



Edited by
GREGORY BARZ
and
WILLIAM CHENG

Queering the Field

Sounding Out
Ethnomusicology

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Barz, Gregory F., 1960– | Cheng, William, 1985–
Title: Queering the field : sounding out ethnomusicology /
edited by Gregory Barz and William Cheng.
Description: New York, NY : Oxford University Press, [2019] |
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2019005239 | ISBN 9780190458027 (cloth) |
ISBN 9780190458034 (pbk.) | ISBN 9780190458065 (oxford scholarship online)
Subjects: LCSH: Ethnomusicology. | Homosexuality and music. |
Gender identity in music.
Classification: LCC ML3798 .Q43 2019 | DDC 780.89—dc23
LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019005239>

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

Paperback printed by Marquis, Canada
Hardback printed by Bridgeport National Bindery, Inc., United States of America

To all silent [silenced] queer voices in our academic discipline—historic and present. It is our hope that within these pages there might be hope for sounding out ethnomusicology.

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Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Suzanne Ryan Melamed for her marvelous and patient shepherding of this volume from beginning to end; Marcus Pyle and Joseph Matson for expertly copy editing the manuscript; Chet Humphries for providing substantial assistance with the bibliography; and Dylan Kistler for helping compile the index. We are also grateful to those who lent the intellectual, emotional, and moral support that made this book possible, including Tomie Hahn, Deborah Wong, Kay Shelemay, and especially Wil Melchor-Barz and Chris Schepici. While *Queering the Field* is in many ways a collective labor of love, it is nevertheless populated with the talent and voices of many strong, passionate individuals. For all who have been our stewards . . . *thank you*.

About the Authors

Kathryn Alexander is an ethnomusicologist specializing in the intersections of music, dance, gender, and sexuality. She is an Assistant Professor in the Honors College at the University of Arizona, where she develops and teaches interdisciplinary general education curricula from an ethnomusicological perspective. Her current research examines the embodied and social practices that frame lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) country western dance and rodeo culture in the United States. In previous research, she applied online ethnographic methods to the practice of historical ethnomusicology and articulated the formation of ethnic whiteness and heterosexuality in Cape Breton's traditional Scottish social dance communities. Her research has been published in *MUSICultures* and the *Yearbook for Traditional Music*.

Gregory Barz is Director of the School of Music at Boston University where he serves as Professor of Ethnomusicology. He is currently the president of the Society for Ethnomusicology, and he currently conducts research of drag performance in Tel Aviv, Israel. He was formerly the Alexander Heard Distinguished Professor at Vanderbilt University. His latest book is a co-edited volume titled *The Culture of AIDS in Africa: Hope and Healing in Music and the Arts* (Oxford University Press). His monograph *Singing for Life: HIV/AIDS and Music in Uganda* (Routledge) applies the central tenets of medical ethnomusicology to a study of HIV prevention in East Africa. His book *Music in East Africa: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* was also published by Oxford University Press. He is co-editor of two editions of *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (Oxford) and *Mashindano! Competitive Music Performance in East Africa* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota). He has produced four compact discs and a documentary film and received a Grammy Award nomination in the Best Traditional World Music category for his Smithsonian Folkways CD, *Singing for Life: Songs of Hope, Healing, and HIV/AIDS in Uganda*.

Alexander M. Cannon is an ethnomusicologist specializing in the music of contemporary southern Vietnam and works as Lecturer in Music at the University of Birmingham (United Kingdom). He holds a BA in music and mathematical economics from Pomona College and an MA and PhD from the University of Michigan, where he wrote a dissertation on the changing practices of a genre

of traditional music called *đờn ca tài tử* under the guidance of Joseph Lam. He has published several articles on southern Vietnamese traditional music, charisma, and creativity studies in the *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, *Asian Music*, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, and *Ethnomusicology*. He currently serves as Book Reviews Editor of the *Yearbook for Traditional Music* and as Secretary on the Board of Directors of the Society for Asian Music.

Christi-Anne Castro is an Associate Professor of ethnomusicology in the Musicology Department of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor as well as the director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies. She received her BA from Yale University and her PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her book, *Musical Renderings of the Philippine Nation*, was released in 2011 by Oxford University Press and won the 2012 Global Filipino Literary Award for Nonfiction. She is co-editor of the journal *Music and Politics* and on the editorial board of the journal *Asian Music*. She teaches courses on music, gender, and sexuality, music and the body, and music and community.

William Cheng teaches at Dartmouth College. He is the author of *Sound Play: Video Games and the Musical Imagination* (Oxford, 2014), *Just Vibrations: The Purpose of Sounding Good* (Michigan, 2016), and *Loving Music Till It Hurts* (Oxford, 2019).

Amber R. Clifford-Napoleone (she/her/hers) is Professor of Anthropology and Director of the McClure Archives and University Museum at the University of Central Missouri, Warrensburg. She holds BA and MA degrees in history, an MS degree in museum science, and a PhD in American Studies from the University of Kansas. She is the author of two books: *Queerness in Heavy Metal* (Routledge, 2015) and *Queering Kansas City Jazz* (Nebraska, 2018). Dr. Clifford-Napoleone is one of the founders of the International Society of Metal Music Studies (ISMMS), and a contributor to the nascent field of metal music studies. As a cultural anthropologist with specializations in material culture and ethnographic methods, Dr. Clifford-Napoleone also specializes in gender, sexuality, and material culture with a focus on textiles. She resides in Missouri with her wife, their dogs, and a large collection of doom metal.

Aileen Dillane is an ethnomusicologist based in the Irish World Academy at the University of Limerick where she currently directs the MA program in Irish Music Studies and teaches in the Ethnomusicology MA and Performing Arts BA programs. Her research interests include local/global Irish musics, protest music, popular music heritages, and urban soundscapes. Aileen is currently writing a

monograph on Irish American music, extending her doctoral research at the University of Chicago, where she was a Fulbright scholar and Century Fellow. Co-founder and co-director of the *Popular Music, Popular Culture* research cluster at the University of Limerick, Aileen has co-edited five books to date, including *Songs of Social Protest: International Perspectives* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018) and *David Bowie: Critical Perspectives* (Routledge, 2015). More recently, Aileen spent a semester as an invited professor at the University of Notre Dame and is currently a research fellow at the Department of Music, King's College, London. From 2019–2022 she is one of five international partners in a European-funded research project on European music festivals, public spaces, and social diversity. Aileen plays flute and piano with the Templeglantine Ceilí Band and has recorded with a variety of musicians in Ireland and the United States.

Luis-Manuel Garcia is a lecturer in ethnomusicology and popular music studies at the University of Birmingham. He was also a post-doctoral research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, where he retains an affiliation as an adjunct researcher. His research focuses on urban electronic dance music scenes, with a particular focus on affect, intimacy, stranger-sociability, dance, embodiment, sexuality, creative industries, and musical migration. He is currently researching “techno-tourism” in Berlin while also preparing a book manuscript entitled, *Together Somehow: Music, Affect, and Intimacy on the Dancefloor*.

Nic Gareiss is a performer, teacher, and researcher of traditional music and dance. His interests include vernacular sound and movement practices from many locations, especially Ireland and its diaspora. Informed by fifteen years of ethnographic study and performance of many percussive dance traditions, Nic's work reflects his love of improvisation, traditional footwork vocabulary, and musical collaboration. He has concertized for over ten years in fifteen countries with many of the luminaries of traditional Irish music, including Frankie Gavin, Dervish, Buille, Solas, Martin Hayes, Liz Carroll, The Gloaming, and The Chieftains. He has been called “the human epitome of the unbearable lightness of being” by the *Irish Times* and “the most inventive and expressive step dancer on the scene” by the *Boston Herald*. Nic holds a degree in Anthropology from Central Michigan University and an MA in Ethnochoreology from the University of Limerick. His MA thesis, based upon ethnographic work with LGBTQIA+ competitive step dancers, was the first piece of scholarship to query the experience of sexual minorities within Irish dance. Gareiss's chapter “*An Buachaillín Bán: Reflections on One Queer's Performance within Traditional Irish Music & Dance*” appears in the book *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* edited by Clare Croft from Oxford University Press. His present research seeks to illuminate

discursive formations of national identity, gender, and sexual orientation via ethnography and embodied practice. Visit his website at www.nicgareiss.com.

