

Applied Ethnomusicology

Applied Ethnomusicology:
Historical and Contemporary Approaches

Edited by

Klisala Harrison, Elizabeth Mackinlay
and Svanibor Pettan

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS**

P U B L I S H I N G

Applied Ethnomusicology: Historical and Contemporary Approaches,
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PREFACE

STEPHEN WILD,
SECRETARY GENERAL, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Study groups are the lifeblood of the ICTM; they sustain the discourse of members between biennial world conferences. Most ICTM members actively participate in at least one study group, often more than one. Over the last thirty years, the number of study groups has steadily grown from six listed in the April 1980 *Bulletin of the ICTM* to nineteen listed in the April 2010 *Bulletin*. Study groups may be either topically based, for example Folk Musical Instruments, Ethnochoreology, and Music and Gender, or regionally based, for example Music and Dance of Oceania, Music of East Asia, and Music of the Arab World. Study groups meet between world conferences, often in the alternate years between them. The groups may be large, for example the Study Group on Ethnochoreology has several sub-groups that meet independently in addition to meetings of the whole group, or small, for example the Study Group on the Music and Dance of Oceania, whose meetings usually involve only twenty to thirty members. Study groups provide a forum for intensive discourse on narrower subjects than that the whole ICTM represents. They also publish results of those discourses while the ICTM provides limited opportunity for members to publish papers in the *Yearbook for traditional music*. An annual review of study groups by the Executive Board of the ICTM ensures that those continuing to be recognised by ICTM remain active.

The Study Group on Applied Ethnomusicology, under the collaborative leadership of Svanibor Pettan (Chairperson), Klisala Harrison (Vice-chairperson) and Eric Martin Usner (Secretary), had its genesis in a preliminary symposium associated with an ICTM Executive Board meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia in 2006, and a panel at the ICTM World Conference in Vienna in 2007. Its first symposium since official recognition by the Executive Board was held in Ljubljana in 2008. The present volume is the first published outcome of its deliberations. A cursory examination of the contents reveals the global spread of its participants' research interests: South Africa, the USA, Australia, Slovenia,

Serbia, Austria, Indonesia and Germany. It has close links with the research interests of another recently formed study group on Music and Minorities, as acknowledged by the latter's Chair, Ursula Hemetek, in her article in this volume. The two study groups will meet jointly in Vietnam in 2010.

A full discussion of this volume belongs to the Introduction, but allow me to touch on some highlights. After a thorough consideration by Ana Hofman of the deep sources and ethical dilemmas of applied ethnomusicology, particularly in Europe, several articles acknowledge the influence of Daniel Sheehy's 1992 seminal paper published in our sister journal *Ethnomusicology* in the USA. Perhaps Sheehy's article can be considered as the formal starting point of applied ethnomusicology. However, as Ursula Hemetek points out, much of ethnomusicology is inherently "applied" research (as per the study group's definition of the topic; see Introduction) because of the discipline's representation of the music of ignored or oppressed peoples. This point comes through loud and clear throughout the volume. Another prominent theme of the book is the potential of music and the contribution of ethnomusicology to affect tolerance and reconciliation between otherwise hostile peoples. This is strongly expressed in Bernhard Bleibinger's essay "Applied ethnomusicology at the Music Department of the University of Fort Hare, South Africa" and Britta Sweers' article on combating extreme nationalism in a northern German town through a multicultural music recording project. A final theme of the volume that I wish to highlight is the use of music and ethnomusicology in a therapeutic role, both in clinical practice and on the ground: Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg on the therapeutic value of choral singing in a northern Australian Aboriginal community, and Margaret Kartomi's account of the healing effect of music in tsunami and civil war affected Aceh, Indonesia.

This volume repositions applied ethnomusicology in the characterisation of the discipline. I suspect that no ethnomusicologist will be able to ignore it in their own understanding of who they are and what they do professionally. Every paper in this volume makes a significant contribution to this still-emerging and dynamic field. I congratulate the authors and the editors on producing such a powerful contribution to ethnomusicology as a whole and a worthy addition to the publications of the study groups of ICTM.

CHAPTER THREE

APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY,
MUSIC THERAPY AND ETHNOGRAPHICALLY
INFORMED CHORAL EDUCATION:
THE MERGING OF DISCIPLINES
DURING A CASE STUDY IN HOPEVALE,
NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

MURIEL SWIJGHUISEN REIGERSBERG

Introduction

Interview transcript, Hopevale, 29 November 2004:

June Pearson: I think music is a very big ... plays a big part in this community. People like functions, but it don't happen. It happens far and in between, you know? And I think we'll solve a lot of the problems here if we introduce music back and basically getting happy families again, you know.

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: Do you think that music could somehow be helpful when it comes to reconciliation?

JP: I think, I think it will because ... I feel that whatever type of music comes out, you know, whether they're singing or play, it always touches the heart in some way, you know? It makes you feel good or makes you feel sad, I mean you can sing a song that'll make you very sad and make you cry! But then again, it can touch the heart in a different way.

This chapter will examine recent developments in the areas of applied ethnomusicology, music therapy theory and choral education. Shifts in academic thought have led to increased commonalities between the disciplines. I will demonstrate that these shifts in thinking and practice are

stimulating interdisciplinary research. I begin by looking at quotations in recent publications in the areas of medical ethnomusicology, anthropology and music psychology in order to demonstrate that a definite shift in thinking has occurred which favours applied, ethnographically informed approaches. I then examine the concept of “culture centred music therapy” (Stige 2002) and how it overlaps with an applied ethnographically informed approach to choral education and facilitation, with a specific focus on music and healing practices.

