Take me out to the Ball Game: Baseball in Early American Song

by Matthew G. Doublestein

Today's popular music industry is primarily concerned with record sales. The Billboard charts grade the popular appeal of a record album from week to week. Before the 1980s, however, the thrust of music production was to promote the sale of sheet music, thus fostering the growth of the American song publisher. Successful publishing companies grew up in and around a New York street nicknamed Tin Pan Alley. They published songs about popular topics and, in this period of American history, few things were as popular as the game of baseball. Baseball's place in American culture and specifically in Tin Pan Alley song is worth understanding, especially if one desires to learn about the game's influence on the arts.1

Baseball's influence on the arts in the United States is evident in the some 300 Tin Pan Alley-era songs whose texts are directly or indirectly about the game. In the 1840s, baseball was played on the East Coast, predominantly in New York City. Perhaps having descended from the British game of Rounders, the game was played mostly by men. They formed gentlemen's clubs devoted to the game and the social interaction that accompanied it. A coal miners' nine might play a ship builders' nine (teams were called "nines" after the number of players on the field). After the game, the home team would provide a banquet and drinks. According to baseball scholarship, the first such men's club was the New York Knickerbocker Base Ball club, formed in 1845. Children soon picked up the game and played in the alleys. Women formed their own teams early in baseball history and had enough teams to organize into leagues during World War II. One such league, the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, is depicted in the 1992 film A League of Their Own.2

In 1876, the National Association was formed (appropriately, perhaps, in the year of the American centennial), and in 1900 the American Association came into being. Other professional leagues formed such as the Pacific Coast League, the Federal League, and the International League. Negro leagues existed as well, some as early as 1862. A few teams, such as the Indianapolis Clowns, would "barnstorm" around the country, playing any teams that would put up the money or food. Fans came from all segments of society. Once professional teams had formed, owners and managers charged the public to watch the game. Before the advent of municipal stadiums, fans would sit on the grass around the diamond or in temporary wooden bleachers (which supposedly earned their name because the planks would bleach in the sun on game day). They even sat in the outfield, and ballplayers would have to fight fans for the ball. Fans kept their eyes on the box scores in the newspaper as well as the sports tickers and eventually became glued to radio broadcasts and televised games. Baseball was a very large part of the local economy and culture.

Professional musicians and other artists were actively involved in the sport and in the business of baseball. John Philip Sousa's team played his trombonists (Arthur Pryor) team in Paris on 4 July 1900, the first baseball game in the great French city. Jazz musicians had close ties to Negro League teams. Count Basie said of the Kansas City Monarchs, “We went to see them play during the day, and they came to hear us at night” (Thorn). In New Orleans, Louis Armstrong financially supported black ballplayers on a semiprofessional team. Tommy Dorsey, Cab Calloway, and Harry James all fielded softball teams comprised of band members to play charity games, sometimes at major league parks. Theatrical producer Harry Frazee owned the Red Sox from 1917 to 1923, and sold the rights to Babe Ruth to the Yankees in 1920—the Red Sox have not won a World Series since. Bing Crosby was part owner of the Pittsburgh Pirates, and Al Jolson owned shares in the St. Louis Cardinals. Gene Autry founded the Los Angeles/California/Anaheim Angels in 1960 and owned the team until he sold it to The Walt Disney Company in 1996.

Athletes, writers, singers, and other celebrities also played a role in marketing Tin Pan Alley songs. They would pose for a cover photograph or lend an autograph in hopes of encouraging more sales. Babe Ruth's picture and autograph appeared on the cover of Irving Berlin's Along Came Ruth. Lou Gehrig appeared on the cover of Charles Rosoff and Eddie Cherkose's A Cowboy's Life. Cupid even got into the act, appearing at bat on the cover of Base Ball Game of Love by Edith Barbier and Arthur Longbrake.

The National Game became so ingrained within the American culture that any sociable citizen knew how the game was played. Terms like "strike out," “batter up,” and others made their way into conventional American English. Baseball became such a symbol of American life that the story of its creation by a Civil War hero, Abner Doubleday, was told so that the game would not lose its distinctly American flavor. This story is now known to be false.

The movies, in their infantile stages in the early 20th century, reflected this cultural emphasis on the sport. Movies like Baseball and Bloomers (1911), Baseball (1913), The Baseball Fan (1914), 'Tis the Ball (1932), and Negro Leagues Baseball (1946) all demonstrated the influence of baseball. Authors such as Ring Lardner and Eliot Asinof (brother of Isaac Asimov) wrote newspaper columns and novels about the sport. Salvador Dali painted test cells for a segment of the 1940 release of Fantasia about baseball as a metaphor for American life.

Works such as Ball Club March (Thomas Baldwin, 1888), American League continued on page 30
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March (composer unknown, 1901), and Three Strikes Two-Step (A.W. Bauer, 1902) portrayed the game through the medium of the wind band. Baseball even inspired operatic composition in Paul Eaton’s Angela: or the Umpire’s Revenge (1888) and William Schuman’s The Mighty Casey (1954). Baseball influenced nearly every branch of the arts, including Tin Pan Alley song.

Irv Berlin wrote the music for a number of baseball songs including Along Game Ruth (1929) and Jake! Jake! The Yiddisher Ball Player (1913). Jake! (lyrics by Blanche Merrill) demonstrates the tendency of these songs to reflect American culture. A term like “Yiddisher,” and the patronizing attitude toward the player in the song, might be understood as racial slurs in more modern times. In 1913 this was acceptable language and subject matter, as evidenced by Berlin, a Jew, composing music for a song that used such terminology:

VERSE 1:
What's the score? Six to four! What do you think of that?
Don't blame me if I holler, I bet a half a dollar on the game,
And I've got a right to be sore.
Please remove your hat, Who's that at the bat?
Did you say it's Jakey Rosenstein? Fine!
On his hand he's got sand, Look at him at the plate,
Maybe you don't think that boy is great,
Wait!