Nicol Hammond is an Assistant Professor of Cultural Musicology at the University of California at Santa Cruz. She is an ethnomusicologist and popular music scholar specializing in South African music, popular music studies, and feminist and queer music studies. She is originally from Johannesburg, South Africa. Her research interests include music and nationalism, gender and sexuality, queer theory, music and sports, and the voice. She has published on queer performance in the music of Afrikaans rock musician Karen Zoid, South African choral music, and music at the 2010 Soccer World Cup. She is a choral conductor and singer.

Sarah Hankins completed the PhD in ethnomusicology at Harvard University with a dissertation focusing on musical nightlife and political aesthetics among African transmigrants and Afro-descendants in urban Israel. She is interested in music and diaspora, nightclub and studio production technologies, queerness, psychoanalysis, and sound studies of trauma and recovery. Her articles appear in *Black Music Research Journal*, *City and Society*, *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, *Ethnomusicology Review: Bring in the Noise*, and *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*; she has published review essays in *Popular Music* and *Anthropos*. Hankins is the recipient of the SEM Marcia Herndon Award, and the Anna Rabinowitz Fellowship from Harvard University's Center for Jewish Studies. She serves on the SEM Gender and Sexualities Taskforce. Her current projects include an article on necropolitical performance among Israeli and Palestinian dissidents and refugees, and research on sonic experience in clinical psychoanalysis. As a member of the U.S. Foreign Service from 2002 to 2009, she served in Tel Aviv, Washington, D.C., and throughout Latin America, winning Meritorious and Superior Honor Awards from the Department of State for her reporting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She is a dance music producer and performing DJ. Her remix collection *Been in the Storm So Long* (2009) was independently produced in consultation with Smithsonian Folkways.

Matthew Leslie Santana is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at Harvard University. His primary interests involve race, sexuality, and performance in the Americas, and he is currently at work on a project on gender performance in Cuba. Matthew is also an active violinist and has performed as a New Fromm Player at the Tanglewood Music Center, an artist-in-residence at the Intimacy of Creativity at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and a baroque violinist with Apollo's Fire. As an educator, he has served as a graduate

student instructor at the University of Michigan, a teaching fellow at Harvard University, and as resident faculty at the Sphinx Preparatory Academy, a tuition-free summer program for young Black and Latinx string players. Prior to starting the PhD, Matthew studied violin, historically informed performance practice, and women's studies at the University of Michigan, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Case Western Reserve University.

Peter McMurray is an ethnomusicologist, saxophonist, and media artist. He is Lecturer in Ethnomusicology at University of Cambridge. His research focuses primarily on the intersection of Islam and sound, including recitation, liturgy, theology, and architecture, and he is currently completing a book and media project, *Pathways to God: The Islamic Acoustics of Turkish Berlin*. He has also published on various aspects of the history of sound recording, especially tape and YouTube music. He is currently researching music and the refugee crisis in contemporary Europe and Turkey as well as intersections of sound, media, and empire in the nineteenth century. His media practice includes extensive non-fiction audio and video work.

Moshe Morad is a radio broadcaster in Israel, hosting a popular daily world music program. He lectures at Tel Aviv University and at Ono Academic College, where he teaches courses on African music and on gender and queerness in the music of Africa and the Middle East. Moshe completed his PhD at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and is author of *Fiesta de Diez Pesos: Music and Gay Identity in Special Period Cuba*, winner of the 2015 Alan Merriam Prize honorable mention awarded by SEM and the 2016 Herndon Book Prize awarded by SEM's Gender and Sexualities Section. He is also the co-editor of *Mazal Tov Amigos!: Jews and Popular Music in the Americas*, winner of the 2018 SEM's Jewish Music Special Interest Group Prize. His career in the media and music industry includes presenting TV and radio shows in Israel, presenting "on location" World Routes programs on BBC Radio 3 in the UK, serving as Managing Director of NMC Music, Global Marketing Director at EMI Music in the UK, and head of EMI's world music label "Hemisphere." He has produced and compiled numerous CDs in various genres, including dance music and world music.

Heather J. Paudler is a musicologist based in Bergen, Norway with degrees from Florida State University (PhD, 2015, Musicology), Pennsylvania State University (MA, 2010, Musicology with a cognate area of Art and Architecture History), and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville (BS, 2007, Music). Her dissertation examines the music, text, choreography, and history of Panamanian expressions of *los moros y cristianos* dance-dramas. In her dissertation she traces the

movements and intersections of the current expression of *la danza Bugabita* to build a story in both time and space that portrays the historical continuum from which the contemporary dance-drama emerges in order to illuminate dynamic meanings that reflect discourses of race, ethnicity, gender, and identity.

Gillian M. Rodger is Professor of Musicology and Ethnomusicology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Rodger's work has centered on popular theatrical entertainment in the United States, primarily in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Her first book, *Champagne Charlie and Pretty Jemima: Variety Entertainment in the Nineteenth Century* (University of Illinois Press, 2010), charted the emergence of variety in pre-Civil War America and showed the development of the form—in terms of performance conventions, management styles, and business strategies—until the mid-1880s. She has just published a second monograph that focuses on cross-dressed performance in variety and vaudeville in order to examine working-class gender construction and shifting class affiliation in the last third of the nineteenth century. Rodger has also completed work on the Scottish popular musician Annie Lennox, and on the persistence of nineteenth-century moral reform arguments in the reaction to jazz and rock 'n' roll in the twentieth century.

Jeff Roy is a filmmaker, musician, and Assistant Professor in the Department of Liberal Studies at Cal Poly Pomona. Roy holds a PhD in ethnomusicology from UCLA and is a Postdoctoral Alumnus of le Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS) à l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, France. His work focuses on the politics and performance of queer, transgender and *hijrā* identity formations at the intersections of race, class, caste, and religion in South Asia. Roy's writings appear in *Asian Music*, *Ethnomusicology* (awarded SEM's 2018 Marcia Herndon Prize for exceptional work in gender and sexuality), *MUSICultures*, *QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking* (for which he also served as guest editor of a forum on queer South Asian scholarship), and *Transgender Studies Quarterly*. His award-winning films have been screened at the Director's Guild of America, Film Society of Lincoln Center, and the Godrej India Culture Lab; featured in *Out Magazine* and *Vogue India*; and supported through research and production fellowships by Fulbright-mtvU, Fulbright-Hays, and Film Independent.

Zoe C. Sherinian is Professor of Ethnomusicology and Division Chair at the University of Oklahoma. She has published the book *Tamil Folk Music as Dalit Liberation Theology* (Indiana University Press 2014), articles on the Dalit *parai* frame drum in the journal *Interpretation* (2017), and articles on the indigenization of Christianity in *Ethnomusicology* (2007), *The World of Music* (2005),

and *Women and Music* (2005). She has also published on soft-butuh gender constructions in k. d. lang's vocal performance (2001). Sherinian has produced and directed two documentary films: *This Is a Music: Reclaiming an Untouchable Drum* (2011), on the changing status of Dalit (outcaste) drummers in India, and *Sakthi Vibrations* (2018), on the use of Tamil folk arts to develop self-esteem in young Dalit women at the Sakthi Folk Cultural Centre. She is presently writing a book titled *Drumming Our Liberation: The Spiritual, Cultural, and Sonic Power of the Parai Drum*. Sherinian is also an active musician who performs and conducts trainings in the *parai* drum. She has extensively studied the mrdangam, the classical drum of South Indian Karnatak music, and performs on the jazz drum set.

Tes Slominski is a music/sound scholar and fiddle player. Her monograph *Trad Nation: Gender, Sexuality, and Race in Irish Traditional Music* (in press at Wesleyan University Press) connects issues of gender and sexuality in the early twentieth-century Irish nationalist music scene with more recent developments in Irish music, including the increasing visibility and presence of LGBTQ performers and musicians of color. In addition to her scholarly work, Tes is an active performer who specializes in the regional repertoire and style of Sliabh Luachra, an area at the border of counties Kerry and Cork. She founded the still-thriving Blue Ridge Irish Music School in Charlottesville, Virginia in 1999, and taught ethnomusicology at Beloit College, where she also founded the North Atlantic Music Ensemble.