This I relate to my own ethnographically informed research as an applied, female, Dutch ethnomusicologist in the Australian Aboriginal community of Hopevale, Northern Queensland between September 2004 and June 2005. During the research period I was engaged as a music facilitator (or “choir lady,” as I was referred to) by the local community, as part of a PhD research project based on reciprocal learning through performance and choral teaching, and on sharing benefits of the research outcomes. I employed participatory action research when reinvigorating an Indigenous Lutheran, choral singing tradition, and developed an ethnographically informed approach to choral education and facilitation based on choral educationalist Durrant’s *Choral conducting: Philosophy and practice* (2003).

For the purposes of this discussion, I shall work from the basis that education and learning take place both in and outside formal educational institutions, that knowledge can take on various forms (Walford 2008, 8-9), and that this knowledge may be acquired through performance and can be embodied (Magowan 2007). I will show how my approach can be viewed as culturally appropriate music therapy and that this approach has implications for music therapists, educationalists and choral facilitators. I conclude that the concepts of culture-centred music therapy, applied ethnomusicology, and ethnographically informed choral education and facilitation share a theoretical basis that is conducive to future collaborations between all fields. Such projects could demonstrate more accurately the relevance of ethnomusicological research and the beneficial effects of musical performance, education and participation.

Calls for interdisciplinarity

Various scholars in different fields have recently identified a need to foster collaborative relationships between their own and related disciplines such as (applied and medical) ethnomusicology, music psychology and music therapy. Barz’s (2006) *Singing for life: HIV/AIDS and music in Uganda* discusses the importance of music, dance and drama as means of

disseminating in a culturally appropriate manner, information about HIV/AIDS. Barz demonstrates music's ability to help sustain morale amongst those who are HIV-positive through "positive living" (2006, 50-56) in the face of a medical epidemic. He writes that:

It is perhaps time for new methods to emerge within ethnomusicology that combine the rich experiential and culturally rooted ethnographic research with objective scientific experimentation. Medical ethnomusicology demands such collaboration (Barz 2006, 68).

Barz shows that music is able to improve self-esteem and emotional well-being amongst HIV-positive Ugandans (2006, 41–76). This suggests that Ugandans use music as what Western scholars would label music therapy.

In the ethnomusicological literature, Magowan has written a text that explores how Yolngu¹ music is embodied in the skill of learning to dance and sing the environment. Yolngu dance and song embody the rules of social interaction and transmission, and help to perform emotion (2007, 13). Her study shows how a cultural system of music and dance differentiates Yolngu musical experiencing from non-Yolngu experiences of music. The difference, Magowan argues, lies in the fact that the ontological foundation of Yolngu life bases itself on a strong sensory relationship with an ancestral landscape (2007, 9–10). Magowan's study has implications for this discussion. Her work supports the notion that a culturally informed approach is necessary when studying the relationship between emotion, music, landscape and culture. This in turn would suggest that applied ethnomusicologists and music therapists investigating the relationship between music, emotion and well-being should refrain from automatically applying Western approaches to the use of music in therapeutic settings, but consider other, culturally informed ones.

In Juslin and Sloboda's *Music and emotion* (2001), ethnomusicologist Judith Becker states that emotional responses to music can be both culturally determined as well as innate. She concludes:

It seems clear to this author that a common ground needs to be explored between the more humanistic, cultural anthropological approach and the more scientific, cognitive psychological approach. I see the bringing together of the scientific and cultural approaches to the study of music and emotion as one of the great challenges of our fields. While the styles of argument and the criteria for evidence may remain distinct, the conclusions need to be comparable and not incommensurable. Both disciplinary areas may have to give up some of their established scholarly practices (Becker 2001, 150).

Becker's article is published in a book that also investigates philosophical, biological, sociological and psychological responses to music, and how these are related to music and emotion. These relationships are discussed from a Western academic perspective. Becker's article implies that the exploration she advocates between the scientific and humanistic approaches does not yet exist. However, the fact that the article has been incorporated into Juslin and Sloboda's music psychology volume is already an indication that other disciplines are welcoming contributions from ethnomusicologists. As the book's subject matter "emotion" plays an integral part in the relationship between music and well-being, Becker's article and her comment are pertinent to the discussion here.

In the field of music psychology, there have been other shifts in thinking and interest. North and Hargreaves (2008) in *The social and applied psychology of music*, structure their topics "according to another trend that has become increasingly evident over recent years, namely a strong interest in how research findings might be applied to 'real world' problems and issues" (2008, 6). North and Hargreaves address not just the core areas of music psychology such as listening, composing and performance but also consider issues such as music censorship, musical subcultures, music in business and health, and music in education. The new emphasis on applied research suggests that music psychologists are starting to embrace sociological, ethnographically informed, methodologies and theoretical approaches. This methodological and theoretical shift may enhance collaborations between applied ethnomusicologists and music psychologists. The changes in theoretical approach may also influence music therapists, whose discipline relies heavily on the field of music psychology.

Music therapy and a culture-centred approach

Music therapists already have begun to draw on anthropological and ethnomusicological theory when studying the relationship between health and music. Definitions of what constitutes music therapy are numerous, however. Wigram, Saperton and West (1995) write that:

Some music therapy approaches have emerged from psychoanalytic traditions, some from humanistic tradition, some from behavioural traditions, some from special educational philosophy etc. In addition, one or more of these traditions may dominate music therapy practice in a single country ... [M]ethodologies for music therapy practice are mildly to vastly different among countries. These have been developed based on a particular theoretical orientation or combination of orientations. Also, for a

variety of reasons they may emphasise one or more of the experiences within music (improvisation, reception, composition, performance, activity, combined arts) (1995, x).

