers by the mid-twenty-first century. Looking back, will future

researchers find a forty-year gap in the study of many musical traditions? Will they find that we shared only our thoughts and theories about these traditions and not information about the traditions themselves?

The dwindling number of accessible recordings and descriptive texts leads us neatly into the next consequence of avoiding the use of sound recordings. This consequence is a result of the paradigm shift from studying music as sound to studying music as human behavior. Creating such a firm definition of music results in generalizations about the meaning and significance of music and musical behavior and fails to take into account the perceptions and experiences of one's informants. Although some informants may see music as behavior or as inseparable from its cultural context, others may not. The Suyá often trade songs with their visitors, and they make this exchange both through the medium of live performance and through cassettes (Seeger 1991b:24). More recently, the Suyá men have come to use recordings as learning aids for certain ceremonies (Seeger 2002a:42-43). In many cultures, people buy, sell, and exchange songs. The women of some Aboriginal groups give away secret songs as gifts that can then only be performed by the new owner. This fact was discovered by a horrified Catherine Ellis when she learned she had become the sole possessor of an ancient performance tradition that she lacked the physical ability and knowledge to initiate (Ellis 1992:268). In some cases, a given community may use sound recordings to substitute for a live performance or performer. Taiwanese Buddhist monks can apparently use commercial recordings to fill in for them while on vacation (Perris 1986:438). A tape of dance music can inspire Maewo participants to dance and sing at a celebration despite the absence of live performers (Crowe 1981:428-29). Similarly, I

have read arguments that square dance recordings are preferable to the live music of an inexperienced ensemble or the dance calls of an inexperienced caller since the sounds of the latter are harder to dance to than those of recordings made by a professional ensemble. Piman healers record their curing songs and other members of the society can then use the tapes as effective cures even without the healer present (Bahr and Haefer 1978:92). Recordings of certain Native American ceremonies can cause problems when performed outside of their proper ritual context even without a performer present, Coyote songs are particularly notorious in this regard. Recordings can also become the central objects of political power struggles or the source of serious conflicts if the proper boundaries of ownership are transgressed (Seeger 2002a:43). Cassettes are sometimes used in addition to one-on-one instruction by teachers of Qur'anic recitation (Ramussen 2001:39),³ capoeira (Downey 2002), jazz, and many other musical traditions. Some teachers of Classical Indian music purposely make mistakes when recorded, as do some instructors of capoeira (Downey 2002:503), to prevent the resulting sound recordings from disseminating knowledge that the teachers feel only they have the right to disseminate.

All of the above uses suggest that some musicians and their audiences feel sound is of central significance to musical performance and that sound recordings can act as partial surrogates for the performances and musical behavior of live musicians. The performer need not be present and yet the intended audiences, both common and/or supernatural, treat the sound recordings as a substitution for live performance and interact with them in a manner similar to the way they would with a live performer. The fact that many Western musicians make recordings of themselves for their ears alone as an aid in

assessing their performance suggests that an audience may also be absent in some cases. Or perhaps the same person becomes both performer and audience in a somewhat lopsided version of the standard communication model. By ignoring these uses of sound recordings, and indeed many of the authors discussed above have treated these uses as curious occurrences with little attempt at further exploration, ethnomusicologists pass up the chance to explore emic perceptions of the definition and use of music and they may pass over nuances that the originating community deems as highly significant to a musical performance. Contrary to definitions of music as human behavior and the move away from studying music as an isolatable art form, certain songs do act as cultural property or "objects" within their originating community and come complete with rules for ownership, economic value, political status, and exchange.

The theoretical arguments by ethnomusicologists regarding the importance of synesthetic context also seem overgeneralized. While many performances are highly synesthetic, others are less so. Often the musical behavior of musicians serves as background. Jazz bands, string quartets, Japanese Noh casts, and wedding ensembles from a wide range of cultures often serve as aural ambience for otherwise non-musical activity. Although cigarette smoke, alcohol, one's colleagues, and ambient lighting may alter one's experience of these performances, it seems odd to automatically treat these entities as central and indispensable elements. Can one say that the music scene or, taking things a step further, the "music" in Bloomington, Indiana will never be the same again now that smoking is banned from most bars? Cigarette smoke is certainly as much a part of one's synesthetic musical experience as the feel of one's clothing or a humid night in Madras. But do those who are members of the originating tradition feel these

elements are central or even significant to the performance? Such questions are overlooked when one simply assumes that every aspect of sensory input is significant or when one assumes that everything but the sound is significant. Additionally, I question whether the role of sound recordings is to capture the full range of synesthetic experience any more than it is the role of ethnographic text to visually capture what one's informants looked like.

Closely related to ignoring performers' perspectives of sound and sound recordings is a partial loss of understanding about certain forms of musical behavior. McAllester mentioned that ethnomusicologists have tended to romanticize certain types of music by studying sacred, traditional, and political music while ignoring the popular music that informants listen to most of the time through their radios and stereos (1979). I would further argue that this failure to study everyday musical behavior is also due to the tendency by ethnomusicologists to romanticize live performance while ignoring informants' use of sound recordings. Playing and listening to mediated music is also a form of musical behavior and one that is difficult to study if a researcher refuses to examine the informants' listening repertoire because of its format. In some cases, recordings allow audiences to hear music that was formerly inaccessible to them due to a forbidden performance context. I have already mentioned Racy's example of how sound recordings allowed Middle Eastern women to listen to the performances of male performers and vice-versa, an experience that was generally forbidden to them due to gender segregation before the development of the phonograph. Additionally, it is difficult to imagine that a parent from a middle or upper class family in the United States would have allowed their child to frequent the venues in which jazz and blues were

performed during the first half of the twentieth century. Using recordings, however, young Americans were able to obtain and experience the aural aspects of a wide range of musical performances.

In some cases, people use recordings of music as a form of mediated communication. In the United States, and probably other countries as well, many couples make and trade compilation tapes of songs they feel hold special significance within the context of their relationship. Erika Brady described the use of cylinder recordings made by the deceased as part of funeral ceremonies (Brady 1985:56). She explained that individuals participated “vocally in their own funerals by means of the phonograph, either by singing their own anthem, or by preaching their own eulogy. In preparing these recordings for use at their funerals, these individuals clearly intended in their own fashion to transcend their mortality—and incidentally guarantee a funeral their survivors would never forget” (Brady 1985:56). By Merriam’s definition of “music,” a cassette of someone singing a song for their own funeral would either not be music due to a lack of direct interaction between performer and audience, or the music would take place during the original performance. However, in this case it is very clear that the performer intended his sound recording to serve in his or her place at the funeral as part of a very specific musical experience for the listeners. “Listening parties” are another example of how sound recordings can play a central role in musical behavior. My friends and I take turns hosting listening parties in which our musical behavior takes place around the turntable and songs unheard for a hundred years or more. The lyrics and tunes become the source of inside jokes and a part of our musical repertoire in the same way that the radio catch phrase “Hello Kitwe” has become synonymous for “Earth to so-and-so” in

Zambian culture (Spitulnik 1997:167-68). The meaning and effect of these inside jokes can be explained to a researcher, but he or she would probably have difficulty discovering them or understanding them without possessing familiarity with their aural sources. Informants also use recordings to relearn songs, an act that ethnomusicologists have often applauded or used in expressing the value of sound archives. When members of the originating community decide not to relearn a song note per note, they may still incorporate specific elements into modern performances or the recording may influence current performance traditions and perspectives within the community. Certainly there must be some value to studying how and when communities decide to repatriate these materials.