Henry Spiller (Professor, Department of Music, UC Davis) is an ethnomusicologist whose research focuses on Sundanese music and dance from West Java, Indonesia. His books include *Gamelan: The Traditional Sounds of Indonesia* (ABC-CLIO, 2004), *Erotic Triangles: Sundanese Dance and Masculinity in West Java* (University of Chicago, 2010), and *Javaphilia: American Love Affairs with Javanese Music and Dance* (University of Hawaii, 2015). His work has been supported by awards from Fulbright (1998–99 and 2013) and the Balzan Prize Foundation. Notable awards include the Association for Asian Performance Debut Panel Award (1998), the American Harp Society Adams Award for Academic Research (1997), SEM's Marcia Herndon Prize for exceptional ethnomusicological work in gender and sexuality, an honorable mention for SEM's Merriam Prize for *Erotic Triangles* (2011), and SEM's Bruno Nettl Prize (2016) for *Javaphilia*. At UC Davis, he teaches world music classes and graduate seminars, and directs the Department of Music's *gamelan* ensemble.

Cory W. Thorne is Associate Professor in the Department of Folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland. He is cross-appointed with Memorial's School of Music, is a member of the Research Centre for the Study of Music,

Media and Place (MMaP), and has served as president of the Folklore Studies Association of Canada, and convener of the LGBTQ and Allies Section of the American Folklore Society. His primary research interests are in queer and vernacular theory, underground economies, popular culture/music, critical regionalism, vernacular religion, and material culture. Since 2008, he has been conducting on-going ethnographic research with a “gay ranch” in Havana province. His past research was focused on Newfoundland expatriate community associations, involving fieldwork in Newfoundland spaces (including folk festivals, social clubs, bars, and restaurants) in Alberta, Ontario, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

FOREWORD

1

Queering the Field

A Foreword

Kay Kaufman Shelemay

It is an honor to write a foreword to such a forward-looking collection. I offer warm congratulations to co-editors Gregory Barz and William Cheng, who conceived and organized this landmark volume, and to the many colleagues from across ethnomusicology and allied fields of scholarship who contributed memorable essays. *Queering the Field: Sounding Out Ethnomusicology* provides deep insights into the too-long neglected field of queer studies in ethnomusicology. But this volume in fact achieves so much more than one might anticipate. *Queering the Field* unveils queer studies already underway within the heart of ethnomusicology. It also reveals the compelling theoretical relevance for queer studies within both cross-cultural musical inquiry at large and other domains of knowledge production across the arts and humanities. Providing an intellectual cartography for new directions, essays in the volume explore multiple queer locations and subjectivities, offering insights into the performance of queerness in the field, within various institutions, and as part of many, often unsuspected, social and musical scenes. The introduction by Gregory Barz provides both a clarification of the rapidly changing terminological challenges of queer studies and an overview of the history of important theoretical concepts. In short, this volume delivers both intellectual support and a moral guide for considering how one can bring wisdom from queer studies into one's own scholarship.

Ethnomusicological research and writing have long been a heavily androcentric and heteronormative domain. Despite the history of women working in a discipline defined primarily by men from early dates—and despite ethnomusicology's acknowledgment and embrace of personal difference within the profession across a full range of sexual preferences and gender identities—the field has been remarkably tardy in incorporating more nuanced gender studies and the subject of erotics into its scholarly agenda. Ethnomusicologists began to look closely at dimensions of gendered musical performance only over the course of little more than the last twenty-five years or so, playing catch up on the manner in which gender differences inflect so many aspects of musical and social life. Yet editor Gregory Barz is surely correct that the normalization of our

core practices in the field and in our written ethnographies follows “a straight set of rules.” Ethnomusicological approaches to gender have been heavily binary, shaped by a habitus of compulsory heterosexuality. With the publication of *Queering the Field*, we have arrived at a moment when a critical mass of researchers has stepped forward to discuss the importance of queer theory to their own work and lives, and they have proposed promising new pathways for ongoing research for the field at large. A close reading of the following pages provides many important, often revelatory, insights.

Ethnomusicology was long stymied in its approach to gender studies in part due to the tension derived from reconciling sensitivity to cross-cultural differences as well as the presence of often conflicting identities of the fieldworker and research associates. Perhaps ethnomusicology needed to work through a transitional period of attention to gender and music, first carrying out remedial studies necessary to include the presence of women in the androcentric world of cross-cultural composition and performance. But we have now entered into a new age with more open discussions about varying roles of different gender identities and a range of sexual preferences.

This volume is particularly eloquent in spanning the distance between the researcher’s experience and the field of engagement. The reader can also expect to learn that queering the field brings with it great challenges, including a full measure of risks for colleagues who expose their own lives and gender identities in a world still rife with homophobia and other modalities of overt discrimination. For researchers working in many locales worldwide, including North America and Europe, revealing one’s own gender preferences in relation to the field experience can be a precarious act.

Queering the Field sounds a wakeup call to ethnomusicology as scholarly practice as well as to each ethnomusicologist, speaking out eloquently against the silencing of queer identities within all fields of endeavor. This collection of essays takes on often contested relationships between gender, sexuality, and race. It explores the boundaries of gender experiences past and present and in live as well as virtual contexts. Essays interrogate the centrality of eroticism, and so much more. This volume will no doubt move queer studies into the center of ethnomusicological discourse—that is, if it is not already there, as Gregory Barz acknowledges when he writes that “We are all just a bit queer, working within a slightly queered discipline” (94).

INTRODUCTION

2

Queering the Field

An Introduction

Gregory Barz^{*}

Sadly, *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology* (Brett, Wood, and Thomas 1994) represents an important juncture in musicology, but there are no ethnomusicologists in that collection, and in many ways—eleven years later—most ethnomusicologists have still not engaged deeply with sexuality studies or queer theory despite the fact that music is often a key performative means for defining the terms for pleasure and desire.

—Deborah Wong (2006:266)

Prelude

Ronny Chokron takes a long drag on his cigarette and then asks me to order him another espresso. A waiter in the bustling sidewalk café along Tel Aviv's trendy Rothschild Boulevard rushes over as Ronny's well-manicured hand gesticulates with snapping fingers in the air. The waiter asks if we would like to order food as well. Ronny stops him by blurting out, "שובלל הכירצ ינא, קתומ, יוא," "ברעה הדומצ הלמש" [Oh honey, I need to wear a *tight* dress tonight!]. "I'm Nona Chaland tonight," Ronny informs us. The waiter smiles and rushes back into the restaurant. Later that evening a cab drops me off at a local art museum. The plaza in front of the museum is already crowded as people queue up to purchase tickets for the gala opening of a new exhibit, with gay icon Nona Chaland as MC. As I enter the museum-turned-techno-performance space, Nona walks flawlessly over to me in impossibly tall heels and announces to the assembled guests in her microphone that "יתוברו גלוקיזום-ונתאה, יתורלבג"

^{*} With gratitude, I thank colleagues Zoe Sherinian, Gillian Rodger, Steven Moon, and William Cheng for their close readings of this chapter. Their suggestions allowed the chapter to take a variety of unanticipated twists and turns. I am also grateful to several anonymous readers for their encouragement and support. Any and all omissions, however, remain my own responsibility.

[ladies and gentlemen, the homo ethnomusicologist is here!]. Draped in chiffon with a long silver-haired wig and perfect makeup, the drag queen (“honey, I’m a fashion artist!”) mingles with the guests throughout the night, dragging me, the intentionally queered ethnomusicologist, behind her. At no point does the performance artist seem out of place, and at no point does anyone *not* welcome her into their conversation. She is an expected addition to the queered ambient Tel Aviv environment.

What Does It Mean to Queer the Field?

The musicians with whom ethnomusicologists are privileged to work typically do not rely on a singular code of ethics that guides their cultural performativity; in fact, the fracturing of such expectations in the field is frequently the rule rather than the exception. And yet, as fieldworkers, ethnomusicologists are frequently bound to institutionalized codes of ethics, beginning at home with the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) of our professional affiliations, and expanding to the expectations of accessing and attaining local research clearance. Do the codes outlined in such institutional documents constrain the practice of ethnomusicology? To normalize the core practice of fieldwork—making it follow a *straight* path, a *straight* set of rules—seems a violent act given that musical practice frequently involves improvisation, spontaneity, and the release of expectations and reassignment of responsibilities.