I shall restrict my discussion on the definitions of the term “music therapy” to those definitions proposed by Stige (2002), but acknowledge that the discipline is a diverse one, and that music and healing already have been discussed in relation to culture by scholars like Gouk (2000).

It was Stige (2002) who coined the term “culture-centered music therapy.” He writes that “[c]ulture specific music therapy acknowledges the fact that a client comes to music therapy with a cultural identity, as does the therapist, and that music therapy therefore may not be considered a ‘culture-free’ enterprise” (2002, 41). Stige goes on to outline the implications of this statement:

One implication could be that therapists, in showing respect for clients and their culture, adjust their way of working to each client, for instance by choice of musical styles. This is already an important implication, but it must be noted that cultural differences may be reflected in many aspects relevant to the therapy, such as notions of health and of relationships, ways of expressing emotions etc. Openness for reflexive dialogues on these matters may be required in order to provide qualified and ethical defensible therapy (2002, 41).

Stige further explores the notion of what it means to be healthy and involved with music. To Stige, health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (2002, 186). He describes health as the “personal conditions and qualifications for *participation in social life*” [emphasis original]. For Stige, it also concerns “people’s *mutual care* to ensure development of the conditions and qualifications of each person” [emphasis original] (2002, 190).

Stige redefines music therapy in the following way: “Music therapy as a discipline is the study and learning of the relationship between music and health” (2002, 198). This redefinition is broad enough to encompass culturally specific definitions of “health,” “music” and “emotional well-being.” Stige lists several types of practices that could be incorporated into the field of music therapy under his new definition. These include, but are not limited to:

- Non-professional practices of music healing in cultural contexts, and other everyday health-related uses of music;

- Music and health in the perspective of cultural history, especially the histories of musical healing and music therapy;
- Music and health in the perspective of the human ontogeny, especially lifespan development to and through music (2002, 198).

Stige's redefinition is useful to applied ethnomusicologists who work in situations where music, health and education are the foci of their work. In the context of my own argument, Stige's discussion on redefinitions of health is relevant in that Tatz (2005), who examines the high rate of Australian Aboriginal suicide, calls for an ethnographically informed approach to the understanding of health and the implementation of health strategies for Indigenous Australians. Tatz writes:

A major theme of this book is the inappropriateness of the public health or medical model for Australian Aboriginal, Maori and indigenous youth suicide generally. My sustained contention is that most, if not all, indigenous youth suicide has no basis in "mental ill-health", in depression, let alone in genetics or biochemistry ... my assertion is that we need understanding of the suiciders ... I also argue that we should embrace ... cultural and social factors in developing strategies for alleviating the problem—not their perfunctory acknowledgement as factors (2005, vi-vii).

During my field research with the Australian Aboriginal community of Hopevale, Northern Queensland between June 2004 and September 2005, I practiced what might be called music therapy under Stige's new definitions. To understand why this is so, it is necessary to contextualise the field research I undertook for my PhD.

Hopevale's history and its choral singing tradition

The Hopevale community is an old Lutheran mission settlement created in 1886, in tropical northern Queensland, Australia. It lies 45 km north of Cooktown and now is managed by an Aboriginal council. The population largely consists of Aboriginal people of Guugu Yimithirr descent who are third or fourth generation Lutherans. Many community elders are members of the Stolen Generation: children of Aboriginal descent who were removed forcibly from their Aboriginal families² and communities as a result of state and national protectionist policies such as Queensland's 1897 Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act. Under the Act, Queensland Aboriginal people could legally be confined on mission stations and reserves. This legislation aimed to

“protect” Indigenous people from the harms of settler society such as venereal disease, alcohol overuse, slave labour and sexual exploitation.

As a short term strategy, this approach was successful in preventing the further demise of the local Guugu Yimithirr population in the Cooktown area. In the long term, however, the continued paternalistic attitudes of the Australian federal and state governments, and the Lutheran church created a culture of financial dependency and a community where many people suffer from intergenerational trauma due to their own or their parent’s removal as children. Alcohol overuse, petrol sniffing, the use of hydroponic drugs such as *gunga*, sexual abuse, domestic violence and unemployment have become endemic. The life expectancy of Aboriginal men is extremely low and suicide amongst young men is common. The Hopevalian plight is not unique in this respect, and is shared by many other Aboriginal communities throughout Australia (cf. Phillips 2003, Tatz 2005, Trudgen 2000). Many Hopevalians, however, believe that this state of being is unacceptable. They are working towards a way in which to resolve these issues locally. As the opening quotation demonstrates, part of their solution at my time of research included reintroducing music and choral singing into the community.

The relationship between Hopevale’s history as a mission and its musical practices has not been unproblematic. Historically, hymnody was used by missionaries to discredit what they perceived as “non-Christian” practices,³ and to create rifts between Indigenous elders and their mission-born children (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008, 223-33). As a result, formal Christian worship and hymn-singing in Hopevale today contain no references to Indigenous understandings of Christianity. Local, Indigenous scholar and politician Noel Pearson writes:

While painting, song and dance do have a place, because of the lack of strong public traditional beliefs, these do not occupy a significant place in that culture. They essentially exist as “curios” in Hope Vale’s culture and they will remain so as long as the culture denies them cultural or religious significance (1986, 8).⁴

In Hopevale, Lutheran and Anglican hymnody, Christian choruses, country and western, country gospel, reggae, and rhythm and blues are most frequently engaged through performance, composition and listening. There is no pre-colonial song material being performed. Most of the other genres are consumed and used in English, although the local language Guugu Yimithirr is still spoken and occasionally used in church hymnody. Hopevale has a long tradition of harmonised congregational hymn and choral singing, which was introduced when the community was forcibly

removed to Woorabinda⁵ in 1942. Hopevalian church organist, June Pearson commented: “Quite a lot of the old fellas they learnt to sing in the churches in Woorabinda, because they sang a lot to stay happy to come back home” (pers. comm., 29 November, 2004).