As more communities begin to make their own recordings, we also find situations in which the context for the live performance is beyond the reach of the ethnomusicologist because 1) the ethnomusicologist was not invited to the original performance, 2) the musicians intended the recording as the finished product and true performance, 3) or because a live performance never existed. Michael Dellaria outlined three types of performance that exist only in the form of sound recordings:

1. Perfect performances created through editing.
2. Impossible performances created through editing (i.e. Mixing of multiple performances by the same musician on different parts, mixing performances by two musicians who have never performed together, adjustments of pitch or other musical aspects).
3. Synthesized music (i.e. Electronic music, midi-created music, mechanical music). (Dellaira 1995)

People from cultures across the globe create and interact with recordings of music that fall within each of the above categories. The creation of and interaction with mediated

music is a form of musical behavior that cannot be fully understood without examining the sound recordings themselves. Lysloff offered us four lessons that ethnomusicologists should learn about informants' uses of technology:

(1) That the "native" is not necessarily a naïve and passive recipient of media technology; (2) that media technology may be *especially* empowering for those people with little or no political and economic power; (3) that people may use media technology in radically new and surprising ways, and infuse it with meanings specific to such use; and (4) the social meanings associated with particular technologies often change as these technologies traverse cultural boundaries. (Lysloff 1997:217)

Sadly, if we avoid others' sound recordings as a research source, it becomes difficult or even impossible to study these forms of musical behavior. One would never venture to study the behavior and knowledge of potters without studying their work, and yet many ethnomusicologists have strongly encouraged this approach with music despite the loss of insight into many of the situations described above.

Another troubling consequence related to the exclusion of sound recordings from ethnomusicological research is that this exclusion shifts authority from performer to researcher and from reader to researcher. I have already discussed Brady's examination of the failure by modern ethnomusicologists to credit performers with a role in the negotiation process involved in making sound recordings and the tendency of these ethnomusicologists to treat the resulting recordings not as somewhat altered creations made by the performer but as fictions made by the researcher. By failing to cite their own recordings or to even provide access to them, ethnomusicologists turn their ethnographies and articles into the sole authoritative sources on a musical tradition for all but the few researchers who are able to visit the same research site during the same time period. We lose the voice of the performer, the sound of their artistic creation, perhaps

even the messages embodied in the lyrics, and we certainly lose the larger acoustic context for the bits and pieces that the author quotes in his or her academic text or includes on the accompanying CD. Hours of performance, and perhaps even performances that the informants envisioned as reaching an academic audience, are distilled, chopped, processed, and reified into academic text and carefully packaged in theory to prevent it from going awry before reaching the reader. Unless performers are allowed to participate as co-authors or are extensively quoted, they are effectively silenced. The researcher speaks for them. Perhaps this action is necessary because, after all, sound recordings tend to distort the performance and falsely represent the performers' musical intentions. Through text, the ethnomusicologist can correct these problems and represent the performance in a way the performer intended. But such arguments are hauntingly familiar, mere re-embodiments of the arguments made by the early folklorists, musicologists, and anthropologists described by Brady. The primary difference is that we do not speak for our informants through transcribed text alone but through theoretical discourse. We sometimes give our readers a good dose of "you wouldn't understand" and "you might mistake my recordings for reality" to prevent them from wandering off to explore sound recordings unattended. We reduce the power of both our informants and our readers to interact as we wedge ourselves between them as interpreter and sever the last remaining form of oral/aural communication. By not citing sound recordings, we are not eliminating colonialism, but are enacting a new form of it. If our informants see and treat sound recordings as an acceptable form of mediation for their intended performance, who are we to say that such recordings serve only to misrepresent and victimize them?

Anthony Seeger wrote:

Who, after all, are we ethnomusicologists serving with our research? If our recordings are “raw material” and our journals and books are our finished products, are we not reproducing a colonial pattern in our academic work? Given the price of books and journal subscriptions in third world countries, the pattern is superficially very similar—we collect raw material from less privileged societies and groups, and produce finished industrial products which are quite expensive (although they rarely produce a profit for the researcher). If we keep our field recordings and record collections to ourselves, effectively removing them from public circulation, are we not depriving the other countries of the material from which they could develop their own ethnomusicological studies? (Seeger 1986:267)

In Seeger’s quotation we find a threat of colonialism not only in our preference for finished textual products over sound recordings but in the prevention of recordings reaching both our audiences and the originating community.

In addition to the negative consequences listed above, avoiding the use of sound recordings eliminates numerous potentially valuable research approaches. Although relying solely upon sound recordings for the entirety of one’s research is neither ideal nor advisable, using them when preparing for field research can help a new ethnomusicologist become accustomed to some of the musical sounds he or she may encounter. In *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, Helen Meyers recommends reviewing everything on one’s area of study *except* sound recordings. Non-fiction, fiction, research advice from living experts, and learning the local language are all treated as valuable sources of information that can help one prepare for the field (Meyers 1992b:29-30). As mentioned earlier, Meyers does not feel the same way about recordings. In a way, learning as much as possible about the music ahead of time can serve a purpose similar to that of learning the local customs or the local language. Although two-years of college Spanish cannot completely prepare one for the nuances of sound and meaning existent within the dialect of any given area, it can give a student a basis of knowledge to draw

from. In the same way, listening to music from one's intended research area can help to build a basis of knowledge to draw from. This knowledge may be as simple as gaining a sense for a few of the more popular songs, singing techniques, and genres or it may involve overcoming one's hang-ups and *a priori* assumptions about how music "should" or can sound based on one's own cultural background. Although Hood assured us that a live performance is shocking compared to the sound of a recorded one, how much more shocking are the singing styles used in Noh drama, the diaphonic singing style of female folk ensembles from Bulgaria, or the thick harmonic structures of Impressionistic music to someone completely unfamiliar with these sounds. Listening to recordings before fieldwork may instill a few preconceived (and overcomable) notions, but Catherine Ellis has assured us that such preconceived notions are inevitable:

It is dangerous to begin the study of an unknown musical system with preconceived ideas. Unfortunately, it is also inevitable.

Even with a known musical system, the ear tends to normalize the many occurring deviations from the theoretical standard. When the system is unfamiliar the mind grasps at the few retainable elements and can (and often does) dispense with material which is basic to that system. (Ellis 1964:126)

Mantle Hood described this process of normalization as "liberalizing [sic] Western ears," although he gave credit for this process to the monochord, polychord, strobocon, variable-speed turntable, and the tape recorder as opposed to the act of familiarizing oneself to the actual sounds of foreign musical traditions (1957:7).

In some cases, familiarity with the available sound recordings from a given musical area can help one gain deeper insights into the music by providing the ethnomusicologist with a basis of knowledge for generating questions during his or her

fieldwork experience. George List described an interview with a Hopi performer during which this informant referred to the “middle part” of a kachina performance. List wrote:

At one point he complained of the performing group’s insistence on composing the “middle part” of the song, as though the composer were not competent to do this himself.

When the man had exhausted his complaints I returned to the matter of the “middle part” that interested me very much. I had a rather large collection of recordings of Hopi kachina dance songs made by other collectors. Some had been made as early as 1903. In none of these recordings, nor in those that I had made on the reservation myself, was there a section that could be described as a “middle part.”

Upon further interrogation I discovered that the “middle part” was omitted when kachina dance songs were sung in other than ceremonial circumstance as, for example, by adults to children. It had therefore been omitted in performances for collectors. (List 1972:448)

Would List have reached this same realization and discovery had he been completely new to the tradition or would he have continued to study these performances without realizing that informants were omitting the middle section as they had for all the researchers preceding him? On another occasion, List's experience with Hopi musical traditions allowed him to take a 1906 wax cylinder mislabeled by the original collector as a funeral chant and to properly identify it as a kachina dance song for bringing rain and ensuring crop fertility (1983:181). This second occasion shows that a researcher familiar with both a musical tradition and with sound recordings of that tradition can make educated decisions about and interpretations of both the live and recorded versions.

On occasion, familiarity with the sound recordings of a given tradition may also allow researchers to recognize intra-musical quotations (See Meyer 1960:272-74). Kay Shelemay studied the use of Middle Eastern melodies set with new texts in the performance of Jewish liturgical music. Paul Berliner traced the progression of a

particular musical “lick” through thirty-five years of jazz and studied its role in the interplay and communication between performers.⁴ Both music and text can be quoted, imitated, parodied, and even used to identify a performer’s musical lineage as in the case of some forms of Classical Indian music and capoeira. Familiarity with recordings may prepare new ethnomusicologists to notice intra-musical and intra-textual allegories, allowing them not only to perceive the current performance but also to grasp and investigate the extramusical associations related to these quotations.