CHORUS:
Jake, now don't you miss it, Jake, Go on and kiss it,
Give it a knock and don't you fake,
Go on and give it a smack, crack!
That's a la-la-pa-loo-sa! Run, you son of a gun,
What's that I hear the people shout? You're out!
Jake, I lose my half a dollar, poison you should swallow;
Jake, Jake, you're a regular fake.

VERSE 2:
Hear them holler, It's a foul! What do you think of that?
Why, he was only jakin', Now he'll bring home the bacon,
Oi! that boy, He's certainly there with the bat.
It's not over yet, I would like to bet,
Only if you bet with me you must trust;
Jake, don't stall, hit the ball, Play with it like a toy.
Make a half a dollar's worth of joy, Oi!

A focus on Jake's Jewish heritage is demonstrated by Jake's obviously Semitic last name, Rosenstein, along with the Yiddish expression “Oi” in the second verse. This is also reflected in performance practice. D'Anna Fortunato sang Jake! Jake! The Yiddisher Ball Player in a stereotypically Yiddish accent for the 1994 compact disc, Hurrah for the National Game. Merrill's lyrics even irreverently allude to Jewish kosher laws in the second verse, “Now he'll bring home the bacon.” These Jewish elements are evident in the song, but the text primarily concerns a half-dollar bet on a baseball game.

Gambling and baseball reached a horrible climax with the 1919 Black Sox Scandal when eight players for the Chicago White Sox were implicated in a gambling scheme to fix the World Series. The most famous player involved was “Shoeless” Joe Jackson, who received a permanent ban from professional baseball for his role in the incident. Berlin and Merrill's song represents a baseball culture before the ugly stain of the Black Sox Scandal in which gambling was common and accepted. Before the 1919 World Series, fans generally believed that players were unaffected by gamblers. Better would heckle players and blame them for losses, as in Jake! Jake! The Yiddisher Ball Player, but certainly wagers would not affect the integrity of the game itself. After the Scandal, fans realized how corruption and greed had tainted baseball.

Moises “Moe” Jaffe also wrote a number of Tin Pan Alley-era baseball songs. Jaffe formed his band “Jaffe's Collegians” while attending The University of Pennsylvania Law School, and on 4 April 1925, the band recorded its headliner song Collegiate. The song sold more than one million copies of sheet music. At one point in his Tin Pan Alley career, Jaffe had an office in the heart of the publishing community at 1619 Broadway. His prolific baseball song compositions included (the following all from 1938) There's Gold in Them There Phils, The White Sox Are Coming Home, The St. Louis Browns, Watch the Senators, Here Come the Yanks, and Batter Up: A Theme Song for Every Team in the Big-Time Circuit. He also composed songs about the Pittsburgh Pirates, the Brooklyn Dodgers, and the Chicago Cubs.

The baseball songs of Harry Von Tilzer included The Baseball Glide (1911) and Batter Up Uncle Sam Is at the Plate (1918). Perhaps his most significant contribution to baseball in American song was as a publisher of his brother’s compositions. Albert’s contributions to the repertoire of baseball songs included Back to the Bleachers for Mine (1910), Did He Run? (1909), I Want to Go to the Ballgame (1913), and the most popular baseball song of all time: Take Me Out to the Ball Game (1908), which was published by his brother's company. Surprisingly, neither Tilzer nor Jack Norworth who wrote the words to Take Me had ever seen a baseball game before they wrote the song. The section that is most popular today is the chorus of the original song; the verse is about Norworth's girlfriend Katie:

Katie Casey was baseball mad,
Had the fever and had it bad;
Just to root for the hometown crew,
Ev'ry sot' Katie blew.
On a Saturday, her young beau,
Called to see if she’d like to go,
To see a show but Miss Kate said, “No,
I’ll tell you what you can do:

Take me out to the ballgame,
Take me out to the crowd,
Buy me some peanuts and cracker jack,
I don’t care if I never get back,
Let me root, root, root, for the home team,
If they don’t win it’s a shame.
For it’s one, two, three strikes, you’re out,
At the old ball game.”

These lyrics were composed while Norworth took a half-hour ride on the New York City subway. He was inspired by an advertising sign promoting baseball at the Polo Grounds, the ballpark where the New York (now San Francisco) Giants played. When Norworth premiered the song during his vaudeville act at Brooklyn’s Amphion Theater, the audience did not receive it well. Norworth discarded the piece in the trunk of his car. Three months later, while performing at Hammerstein’s Victoria Theater, Norworth was amazed to learn that a number of performers had added Take Me Out to the Ball Game into their acts. His song that had flopped in its first performance was now a vaudeville hit. Eventually the song made its way into the ballpark, although the reasons for its popularity over other baseball songs composed the same year are not quite clear. George M. Cohan’s Take Your Girl to the Ball Game was very similar to Norworth and Tiller’s hit, yet it never reached the popularity of Take Me. Take Me Out to the Ball Game remains the most popular baseball song of all time.

Tin Pan Alley song was song about American life. From tunes about the girl next door to songs about mothers and fathers, they depicted popular subject matter. Baseball’s influence on late 19th- and early 20th-century American culture is heard in these songs. The national pastime was certainly national in its scope and was so represented in popular song. In this genre we see baseball’s depiction in the arts in general and music in particular. Tin Pan Alley’s use of the sport teaches us about America’s cultural emphasis on baseball in this time period.

Matthew Doublestein is a member of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and an undergraduate student in Music Education at Ball State University, where he is a student of Dr. Linda Pohly.