By “choral singing” Hopevalians mean the congregational singing of hymns in harmony as well as the singing of harmonised songs in a choir ensemble of a select group of people. The concept of choral singing, therefore, was amalgamated with that of congregational hymn-singing in harmony. Hopevalian choir member Marie Gibson commented:

MG: Well, my mother and father used to sing in the choir too ... When we were small, when we were young, every night we used to sing hymns. Choruses and ... before we go to sleep, yeah, and ... We been singing all the time, you know at home, not in concerts or any one thing. Yeah, and we love singing.

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: When was it you first joined [the choir]?

MG: When, I was still a teenager then. There was a ... that was in the 60s. We had a Pastor there that used to run the choir ... Pastor Wenke, yeah and me and the whole of Saint John’s used to go to that choir just to sing, everybody (pers. comm., 23 May, 2005).

After the community’s return to Hopevale in 1949, a group of men and later women formed the nucleus of a group of singers who would lead the congregational and choral singing for special occasions and for visitors. Historical accounts demonstrate that Hopevale had a lively choral tradition, which was used as a means to proselytise (Lohe 1977, 14-15). Choral singing and congregational singing, therefore, are very much part of the Hopevalian musical tradition, and are engaged in by participants and listeners.

Historically, the choir had always been directed by a Pastor or member of the white mission staff. No Hopevalians had been given the responsibility to run the choir until the departure of the last “choir leader” Margaret Scholz in the early 1980s. The designated leader, Len Rosendale, however, fell seriously ill and was unable to lead choral singing on a regular basis, causing the practice to decline. Due to the community’s fondness for singing, however, the wish to reinvigorate choral and congregational singing remained. Hopevalian singers, though, felt that they needed a new “choir lady” or “leader” who could lead the rehearsals. They wanted someone who could read music and teach them new materials, whilst working on old community favourites.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) and an ethnographically informed approach to choral facilitation

I came to work in Hopevale through my belief that all research must be reciprocal in nature. Having previously explored other Christian denominations and their musical worship in London (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 1999, 2000), I wanted to complete a PhD on a similar subject. It was due to the local need for a choral facilitator or “choir lady” that the Hopevale church elders and community council decided to engage me. Their decision was based on a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and letter that I sent requesting permission to conduct fieldwork in the community. I had sent out several such letters to former missions, and it was the Hopevale Council that responded to my request. In the letter and CV, I described my research interest and potential focus as well as my singing expertise. I stipulated that I was willing to undertake work of the community’s choosing in return for permission to conduct field research. It was decided by the Hopevale Community and Church Council that in return for my choral facilitation, Hopevalians would assist me in answering my research question: “Does choral singing have a positive influence on the construction of Aboriginal identities?”

The fact that the community had actively chosen to grant me permission in return for my work with the choir, immensely facilitated the research process. Because of my direct influence on well-being and the research process, I have problematised extensively my position as a researcher throughout my PhD thesis. I also have addressed the ethical implications of this applied methodology (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008). I shall summarise these only briefly here to say that the singers in the choir fully supported the research process, and actively engaged with it by singing and freely giving me feedback on their likes and dislikes, and by making themselves available for interviews. I acknowledge that not all community members were supportive of the work.

There are certain social divisions in Hopevale along religious and ethnic lines formed during missionisation. These rifts have created an antipathy towards the church and by extension, Christian music amongst certain individuals. During my research, however, the local white Pastor frequently and deliberately de-emphasised the choir’s links with the church, and singers themselves were welcoming of all those who wished to sing, regardless of their spirituality, ethnicity, age or gender (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008, 102-49). Singers also specified that they were aware of community divisions, but preferred to challenge these by accepting all singers into their ensemble including myself and Anglo-

Australian visiting teacher Mrs Kemp (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008, 133-37). My own atheism, once it became known, helped to facilitate the research process.

Due to this effective collaboration, the PhD research became a reciprocal, applied project that was based on Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR can be defined as a

[c]ontinuous interaction of research with the action through joint researcher/actor data collection, analysis, reflection; and use. In other forms of research ... the means (research) leads to an end (an evaluation, a program, a policy change, etc.) In participatory action research (PAR), the means is the end, and the conduct of research is embedded in the process of introducing or generating change. PAR is, first and foremost, locally specific and is intended to further local goals with local partners (Trotter and Schensul 1998, 693).

Music therapist Stige also suggests PAR as a methodological and theoretical approach to music therapy, for those wishing to engage in culture centred music therapy. To Stige (2002, 291), PAR in music therapy is:

- workplace and/or community oriented;
- geared at solving problems as experienced by practitioners, clients, and/or members of the community;
- sensitive to how musicking may create and change cultural and social relationships in the workplace/community;
- oriented towards the improvement of situated practice;
- creative and flexible in the development and implementation of research techniques (in relation to goals and local conditions, for example); and
- guided by critical awareness and collective reflections.