Of course, the meaning of music is not always this subtle. Recordings often contain lyrics and people often sing about important social and political issues, other members of the community, history, religion, and numerous other topics. Reanalyzing lyrics in combination with any available contextual information could prove beneficial in gathering information not sought after by the original researcher. A song that was originally analyzed for its insight into a group’s religious beliefs could be reanalyzed for information on the perceived gender roles of women, associations and belief about various occupations, narrative devices, social history, etc. Considering that we have been finding new meanings and information in the works of Shakespeare for centuries, it seems safe to assume that one ethnomusicologist could not possibly mine all of the valuable information and possible interpretations from a three-hour performance within a handful of years.

In addition to various types of cultural information, lyrics may also contain formal oral histories relating to the life of the performer or to that of the community. Choosing to ignore the community's own renditions of its history while studying those written by Western scholars has an air of colonialism to it, and yet researchers do overlook

recordings containing oral histories on a regular basis. Paul Apodaca, a researcher who studies the history of California Indians, found that the numerous wax cylinders and aluminum disc collections transferred to tape by the Federal Cylinder Project had yet to be transcribed or analyzed despite their valuable historical content. In the 1980s, Apodaca began working with Cahuilla translators to create a history drawn from the songs recorded on these cylinder and discs and from present day performances (Jaskoski 1989). In the introduction to her interview with Paul Apodaca, Helen Jaskoski tells us that most people at the time based their perceptions of the Cahuilla on “Theodora Kroeber’s biography of a northern Californian, *Ishi*, and Helen Hunt Jackson’s *Ramona*, a romantic novel based on some events in the life of a Cahuilla woman” (1989:1). Despite numerous aural documents created by the Cahuilla, before the late 1980s the average American seeking information on this Native American group apparently had to go to Helen Hunt for it.

Many songs carry meaning not only through lyrics or intra-musical references, but also through widely understood systems of musical symbols. Drum language and ragas are perhaps two of the better known and certainly among the more elaborate examples, but such symbols abound throughout a wide gamut of traditions. Timbres, melodic motifs, rhythmic patterns, and singing styles can all carry messages from the performer to audience members and to other performers. Exchanges of musical symbols may even be used in a form of musical conversation (See Berliner 1994, Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok 1976). For these and other musical traditions, recordings can offer a wide range of examples in addition to those gathered in the field.

Another methodology that makes use of recordings is reanalysis. Not only can reanalysis give us a sense of change over time in a given area if it is combined with one's current field research, but it allows us to discover the mistakes and biases of our predecessors. Ethnomusicologists have occasionally performed reanalysis to assess transcriptions made by earlier researchers. The following is just one example:

McIntosh's transcriptions of these songs are in places consistently different from the recorded performances, a fact which may disturb scholars seeking to use the transcriptions in further research, but do not otherwise detract from the importance of this work or the interest it holds for folklorists and ethnomusicologists alike. (Kardas 1976:387)

Martin Clayton recently suggested that ethnomusicologists should reanalyze the writings of past researchers in combination with their research recordings, notes, and musical transcriptions to discover the cultural biases of our predecessors and the effect upon the content of their academic publications. Additionally, Clayton claimed that this approach to older research could help us to learn about the "historical development of ethnomusicological method—of the ways in which music has been recorded, transcribed, and analysed" (Clayton 1999:87). In the same article, Clayton performed a reanalysis of the works and research recordings made by A. H. Fox Strangways as a means of illuminating his biases regarding musical structure. This analysis not only opens the floor for a new interpretation of Strangways' material, but it provides us with a grain of salt to take with Strangways' publications. In some cases, two or more researchers have assessed the same historical collection and have used public forums to hash out their differences in opinion (See McLean 1996, Rossen 1996, England 1964). Of course, it is safe to assume that we will all make mistakes, just like our predecessors, and may even repeat them. If nothing else, one should allow for the possibility of multiple and equally acceptable

interpretations of the same material and events. For this reason, creating a way for future researchers to access our source recordings is a necessity if they are to recreate the informational context of our work and the influences on its content.

Not far removed from restudies are studies of historical change. To study long-term change in music, especially toward the beginning of one's career, an ethnomusicologist will need to rely on historic sound recordings to study change in the aural aspects in addition to those in the social and political aspects. To ignore audible changes in the music is to ignore at least an aspect of change, and not necessarily one of the least significant aspects. Even Merriam, with his strict warning against audile analysis, occasionally praised a sound recording. In one instance, he praised a 1935-36 recording of the Abatusi Royal Drums for providing "a perspective of some twenty-seven years of material." He adds, "We are beginning to get some real time depth in ethnomusicology, and it is to be hoped that we shall soon begin to profit from it in studies of culture change" (Merriam 1963b:58). This statement suggests that Merriam was not altogether opposed to the use of sound recordings, despite his strong statements of disapproval regarding the practices of audile analysis, but it is difficult to work out exactly what his philosophy was or when the use of sound recordings was appropriate.

In recent research, ethnomusicologists have made use of historic sound recordings to study change over time but, with the exception of a few authors such as Kay Shelemay (1998) and Theodore Levin (1996), this use has generally been confined to studies of popular music or the career of a single performer (Danielson 1997). *Popular Music*, an academic journal published by Cambridge University, frequently features articles from a wide range of disciplines that make heavy use of sound recordings to study the influence

of various political, social, and economic factors upon a given musical performance or tradition. *Popular Music* also has served as a publication venue for the occasional ethnomusicologist when he or she chooses to take a more musicological or historical approach. As discussed earlier, although most ethnomusicologists include a brief section on the known history of a musical tradition, this section often draws solely from historic texts or focuses on the limited date range covered by the ethnomusicologist's fieldwork. Again, considering the popularity of discussing outside influences, assimilation, acculturation, and globalization it seems odd that so few articles by ethnomusicologists on these topics actually make use of recordings, or at least fail to cite them, for studying the aural aspects of change.

Sometimes the historical value of a recording lies not in studying change over time, but in studying the content as a historic performance. Traditions do occasionally die. The sound of the *castrati* vocal timbre died out just after the turn of the twentieth century along with Alessandro Moreschi. The only way we can study the sound of this music, other than through vague textual accounts, is through Moreschi's recordings. Having heard this recording, I can safely say that the textual descriptions of the *castrati* timbre do not come close to capturing the haunting timbres of Moreschi's voice.

In addition to timbres, songs occasionally die as do genres and styles, phased out not only by Western imperialism but also by the whims, wants, and needs of the originating community. Lauded performers die and performances eventually end. Some ethnomusicologists have met frantic attempts to preserve these performances with open hostility, treating them as acts of colonialism or as a senseless reification of lived traditions into static museum pieces. And yet many of the original performers or their

descendents are eager to obtain copies of these “frozen”, “bronzed”, “embalmed”, “canned”, and reified objects. Often when the originating communities show their distaste, it is not directed toward the recordings or their content but toward the researchers and institutions that have mistreated the community while collecting, stealing, or improperly using their music. The American Indian Studies and Research Institute (AISRI) and the Center for Documenting Endangered Languages (CDEL), based at Indiana University—Bloomington, have recently found this to be the case with the Meskwaki community. After many abuses at the hands of anthropologists and other researchers, the Meskwaki community closed its doors to the members of academia for a number of years. Recently, a set of materials recorded on wax cylinder has served as a bridge between the researchers at AISRI, CDELL, and members of the Meskwaki community. Although this new relationship appears to still be at a delicate stage, this is more due to the community’s experience with past researchers than because of anything inherent in the recordings. Unfortunately, sound recordings and their role in preservation have often been made scapegoats for our mistakes and for those of our predecessors. Although there are certainly sensitive performance events that should never be recorded, and particularly never recorded against the will of the performers, preservation in and of itself is generally a neutral activity.