Notes
1. The National Art Museum of Sport on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) holds a number of paintings and sculptures that demonstrate the influence of baseball on the visual arts.
2. The Northern Indiana Center for History, located in South Bend, Indiana, is the national repository for the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGP-BL) records and information. Also note that the modern terms “baseball” and “ballgame” were often written as “base ball” and “ball game” (separate words) in the early days of the game.
5. This recording was historic as it was the first recording to use an electric microphone rather than a recording horn.
6. A sou was a small unit of French currency.

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The Society for American Music promotes research, educational projects, and the dissemination of information concerning all subjects and periods embraced by the field of music in American life. Individual and institutional members receive the quarterly journal American Music, the Bulletin, and the annotated Membership Directory. Direct all inquiries to The Society for American Music, Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260; (412) 624-3031; SAM@american-music.org.

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Annual Conferences
30th Annual Conference, Cleveland, Ohio
Rob Walser, Program Committee Chair
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November is AMERICAN MUSIC MONTH

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Plans for the 2004 Annual Conference in Cleveland on March 10-14 continue to develop. The Conference will be a joint meeting with the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC); that group expects approximately 100 of its members to attend.

The Conference will be held at the Renaissance Cleveland Hotel—arguably the best hotel in the city. Located on Public Square, at the center of downtown Cleveland’s business, shopping, theater, and entertainment districts, the hotel was opened in 1918 as the Hotel Cleveland and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. It became part of the vast Cleveland Union Terminal railroad station and Terminal Tower office complex in 1930 and was thoroughly renovated in 2002. Now part of the Tower City retail complex, the hotel is connected via underground passage to a shopping mall, restaurants, a food court, a group of movie theaters, Starbucks, and the Cleveland Rapid Transit system. We have secured favorable lodging rates for both groups at $129 per night for single or double beds, one or two persons. Air travelers arriving at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport can ride the Rapid Transit directly to Tower City for just $1.50.

All ARSC and SAM conference sessions will be open to members of either Society and registration fees for both Societies will be identical. ARSC sessions will take place in a single, large, dedicated room; for the SAM sessions we have reserved four smaller rooms for concurrent sessions.

Cleveland is a thriving metropolitan area with much to offer visitors, and we have planned some events that should showcase the city’s musical offerings. The Conference will kick off on Wednesday with the traditional reception at the hotel; on Thursday evening we will have a reception and open house/tours at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, and on Friday, we plan excursions to University Circle, where Case Western Reserve University is located. An extraordinary concentration of more than 70 cultural, educational, and social organizations, the Circle was designed by the Olmstead brothers and is home to the world famous Cleveland Museum of Art, the Western Reserve Historical Society and Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum, the Cleveland Botanical Gardens, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Severance Hall, home of the Cleveland Orchestra. The newest University Circle attraction is the Frank Gehry-designed Peter B. Lewis Building, scheduled to open in Fall 2002. The Little Italy Historic District, developed in the early 20th century, is a five-minute walk from the Circle, and boasts a number of excellent restaurants and cafés as well as shops, galleries, and an historical museum. We plan organized tours of some of these sites, but will also simply provide transportation to the Circle, allowing Conference attendees to freely circulate among the institutions that they find of interest. At the end of the day, we plan a reception at Case for attendees. Another excursion option would allow conference attendees to visit the Polka Museum. We are working on the details of that possibility.

Cleveland’s musical scene is lively and diverse. The Cleveland Orchestra performs at Severance Hall most weeks from September through May. On March 11 and 12 at 8pm, and March 14 at 3pm the Orchestra will present a program with Wilson Hermanto, as conductor, and Elisabeth Batiashvili, violin, that includes two works by Sibelius—the Violin Concerto and Pohjola’s Daughter as well as the Shostakovich Symphony No. 1. The same weekend, the American Ballet Theater will perform at Playhouse Square. Other musical and theatrical events may be available for conference attendees at the Cleveland Playhouse and Gund Arena. The Cleveland Institute of Music and the CWRU Department of Music present regular recitals and concerts, as do Cleveland State University and Cuyahoga Community College (home to the annual Tri-C Jazz Fest). The Cleveland Museum of Art sponsors a number of concert series, including a world music series that brings world famous performers to University Circle. In addition, Cleveland’s ethnic communities offer a range of musical and cultural events.

Bibliography

Discography
Diamond Cuts CD series available from the Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, NY.
There was a time when the project of introducing young Americans to “great music” mainly meant introducing a pantheon of great composers beginning with Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. This Eurocentric curriculum seems dated today.

As a timely replacement, the story of Dvorak in America suggests itself for many reasons. No other European musician of comparable eminence so dedicated himself to finding “America.” Dvorak’s quest was both concentrated and varied. And he proved amazingly absorbent. In particular, his enthusiasm for the music of Native Americans and African Americans memorably bore fruit in his own symphonic, piano, and chamber works. The pedagogical ramifications of Dvorak’s quest are irresistibly multicultural and interdisciplinary. The slave trade, the Indian Wars, blackface minstrelsy, Yellow Journalism, and the Panic of 1893 are among the pertinent topics. The cast of characters includes Stephen Foster, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Buffalo Bill, and Marian Anderson.

My own awareness of the Dvorak story begins with Wagner Nights—my 1994 history of Wagnerism in the United States. Immersed in 1890s New York City, I became immersed in the American career of Wagner’s charismatic New World emissary, Anton Seidl. Seidl conducted the premiere of the New World Symphony. Like Dvorak, he committed himself to America. Dvorak’s ambitions for an “American school” of composers, and for state-supported American institutions of musical education, were also Seidl’s ambitions. In Manhattan, Dvorak and Seidl were inseparable colleagues and friends.