During my applied research, I married the above theoretical concepts with Durrant's approach to choral conducting and education as described in his *Choral conducting: Philosophy and practice* (2003). I therefore was using anthropological and choral educational practice and theory to inform my choral facilitation work. I combined the learning and performative outcomes of rehearsals and public performances with the choir, with interview details and interaction, and used this to inform my research approach, which will be described further below. This made my work applied, as described by Trotter and Schensul (2002, 291), because Participatory Action Research is a form of applied work.

Whilst using this approach, choral educationalist Durrant's text was most helpful for guidance, because all other texts available on the subject of choral conducting (cf. Hunt 2001, Kaplan 1985, Rao 1993, Stannard 2003) assume that practitioners are operating in a Western classical setting, or at least in an environment where there exists a shared set of performance conventions, which can be used as a basis to determine what is aesthetically acceptable and what is not. The texts also take for granted that choral singers are readers of music or if not, should be taught the tonic solfege system or similar. None contemplate the possibility that singers might be taught by rote. The texts all implicitly suggest that what is written in a musical score must be reflected in the choral performance as accurately as possible. None of the texts address in any great depth the experiential side of conducting by exploring the influence that a choral conductor can have, for example, on the flow of a rehearsal, or on the potentially musically and socially diverse backgrounds of choir members.

Durrant, however, presents his ethos on choral conducting, writing from a community music-making perspective. His text assumes that communities are socially diverse. Thus, specific guidelines as to what constitutes "good practice" are unhelpful. His theoretical model is defined broadly to suit this diversity of community music-making. Durrant also acknowledges the importance of the conductor in the experiential, physical sense and offers suggestions as to how he/she might be able to enhance the rehearsal experience for singers. He proposes that a process of good conducting and its outcomes might follow this path:

- Conductor creates engaging, non-threatening environment
- Singers seek sensory input and,
- Gain mastery over music
- Deep pleasure sensations develop
- Self-esteem is enhanced (2003, 21).

Durrant also writes on the importance of body language, and the necessity of feedback and interactive learning. These are all part of his belief that:

- our whole communication [as conductors], including the language we use in rehearsals can have a profound effect on singers' attitudes and responses to music and to themselves;
- the physical and mental well-being of the conductor plays its part in the well-being of the musical performance or the outcome of a rehearsal (2003, 10).

Referencing educationalist Elbaz, Durrant identifies five areas that influence the experience of learning musically, labelling them the five “orientations of practical knowledge” or “craft knowledge.” I shall refer to them here in the context of my fieldwork example:

1. **Situational:** Formulated according to location, for example. During most rehearsals or concerts, situational factors varied. During my research period, the choir I facilitated mainly rehearsed in church. This meant being in surroundings with good acoustics, the ability to hear oneself and the ensemble, and the availability of an electric organ. The church setting also encouraged the learning of religious songs.
2. **Personal:** This includes my own orientation and ethos, intellectual beliefs and perceptions, and emotions. It includes my commitment to promote singing in a healthy way in a bid to sustain Hopevalian community well-being.
3. **Social:** This, Durrant says, encompasses the social constraints and social reality of the knower, in this case, myself. I acted and facilitated in a way that I deemed socially appropriate at any given time, in efforts to encourage vocal, personal and interpersonal well-being. As I came to know the Hopevalian singers and their families, this social reality changed, causing my approach to facilitation to evolve alongside it.
4. **Experiential:** Here, the practical knowledge I possess was shaped by multidimensional experiences, which depended on, for example, non-verbal and sensory feedback, musical sounds, and the personal interactions between myself and the singers during rehearsals, when performing in concert and whilst living in Hopevale.
5. **Theoretical:** Here, Durrant includes the relationship between theory and practice. In my particular case, this relationship existed on the levels of musical theory and practice, and of ethnographic theory and its “practice” in participatory action research. My understanding and application of ethnographic theories involved the continual reassessment and readjustment of the facilitation process. It was an ethnographically informed approach to choral facilitation.

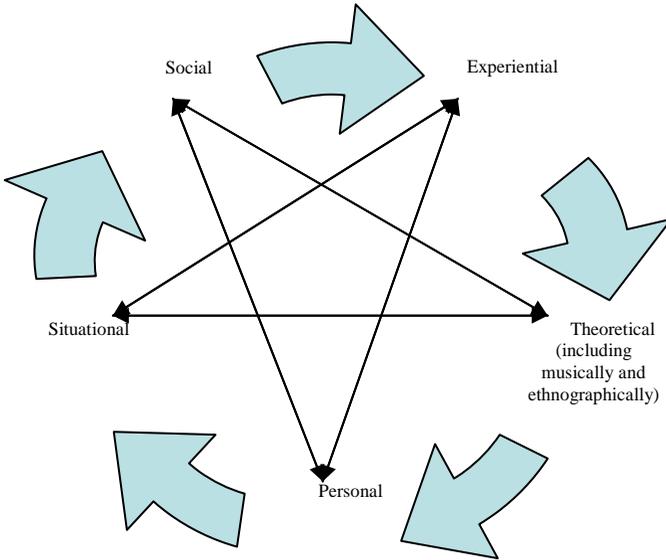


Fig. 3.1. An ethnographically informed, fluid model of the five orientations of a facilitator's "craft knowledge."