A few ethnomusicologists have decided that it is not our place to decide what to save, but why is it any more our place to decide what to throw away or to insist that the primary value of these materials lies within their potential repatriation into a community? Informants can use recordings to experience nostalgia, such as in the case of a son or daughter hearing their father’s voice for the first time in thirty years. Informants can also

use recordings as objects of political power or to strengthen the community's confidence in its identity and heritage. Members of the originating community can also publish sound recordings for the purpose of profit or pedagogy. There is an ugly undertone in ethnomusicology that suggests that researchers and members of the originating community form two distinct groups, with the former group collecting, studying, and explaining material and the latter creating and repatriating it. At the Archives of Traditional Music, researchers from Somalia, various Native American groups, and other originating communities—although not common—are at least as common and perhaps more so than United States ethnomusicologists from non-originating communities. Sometimes these so-called “native” researchers have enough familiarity with the languages, genres, tunes, and lyrics of a performance tradition to make out items recorded on wax cylinders despite the limitations of low fidelity, surface noise, reduced structures, and short durations. As shown in the section on theoretical arguments regarding reliability, these limitations can act as serious barriers for all but the most initiated of researchers. Recent work with members of the Meskwaki community has shown that Meskwaki informants can often explain and translate information on the Roaming Scout cylinders that would require grueling research on the part of the staff at AISRI and CDEL. Such uses of historic recordings by originating communities raise several points. First, preserving performances is not necessarily a bad thing as suggested by some ethnomusicologists. Second, ethnomusicologists from the originating community may be able to overcome many of the barriers currently complained about by outside “non-native” ethnomusicologists. Third, the reintroduction of these recordings into the

originating communities may prove a rich area for the study of musical behavior and one that is hardly touched by ethnomusicologists.

In general, ethnomusicologists have not delved into studies of how performers' use and interact with sound recordings. Most researchers who discuss mediation tend to focus on film or video. One of the few exceptions is Charles Keil. In a 1984 article, Keil examined the use of sound recordings in Japan, but this examination was both cynical and more of an academic teaser due to its brevity. Keil began by describing the "blindness" preventing the study of mass media. Interestingly enough, he felt these blinders were the result of capitalist culture and not our own disciplinary hang-ups. Keil explained that the three blinders preventing us from studying musical mediation are a "(1) traditional focus on non-Western music; (2) concern with folkish authenticity; (3) live performance as premier value, both in descriptive work and in performance group replications of traditional styles" (Keil 1984:92). Keil's presented view of mediation was mixed. He seemed uncomfortable with the fact that sound recordings had partially replaced instrumentalists at many festivals and in *chinonya* (street musician) performances, but less so that they played a major role in *Karaoke* as participated in by cultures around the world (Keil 1984).

Sutton built off Keil's article and revealed us with another form of mediated musical behavior in need of study. His article focused on the cassette culture in Java concerning both its affect on the standardization and homogenization of *gamelan* and its role in pedagogy. Sutton recommended cassettes as important research data, particularly when sampling the *gamelan* repertoire and discussing the nuances of the contained

performances with *gamelan* instructors. However, he also provided a familiar six point disclaimer about the use of sound recordings in ethnomusicological research:

1. "Most fundamental is the fact that they are only recordings, separating musical sounds from the musicians who make them and form the social milieu in which these sounds have been and continue to be meaningful. They represent a record of an event the purchaser has not witnessed and may not even be able to imagine." (Sutton 1985:41)
2. "Where performances may have been of high caliber, the recording (or the particular copy that one happens to obtain) may be badly distorted, poorly balanced, uneven in speed" (ibid.)
3. "Names of performers other than singers are seldom listed, nor are dates of recording or release." (ibid.)
4. "On cassettes produced by the less prestigious companies, pieces may be incompletely or incorrectly labeled, and may be cut off before their conclusion." (ibid.:41-42)
5. "Mistakes may be let for financial reasons, since companies are likely to be concerned with the standards of a buying public, rather than those of performers." (ibid.:5)
6. "The repertory for some traditions is not evenly represented." (ibid.:5)

These complaints about an absence of context, lack of reliability, insufficient or poorly done documentation, poor editing, and inaccurate representation of performance traditions are all familiar. It is fair enough to claim that ethnomusicologists should only use commercial cassettes in addition to field research, but I question the value of strongly asserting the arguments against the use of recordings in an article intended to support this use. If Sutton's primary purpose was to convince ethnomusicologists to use these aural documents, then his disclaimers work against this purpose. Another interesting point to note is that between these two works by Keil and Sutton on the value of sound recordings to ethnomusicological research, only Sutton's article cited any. In the endnotes of

Sutton's article are three partial citations, each limited to the company name and number of a commercially released cassette.

Another value of recordings that relates to the involvement of originating community members is that recordings can serve as a tool for obtaining feedback on past musical performances and traditions. In ethnomusicology, Ruth and Verlon Stone created one of the most popular models for a feedback methodology. This model involves playing back new video footage for the original performers as a means of obtaining in-depth commentary from them about specific performance techniques and practices as they watch the video (Stone and Stone 1981). There is, however, no reason for limiting feedback interviews to video, to the researcher's own material, to the same performers, or even to the same generation of performers. A few researchers have made use of sound recordings for informal feedback interviews as far back as the 1960s.

Nicholas Smith published the first example in Ethnomusicology:

After the rehearsal the dance leaders listened to recordings made previously by the author of dance music by the other three Wabanaki tribes. Although the St. Francis dance leaders had not sung songs to their dances, they were able to understand the recordings and felt that their own dances should have had these songs also. But no one felt that his voice was good enough to sing the songs at the celebration. (Smith 1962:15)

This is an example of a feedback interview used to elicit commentary from a subgroup of the Wabanaki Indians to obtain their thoughts on why they had excluded songs by other subgroups.

In 1963, a Charlotte Johnson used her own recordings and a selection of material collected by David McAllester and Oswald Werner to elicit commentary from three of her informants regarding the singing styles of each of the performers (1964). In 1969, Ernst Heins presented a record of gamelan music performed by the UCLA gamelan

ensemble to various teachers of gamelan music and obtained their critiques of the performance without first identifying the performers. His experiment obtained detailed commentary on proper performance techniques, defining characteristics of various stylistic schools, and expected musical standards (Heins 1969). Caroline Card played an arranged performance of women's *tindi*, her own recording in this case, for a male informant and learned that the male shouts usually heard in the background of *tindi*, which she had failed to record, were considered an important performance element (1978:57). Bruno Nettl used older recordings of Arapaho songs to encourage an informant to remember and sing his own versions of many traditional pieces (1984:175). And Greg Downey found that recordings brought back memories for one of his informants about the darker days capeoria (2000:492).

Another possible use of the feedback methodology is that of using older recordings in interviews with younger musicians to study their views of the songs and styles performed by their predecessors. Additionally, one could use recordings to illicit responses from older researchers. Merriam described his reaction to a recording of Burundi music in one of his reviews as follows:

Most of the music is overwhelmingly and achingly familiar to one who has spent time in Burundi; it should perhaps be added that in the nineteen years since my wife and I recorded about 125 songs there, the genres we know have apparently not changed perceptibly. (Merriam 1971:303)

This review suggests not only the possibility of using recordings as tools for collaboration between informant and researcher, but also between multiple generations of researchers.

Other possible uses of sound recordings include using them as a tool for studying performers' abilities to manage time and to negotiate musical structures when meeting

the limited durations of early sound formats (Ghosh 2000, List 1972) and for studying the framing techniques and narrative devices employed in performer-made recordings (Feaster 2001, Keller 1984). Additionally, one can use sound recordings within their more traditional role as the objects of comparative, systematic and generalist studies. Despite a cry against these approaches, articles such as List's "Boundaries of Speech and Song" (1963), Charles Seeger's "Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing" (1958), and Cornelia Fales "The Paradox of Timbre" (2002) have yielded some very valuable general knowledge, not necessarily about all the musics of the world, but about our own assumptions, methodologies, and understandings of sound.