When it came time to celebrate the one hundredth birthday of the New World Symphony, in December 1993, I was the Artistic Advisor to the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra. The result was a festival exploring the “American accent” of the music Dvorak composed in New York and Iowa. Subsequently, as the orchestra’s Executive Director, I took the story of Dvorak into middle and high school Brooklyn classrooms. For inner city youngsters new to symphonic music, Dvorak proved a fascinating and heroic figure. The students proved eager to identify with Dvorak’s search for an indigenous New World music distinguishable from Old World models. Our “Dvorak in America” programs in the Brooklyn schools typically included “Deep River” and “Goin’ Home,” Stephen Foster’s “Old Folks at Home” in Dvorak’s arrangement for chorus and orchestra, and excerpts from the New World Symphony, all with student performers and commentators taking part alongside professional players.

In 1999 I taught “Dvorak and America” at Boston’s New England Conservatory. My students created lecture/recital programs featuring the American String Quartet, the American Suite, the Humoresques, and the Violin Sonata. These became part of a three-week Dvorak unit at the Boston Latin School, where thirty twelfth graders were invited to ponder issues of race and culture as exposed by Dvorak’s American sojourn—during which he was denounced in Boston as a “negrophile.” Sponsored by an orchestra, sponsored by a conservatory, “Dvorak in America” proved an ideal vehicle for introducing the symphonic experience by way of exploring the American experience. The fundamental questions Dvorak indefatigably asked—What is America? Who is an American?—are questions perpetually renewed and unfailingly rewarding.

In 2001, with the support of the American Symphony Orchestra League, I was able to secure an education grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (which requires that I state that “any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations” here expressed “do not necessarily represent those of the NEH”). This book is one result.

At the beginning of the chapter on the New World Symphony, Anton Seidl and Antonin Dvořák, sitting together in a café, carry on this fictionalized conversation:

In between silences, a familiar topic was addressed. “The musical life of this country is in the hands of foreigners,” Dvořák muttered. “All the composers sound German.” Seidl stared at the table and said, “There is Victor Herbert. There is Edward MacDowell. They have a future.”

“And they have a past. They studied in Stuttgart and Frankfurt. They made their reputations in Germany.”

“You should not underestimate the energy of Americans. I am here longer than you. Look at the ladies of the Seidl Society, what they have done on Coney Island: my summer concerts there, fourteen times a week, for twenty-five cents a ticket. Never could you find such a thing in the Old World. And the ladies of the society don’t work for money. They raise the money to create concerts for the working man.”

“Yes, the women here are different. Mrs. Thurber—certainly there is no one like her in Prague or Vienna. Maybe my new symphony…”

“But you are not American. Incidentally, I have been looking at your new symphony. The second movement.”

Dvořák bristled.

“It is a slow movement, nein?” said Seidl. Dvořák exhaled a gust of cigar smoke.

“Andante, you call it,” Seidl continued in his low, steady voice. “But I am sure that it is slower. A Largo. That is to get underneath, to the inner meaning. The Innigkeit.”

Dvořák was now talking to himself: “But of course it is an Andante. The tempo is only moderately slow. It is like a slave song sung by Burleigh, like ‘Deep River.’”

Dvořák confronted Seidl’s gaze. “No one can sing so slowly.” He said. “Burleigh….”

“Ja! Ja! Burleigh!” Seidl snorted and glanced away. “This is not Burleigh. This is Heimweh—homesickness. Your ‘New World’ Symphony is an ‘Old World’ Symphony. Negro music, Indian music, it is all very fine. It is what the Americans call window dressing. It is not the heart of this music. Your heart—is it in New York? Or in Bohemia?”

Seidl pointed at his chest. Dvořák ordered another Pilsner. Minutes passed.

“Do as you please,” said Dvořák. Seidl lifted his watch from his pocket. “I must rehearse,” he said, and left the table.

Published by Cricket Books, Dvořák in America is copiously illustrated with period
The Hayloft Gang

Stephen Parry

Image Base, a video production company located in Chicago, Illinois, in association with Media Working Group a non-profit 501(C)3 media education and development organization located in Covington, Kentucky (www.mwg.org), is producing a television documentary The Hayloft Gang: The Story of The National Barn Dance.

Produced by WLS in Chicago and broadcast coast to coast on the NBC network. The National Barn Dance was the cutting edge of country music programming in its hey day of the 1930s and 1940s. The program’s immense popularity and unique format set the standard for some six hundred other barn dance radio shows that blanketed the country from the mid 1920s to the late 1950s. It was not until the late 1940s that the Grand Old Opry in Nashville began to challenge The National Barn Dance as the nation’s premier country radio program.

The story of The National Barn Dance is an important chapter in the American experience that up to this point has been largely untold. The National Barn Dance defined and shaped country and western entertainment and was the catalyst that brought country music to national popularity. WLS artists, such as Gene Autry, Lulu Belle and Scotty, Patsy Montana, and Bradley Kincaid became household names.

The documentary began in February 2002, stemming from Producer/Director Stephen Parry’s deep interest in Bluegrass and early country music. Initial research has uncovered a fascinating story just waiting to be told about the amazing talent and colorful characters known as the “Hayloft Gang” who made up the cast of National Barn Dance. This documentary will provide a compelling and fresh perspective on an era that was divided by two world wars, rapid industrialization and massive southern rural to northern urban migration.

The project has recruited an excellent team of historians, folklorists, and country music experts to serve as consultants and advisors including: Wayne Daniel, Douglas B. Green (Ranger Doug), William Lightfoot, Bill C. Malone, Kristine McCusker, Paul Tyler, and Charles K. Wolfe. The advisors will assist in locating and identifying key archival audio and visual resources and provide feedback on the production and post-production process to insure historical accuracy and objectivity.

The project is just beginning the fund raising phase and has received production grants from the Illinois Humanities Council and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. Additional funding sources will include government grants, foundation support, corporate underwriting and individual contributions. Production will take place in the spring-fall of 2004 with the final program slated for completion early 2005.