The model in Fig. 3.1 visually represents the ethnographically informed approach to choral facilitation that I used. It shows all five of Durrant's "orientations of practical knowledge" influencing one another at any given time. The larger sized arrows on the periphery of the circle do not indicate that the connections between certain orientations are stronger than others. Equally, the directions of the larger arrows could be counter-clockwise because it does not matter in which direction they flow since the shape is circular. All five orientations are equally important in the context of music facilitation. I also have incorporated my suggestion that the theoretical orientation should include both the musical and the ethnographic, which is something that Durrant does not do. Using this approach to choral facilitation, it was possible to incorporate Hopevalian understandings of interrelationships between music and well-being, and local performance traditions and aesthetics, into my research methodology and analysis.

Hopevale choral singing, aesthetics and choral facilitation

During my work in Hopevale, the incorporation of local performance traditions and aesthetic preferences included accepting: a frequent use of glissandi, especially when singing well-known hymns in the local language Guugu Yimithirr; the use of a forward-placed vocal timbre that can be described as nasal; the performance of hymns in a very slow tempo, regardless of tempo indications; the learning of music by rote; and the practice of harmonising by ear as opposed to singing music as written and using musical scores. Hopevalian church organist June Pearson commented:

JP: You'll notice in the church on Sundays now, I'll read music, but I don't play it according to the timing that the notes tell me to because people in church don't know how to do that, so I play the way they sing, whether it's fast, slow ... or whether ... it's supposed to be sung that way ... It's not according to how the music setting is, it's according to the tune and what they know. How they know it, but ... to us it's lovely. It's nice. Nice to listen to (pers. comm., 29 November, 2004).

June was referring to her practice of commencing musical phrases slightly earlier on the organ than written, and so as to lead the congregational and choral singing. As I will explain, the quotation suggests that the hymns were learned orally and that the specific performative style used in church has been part of the community's performative practice for quite some time. June was using the organ to replace elders who used to lead the singing. These elders commenced singing phrases earlier than the tempo required in order to indicate when other singers had to start or which text was to be sung. The congregation then would follow suit. When facilitating the choir, I called this technique "follow the leader."

I tried to embrace these differences in musical practice and aesthetic as much as possible. I taught the choir by rote, learning all of the separate vocal parts. I did not always insist on music being performed as written if the choir harmonised well by ear and was not singing the notes as presented on paper. Neither did I comment on the frequent use of glissandi when used in the singing of old, Lutheran hymns that historically had been part of the choir's repertoire. When I taught new, African and African American Christian songs, however, I would try to introduce a quicker pulse and fewer glissandi as the musical interest of the new songs often would lie in their cross-rhythms and upbeat tempi. Since singers expressed a liking for these songs, I kept them in the repertoire. I allowed myself to be guided by the singers' preferences:

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: Now tell me, what did you find interesting and nice about choir?

Dora Deemal: Learning African ...

Violet Cobus: ... African songs, yeah.

DD: Songs.

VC: Different songs, hey?

VC: We enjoyed them very much.

MSR: What was it about the African ones you liked the best?

DD: All of them.

MSR: Was it because they are lively or ...?

VC: Yes, it is ... sounds lively.

MSR: Did it make you also feel happy on the inside when you were singing them?

DD: Yes.

VC: Always, we happy.

MSR: But what about the old hymns? You still enjoy singing those as well?

DD and VC: Yes.

MSR: What about those new ones that Pastor wanted us to learn from *Together in song* [Ecumenical Song Book Committee Australia 1999]. What did you think of those?

VC: That was ...

DD: Lovely too ... something new you know?

MSR: So, really, it's something new you are after?

VC and DD: Yeah! (pers. comm., 3 June, 2005).

Following the singers' preferences also meant that I had to relinquish some fears that I had of altering too much the choir's overall timbre and vocal performance practice. I had to acknowledge that change would be inevitable and that if the choir enjoyed the new musical ideas introduced, I should persevere with them because my aim was, first and foremost, to ensure that singers were enjoying themselves. Using my ethnographically informed approach, I therefore also was able to promote, in a culturally sensitive fashion, well-being and enjoyment alongside choral singing.

The potential positive effects of choral singing

During my research period I found that choral singing could have a beneficial effect on community well-being if facilitation was done appropriately. Research techniques incorporated ethnographically informed choral facilitation alongside the more standard approaches of interviewing, filming, recording, photography, note-making, and engaging with daily events. Because outcomes were often performative and experiential, I recorded data in my PhD thesis using audiovisual footage and performative writing (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008). I also relied on multi-media due to the problematic nature of interviewing the singers.

In Hopevalian culture, it is not acceptable to answer questions on another's behalf, however generalised the questions might be. Equally, being extremely familiar with the personal lives of singers and having established a reciprocal working relationship based on continual openly shared feedback, I was fully aware that the singers would comfortably challenge me if I asked inappropriate questions or if I suggested inappropriate answers. Such "challenges" occurred a few times during the research process and were resolved successfully through respectful discussion and feedback. This, however, made it difficult not to ask "leading questions." I argue, however, that the mutually respectful working relationship meant that answers received were never tailored by singers to suit my needs. In many cases, an interview was undertaken to have a formal, transcribable record of research outcomes for purposes of writing the PhD thesis. I opt in this article, to present contextual information with interview excerpts and to briefly problematise the nature of the interview research outcomes.

My engagement with the singers during performances, interviews and daily living demonstrated that good choir facilitation can generate personal enjoyment, and pride in musical achievement. This can indirectly impact a community at large because the public success of a choral ensemble

reflects well on a community as a whole. A member of the Hopevale Community Choir, Phylomena Naylor, commented:

Well that question ... me, for myself, joining in with this choir, when you taking us places, it showed me more confidence in myself ... and showed me that I can do it! That, before, before I met you and the rest of the ladies, I was nothing ... but now I know I'm somebody. I can stand up for myself, and I can show the whole world who I am. Which is very, very ... it touches me ... I can smile. I can go out and smile. It encourages me now, giving me more confidence in myself, that I can do all these things.