If a queered identity is conceptualized as one that is non-normative, how then do prescribed ethical codes affect fieldwork practice? And how can the boundaries of such marked or unmarked deviance be addressed within the practice of researchers and informants in ethnomusicological work? In many ways, these questions mirror those in the opening section of the volume *After Sex? On Writing Since Queer Theory*:

Does the very distinction between the sexual and nonsexual matter to queer thinking, and if so, when, where, and how? Can work be regarded as queer if it’s not specifically “about” sexuality? This finding oneself “after” queer theory differs—in terms of desire, location, temporality, loyalty, antagonism, comradeship, or competence—from finding oneself “after” a traditional academic discipline, critical race theory, a religious orientation, a political conviction, feminism, lesbian and gay studies . . . ? (Halley and Parker 2011:2)

In *Queering the Field*, as in *After Sex?*, we aim to move beyond earlier models in which musicality is equated with difference and thus understood as queer (per Philip Brett’s invaluable claim in musicology’s *Queering the Pitch* [2006(1994)]).

Rather, in this volume, we propose to expand the critical, social, and behavioral rubrics of musicality to include categories of play, performance, masquerade, expression, subjectivity, interiority (and all the concepts, actions, and habits that inform the production, circulation, and study of music and sound writ large). Concepts of normativity will also need to be understood in relation to institutionalization, discipline, canon, and habitus.

Perhaps ethnomusicology's historically shadowed presence "in the closet" mirrors the reluctance of individual ethnomusicologists and their delayed (if not late) entrance to the queer dance floor, as ethnomusicologist Ellen Koskoff suggests in a recent interview with Jennifer Kyker:

[Kyker]: Are there any ethnographies you particularly value for their portrayal of men as gendered? [Koskoff] Certainly the queer musicology scholarship has really looked at that. However, a lot of that work is about erotic relationships between men. . . . What I find interesting is that most of the people who are coming to that position are either out gay, or women. The non-out males are more reluctant. (Kyker 2014:8–9)

This "reluctance" indicates a continued positionality of a perhaps closeted intellectual agenda, mirroring what Sara Ahmed labels as a desire to maintain "straight lines," since "the forms they elevate into moral and social ideals (such as marriage and family life) will be rejected by those whose bodies can and do 'line up' with the straight line, which is not, of course, all straight bodies" (2006:174).

Since the 1980s intellectuals have reclaimed "queer" as a marker of identity, and the authors in *Queering the Field* continue this intellectual cultivation by transforming the concept in several subversive ways for the field of ethnomusicology: the queer rejection of heteronormativity in field research design and implementation, the queer embrace of sound as embodied, the queer critique of gendered binaries, the advocacy for queer-identified musical individuals and traditions, and the queered rethinking of inherited theoretical models for analyzing and performing global music traditions. There is much at stake for the authors in this volume as they intentionally mark the heretofore unmarked. Lauren Berlant and Elizabeth Freeman point directly to the privileging afforded to heteronormativity when applied as an unmarked category:

By heteronormativity we mean the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged. Its coherence is always provisional, and its privilege can take several (sometimes contradictory) forms: unmarked, as the basic idiom of the personal and the social; or marked

as a natural state; or projected as an ideal or moral accomplishment. It consists less of norms that could be summarized as a body of doctrine than of a sense of rightness produced in contradictory manifestations—often unconscious, immanent to practice or to institutions. (1993:548n2)

And as Clare Croft suggests in the introduction to *Queer Dance*, the queering of performance demands a clear “rejection of normativity” and the ability to be comfortable in the midst of discord:

“[Q]ueer” arises from a critical entanglement of gender and sexuality within a larger call for resisting normativity. “Queer” function as an umbrella term for LGBTQ people and recognizes non-normativity more broadly. . . . To lay claim to “queer” as one’s identity, as many do in the twenty-first century, often denotes a non-normative gender or sexual identity and that one is not invested in more mainstream LGBT policies. This is an example of how a label can take on a queerly performative function, undoing even what we think a label does. (2017:9)

At one time the LGBT(QI+) label invoked by Croft might have been just an acronym of confusing terms. I share a footnote from Horacio Ramírez and Nan Boyd’s introduction to queer oral history in order to establish a shared understanding of the non-normativity explored by many authors in the present volume:

The acronym LGBT (the most pervasive, as well as Anglo- and Euro-centric globally) is meant to describe nonheterosexually identified women and men: lesbian women, gay men, bisexual women and men, and transgender women and men who may be gay, bisexually, or lesbian identified but also heterosexual or straight. The acronym, emerging from conceptual, historical, and political assumptions that these individual identity-based categories are fixed and static, fails to capture a great deal of queer erotic life and gender expressions, especially when we examine those that existed prior to the identity-based civil rights era and social movements dependent on a public politicized identity. It also fails to capture many of the identities and expressions emerging in non-white communities and non-European or European-descent nations and populations. “Queer” was meant to respond to some of these conceptual limitations by connoting sexual and gender transgression more broadly, but it carries its own Euro-centric historical formation. The term (still derogatory to some while liberating for others) was born out of the more in-your-face (rather than mainstream and assimilationist) grassroots political struggles in the late 1980s and early 1990s in large urban centers in the United States. (2012:17–18, n2)

Ramírez and Boyd continue to unpack the presence of queer politics in the Euro-American intellectual academy in this directly addressed footnote and hint at a longstanding critical relationship between queer identity and queer theory.¹ Regarding the late entry of queer theory to ethnomusicology, Ramírez and Boyd help us just a bit by suggesting that “historically, academic queer theory followed the grassroots innovations, not the other way around” (Ramírez and Boyd 2012:18, n2). Thus, it is perhaps understandable that the location of queer practice has been identified and situated first within ethnographic work before a queer theory ended up emerging organically within the discipline of ethnomusicology.

If *Queering the Field* leads to an increased awareness and advocacy of queer-identified issues and individuals in our discipline, then we have accomplished a significant objective. The authors in this volume provide nuanced case studies for further exploration, and in so doing they have each contributed to the subtitle of this volume: *Sounding Out Ethnomusicology*.

Anxiety in the Margins—Queer Pursuits in Musicology

So, why *has* there been a paucity of queer inquiry in ethnomusicology while significant efforts in closely allied disciplines (musicology, anthropology, history, and sociology) have led to innovative and ongoing responses to queer theory? Early efforts in queer musicology from the early 1990s met resistance that resulted in open and perhaps overt homophobia. As Deborah Wong remarks in this Introduction’s epigraph, ethnomusicologists have not been represented in publications focused on queer topics produced in our sister disciplines to date (note that even the part deux-esque *Queering the Popular Pitch* [Sheila Whiteley and Jennifer Rycenga, eds. 2006] closets the efforts of those ethnomusicologists included in the volume by labeling such efforts on the back cover as a promise “to establish a new level of discourse in a growing field of *musicological* research” [emphasis added]). *Out in the Field: Reflections of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists* (Ellen Lewin and William L. Leap, 2006 [1996]) is one of the most visible documents situating the queering of anthropology in praxis, specifically within field research and constructions of ethnographic narrative. While none of the volume’s authors approach the question of whether anthropology is an *inherently* queered discipline, several authors nevertheless unmask the hegemony of the marked, masculine nature of the discipline. A related

¹ For an overview of queer performative identity in American popular culture, see Stéphanie Genz and Benjamin A. Brabon’s essay on “Queer (Post)Feminism” in *Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories* (2009).

volume, *Out in Theory: Reflections of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists* (2002), positions the work of self-identified queer researchers as “queer,” and in so doing the volume perhaps inadvertently (re)marginalizes such work by labeling and repositioning queer research outside the so-called mainstream. Within the ever-increasing catalog of queer studies, there is precious little attention given to music and queer identity; this is odd, especially given the prominent role of the body in music’s reception, perception, and discursive formation. The few musical reflections that involve queer theory are often sidelined and frequently presented by non-ethnomusicologists with facility in theoretical chops, such as legal scholar Carl Stychin’s recent provocative study of the Eurovision song contest (2014).

For ethnomusicologists trained in the 1980s and 1990s, Tony Larry Whitehead and Mary Ellen Conaway’s edited volume, *Self, Sex, and Gender in Cross-Cultural Fieldwork* (1986) was an invaluable resource for reflection on the multidisciplinary shift in focus on the transformed self in relation to field research, and yet there is not a single mention in any of the volume’s articles about homosexual identity, let alone an intentional queering of identity. Colin Turnbull’s opening article dances precariously close to the issue of queer identity (1986), but nevertheless leaves the issue unspoken and unnamed (and thus unmarked). *Queering the Field* thus provides a bold response by providing a foundation for further work in ethnomusicology while filling a void that some did not know existed. The authors in *Queering the Field* reveal and highlight the work of others in similar disciplines while simultaneously building a platform within ethnomusicology that intentionally relocates queer positions at the very center of our discipline.