Before closing, I would like to suggest that one of the consequences of avoiding sound recordings or, in many cases, sound in general within the field of ethnomusicology is that we are losing one of the "cornerstones" that makes our field unique (Kolinski 1967:7). What makes ethnomusicology unique is not solely the study of human thought and behavior since most of the various branches of anthropology study these aspects, nor does the study of musical sound set us apart since the various branches of musicology explore these aspects. What distinguishes ethnomusicology is our ability to study and explain human behavior with, through, and as music—a feat not easily accomplished if we ignore the aural aspects and the latest means of conveying them. Even if one defines music *as* human behavior or culture, sound is one of the primary means of expressing this "music." Indeed, it seems fair to question whether it is possible to have music without sound. Although we can ignore recordings, the people we study do not. Our avoidance of a major part of our informants' musical behavior, experiences, and history puts ethnomusicology at a serious disadvantage for understanding music however one decides

to slice it.⁵ Most of our readers will never make it to the remote field locations described in our articles and ethnographies. Should we really prevent them from experiencing the bits of performance that are available on sound recordings? What we need now is not a complete forbidding of aural documents, but theories and methods for how to effectively use these materials just as we have for texts, photographs, and moving images. We need to experiment and learn about these valuable historic documents instead of stockpiling them in archives or, worse yet, upon the inaccessible shelves of our private collections.

Chapter 9

Conclusion: Where to Go from Here?

If we are to improve the value of sound recordings as information sources for ethnomusicological research, there are several areas in need of improvement. First, there is clearly a need for the establishment of citation standards, not only for how we should cite sound recordings but also for what we should cite and when we should cite it. In cases where ethnomusicologists have often drawn ideas from specific recordings or sets of recordings without including transcriptions of either the music or the lyrics, I suggest that we should cite these sources in the same way we cite the texts that serve as inspiration for our paraphrases, theories, and general knowledge about a given topic. We should also give sound recordings an equal place alongside texts and visual materials by placing them in either the formal bibliography or within a separate discography immediately following or preceding this bibliography.

Not only should we connect our textual publications to their aural sources, but we should also link our archived and published sound recordings to relevant textual materials such as ethnographies, articles, and fieldnotes. This way, researchers from other fields who access these recordings can easily locate pertinent scholarship that explains the thoughts and behavior of the creating performers as well as the cultural and historical context of the recordings. Since recordings and published works are often created,

produced, published, and archived over the span of several decades, creating the links between recordings and texts will prove to be an interesting challenge. We will need to establish a system for periodically reviewing and updating these connections in an orderly manner. One possibility would be to create a centralized database that would provide access to all of the specific sound recordings cited within an article either in the form of online surrogates or, in the case of sensitive or bulky materials, as pointers to the commercial recording or the location of the archived material. This would ensure that readers could access, or at least locate, the sound recordings relevant to a given article. If we were to add an email notification system to the database, archivists could automatically be informed when a researcher added material to the database relevant to their archival holdings. These archivists could then add a note to the finding aid, an appropriate URL to the MARC catalog record, and/or a bibliographic citation to a list of related works. For archives maintaining a collection of books and journals, these email notifications could also add items to their next list of purchases.

In addition to a better system for linking sound recordings and texts, we need a better means of documenting the content and creation process of sound recordings to improve our ability to determine both their reliability and authenticity as historic documents. Michael Taft, Head Archivist of the American Folklife Center, is currently pushing for earlier involvement by archivists in the collection, documentation, and preservation of materials related to heritage and culture. Additionally, he feels there is a need to impress upon fieldworkers their role in archiving and preserving cultural heritage. Among his list of responsibilities that come with this new archival role are:

1. The need to negotiate with informants through release forms.
2. The need to obtain contextual information.

3. The need to make the donation accessible to others in concordance with the wishes of the informant.
4. The need honor the original intent of the donating informant.
5. The need to preserve the materials in as pristine a condition as possible (beginning with documenting the limitations of the researcher's collecting equipment and recording mediums)
6. The need to label materials.
7. The need to take fieldnotes and document relevant information.
8. The need to note the roles played by others helping to document material.
9. The need to negotiate for releases that are not completely restrictive.
10. The need to compensate the community by supplying them with copies of any resulting publications.

Some of these needs relate to practical issues such as access and intellectual property rights. Others, most notably item two and items five through seven, will provide future researchers with information about the content, completeness, creation procedure, and source of the sound recordings in the collection. Although this information will not remove all of the theoretical barriers to the use of sound recordings, it can help to reduce them (Taft and Bulger 2003).

There is also a definite need for instructions and guidelines about how ethnomusicologists should listen to older sound recordings and about how they may best use them as historic documents. Perhaps what is needed is a new branch within ethnomusicology that focuses on paleophonography, or the use of aural artifacts in the recreation and interpretation of earlier contexts, cultures, and events. Ethnomusicologists should never treat sound recordings as full and proper substitutions for a performance unless the performers intended them to serve as a legitimate substitution. In most cases, sound recordings are merely evidence of a historic performance event and we should treat them as such. As with all historic documents, sound recordings may allow for multiple interpretations. Additionally, future researchers may discover and bring additional evidence into play, creating controversy over the most likely and accurate interpretation.

The resulting discussions and reevaluations of these materials are both acceptable and healthy. As with fieldwork, the purpose of using sound recordings in ethnomusicological research is not to find a single, unified truth but to gain a deeper understanding of a community, albeit one of an earlier time period, in relation to its music and musical behavior.

Finally, there is much ground to be broken in the area of musical behavior and music making as it relates to the creation of sound recordings by performers. Additionally, few studies have focused on the role of sound recordings in human interaction and musical performance. Since sound recordings continue to gain popularity with our informants and an ever-growing role in their musical experiences, it is negligent for us to ignore them or to exclude them from our written publications. Whether an ethnomusicologist agrees or disagrees that sound recordings contain “music,” rendering them invisible can fail to take into account numerous significant aspects of musical behavior.

These new steps will require a great deal of effort, ingenuity, and energy, but hopefully we will find these toils well worth the trouble as we begin to gain new insights into the relationship between music and culture and as we begin to produce richer sources of ethnographic data. My hope is that the above research has laid the groundwork for discussing current problems, overcoming detrimental attitudes toward valuable information sources, and for creating both theories and methodologies for the use of others’ sound recordings and audio analysis in ethnomusicological research.

Endnotes

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Both *Ethnomusicology* and *Yearbook for Traditional Music* have undergone name changes since their inception. I have also examined the articles that were issued under the auspices of the *Ethno-musicology Newsletter* and *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*.
2. What constitutes the actual content of a live performance has been subject to debate over the years. For instance, Frances Densmore made performers leave out or alter shouts and percussive instrumentation so that it would be possible to transcribe the resulting recording (Brady 1999: 90-91). At this point in history, melody and rhythm were seen as the heart of the musical performance and aspects of timbre that detracted from melody and rhythm were seen as interfering with one's ability to analyze the performance as opposed to an integral part of the performance itself. Ruth and Verlon Stone have presented a contrasting view of performance in which not only the songs constitute the performance but also the behavior and commentary proceeding, following, and appearing between songs (See Stone and Stone 1981).
3. Possible post-editing could involve recording material over the top of material already recorded on a cylinder and adding or leaving off material during duplication. The former technique was used during early exhibitions of the phonograph (See Feaster 2001). The latter, to my knowledge was not actively used until much later when copying material from the original masters to 16-inch discs or to the matrices for LP records.
4. Although there were commercial labels such as Maloof, Macksoud, and Baidaphon with owners from the same ethnic group as the performers and who were more likely to alter the musical performance for aesthetic purposes, these commercial releases of ethnic music made up a much smaller percentage of the market. These recordings may require more scrutiny to determine the effects of the commercial music industry on the resulting recordings.