The program is intended for broadcast on public television for a national audience. The documentary will be distributed on VH and DVD to libraries and music archives across the country. Companion digital projects are planned to expand the content and reach of the program and to provide the audience with additional ways to explore the National Barn Dance and its place in history. An interactive DVD, Website, and printed teachers guides will provide in depth performer biographies, additional interviews, performance clips, and music selections along with a detailed bibliography and discography. These interactive learning tools will be a valuable resource for teaching American history, and music education.

Individuals and organizations wishing to help underwrite the development and production of this documentary may contact Stephen Parry at stevep@image-base.com or 312-587-8700 x223.

Dvořák in America continued from page 33

photographs. As historical fiction, it incorporates dialogue. A companion DVD by Robert Winter and Peter Bogdanoff will be ready this fall—in time for the Dvorak Centenary of 2004, during which the book and DVD are slated for use in educational outreach activities linked to Dvorak festivals by the New Jersey Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Sioux City Symphony, and Santa Rosa (California) Symphony. Horowitz hopes the book will also be used by music schools and conservatories in similar outreach activities (as when his New England Conservatory students performed and taught Dvorak at the Boston Latin School).

Towards the larger aim of applying scholarship in American music outside academia, Horowitz has created a S.A.M. interest group for “Connecting Outside the Academy.” His own pertinent activities include curating American music festival for American orchestras (in particular, the annual American Composer Festival of the Pacific Symphony) and serving (with H. Wiley Hitchcock and Wayne Shirley) as an advisor to Naxos’s American Classics series. He also hopes to produce a touring presentation titled “The American Piano.”

Corrections to the Directory

Paul Machlin’s correct email address is pmachlin@colby.edu.

Carol Oja’s new email is coja@fas.harvard.edu.

Steven Ledbetter’s phone numbers were printed incorrectly. His home and work number is 508-363-2773 and his fax number is 240-597-8685.

James and Ginevra Ralph were inadvertently left out of the Directory altogether. Their information is as follows: Oregon Festival of American Music, Post Office Box 11254, Eugene OR 97440-3454. h: (541) 344-8546, o: (541) 687-6526, fax: (541) 342-6152, email: jgr@ofam.net.


The editor apologizes for the errors!
The Minstrel Show in the 21st Century
—James Deaville, McMaster University

For all of the participants in today’s session, the minstrel show of the 19th and early 20th centuries was a form of popular entertainment that served as a site for the contestation, if not subversion, of power and the affirmation of identity. But what about the minstrel show in the 21st century, almost one-and-a-half centuries after its heyday and after the social change of the last four decades?

In the second half of the 20th century, television enabled the minstrel show to continue to exist as a literal public presence in a sit-com like All in the Family and the variety show In Living Color (not to mention the BBC’s The Black and White Minstrel Show), and to serve as a figurative presence in comedies about blacks like Amos ‘n Andy, The Jeffersons, and Good Times. Moreover, the trademarks of the minstrel show can be seen to extend to film and television portrayals of blacks in general. No sooner than the 21st century had begun than we were faced with two major controversies that centered on the minstrel show itself: the release of Spike Lee’s two major controversies that centered on the minstrel show.

Lee drew upon the semiotics of the minstrel show to unsettle his viewers, which by all means was the result, judging by the wildly varying critical responses to the film. As Lee revealed in an interview with Bruce Kirkland of the Toronto Sun, “I think that’s a good thing sometimes when you don’t know whether you should laugh or cringe, or both at the same time…With this subject matter, I don’t think the approach was to be subtle. How can you be?…But I think that, number one, America is never going to be the great country it can be until we deal with slavery…[The minstrel show] is part of our legacy. It might be ugly and it might be offensive but it is still a part of our past. You can’t just say: ‘It happened in the past, let’s forget about it and let’s everybody move forward.’ I do say let’s move forward, but you can’t just wipe out the past.”

Two years later, in September of 2002, white drag queen Charles Knipp caused significant controversy through his club show, for which he put on blackface and as Shirley Q. Liquor, presented a self-proclaimed minstrel show called “Ignunce.” Whether satirical or not, the show was replete with all of the stereotypical images of African Americans. The Shirley persona, who is heard regularly on radio stations throughout America, speaks in pidgin English, and is a drinking, smoking, fat, ignorant, husbandless welfare mother. In face of protests by the black gay and lesbian community, the police had to shut down the New York City gay bar The View, which was to be the first stop on the entertainer’s tour. He did perform at the Eagle in Pittsburgh, but the club in Boston cancelled the show and it is probable that the rest of the tour—to Austin, New Orleans, Memphis, Jackson, Ft. Lauderdale, and Clearwater—never took place. The debate over blackface minstrelsy opened up again, with the majority opinion decrying such latter-day racism, yet important voices in the gay community like RuPaul (himself a black drag queen) spoke out in favour of the minstrel show. RuPaul noted how Knipp “is paying loving homage to the Southern black women that he obviously grew up around.”

However, Kheven Lee LaGrone saw no “loving homage” there, but rather a perpetuation of the tradition of blackface minstrelsy, as a strategy to offer Shirley’s “white gay audience a somebody more objectionable and un-American than themselves.”

The controversy over minstrelsy as parody and entertainment has carried on into the present. In a federal court ruling from June 2003, New York City judge John Sprizzo determined that two firefighters and a police officer (all of them white) had their constitutional rights violated by the city when they were fired for having worn blackface and thrown watermelon and fried chicken at the audience during a Labor Day parade in 1998. They also pretended to be dragging one of the men in blackface. The city employees claimed that their float act was not racially motivated but rather was a parody and the judge opined that the “government can’t ban the expression of an idea simply because a segment of society finds it offensive.” (The city of New York plans to appeal the ruling.)