So where *were* the ethnomusicologists while anthropology publicly grappled with its queer identity? Well, I suspect that many of us stayed out of the brawl as passive observers of the queer debate—for a reason. It might be overly clever to suggest that the motivation for reluctant engagement was that ethnomusicology was in a sense already queer (at least relative to music history and music theory), and as such, scholars saw little need for explicit articulations of queerness or queer identity. Perhaps it is the already queered status of ethnomusicology in the academy that has contributed to the anxieties long harbored by ethnomusicologists, encouraging many to disavow queer theories and avoid any direct address of queerness in their work for fear of even further marginalization in the academy (these reflections were first introduced in a 2015 blog posting by Cheng and Barz for Oxford University Press). Perhaps. Or it may be that the varying challenges, affordances, and pressures of scholars’ disparate field sites have impeded harmonious and ethically sound dialogues about queerness “out of concerns about culturally relative currencies of gender and sexuality” (Cheng and Barz 2015).

Queer? What's *That*?

Perhaps the most dramatic and historically infamous example of how “queer” has been positioned as a hyper-internalized figure of speech is the violent use of the term during the infamous Gore Vidal versus William F. Buckley debate of 1968, broadcast as part of ABC’s Chicago Democratic Convention coverage. At one particular moment during the debate, Vidal pushed Buckley to the edge by calling him a “pro-war crypto Nazi.” Buckley appeared to be flustered as he responded with an emotional retaliation, calling Mr. Vidal “a little queer” on a live television broadcast feed.² At the time, such a public utterance would have been the ultimate *public* insult.

In this text we deliberately invoke “queer” as a verb, albeit all dolled up as an action verb, “queering.” Queering the field is a deliberate attempt on the part of many authors in this volume to define the act of *doing* ethnomusicology, specifically engaging in ethnographic field research that is, if not inherently queered, then open to the queer gaze. But, again, what is a “queer”? As a noun, queer functions as either an embraced self-label for an individual or unwelcomed marker of identity imposed by someone else. The term also contributes to collectivity when representing groups of queer-identified people, such as “queers of color.” The historical connotation of queer-as-aberrant nevertheless persists and is both embraced and disavowed by many today. The historical deviance associated with queer identity is referenced in the University of California, Davis’s “LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary” published by their Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Resource Center which I offer here as a baseline for measuring the conceptualization of queer-as-aberrance for this volume:

Queer: One definition of queer is abnormal or strange. Historically, queer has been used as an epithet/slur against people whose gender, gender expression and/or sexuality do not conform to dominant expectations. Some people have reclaimed the word queer and self-identify as such. For some, this reclamation is a celebration of not fitting into norms/being “abnormal.” Manifestations of oppression within gay and lesbian movements such as racism, sizeism, ableism, cissexism, transmisogyny as well as assimilation politics, resulted in many people being marginalized, thus, for some, queer is a

² While most sources transcribe this fabulous discursive moment with Buckley accusing Vidal of being a “little queer,” I do find it interesting to note that several important recent sources have chosen to transcribe the albeit muddy network audio tape of this historic event by eliminating the diminutive “little,” letting Vidal off the hook as only “a queer” (see Hertzberg 2015 and Vulliamy 2015).

radical and anti-assimilationist stance that captures multiple aspects of identities (LGBTQIA Resource Center Glossary n.d.).

In this volume, we will quickly introduce a variety of efforts that reclaim queer as a positive term and celebrate the term as an integral aspect of one's identity or part of the identities of the people with whom we work; reclaiming power to use, position, and document queerness is at the heart of many authors' contributions in this volume. As a marker of identity, the term is indeed malleable and embraced by those inside the fold (those who self-identify as queer). Many on the periphery and outside the fold, however, use the term reluctantly. There is certainly a degree of reluctance by the older, more senior members of our academic disciplines who exist within the "queer" fold who steadfastly refuse to embrace the term, espousing the usage of "homosexual" or "gay" as markers of identity instead. Yet these terms, especially "homosexual," cause more confusion today than ever and produce adverse reactions as complex as "queer" once did. The disinclination by some scholars to embrace queer as a marker of identity can be clearly seen in the penultimate sentence of the following statement:

Queer. 1. An umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transpeople, intersex persons, the radical sex communities, and many other sexually transgressive (underworld) explorers. 2. This term is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label instead of "bisexual" as a way of acknowledging that there are more than two genders to be attracted to, or as a way of stating a non-heterosexual orientation without having to state who they are attracted to. 3. A reclaimed word that was formerly used solely as a slur but that has been semantically overturned by members of the maligned group, who use it as a term of defiant pride. "Queer" is an example of a word undergoing this process. For decades "queer" was used solely as a derogatory adjective for gays and lesbians, but in the 1980s the term began to be used by gay and lesbian activists as a term of self-identification. Eventually, it came to be used as an umbrella term that included gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered people. Nevertheless, a sizable percentage of people to whom this term might apply still hold "queer" to be a hateful insult, and its use by heterosexuals is often considered offensive. Similarly, other reclaimed words are usually offensive to the in-group when used by outsiders, so extreme caution must be taken concerning their use when one is not a member of the group. (University of Southern California's LGBT Resource Center)

I offer this institutional definition of this volume's key term in order to underscore the exclusionary reception of the "queer" in today's culture. In order to embrace the complicated reception history supporting the loaded term, this volume focuses primarily on queer as a verb—to queer. By intentionally verbing queer, we can actively pull apart a situation, an act, or a process and explore its boundedness, its limitations, and its biases. By queering ethnomusicology, we redirect our gaze toward the purposeful decisions we make in the field, the assumptions we carry with us, and the habits we form that cause us to make the assessments and evaluations we do. And yet, "to queer" does not mean to throw out categories, but rather to explore elasticity and acknowledge ethnomusicology's presence in the history of forming such categories. "To queer" also acknowledges the complexity of embracing the existence of two (or more) ways of understanding a given scenario in our field research, a skill effectively valued by F. Scott Fitzgerald: "[T]he test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function" (1945[1936]:69).

Additionally, by verbing queer, several of the ethnomusicologists featured in this volume eagerly grab the opportunity to revisit, reexamine, and reinterpret their own experiences in the field, while others still reevaluate (while simultaneously acknowledging the problematic positionality inherent therein) the work of others in the discipline. At the heart of all such efforts at reexamination is the interpretation afforded by new applications of *queer theory* in ethnomusicology.

The resultant implications of the "why this book / why now" core question will be obvious and recognizable to most; acknowledgment of a queered identity by academics has long been dangerous, punishable, and in fact illegal in many cultures, and in many countries until quite recently. As a child of first-generation German immigrants to the United States, I am well aware of the roots that informed my early closeted sexual identity. Many of us grew up in times not that far removed from genocidal threats on global homosexuality, as Richard Plant outlines in *The Pink Triangle*, a study of homosexuality during the Nazi era in Germany:

That homosexuals, by a series of laws, were treated as subhumans does not seem in retrospect particularly illogical or even unexpected. After all, their classification as heretical deviants boasted a long lineage. From the viewpoint of Nazi logic, the extermination policy concerning homosexuals had a kind of ideological justification. Himmler's concept of a National Sexual Budget classified homosexuals as "propagation blanks" and diagnosed them as a health hazard because they spread a so-called homosexual infection. Eicke's police needed no such ideological rationale: homosexuals were simply regarded with the hatred characteristic of ancient homophobic superstitions. (1986:185)

By invoking the very real danger that accompanied (and continues to accompany) LGBT(QI+)-identified field researchers at relatively recent moments in our history, I merely underscore the importance of embracing—and voicing—deep culturally rooted sensitivities when positioning the queering of *contemporary* identities. As a term—at the time of writing this Introduction—“queer” is quickly becoming mainstreamed as a perfectly acceptable cover term to both reference and simultaneously question the rich plurality of non-heteronormative life and culture around the world, perhaps pushing us all to consider post-gay identities. Witness a recent *New York Times* headline, “Cape Town’s New Masculinity: In the queer capital of South Africa, young men are defining themselves through dress,” which intentionally uses the term to represent a deviance with a presumed mainstreaming of gay culture: “But even traditional gay clubs are hostile to nonconformity, so alternative queer spaces have begun to emerge” (Mesiani 2018). Having been a resident at one point in my life of the “Mother City,” Cape Town emerges in this perspective as not a “gay” capital, but rather one that is actively and intentionally “queered.”