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: And so you can!

PN: Yes I can and I never can say "I can't" ... It [choir singing] sort of relaxes me, you know ... I could've gone downhill, just like the rest of my family, because they're all drinkers and they don't care about themselves. They still don't ... like I told my children: "You never think that way. You don't ... what you's doing now, you have to put a stop to it and think, what your kids and their kids gonna do. Follow you." So, it's a big, big thing really, hey?

MSR: So do you think Hopevale as a whole would benefit from being more creative and musical?

PN: There's a lot of talent in our community here today. It's just that, they have to learn and pull up and look and think what they doing to themselves, you know. It's not ... we can tell them, but it's up to each and every individual people, to look forward and backward. Because I've seen ... I've seen a lot, you know, in front of me as I was growin' (pers. comm., 5 June, 2005).

Choral singing by the Hopevale ensemble also offered the choir opportunities to educate audiences about Aboriginal diversity through non-confrontational performances, as was the case during the choir's four-day tour through northern Queensland in April 2005. The ability to inform audiences about Hopevale's choral singing tradition and Christianity generated pride in the singers. After the Hopevale Community Choir's performance for a tourist audience, a choir singer, Auntie Gertie Deeral commented: "I was happy to go on a tour and I was proud to inform myself from Hopevale. I was a bit nervous but I was like a teacher telling people about myself, what happened to me and my family, and I was happy that the people want to listen to my story." Auntie Gertie therefore conceived of herself as a capable teacher in the context of a performance situation, facilitated through choral learning and rehearsal. It was evident

that the research ethos and approach of mutual learning also through performance created pride in the singers. Local singer Uncle Clarry Bowen commented that the choir should “go outside” more, or visit people external to the community, in order to show them what Hopevalians are capable of. Auntie Dora Gibson felt that this would be good because it demonstrated that “more comes out of Hopevale than just drunks.” Phylomena Naylor also felt that singing for tourists allowed the choir to demonstrate how it could sing just as well as a white choir; and that his inspired confidence and pride in the singers.

Phylomena Naylor: That most probably is something really ... really a thing for them, hey? To come out here to Australia and see us: “Ah there’s an Aboriginal choir!” you know! “Do they really sing it?” and “How will they sing?” you know? But when we sing, they are so surprised to hear it. And they’ll be thinking: “Ah, how do they do it?” you know? But, I suppose, as an Aboriginal group ... we, we could show the world, that we can do the same thing as white ... you know? It’s not hard. It’s just a matter of learning ... it gives you that feeling you know? To know, knowing that we ... we did it, we can do it! Pride (pers. comm., 5 June, 2005).

Within the community itself, the choir was well received too. The choir provided opportunities for positive role modelling for its members, who were mainly female community elders at the time of my research:

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: What do you think we should do for younger people to come and join the choir?

Violet Cobus: I don’t know ... it’s up to the younger people, I think.

MSR: How do you think the community feels about our singing?

VC: Well, they’re talking about it!

Dora Deemal: They say it was beautiful.

MSR: Do you think they’re proud of what you’ve achieved and what you’ve been doing?

VC: I should think so.

MSR: And do you feel proud about it too?

VC: I feel proud about myself too [laughter] being an old girl!

DD: Yeah, true!

MSR: So, do you feel in some ways you're also setting an example for younger people?

DD: Younger people, yeah.

VC: Yeah, that's true. They should really follow I think, young people! (pers. comm., 3 June, 2005)

Choral singing also offered the choir members an opportunity to get away from challenges that they faced on a daily basis. Most members had to cope with endemic social problems and their roles as family, community and church leaders. They often bore the brunt of the childcare responsibilities for grand and great grandchildren as parents were unable to fulfil these responsibilities. However, choir members at times felt that occasionally they were entitled to personal relaxation and enjoyment as well, which they gained through singing in the choir.

Maureen Wallace: And I was thinking: "Why me?" [on becoming a Justice of the Peace and an artist as well as a choir singer and a health care worker.] Because I am older: I'm a grandmother, but then I was thinking: "I'm free." You know? My children are all grown up. My nieces and nephews are gone now. They got their own life, and as well as my children. And, when I turned fifty, I said: "Okay, it's my year!" (pers. comm., 30 May, 2005)

In a conversation about enjoying the tour and choral singing, Uncle Henry Deeral and Auntie Gertie Deeral answered similarly.

Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg: Has it [choir singing] also been a way for you to relax? From your, you know, troubles in life?

Henry Deeral: Yes.

Gertie Deeral: I enjoyed it!

HD: I enjoyed myself.

MSR: Just a little way to forget ...

HD: Yeah, forget!

MSR: You enjoyed the travelling as much as the singing?

GD: Singing, liked the singing, but now we're back home ... I'm getting tired from cooking and cleaning (pers. comm., 24 May, 2005).

Auntie Gertie was referring to her home situation, with which I was familiar, where she was expected, despite being in her late sixties, to cook, clean and look after grandchildren, which her sons often were unable to do due to excessive alcohol consumption or mental illness. Auntie Gertie was not the only member of the choir who benefitted in this way. Other members frequently told me of their personal distress about family conduct and family feuds, and how the choir rehearsals and events provided relief from these.