So, while on the one hand Spike Lee enlisted the minstrel show for satirical purposes, on the other Chuck Knipp and the New York City employees at least claim to have appropriated it as entertainment. All cases ultimately evoked the late-20th-century perception of the minstrel show as a monolithic racist discourse against black Americans, which Dale Cockrell, W.T. Lhamon, and William Mahar (and others) have attempted to destabilize by situating historical minstrelsy within social conditions of the times. Yet as these two cases reveal, the minstrel show is clearly inflammatory and offensive at the outset of the 21st century; although it still crops up as an element of social life on university campuses and in charitable clubs. Does it confirm Dan Savage’s words, “Americans—every last one—are fucked up about race”? Or does the tradition of the drag queen show, for

continued on page 36

Editors note: This paper was originally delivered as a response at the Work-in-Progress session “Post-Bellum Minstrelsy,” at the 2003 Annual Conference in Tempe, Arizona, during which a lively discussion ensued that a larger audience was suggested. Responses to his response and the issues it raises are welcome.

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example, with its roots in the carnivalesque cross-dressing and satire of the minstrel show, somehow offset (if not justify) racially questionable material?

And how should we, as scholars of minstrelsy, position ourselves vis-a-vis the practice, in its history and its present status? I think the research and insights of the aforementioned scholars and today’s panel address one of the prime issues, that is, trying to understand and make understood to public and students alike the cultural work accomplished by the minstrel show in all of its historical manifestations. At the same time, we must take Spike Lee’s point to heart, and sensitize ourselves to recognize where these emblems of the minstrel tradition continue to crop up in television and film and to resist their evocations of stereotypes for African Americans (and indeed, other minorities). Only by engaging in open dialogue with sources, ideas and each other, as occurred in this panel, can we hope to learn from our past and share that with our students, colleagues and community.

Notes
6. Minstrelsy became an issue in the 2000 Missouri senate race, for example, when incumbent Republican John Ashcroft’s re-election committee circulated a photo of his Democratic rival Mel Carnahan participating in blackface in a minstrel show almost 40 years earlier.
7. At McMaster University in early 2003, the staff association presented a vocal concert of the “McMaster Minstrels,” apparently unaware of the potentially offensive ensemble designation.

“Performing Images, Embodying Race” Exhibition & Gallery Talk
From 15 October through 12 December 2003, Wesleyan University’s Davison Art Center will present “Performing Images, Embodying Race: The Orientalized Body in Early 20th-Century U.S. Performance & Visual Culture.” The exhibition offers a critical view of how print-media images of real and imagined Chinese, Japanese, and Asian American performance supported racial ideology. Robert G. Lee (Brown University) and Mari Yoshihara (University of Hawai‘i) will give a gallery talk on 15 October at 7 P.M. For more information, please contact Rob Lancefield at the Davison Art Center, Wesleyan University, 301 High Street, Middletown, CT 06459; www.wesleyan.edu/dac; 860-685-2500.

RAMH Materials Donated to MLA Archives
The Music Library Association is pleased to announce the receipt by the MLA archives of primary source materials from the landmark publication Resources of American Music History: a Directory of Source Materials from Colonial Times to World War II (RAMH). Published in 1981 by the University of Illinois Press, RAMH was edited by D. W. Krummel, Jean Geil, Doris Dyen, and Deane Root. The materials, which were in Krummel’s possession, were placed in the archive for safekeeping.

Bonnie Jo Dopp, Curator of the MLA Archives, notes, “The RAMH Archives documents the history of this monumental project. It contains files on all the libraries and repositories, state by state, that were surveyed; administrative files such as minutes of meetings, grant proposals, mailing lists, publicity materials, and memoranda of decision-making; and texts of talks given by the editors about the project while it was in progress.

MLA’s Archives are housed in Special Collections in Performing Arts, a department of the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library, at the University of Maryland, College Park. Accessions inventories of the RAMH Archives exist, and the collection may be used by visiting researchers in the Irving and Margery Morgan Lowens Room for Special Collections, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday by appointment with the Curator. Persons with questions about the RAHM Archives, or any other aspect of the MLA Archives, may e-mail the Curator via the website at www.lib.umd.edu/PAL/SCPA/SCparefreqform.html.

“The Authority of Knowledge in a Global Age”
New York University’s International Center for Advanced Studies announces Fellowships 2004-2005. The International Center for Advanced Studies (ICAS) at NYU brings together a community of scholars to pursue research, writing, and intellectual exchange around a common theme. The community is international in membership, interdisciplinary and comparative in intellectual strategy, and global in scope. ICAS offers fellowships to scholars in any field of the social sciences and humanities whose work addresses the Center’s theme. For the years 2004-2007, ICAS is organizing a project on “The Authority of Knowledge in a Global Age.” Each year of the project will focus on a different topic. In 2004-2005 the topic will be The Rule of Markets. Fellows are awarded a $35,000 stipend for 9 months and are eligible for low cost NYU housing. Applications from outside the United States are encouraged. Details of the project, application forms and instructions are available on the Center website at www.nyu.edu/gas/dept/icas. Or contact icas@nyu.edu, fax: 212-995-4546. Application deadline: 8 January 2004.

2003 ACLS Annual Meeting
The 2003 Annual Meeting of the American Council of Learned Societies took place at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel in Philadelphia, PA from 9-10 May 2003. More than 250 persons attended, including
members of the ACLS Board of Directors, Delegates of the Constituent Societies, members of the Conference of Administrative Officers (executive officers of the Constituent Societies), presidents of the Constituent Societies, representatives of Affiliate members, representatives of college and university Associate institutions, ACLS Fellowship recipients, committee members, foundation representatives, and other invited participants.