Queer Theory! What the Heck Is That?

If nothing else, queer theory is a field supremely cognizant of the rhetorical significance of marking beginnings and endings. At the start of 2012, when the intellectual pursuit organized by the term “queer theory” was barely old enough to buy itself a beer at the local gay bar, its demise was already being forecast. Michael Warner’s *Chronicle Review* essay, titled “Queer and Then?” and the ominously subtitled “The End of Queer Theory?” was prompted by the discontinuation of Duke University Press’s important Series Q. . . . He describes the initial emergence of queer theory, when “queer” “was not yet a cable-TV synonym for gay; it carried a high-voltage charge of insult and stigma,” but notes that within four years of the first use of the term, Teresa de Lauretis and others were already worried that it had become a “conceptually vacuous creature of the publishing industry.” Thus, Warner narrates queer theory’s history as containing, from the beginning, a certain anxiety about its own utility and relevance, even as it also proved to be incredibly intellectually stimulating for those who participated in its early proliferation. (Rand 2014:156–57)

As a concept, “queer theory” is used in two ways by authors in *Queering the Field*. Several contributors use specific attributes of queer theory in order to unpack cultural production marked by individual domains within the LGBT(QI+)

acronym, referencing specific expressive identities associated with lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, and queers. In addition, several authors also rely on the central tenets of queer theory to approach direct social deviation or to question the presence of a presumed normative sexual practice or orientation in a given field research situation. It is the propensity to identify and question the “normative” in ethnomusicology that authors in this volume frequently address, in a practice similar to what Nick Rees-Roberts suggests in *French Queer Cinema*: “Queer critique, in short, attempts to undermine all normative or ‘straight’ representations of gender and sexuality, hetero or homo” (2014:5). Regarding ethnomusicology . . . it is about time.

By its queer nature, queer theory attempts to avoid strict, bounded definitions of both inclusion and exclusion—*this* is queer and *that* is not. As a theoretical construct, queer theory was first introduced by semiotician Teresa de Lauretis in 1991. As a theory, it was from the start a deliberate intervention for “sounding” out voices that had been historically and, in some cases, politically silenced as de Lauretis suggests:

It is already here in the essays’ work to deconstruct *the silences of history* and our own discursive constructions, in the differently erotic mappings of the body, and in the imaging and enacting of new forms of community by the other-wise desiring subject of this queer theory. (1991:xvi, emphasis added)

Yet, where was the “theory” in early queer theory? Sudeep Dasgupta and Mireille Rosello remind us that in its earliest days, the coupling of “queer” with “theory” was considered odd and in their view “provocative” (2014:4). For many, queer theory remains a liminal space of sorts within which scholars can meet, share ideas, and form a “counterpublic,” as Michael Warner intimates in “Queer and Then? The End of Queer Theory?”:

Queer theory in this broader sense now has so many branches, and has developed in so many disciplines, that it resists synthesis. The differences have often enough become bitter, sometimes occasioning the kind of queerer-than-thou competitiveness that is the telltale sign of scarcity in resources and recognition. That impulse can be seen, for example, in the title of a special issue of *Social Text* called “What’s Queer About Queer Studies Now?” And given queer theory’s strong suspicion of any politics of purity, it is ironic that queer theorists can often strike postures of righteous purity in denouncing one another. . . . At its best, queer theory has always also been something else—something that will be left out of any purely intellectual history of the movement. Like “I want a dyke for president,” it has created a kind of social space. Queer people of various kinds, both inside and outside academe, continue to find their way

to it, and find each other through it. In varying degrees, they share in it as a counterpublic. (Warner 2012)

Queer theory in ethnomusicology? Surrounding any efforts to date, there has been a profound silence; queer theory lives within a deafening absence in the field and fieldwork of ethnomusicology. To date, there has been little effort to address queer topics or to incorporate queer theory in the discipline, either in scholarly publications or in pedagogical matters. And yet the halls of recent meetings of the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) are filled with conference attendees running to catch individual papers on queer topics or entire panels devoted to queer identities. In fact, we are at a point of germination in the SEM where recently one contributor in this volume publicly challenged another contributor, stating that his topic was really all about being “gay” and not “queer” (enough). The queering of our intellectual growth and development is clearly grinding the crank shaft as we attempt to make it out of first gear and into second.

First gear—1997. SEM Annual Meeting in Pittsburgh. Queer Theory was a prescribed topic at the 1997 conference with papers and panels offering a variety of queer approaches in ethnomusicology. In practice, ethnomusicology was actively considering and presenting reflections on queer theory. I remember Zoe Sherinian and Gillian Rodger (both in this volume) presenting on queer topics on a panel with respondent Philip Brett. These were early days for ethnomusicology’s initial dipping of the toes into queer theory. At that time, Rodger suggested caution when applying the term queer to global contexts, fearing a colonization of other cultures by mapping queer identities onto same-sex affection. Gillian Rodger’s research and publications were among the first in the early wave of addressing queer identities in ethnomusicology. Her 1998 dissertation cites much of the nineteenth-century sexology related to sexuality and cross-dressing that informs her early work. In her early work, she found that the central tenets of queer theory did not always work well when applied to topics in the nineteenth century. An exception was her use of Judith Butler’s work on subversive reiteration (*Bodies that Matter* [1993]) in that period. In this way, queer-informed theories helped Rodger re-consider performances of male impersonators in the nineteenth century, and later in her studies of Annie Lennox (2004) and S/M as an organizing perspective on performance (2007).

SEM’s Gender and Sexualities Taskforce began as a steering committee in 1996 and achieved section status ten years later; the early organizers—self-identified as lesbians—initially charged themselves with creating a queer safe zone before eventually shifting the focus to gender and sexualities as a legitimate area of study within the discipline. Thus, a question that guides this volume might actually be better framed (as contributor Zoe Sherinian has suggested in a personal communication) as “why have gay men been so late to approach the ‘Q’ in LGBT(QI+)?”

This volume could surely not have emerged if not for the work of so many female ethnomusicologists who laid the groundwork for our present project.

Applications of queer theory in ethnomusicology were nurtured within the early efforts of feminist studies in ethnomusicology. The early work by lesbian-identified ethnomusicologists and others writing about LGBT(QI+) subjects found a home in the discipline's prodigious feminist anthologies (Koskoff [1987], Moisala and Diamond, eds. [2000], and Koskoff, ed. [2000]). The first feminist anthology in ethnomusicology (Koskoff 1987) was in fact published several years before Teresa de Lauretis coined the term Queer Theory in 1990. Ethnomusicologists were actively grappling with issues of gender and sexuality within the discipline. Carolina Robertson (1987), in particular, posed comparative cross-cultural theoretical questions of the relationship between gender, power, and performance as well as sexuality that were critical to the development of feminism in ethnomusicology (see Robertson's work on the Hawai'ian Māhū for example [1989] with an emphasis on androgyny). Yet it would still be several decades before the ethnographic embrace of queer theory in ethnomusicology would be fully embraced.

In contradistinction, the published scarcity of research output surely does not reflect an absence of LGBT(QI+)-identified ethnomusicologists. And I need to posit that queer theory has long been (hyper-)present in ethnomusicology due to its marked absence. Note, for example, that in Ellen Koskoff's recent tour de force, *A Feminist Ethnomusicology* (2014), in the section devoted to queer theory, there is nothing to mention about ethnomusicology. So, if I pose the question—why this book, why now—the answer might seem peculiar. Why actively queer the field of ethnomusicology at a moment in a time when many would say that queer theory is, well, already dead? “[Q]ueer theory (and not just its politics) is always already dead, buried, over, finished” (O'Rourke 2011:103). If queer theory has in fact already been proclaimed dead as a theoretical model, why then did ethnomusicology not attend the wake? Or, as William Cheng and I posit in the aforementioned OUP blog, “So why has queer ethnomusicology arrived late to the party? Queer theory has been around for over two decades. For ethnomusicologists to jump on the wagon now might seem akin to wandering into a club at last call, just as everyone else hails taxis home” (Cheng and Barz 2015). But I wonder, is it too late to populate the dance floor at queer theory's after-party? Is there still time to contribute a critical and meaningful voice to queer conversations? At the risk of spoiling the rest of this volume, the answer is decidedly yes!