SECTION I: CITATION STUDY

Chapter 2: Quantitative Results of Study

1. The 1953-1956 issues of *Ethnomusicology Newsletter* and *Ethnomusicology* did not contain any formal citations.

Chapter 3: Qualitative Results of Study

1. In the case of George List's 1997 article, I suspect that the Hopi Kachina material recorded in 1926 is from a set of five 78rpm discs recorded by Jesse Walter Fewkes in Arizona and released that year by Gennett Records. List would have been four or five when this material was recorded and so they are unlikely to be his recordings. Copies of the discs and the accompanying booklet are available at the Archives of Traditional Music, accession number 54-257.01-C ATL 18279.
2. For those unfamiliar with the various genres of Indian music, this is roughly equivalent to saying one is looking for a Baptist hymn from the South.
3. See <http://www.indiana.edu/~ethmusic/publications/multimedia.html> for "Multimedia Appendices."
4. See Beaudry, et al. 1978 for full citation. Copies of the sound sheet accompanying George List's "Boundaries of Speech and Song" (1963) and seven inch 33 1/3rpm disc accompanying the "Symposium on Transcription and Analysis: A Hukwe Song with Musical Bow," moderated by Nicholas M. England (1964), are more common. The master tape for List's accompanying recording is held at the Archives of Traditional Music (accession number 80-006-D ATL 7725).

SECTION II: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Introduction to Environmental Scan

1. See Danielson 2001 and Schuursma 1991. Also, *The Folklore and Folk Music Archivist* was largely devoted to issues of collection organization and access and was in publication from 1958 to 1968.
2. See IFMC 1957, Stielow 1986, Seeger 1992, Mills 1996, Zemp 1996, Scherzinger 1999, Seeger 2001, and Berlin and Simon 2002.
3. Although collections that contain materials of a sensitive nature may warrant such a restriction of access, there are undoubtedly more materials maintained solely in private collections than there are materials that require a complete restriction of access.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Issues with the Reliability of Sound Recordings

1. Erika Brady lists the date for this presentation as 1908, but Grainger actually presented the paper two years before its publication in the journal in 1906 (Keel 1948).
2. 78rpm discs released by Gramophone of Taylor's 1908 performances include: Bold William Taylor (2518f), Sprig o' Thyme (8747e), Died for Love and Brigg Fair (8748), The White Hare (8750e), Lord Bateman (8751e), Rufford Park Pachers and The Gipsy's Wedding Day (8752e), Worcester City (8753e), Creeping Jane (8754e), Murder of Maria Martin and a second recording of Sprig o' Thyme (8756e). These recordings along with the performances of other Lincolnshire Singers recorded by Grainger are more readily available in the form of a reissued LP by Leader (Taylor, et al. 1972).
3. A report on the fifth annual meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society in Montreal on September 13th and 14th of 1893 state, "In the evening a conversazione, which showed some novel features, was held in the Recital Hall, St. Catherine street, and was well attended. It consisted of illustrations of the music of Canadian folk-songs; examples of Montreal street cries, repeated by phonograph, with lantern views of the criers exercising their callings" (R. V. 1893:191).
4. This trend is of significance to modern day ethnomusicologists, particularly those who choose text or

transcription as the authoritative information source for a performance in place of sound recordings.

5. Erika Brady list the date for this presentation as 1908, but Grainger actually presented the paper two years before its publication in the journal in 1906.

6. It is interesting to note that the generations of American researchers following the 1890s to 1930s are the most critical of the reliability of sound recordings made by American anthropologists due to their recording practices while their critique of the Berlin School has tended to focus on the use of audile analysis and the various discredited theories. The practices and theories of the English Folk-Song Society and those of researchers from countries outside of the United States and Germany attract hardly any attention at all.
7. Brady mentions that even commercial studios had a “flunky” with a blanket ready to muffle the phonograph horn and who was responsible for protecting the “fragile diaphragm from the strain of any sudden burst of volume” (1985:218).
8. Recordings to be accessioned by the Archives of Traditional Music. Number yet to be assigned as of March 16, 2004. The cylinders from the session are currently in the possession of Martin Fisher.
9. One should note that cylinders hardly offered high fidelity even when new. In 1894, Alice Fletcher published an essay describing how the beauty of Native American singing was eluding her ears. She states, “I therefore began to listen below this noise, much as one must listen in the phonograph, ignoring the sound of the machinery in order to catch the registered tones of the voice” (422).
10. Kurt Reinhard tells us that Hornbostel supplied the anthropologists who intended to collect materials for the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv with a copy of the chapter entitled “Musik” from *Anleitungen für ethnologische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika und Oceanien* (Instructions for Ethnomusicological Observations and Collections in Africa and Oceania), published by the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in 1908. A translation of both this chapter and the 1904 edition appears in Appendix A.
11. Quoted from Hood, Mantle and Hardja Susilo. 1967. *Music of the Venerable Dark Cloud*. Text accompanying LP Recording of Javanese Gamelan Khjai Mendung under the same title. IE Records, Stereo IER 7501. Institute of Ethnomusicology, UCLA.
12. In the latest issue of *Ethnomusicology* Risto Pekka Pennanen also has described sound recordings as historical documents stating:

It is by no means a simple or straightforward matter to gauge the popularity of musical style on the basis of a corpus of surviving commercial historical recordings. Rather, it is axiomatic that such surviving commercial recordings, far from being direct and/or accurate documents of contemporary living music culture, are documents, several times filtered, of the culture of recorded music. (Pennanen 2004:5)

Chapter 5: Theoretical Issues with the Representational Abilities of Sound Recordings

1. See Krader 1961.
2. I am particularly puzzled by how a modern rendering of a piece, learned from a barrel organ that was obviously accepted as a version of the performance by the composer’s contemporaries, would be more authoritative source on earlier musical traditions than the barrel organs purchased and used by these contemporaries. Also, Grame seems to miss the fact that the barrel organs probably served a very different purpose from that of a live performance and the substitution of a rendition by a 1960s performer or a musical watch may have been considered an unacceptable substitution by the barrel organs’ original audiences.

Chapter 6: Reasons Related to Theoretical Issues Created by Shifting Paradigms

1. The name of the society changed to Gesellschaft für Vergleichende Musikwissenschaft in 1933.

SECTION III: THE CONSEQUENCES FOR ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Chapter 8: Lost Data, Lost Knowledge, Lost Methodologies

1. Most of the articles I have omitted focus on the music of animals.
2. For the sake of presenting a more accurate average, I have removed one extreme case of Jairazbhoy, N. A. 1972. "Factors Underlying Important Notes in North Indian Music." *Ethnomusicology* 16(1):63-81. This article covered an extremely atypical range of 1771 which changed the average per year by a significant increment.
3. The author is aware that Qur'anic recitation is not considered "music" by most followers of Islam, but Qur'anic recitation is a popular topic in ethnomusicology and so I have decided to include it here, not as an example of a use for recorded music, but of recorded sound in general.
4. This topic was part of a presentation that Paul Berliner gave to the Music School at Minnesota State University-Mankato in the fall of 1997 or 1998. I have tried to locate a published discussion of this topic since then, but my efforts have proved fruitless. Perhaps it is the subject of a chapter or section within Berliner's *Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (1994).
5. Anthony Seeger recently published a very tongue in cheek article comparing the different theoretical perspectives of music used in ethnomusicology to slicing a banana into five pieces (2002b).

Appendix

Guidelines for Ethnographic Sound Recording
Provided by the Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, 1904 and 1908.

Note: The original booklets contain numerous blank numbered pages, presumably to provide the researcher with room for note taking.

Translation by Patrick D. Feaster from the 1904 Edition:

Felix von Luschan, ed. 1904. "Music." In *Anleitung für ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika and Ozeanien*. 3rd ed. Berlin: Gebr. Unger. 58-65.

[Page 58]

L. Music

1. *Musical Instruments* from most races have hitherto been represented only quite deficiently, and for this reason are to be collected as completely as possible. A good photograph of many instruments with the characteristic way in which the player holds them would be greatly desired.

Statements such as "the usual form" and the like are to be avoided, because small divergences are themselves often important. Whenever sending in the original is unfeasible, the most exact descriptions possible are very much desired with sketches or photographs.