Conclusion

The above quotations demonstrate that the ethnographically informed approach to choral facilitation was able to promote well-being amongst the Hopevalian choir members through generating pride in musical competence, promoting Indigenous leadership and teaching authority, and providing activities that relieved the sometimes stressful home situations of singers. As the approach is intimately related to choral facilitation and education processes, and could be considered a form of music therapy according to Stige (2002), it is clear that the research outcomes have implications for music therapy and education research methodologies, and for music psychology studies as well.

While working with the Hopevale Choir, I never saw myself as operating as a music therapist during my research period, being unfamiliar with music therapy theory and practice. Instead, I conceived of my research as being applied ethnomusicology with a focus on well-being. It was later that I realised that what I had done could be labelled as applied ethnomusicology *and* culture centred music therapy. These can be very similar, if not identical, when used in situations where the promotion of health and education through musicking are the foci of work in community settings. My applied research in many ways also was similar to what music therapists Pavlicevic and Ansdell have labelled "Community Music Therapy" (CoMT) (2004), which is based on the aforementioned concept of culture centred music therapy. CoMT acknowledges the situatedness of a person and concentrates on taking therapeutic action through the community, not just through individual music therapy behind closed doors. Instead, CoMT uses community settings and public performances in order to increase well-being and community pride. Music therapists have

acknowledged the cultural significance and appropriateness of musical performance in creating well-being for performers:

It is noticeable that the chief issue around [which] the question about “is this music therapy” revolve[s] is that of performance. The consensus model suggested strongly that musical performance was inappropriate to therapy: patients instead needed confidentiality, privacy, a musical search for emotional authenticity. Modern thinking is challenging this assumption but, of course, with the proviso that performance is an option when appropriate for music therapy, not something that is foisted upon clients. Music therapists such as David Aldridge have long championed the idea that our identity and our health are performed ... if we work in culture-sensitive ways it follows that we acknowledge that for many clients from non-Western traditions, performing music is natural and a key part to performing their identity. How could it not be part of the possible agenda of music therapy? (Pavlicevic 2004, 29-30)

Stige writes that CoMT is characterised by careful assessment of factors that he labels agenda, arena, agents and activities (2004, 106-07). In the context of Hopevale, my agenda was to affect positive social change and to increase well-being through choral singing. My arenas included the Hopevale township, and performance venues at Mareeba correctional facility, Undara Lava Tubes tourist resort and Douglas House, an Indigenous rehabilitation centre. Each arena offered new possibilities for action by way of musical performance and social interaction. The so-called “agents” in my work were the people that I encountered during musical activities, such as the choir members, the local Hopevale Pastor, tourist resort managers at Undara and prison officers in Mareeba.

As pointed out earlier, not all choral singing activities have positive outcomes (Swijghuisen Reigersberg 2008). The responsibilities and pitfalls of applied work are many. When operating in a context that involves investigating the relationship between music, well-being and health, it is important to acknowledge that all not changes may be positive and that some members of a given community may not perceive changes as beneficial. Scholars must operate reflexively and responsibly at all times.

I would like to suggest, however, that the potential challenges of applied work should not deter scholars from engaging in such work. In the case of the Hopevale Community Choir, for example, I can report that they are still singing and that for the third time running, they have been engaged by the Queensland Music Festival to represent local Indigenous culture. In August 2009, they performed in a specially commissioned

choral performance. They also worked towards a sunset concert with an Australian composer, a music facilitator and two Anglo-Australian choirs.

I posit here, therefore, that the time has come to engage with other practitioners in the fields of music therapy, music education and music psychology. Ethnomusicologists should actively aim to disseminate their ethnographic, musical expertise in order to ensure that cross-fertilisation can take place between disciplines. This, in the long term, could benefit ethnomusicology as well as the other disciplines and by extension, those people with whom we collaborate and seek to aid in an ethically and ethnographically responsible manner.

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Notes

¹ The Yolngu are an Aboriginal group living in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia.

² Hopevalian oral history indicates that not all children were forcibly removed (Pearson 1986, 42). Some were left at the mission by their parents in order to ensure that they remained out of harm's way. Hopevalians recognise this, and prefer not to view their mission history and removal as entirely negative.

³ Labelling pre-colonial spiritual activity as "non-Christian" is not correct according to many Indigenous theologians. Hopevalian Indigenous Pastor George Rosendale commented that: "See, the Aboriginal people always spiritual. They never worshipped wood and stone like the China man or worshipped animals like the Indians. No. They worshipped this unseen Creator Being ... I said to the hierarchies: 'How can you ... tell us Aboriginals that God was never in Australia?' Now I said: 'That's bullshit.' ... I said: 'God been in Australia since His Creation. If He made the world He was here. He was with our people everywhere.' ... None of you white people could ever convert a person, whether they are white or black. No! Only Holy Spirit does that" (pers. comm., 23 March, 2005).

⁴ This situation is very different than the one encountered in the Northern Territory by Magowan (1999, 2001) amongst the Yolngu. There, Indigenous understandings of Christianity are practised in formal worship and Yolngu have been able to synchronise their spirituality with Christianity in diverse, locally appropriate ways, based on theological, emotional and embodied understandings of their local geographical area and all it contains (Magowan 1999, 2001, 2007).

⁵ Woorabinda lies in the state of Queensland, west of the city Rockhampton. The climate is considerably colder there, and the community lost a quarter of its members in the first month due to an influenza epidemic to which they had no biological immunity. The epidemic was exacerbated by the fact that Hopevalians were removed from their homes without prior warning and thus had not been able to prepare themselves adequately for the different climate.