As rhetorical theorist Isaac West suggests, the emergence of queer theory both as a concept and an intellectual framework in the early 1990s relied historically on an author's resistance of gender, sexual, or other binaries, “including the refusal to afford legitimacy to discrete classificatory schema or essentialized

elements of identities” (2018:1). In such a conceptualization, queer theories are porous and changing, and while they frequently defy being wrapped up as bright-colored packages tied up with string, they nevertheless have roots and historic trajectories that can (and should) be traced. Queer theory’s rich albeit shallow history clearly addresses social hierarchies and the hegemony of the sexual binaries, and this aspect of a theoretical construct clearly relates to the ethnomusicological project. As “a” theory it also attempts to rupture traditional models, as Annamarie Jagose suggests:

Queer theory’s debunking of stable sexes, genders and sexualities develops out of a specifically lesbian and gay reworking of the post-structuralist figuring of identity as a constellation of multiple and unstable positions. Queer is not always seen, however, as an acceptable elaboration of or shorthand for “lesbian and gay.” (1996:3)

But queer theory has always seemed to me to be about something else, something more politicized. Queer theory (or perhaps better put, queer *theorizing*) has provided intellectual room for communities historically excluded from disciplinary conversations. Queer theory carves out a sacred intellectual space and provides within that space a nourishing community.

Judith Butler and Michel Foucault on Performing Identity

The deliberate queering of categories such as gender (and the expectations that attend cultural understandings and representations of gender) is at the heart of many musical and artistic performances and experiences documented and referenced in this volume. For queer ethnomusicology, reinscribing difference onto queer categories, such as drag, would not be a subversive act, as gender theorist Judith Butler intimates:

As much as drag creates a unified picture of “woman” (what its critics often oppose) it also reveals the distinctness of those aspects of gendered experience which are falsely naturalized as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence. *In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself—as well as its contingency.* Indeed, part of the pleasure, the giddiness of the performance is in the recognition of a radical contingency in the relation between sex and gender in the face of cultural configurations of causal unities that are regularly assumed to be natural and necessary. (1990:137–38, emphasis in the original)

For Butler and other queer theorists, queer as a category of identity is purposefully porous and frequently amorphic. For any queer analysis to take root and bloom within ethnomusicology, the performance of sound must first be understood from a perspective that takes into account the ability (or lack of ability) of the queer self to transcend binary categories of gender (see also Nick Davis [2013] for a reflection on queer theory and cinema). Isaac West in rhetorical studies, whose work I referenced earlier, suggests that queer theory has finally moved beyond its traditional emphasis along these very straight-gay binaries:

More recently, the category of queerness has taken on a more ecumenical tone as it has been defined as an umbrella term that exceeds differentiation based on sexuality alone to imagine queerness in more capacious terms to include the shared concerns of trans folk, single persons, people of color, and transnational alliances of oppressed persons. Moreover, a more explicit emphasis on activism and collective action against a broader range of normativities than heteronormativity alone is increasingly prevalent. (2018:3)

For French philosopher Michel Foucault, positing a presumed natural status onto everyday human sexuality was incompatible with theories of sexuality (sex/gender) as social constructions, as Lisa Downing suggests:

The principal way in which Foucault's work has been used for contemporary interdisciplinary sexuality and queer studies is via the exploitation of his methodology of analysing the systems of thought that produced knowledge about sexuality. In particular, Foucault's strategies provide an alternative to the demand to answer the question that had for many years dominated the social and medical sciences' explorations and theorizations of sexuality: the question of whether homosexuality (or bisexuality, or perversion, or female passivity/male activity and so forth) are "innate" or "acquired." Are these supposed phenomena biological givens or social constructs? Is it nature or nurture that determines who we are? (2012:222–23)

And it is within the *performative* elements of the cultural aspects of the nature-vs-nurture divide—whether conceptualized as innate or acquired—that the ethnomusicologists in this volume ultimately find their strongest voice. And perhaps this leads us to the most substantial contribution of *Queering the Field*, namely acknowledging the presence of queer voices in our intellectual community, both in and out of the field. As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, author of the groundbreaking *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) suggests, the acts of locating

and identifying the binaries of knowledge and ignorance are best understood as a place of departure:

For any modern question of sexuality, knowledge/ignorance is more than merely one in a metonymic chain of such binarisms. The process, narrowly bordered at first in European culture but sharply broadened and accelerated after the late eighteenth century, by which “knowledge” and “sex” become conceptually inseparable from one another—so that knowledge means in the first place sexual knowledge: ignorance, sexual ignorance; and epistemological pressure of any sort seems a force increasingly saturated with sexual impulsion—was sketched in Volume I of Foucault’s *History of Sexuality*. (Sedgwick 2003:46)

The Many Voices in *Queering the Field*

Queering the Field began with a Call and as a Call. Several years ago, Will Cheng and I sat down for coffee at a Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting and found ourselves reflecting on the lack of queer voices within the general membership. Where were they? Why was there no significant engagement with queer theory in our ethnographies, in our classes, in our papers and lectures? I remember asserting that I suspected that they were in fact out there, but that without “sounding out” queer identities, the influence of queer culture and queer theories very well might be imperceptible. After issuing a public Call for participating in a publication project, *Queering the Field* was born out of a response by scholars who were eager to *sound out* their experiences, reflections, and analyses on queer identity in ethnomusicological field research. The efforts of those authors included in this volume are tremendous, especially given the lack of discipline-specific theoretical materials on which to ground their case studies. Thus, it should be underscored that the authors in *Queering the Field* take analytical and rhetorical risks in their attempts to build a foundation upon which further, perhaps full-length, ethnographies can develop.

Throughout *Queering the Field*, individual authors draw on ethnographic field research and experiences with musical cultures—much of it deeply personal—in order to unpack a history of sentiment veiling the treatment of queer music and identity in ethnomusicology. Reflected in the thematic structure of the volume is a deliberate cartography of queer spaces in the discipline—spaces that are either strongly present due to their absence, marked by direct sonic parameters, or called into question by virtue of their otherness. This collection of essays is the first large-scale study of ethnomusicology’s queer silences and queer identity politics, and as such, *Queering the Field* directly addresses the normativities that are currently at play in musical ethnography (fieldwork, analysis, performance,

transcription) as well as in the practice of musical ethnographers (identification, participation, disclosure, observation, authority). Most chapters in the volume have as their goal a particular queering of a hierarchical sexual binary, and in so doing, the authors in this volume frequently adopt radicalized voices (while rooted in strong narrative convictions) and present rhetorical and syntactical scenarios that challenge us to read in prescient singular ways for future queer writing and queer thought in ethnomusicology.

Queer Silences—contains chapters by Zoe Sherinian, Nicol Hammond, and Gillian Rodger. These authors tackle issues of silence and absence in ethnomusicology, from perspectives of methodology, ethnography, and history. Zoe Sherinian tackles several large-scale questions on queering fieldwork in India. She asks, “Does the perspective of, or the transference and countertransference of sex, gender, and sexuality matter in fieldwork?” Her rich case studies focus on her time as a young and developing ethnographer and underscore a central tension in this volume—can the ways in which field research has been conceptualized in ethnomusicology be understood as intrinsically queered *when sounded out*? In many ways, Sherinian frames the theoretical arguments that form the very core of many contributions in this volume while providing the historical glances necessary for positioning ethnomusicology within the greater disciplinary efforts to draw on queer theory. Nicol Hammond reflects on the pleasure of engaging field research in her chapter, initially likening it to sexual, physical pleasure. Her focus in her chapter is on the fandom surrounding the music culture of South African musician Karen Zoid and the lesbian base that forms the core of Hammond’s research study. Her reflections on heretofore silent, uncomfortable positions beautifully weaves in her own feelings of longing and desire “in the field.” Gillian Rodger’s article focuses on ways to engage ethnographic work in the past, specifically focusing on the question of what we can (and cannot) assume about *listening to the silence* of same-sex love in historical contexts. Her article concludes with a fantastic reflection on the role of sexuality and the researcher, revealing the decisions that guided her emergent research project.