2. Since string instruments lose their tuning in transport, these are to be determined on the spot if at all possible and to be noted down. In general it would be very profitable to set down simple and typical piece of music, whenever it is possible.

[Page 61]

3. Every traveler in a territory as yet little investigated should be equipped with a phonographic apparatus and should record as many typical pieces of music (solo singing, orchestra, etc.) as possible. In this the following set of instructions is to be used.

A. Equipment

- a) Phonograph or gramophone with recording and reproducing diaphragm, horn, key.

- b) Spare diaphragms or repair kit.
- c) Oil can, dust-brush, leather dust-rag, screwdriver.
- d) Cylinders, most advisably to be protected against breakage, great heat, moisture.
- e) Pitch-pipe (Normal A=435).

B. Recording

- a) Clockwork to be wound up completely before *each* recording.
- b) Usually have the clockwork run at medium speed; with very high, very soft or very fast music high speed.
- c) the apparatus is to be secured and *not* to be shifted during the recording.
- d) Every recording should be commenced by blowing the *a* of the pitch-pipe into the apparatus, then the journal number and the title of the recording are spoken in.
- e) Bring the resonating chamber of the instrument, mouth of the speaker or singer as close to the horn as possible without touching it.
- f) The player (singer) may, if practicable, mark the time by clapping hands (as close as possible to the opening of the horn).
- g) After records of singing, the lowest and highest tone of voice (vocal range) are to be recorded.
Instrumental musicians may play the complete scale of their instrument into the phonograph in the order usual for them; with string instruments the open strings are separately to be recorded.
- h) Every recording is immediately to be reproduced once all the way through as a test.
- i) Noting down the journal number and title of the recording on the cylinder box.
- j) The most careful filling out of the journal possible.
- k) It is advisable as occasion permits to make two recordings of a piece of music on two different days (also by different musicians).

C. Journal

- a) Sequential number of the recording:
- b) Date and place of the recording:
- c) Identity of the Speaker of Musician:
 - a) Race, birthplace, place of residence:
 - b) Name:
 - c) Age:
 - d) Sex:
 - e) Occupation:

[Page 62]

- d) Subject of the Recording:
 - a) Language (conversation, declamation)?
Song (solo, duet, choral, instrumental accompaniment)?
Instrumental music?
 - b) Title of the piece:
 - c) Genre of the piece (dance song, religious song, folk song, etc.)?
 - d) Indigenous name of the key:
- e) Text of the song or the language sample in the most careful transcription possible, if possible with translation (to be noted on the right side):

- f) Does an indigenous notation of the recorded piece exist? (if possible, noting down in the same on the right side):
- g) Noteworthy side details (the performer's posture, expression, gestures; dance, ceremonies):

Optional:

- h) Indigenous theory? Scales (5-intervals, 7-intervals? how do the natives motivate [*motivieren*] the number of steps?) Polyphonic in singing and instrumental music?
 - i)
 - a) Professional musicians (organizations, social position, etc.)?
 - b) Amateur music (diffusion, teaching, etc.)?
 - k) Relation of the natives to European music?
 - l) Native myths of origin and history of music?
4. Of particular flutes, even the way in which they are blown into is not known here.
 5. Of flutes with decorations as well as instruments of the panpipe type, examples are desired as numerous as possible.
 6. In addition it is to be observed whether there are special musicians by profession and special artists in the preparation of musical instruments, especially string instruments.
 7. Orchestra.
 8. Polyphonic song.
 9. Accompaniment.
 10. With drums it is to be rigorously distinguished whether they are struck for dancing or else musical instruments in the narrower sense, or if they find use as a signal apparatus.
 11. "Drum language" deserves the most thorough study; despite its distribution over a very large part of Africa and Oceania it has thus far been investigated and elucidated for us in the case of very few races.

[Page 65]

12. Bells.
13. Rattles and clappers.
14. Castanets.
15. Gong, *Klangsteine* [sound-stones?]
16. Tambourines, cymbals, kettledrums.
17. Drums with regulatable tuning.
18. Clarinets, oboes, bagpipes.

19. String instruments:
 - a) plucked
 - b) struck
 - c) stroked
20. Ceremonies at which music is made.
21. Music while working (e.g. while rowing)
22. Time [*Takt*], musical ability.
23. War dances.
24. Dances in which animals are imitated.

Translation by Patrick D. Feaster from the 1908 Edition:

Königliches Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin. 1908. "Music." In *Anleitung für ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika and Ozeanien*. 5th ed. Berlin: Gebr. Unger. 2-14.

[Page 2]

- g) The individual parts of musical pieces in which several persons perform together not in unison are to be recorded, each one by itself, and specifically in such a way that the one part is placed directly in front of the funnel [of the phonograph] and the others in the background, so that all of them play for each recording, but by changing places each time another part is always coming into the foreground.
- h) After records of singing, to record the lowest and highest tone of voice (vocal range)
- i) Instrumental musicians may play the complete scale of their instrument into the phonograph in the order usual for them (cf. 5.D). With string instruments the open strings are also to be recorded by themselves.
- [Work skips over j]
- k) After records of singing, the spoken text is to be recorded as occasion offers. Likewise with drum language.
- l) If the cylinder runs out before the conclusion of the melody, then this is still to be recorded separately.
- m) Every recording is immediately to be reproduced once all the way through as a test. (Generally give pleasure to the natives and encourages them to further productions). Avoid further reproductions as much as possible in order to preserve the cylinder.
- n) Noting down the journal number and title of the recording on the cylinder box.
- o) The most careful filling out of the journal possible.
- p) It is advisable as occasion permits to make two recordings of a piece of music on two different days (also by different musicians).

C. JOURNAL

- a) Sequential number.
- b) Date and place of the recording.
- c) Identity of the Speaker or Musician:

1. Race, birthplace, place of residence.
 2. Name.
 3. Age.
 4. Sex.
 5. Occupation.
 6. School education (missionary education, knowledge of European music).
 7. Temporary residence outside of homeland.
 8. Reputation with regard to musical ability among others of own race.
- d) Subject of the Recording:
1. Language (conversation, declamation)?
 2. Song (solo, duet, chorus, instrumental accompaniment)?
 3. Instrumental music?
 4. Title of the piece.
 5. Genre of the piece (dance song, religious song, etc.).
 6. (If possible) Indigenous name of the key or the melodic pattern (cf. 17. b).
- e) Text of the song, the language sample, or the drum language sample in the most careful phonetic transcription possible, with interlinear translation if possible, but at least a statement of the sense.

[Page 5]

- f) Does an indigenous notation of the recorded piece exist? If possible, noting down in the same.
- g) Noteworthy side details (the performer's posture, expression, gestures; dance, ceremonies).
Cf. 6., 20. Are the natives afraid of the machine? Are they astonished, amused?
2. *Musical instruments* from most races have hitherto been represented only quite deficiently, and for this reason are to be collected as completely as possible. Whenever sending in the original is unfeasible, the most exact descriptions possible are very much desired with photographs (taken from different sides), sketches of the technical details (e.g. with drums the cross-section, the stretch-arrangement [*Spannvorrichtung*], etc.), statement of the dimensions. Statements such as "the usual form" and the like are to be avoided, because small divergences are themselves often important. The indigenous name of both the class of instrument and the individual instrument, and its meaning are always to be ascertained exactly. For *every* instrument the following points 3 through 6 are further to be observed. In order to determine the range of distribution of the different types, the statement is important [as to] whether the survey is (definitely or probably) complete.
3. *Material*. (With parts of plants (kinds of wood) the botanical name or sending in of blossoms or fruits).
- 4.
- a) The *manner of production* is to be observed personally when possible, as occasion permits instruments in different states of completion to be sent in (especially pan-pipes).
 - b) Are there special artists in the preparation of musical instruments, especially string instruments?
 - c) Do they work according to models? Perhaps ones imported from outside?
5. *Manner of tuning*.
- A. According to *nonmusical* principles.
 - a) Chance. (With bamboo flutes e.g. the holes could be bored approximately in the middle of the natural internodes.)
 - b) Convenience in the preparation of the instruments.