The first plenary session of the Annual Meeting was the meeting of the Council, which consists of the Delegates from the Constituent Societies and the Board of Directors. During the Council meeting Patricia Meyer Spacks, Chair of the ACLS Board, called on a newly appointed recipient of an ACLS Fellowship, Kim F. Hall, Associate Professor of English Literature, Fordham University, to represent the class of ACLS Fellows for 2003-2004. Professor Hall spoke briefly on her project “Sweet Taste of Empire: Gender and Material Culture in Seventeenth-Century England,” and on her connections to ACLS as a Fellow and as a member of several constituent societies.

In the President’s Report to members of the Council, Interim President Francis Oakley reported on how, during the past year, the mission of the ACLS was carried out as Funder, as Convenor, as Collaborator, and as Advocate. Professor Oakley also reported that he and the ACLS staff looked forward to Pauline Yu’s arrival to begin her tenure as ACLS President. President-elect Yu met with both the Delegates and the Conference of Administrators in the course of the meeting.

The Council admitted a new constituent member to the ACLS: the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study. The ACLS now has 67 constituent societies.

Susan McClary, Musicology, University of California, Los Angeles, was elected to a three-year term as Chair. The Vice Chair, Marshall Cohen, Philosophy and Law, University of Southern California, and the Secretary, Fedwa Malti-Douglas, Humanities and Law, Indiana University, were re-elected for one-year terms in those offices. Charlotte Kuh, Policy and Global Affairs, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences was elected to a three-year term as Treasurer at the 2002 Annual Meeting. Marjorie Garber, the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of English at Harvard University; and the Director of the Humanities Center in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; was elected, and Frederick M. Bohen, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Rockefeller University was re-elected, to four-year terms as Bruce Cole, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) addressed the Annual Meeting at luncheon on May 8. Chairman Cole spoke about new developments at the National Endowment for the Humanities most notably the President’s request for significantly increased funding. Chairman Cole emphasized that the funding designated for the “We the People” initiative would extend NEH’s ability to support worthy projects in all areas.

The Delegates, the Conference of Administrative Officers and the representatives of the College and University Associate institutions in attendance took part in two program sessions. The first titled “Understanding our National Past: American History and Civic Life” included presentations by Michael Devine, Director, Truman Presidential Library, and Delegate, National Council on Public History; Eric Foner, DeWitt Clinton Professor of History, Columbia University, and Past President (2000), American Historical Association; and Ramon A. Gutierrez, Professor of Ethnic Studies and History, University of California, San Diego, and Delegate, Organization of American Historians. Arnita A. Jones, Executive Director, American Historical Association, served as moderator.

The second session titled, “Understanding our Global Present: International Issues and Area Knowledge” included presentations by Lisa Anderson, Dean, School of International and Public Affairs and Professor of Political Science, Columbia University, and President, Middle East Studies Association; Susan Mann, Professor of History, University of California, Davis, Delegate, and Past President (1999), Association for Asian Studies; and William G. Rosenberg, Professor of History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and Immediate Past President, American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. Sandra T. Barnes, Professor of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, Vice President, African Studies Association, and member of the ACLS Board of Directors, served as moderator. Lively discussion followed both presentations.

In honor of Charles Homer Haskins (1870-1937), the first Chairman of the ACLS, each year a distinguished scholar is invited to address the topic of “A Life of Learning.” This year’s Haskins Lecturer was Peter Brown, Philip and Beulah Rollins Professor of History, Princeton University. Professor Brown mapped the trajectories, geographical and intellectual, of his life as a scholar. The Lecture was held in Benjamin Franklin Hall at the American Philosophical Society. Professor Brown’s lecture will be published in the ACLS Occasional Paper series.

The public session of this year’s meeting focused on “Crises and Opportunities: the Futures of Scholarly Publishing.” The panelists were Carlos J. Alonso, Edwin B. and Leonore R. Williams Professor of Romance Languages, University of Pennsylvania; Editor, PMLA; Cathy N. Davidson, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies, Ruth F. DeVarney Professor of English, and Director, John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University; John M. Unsworth, Director, Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, and Associate Professor of English, University of Virginia; and Lynne Withey, Director, University of California Press; Marshall Cohen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Law, University of Southern California, Vice Chair of the ACLS Board of Directors, served as moderator. Last minute travel problems prevented John M. Unsworth’s appearance. Professor Unsworth’s text was presented by Steven Wheatley, Vice President of the ACLS. There were numerous questions from the floor after the panelists’ presentations.

Exhibitors at the meeting included the ACLS History E-Book Project, the ACLS Website, JSTOR (Journal Storage), the National Humanities Alliance, the Fulbright Scholar Program, and Imagining America. The 2004 Annual Meeting will take place on May 6-8 in Washington, DC. More information concerning this meeting is available at the ACLS website: www.acls.org.
**Conference Announcements**

**Only in America**
7 - 11 November 2003

Explore the rich diversity of American Jewish musical expression, from its modest beginnings with early Jewish settlers of the Colonial era all the way through the vibrant creativity and dynamics of the 20th century. Celebrate musical masterpieces once thought lost forever; chart future directions with world premieres and workshops. *Only in America* takes place Friday, 7 November through Tuesday, 11 November 2003 in New York City. Unprecedented in scope, this five-day Conference & Festival is jointly sponsored by The Jewish Theological Seminary and the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music

- Papers, Lectures, Panel Discussions, Symposia
- World Premieres, Concerts, Musical Services
- Choral, Klezmer & Other Workshops
- New & Traditional Music

Performances include:

**Chamber Sinfonia of the Manhattan School of Music** and the Rutgers Kirkpatrick Choir

Kurt Weill: “The Eternal Road” (Highlights)

Paul Schoenfield: “Klezmer Rondos”

**The Juilliard Orchestra, The Juilliard Choral Union, and The Brooklyn Youth Chorus**

Ernest Bloch: “Schelomo”

Samuel Adler: “The Challenge of the Muse” (World Premiere)