The section **Out/In the Field** includes a group of chapters by Gregory Barz, Alexander Cannon, Christi-Anne Castro, and Moshe Morad. These chapters propose a positionality for the fieldworker in what is perhaps an inherently queered social space, the field research site. In his chapter, Barz [un]covers the queer identity of the field researcher, suggesting ways in which the expectations of both our academic discipline and our host cultures guide not only the researcher but also the informant in the decisions we make regarding our ability to sound out identity. He explores the concept of being “queer in the field,” and outlines the processes of marking and unmarking queerness in ethnographic research. The purposeful revealing of rather personal details of the queering of one’s field research is at the heart of Alexander Cannon’s chapter. For Cannon, the queering

of fieldwork occurs within transgression and performance. He provides rich scenarios that highlight his state of being—an “empty vessel”—when he began field research in Vietnam until he began seeing musical—like queer—identities as invisible in plain sight. Adopting queer orientations, Cannon suggests, affords us opportunities to adjust the lenses of our inherited narratives, whether “colonial, racist, sexist, [or] ableist.” Christi-Anne Castro’s chapter on ethnography shakes us up, forcing us to reconsider inherited models and traditions. Early in her chapter she comes out from the corner with a punch, “Writing is queer inasmuch as I can manipulate words into an ambiguity that bears resemblance with music.” Her case study of the Filipino singer Charice allows the reader to focus directly on the ambiguity of gender identities outside strict North American binary gender constructions. Moshe Morad’s chapter focuses on his fieldwork with gay men in Cuba during the Special Period. He locates what he calls an “emotional space” that music assumes in the lives of gay men, and he uses music to enter into social spaces of Havana’s *ambiente*, a local term for the gay scene in Havana. Morad’s reflections on fieldwork steer us all toward an understanding of the need for ethnomusicology to queer its methodologies in order to take into account a variety of ethical concerns outlined in his chapter.

The section **Queerness in Action** includes chapters by Jeff Roy, Matthew Leslie Santana, Henry Spiller, and Tes Slominski. The chapters in this section highlight a variety of ways in which queer subjects are studied in ethnomusicology by bringing them into new focus. The trans-*hijrā* community in India serves as the subject matter for Jeff Roy’s chapter on the role of filmmaking in queer identity formation. The camera gave Roy the opportunity to approach the “social scripts” of cultural formation within the trans-*hijrā* community, and he reflects on his adopted positionality within that community and what a queer ethnomusicology can contribute to filmmaking. In his chapter on queer hip-hop artists, Matthew Leslie Santana underscores the fact that queer hip hop artists have long contributed to a “tradition of non-heteronormativity in Black cultural production.” Leslie Santana focuses on several young artists in order to underscore the attributes of what a queer-of-color ethnomusicology might look like. He steers away from labeling a new, upcoming performance arts genre, “gay rap,” to instead suggest the emergence of a group of young artists who depend on “tough love” as a performative tool. In Henry Spiller’s tour de force, the author explores how the complexity of Indonesian gender ideologies affect the performances of both male and female *dalang topeng* (masked dancers). In his chapter, Spiller details ways in which we can (and should) avoid constant glances to Indonesia in search of deviant sexual identities. By focusing on the *topeng* of Cirebon, Spiller challenges the myth of cross-dressing as a (Western) form of social deviance. The positionality adopted by queer ethnomusicologists is also a significant aspect of the chapter by Tes Slominski. Slominski defines queerness as “the condition of

finding—or placing—oneself outside the symbolic order of everyday life, yet still needing to function within the institutions and practices structured by that symbolic order.” By engaging ethnography and field research, ethnomusicologists are perhaps by Slominski’s definition all queer. And this might be her point, namely that we have perhaps always eschewed the dialectical, the life outside (and within) binaries in our theoretical analyses.

The section **Institutions and Intersections** includes chapters by Aileen Dillane and Nic Gareiss, and Heather Paudler that cross boundaries of sameness and difference with regard to queer performativity. Aileen Dillane and Nic Gareiss offer a co-authored chapter that intentionally queers institutional contexts and practices for studying and performing music traditions in Ireland and its diaspora. In their focus on Irish traditional music and dance, they challenge us to understand the fundamental queer nature of the entire discipline of ethnomusicology by focusing on internal institutional research review boards and by intentionally queering ethnomusicology through dancing bodies. Further, in critiquing the hegemony of North American and British theorizations of queerness within the discipline, they advocate for the inclusion of local understandings (“quareness”) that may in turn offer new perspectives to the ethnomusicological project writ large. In her chapter on the rural Panamanian dance-drama known as *la danza Bugabita*, Heather Paudler identifies the ways in which elements of drag are incorporated into the dance performance. She challenges the assumption that male performers of this tradition must be gay/homosexual, suggesting a deeper canonical acceptance of the historical cross-dressing tradition deeply embedded in the culture of Panama.

The section **Who’s Queer (W)Here?** includes chapters by Amber Clifford-Napoleone, Kathryn Alexander, and William Cheng. In this section, the authors explore the positionality of gay researchers versus gay subjects in a variety of cultural, social, and spatial contexts. Amber Clifford-Napoleone presents an assortment of conundrums in her chapter, the least of which is her [inauthentic] ethnomusicological voice. Her reflections on queerness in heavy metal music encourage us to approach the value of the native field research for the queer scholar, calling for a re-examination of the power within the inherited self/subject dyad. For Kathryn Alexander, the projection of self and gender in her field research in Cape Breton directly affects the perception of gender by her field colleagues, thus affecting her own analysis. Her chapter details a brilliant shift in this perception as she worked through the evaporation of queer identity into a gendered binary during her field research. William Cheng’s chapter focuses on the “loud and queer” ways in which an online game ethnography activates queer ethics. For Cheng, the act or process of queering is a deliberate “call to social justice,” allowing the reader to also desire to play in such a “sandbox of queer optimism.” There is much at stake for us all in this process of queering of the field. As Cheng

says in a loud voice: “Queer isn’t just liminality, interstitiality, and performativity. Queer is the bottles thrown, the bodies broken, the flesh and the flame, the strategic rationing and renewal of how many fucks we have left to give.”

The section **Clubs, Bars, Scenes** offers chapters by Luis-Manuel Garcia, Sarah Hankins, Cory Thorne, and Peter McMurray. The authors in this section focus on performative spaces of queered communities from a variety of fieldwork-specific orientations. Luis-Manuel Garcia outlines the challenges (and hardships) that attend research of musical nightlife and the additional layer of complexity when focusing on queer topics. He notes a dissonance between the academic preparation for field research and the lived practice of the researcher in regard to queer performance culture, noting the active engagement of the fieldworker both forming and informing field sites. In a compelling chapter on relationships and conflict in the field, Sarah Hankins reflects on issues of gender and sexuality and the ways they impact race and racial difference. Her case study of the Rasta Club in south Tel Aviv is a vivid reflection on queer identity within the context of heterosexual interactions, especially violent ones. Cory Thorne details issues related to drag performances involving a specific Cuban religious performance genre. But he steps back from actually queering the event, suggesting that through the gaze of male sex workers in Havana, the practice of *Santería* enacted within drag performance may present a challenge to dominant codes of masculinity, that is machismoism, but not to religion. In his outline of a *sensual* ethnography, Peter McMurray attempts to reorient ethnography in his case studies in Gayhane, as he honed his focus on what he calls the “Islamic acoustics of Turkish Berlin.” His sensual recollections are compelling as he dances with elements of his body not normally considered performative. McMurray’s ears, his “recursive archive,” feature prominently in the sonorization of his body. It is within the serendipitous moments of his research that we approach McMurray’s body responding to rich and challenging ethnographic scenarios in Berlin.

Conclusion

This volume issues a cautionary note about the need to define queer in culturally appropriate ways that do not colonize other cultures by assuming that queer = homosexual as typically defined in Western urban spaces, as Gillian Rodger suggested decades ago. In this Introduction I posit why it might be that Ethnomusicology was slow (and perhaps a bit reluctant) to embrace queer theory and other approaches to gender and sexuality. At the Queer 1997 SEM panel mentioned earlier in this Introduction, Gillian Rodger challenged us to consider that gender and sexuality are typically not a part of everyday discourse and that we are therefore seldom in the position of approaching shared, cross-cultural