- c) Consideration of manageability for the player.
- d) Linear measurements (cf. no. 26).
- e) Optical-aesthetic principles (perhaps in ornamental arrangement of the flute holes).
- f) Is number symbolism decisive for the number of notes (flute holes etc.) or the length of the instrument?

B. According to *musical* principles. (*Phonographic recording if possible.*)

- a) Is the destination note decided according to opinion or according to a comparison note (model instrument of string instrument)?
- b) In which order,

[Page 6]

- c) In which intervallic steps does the tuning of the further notes follow?
- d) Are the notes that are to be compared given at the same time or one after the other?

C. *Technique* of tuning. (Xylophones can be tuned e.g. by cutting off, shaving off, or filing off the keys or by sticking on wax or resin (mostly on the underside).

D. *Phonographic recordings* after completed tuning (to the satisfaction of the natives!). Also on different days or after tuning by different persons. (With notes of short duration, repetition of the same note in the form of a trill.)

6. *Use* of the Instrument. *Photographs* of the player in his characteristic posture are greatly desired.

- a) Position of the player.
- b) Holding of the instrument.
- c) Technique of playing.

7. *Struck instruments* [*Schlaginstrumente*].

A. *Drums*.

- a) 1. Skin drums. Describe manner of preparing the skin exactly.
- 2. Slit drums.
- b) Tuning.
 - 1. Fixed tuning to an invariable pitch.
 - 2. Variable tuning.
 - 3. Different tunings during playing. In what manner is the change effected?
- c) Striking.
 - 1. With the hand (fingertips? Palm of hand?).
 - 2 [sic]. With drumsticks.
 - 3. Striking on different parts of the drum or the skin, in order to obtain different pitches, intensities, or timbres?
- d) It is to be rigorously distinguished whether the drum serves just as a musical instrument in the narrower sense, or just as a talking or signal drum, or both purposes.
- e) With musical drums observe whether they serve
 - 1. as solo performance,
 - 2. as accompaniment of dances,
 - 3. as accompaniment of song or other instruments.
- f) "Drum language" deserves the most thorough study; despite its distribution over a very large part of Africa and Oceania it has thus far been investigated and elucidated for us in the case of very few races. *Phonograms* (highest rotational speed) very much desired. Cf. also 1. B. k.

[Page 10]

B. *Wind instruments with mouthpieces and reeds.* The manner of the mouthpiece and the reeds to be exactly observed.

a) Clarinets, oboes.

b) Bagpipes (cf. 5. D.)

c) Series of reed pipes (mouth organs, e.g. the Chinese sheng).

- C.
 - a) Trombone-like
 - b) Trumpet-like
 - c) Horn-like
 - d) Shell-horns.
 - e) Warning whistles, bird-calls.

} Instruments

9. String instruments.

- A.
 - a) With or without resonating body? (Musical bows are sometimes pressed against the teeth, so that the oral cavity comprises the resonating chamber.)
 - b) Number of strings.
 - c) Material of strings.
 - d) Manner of preparing strings. Pegs.
 - e) Bridge. Fixed or moveable?
 - f) Fret-board. Frets. Fixed or moveable? Touch-knobs [*Tastknöpfe*] or marks for the division of strings.
- B. *Plucked* string instruments: Guitars, mandolins, zithers, harps.
 - a) Touched with the finger or
 - b) with a plectrum?
 - c) Is the tension of strings varied during the playing by pressure underneath the bridge?
- C. *Struck* string instruments: Struck zither ("psaltery").
- D. *Stroked* [i.e. bowed] string instruments:
 - a) Bow without a string (simple wood, bone, etc.).
 - b) Bow with a string.
 - c) Is the bowstring drawn through under the strings of the instrument?
 - d) In stroking, is exclusively the bow or also the instrument moved?

10. Chamber music and orchestra.

- a) Which instruments play together?
- b) Is there an orchestra leader or director?
- c) Which instruments accompany in singing?

11. Singing.

- a) Special characteristics
 - 1. The tone formation (e.g. squeezing [Quetschen], falsetto tones).

[Page 10]

2. Manner of delivery:

- a) Emphasis, noise of inspiration, tremolo.
- β) Characteristic for particular songs?
- γ) Recitative.
- δ) Longest periods possible without a pause for breath? Legato.
- e) Glissandos.
- b) Presence and Diffusion of:
 - 1. Solo singing.
 - 2. Duet, conversational or dialogue song [*Wechselgesang*].
 - 3. Chorus.
 - 4. Solo with choral refrain.
- c) Texts (cf. 1. B. k., 1. C. e.)

12. Special kinds of sound production without instruments. Are these present only in singing etc. or also by themselves? Do they have a particular meaning (imitation of animal voices, natural occurrences etc.)?
- a) Whistling:
 - 1. with the lips,
 - 2. between the teeth.
 - b) Tongue vibrato (tongue-r), Lip vibrato (so-called coachman's r).
 - c) Shouting.
 - d) Clapping hands, striking thighs, stamping.
13. Are there *professional musicians*?
- a) Social position, organization.
 - b) Pay.
 - c) Travel.
 - d) Education (cf. 16).
14. Do people make music in general and frequently, or only individual persons and on particular occasions?
15. Occasions of music-making:
- a) Festivals, ceremonies, healing illness (cf. 20).
 - b) Prayers.
 - c) Work songs.
 - d) Love magic.
 - e) Callers (heralds, hawkers, etc.), signals.
16. Are there particular prohibitions (taboos) in the realm of music? Can particular instruments or melodies be played or sung only by particular persons (gender, age, membership in an association, etc.) or only on particular occasions (times of the day or year; ceremonies)? Is there personal ownership of melodies? Is the right to perform the melody sold in certain circumstances? Size of honorarium? Are pieces of music (songs) deliberately changed in teaching or in performance before foreigners? What can be ascertained as to the reason for these customs?

[Page 14]

17. Indigenous musical theory.
- a) Scales. Number of intervals. How is the number of intervals motivated [*motiviert*]?
 - b) Melodic patterns that are varied by the player (singer). In individual cases of this, ask what passes as characteristic for them (if possible, *phonographic recordings* of the characteristic passages).
 - c) Notation or other memory aids.
18. Myths of origin, history of music.
19. Import and export of:
- a) Instruments (cf. 4. c., 5. B. a).
 - b) Melodies.
 - c) Theories.
 - e) Musical customs.

20. Dances. Series of snapshot images, better yet *cinematographic* recordings, greatly desired.

Exact description, also of the dance steps.

- a) War dances.
- b) Religious dances (cf. T. 4).
- c) Erotic dances.
- d) Mask dances (cf. K. 13).
- e) Mimetic dances, especially those in which animals are imitated. Dramatic scenes.
- f) Solo dancers. Dance leaders.
- g) Accompaniment by singing, instrumental music, drumming, noise-makers. Do the dancers accompany themselves?
- h) Children's games. Counting-out songs.

21. *Sense of pitch and musical talent.*

Guard against judging non-European music from a European viewpoint; general statements like "musical," "beautiful," "ugly," "peculiar," "melancholy" are worthless. On the other hand, the indigenous people's judgments about their own and about European music (being sung to or phonographic demonstration) should be collected. Occasional or systematic experiments with intelligent natives would be very profitable. Still, these assume some musical talent and psychological training on the part of the observer. Musically practised persons who plan on spending a longer time in *one* area are referred to the comprehensive instructions of C. Stumpf, which were prepared on behalf of the German Society for Experimental Psychology and deposited in the Institute for Applied Psychology and Psychological Collective Research [*Psychologische Sammelforschung*] at Berlin.

A simple experiment would be the following: One sings individual tones to the informant and has him sing them back directly; next one *whistles* individual tones and has him likewise *sing* them back; also the *a* of the pitch-pipe; if possible also different (successive) intervals and scales. The pitches sung etc. to [the informant] as well as reproduced ones are to be *phonographically* recorded.

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