**Cantorial, Choral and Yiddish Extravaganza**

A Memorial Tribute to Cantor Richard Tricker featuring Cantors and Choirs of World Renown

Visit www.milkenarchive.org or email at onlyinamerica@milkenarchive.org

For additional information, telephone 212/866-7418

**Call for Papers: Folk & Protest Music 2004 Southwest/Texas Popular Culture/American Culture Associations**

25th Annual Conference, held in conjunction with the National Popular Culture/American Culture Associations Conference

**7-10 April, 2004**

The 2004 SW/TX PCA/ACA Conference will meet in San Antonio, Texas, at the beautiful San Antonio Marriott River Center Hotel, on the Riverwalk. Join us this year, as a returning or first-time participant, as we celebrate a quarter-century of this regional popular culture conference. For further details regarding the conference (listing of all areas, hotel, registration, tours, etc.) please visit http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~swpca

Now accepting proposals for Folk and Protest Music in the Music Area, a well-represented area with outstanding participants in years past. We welcome proposals on many aspects of protest music and their role in American popular culture. Prospective topics include:

- Genres opposed to dominant political, economic, or nationalist paradigms, particularly associated with specific social movements: Federalism, States’ Rights, Abolition, Temperance, Populism, labor unions, Civil Rights, anti-war, etc

- Musics created or appropriated in association with expected or self-identified minorities: persons of color, LGBT, women, etc.

- Protest music as part of immigrant communities

- The mechanisms, support networks, economics, and audience demographics of music within protest movements

- Readings of genres as “protest” music which are not commonly so-identified Particular interest/emphasis upon

- Under-examined historical genres or periods of protest music (especially outside the 20th century)

- Protest music as a tool of enculturation or re-affiliation

- Indigenous musics originating or appropriated as “protest” musics

Special topics include:

- Protest music in or as part of Hispanic culture

- Protest music in the Southwest

Proposals should include current curriculum vitae or résumé (3-page maximum) and a 250 word abstract, including name, institutional affiliation if any, and working title.

Submission deadline is November 15. The registration deadline is January 1, 2004. All participants must register by that date or will not be able to present or appear in the program.

Please direct submissions or inquiries in this area to Chris Smith at the email or physical addresses below.

Dr Christopher Smith
Vernacular Music Center
Department of Music History and Literature
School of Music MS 2033
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, TX 79409
806.742.2270 x249
christopher.smith@ttu.edu

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**AMS Doctoral Fellowships Available**

The AMS offers a fellowship for doctoral candidates finishing up their dissertation. Anyone is eligible to apply who is registered for a doctorate at a North American university, is in good standing there, and has completed all formal degree requirements except the dissertation at the time of full application. AMS Fellowships are awarded solely on the basis of academic merit. Winners will receive a twelve-month stipend, currently set at $14,000. Applications forms are due 15 January 2004. For complete information and forms visit the AMS website: http://www.ams-net.org/ams50.html

**Members in the News**

Deane Root and Mariana Whitmer are pleased to announce that the Center for American Music at the University of Pittsburgh has been awarded a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities to host a Summer Institute for Teachers. Based on the Society’s education project, *Voices Across Time*, the Institute will allow 25 teachers to explore topics in American history through the lens of music. The grant is one of 29 projects designated as *We the People* projects that will explore significant issues in U.S. history and culture for teachers and the general public. *Voices Across Time* will take place 12 July – 13 August 2004 at the University of Pittsburgh.
June C. Ottenberg (Temple University) has written a monograph, Gustav Hinrichs (1850-1942), American Conductor and Composer, recently published by Harmonie Park Press ($25). It was edited by Bunker Clark.

Nassim W. Balestrini, an assistant professor of English at the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität in Mainz, Germany, has completed a book-length study entitled 'A Different Kind of Reception History: The Transformation of Nineteenth-Century American Literature into Opera.' She submitted the manuscript as a requirement for a post-doctoral degree ("Habilitation"). The work first discusses the potential contributions of literary scholars to libretto research as well as the historiography of opera in America and of American opera. The study then focuses on the transformation of Washington Irving’s "Rip Van Winkle," Nathaniel Hawthorne’s The Scarlet Letter, and Henry James’s Washington Square into libretti, taking into account the cultural-historical context of each work’s genesis.

Elizabeth McNamee has completed her radio documentary, From Minstrelsy to Movies: Music in California Life, 1880-1910. Funded by a grant from the California Council for the Humanities, this project has been co-sponsored by the Society for American Music and KALW-FM radio in San Francisco. For members in California, the program will be broadcast on KALW-FM on Tuesday, November 11th (12:00 noon - 1:00 pm) and Friday, November 14th (6:00 - 7:00 pm). The rest of us will look forward to a recorded version!

Beth Levy appears on the cover of the current issue of Chronicle of Higher Education (5 September 2003) and is featured as one of the “New Ph.D.’s to Watch: This year’s rising stars of academe.” All this and a nice article, too. Well done, Beth!

The 2003 Directory should have found its way to most of you by now. If you did not receive one let me know. My apologies for any errors which may have crept into the Directory. Printed elsewhere in the Bulletin you will find some which were brought to my attention. Please make a note of these changes in your copy.

We like to know where you are. Please make sure that we have your current and/or permanent address at all times. The US Postal Service charges us $.70 each time they let us know about an address change. We’d rather hear it from you and save the money. Address changes can be submitted via email to SAM@american-music.org, or via mail to: Society for American Music, Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Also let me know if the address change is temporary, otherwise I will change our records permanently. Thank you!

SAM Cleveland Silent Auction

It’s time! Time to start collecting your donation for the 2004 SAM Silent Auction at our Cleveland meeting. Please bring books, sheet music, scores, CDs, etc. We will be glad to put up for auction any item that has to do with music or American music. And remember that all proceeds from the silent auction go to the Student Travel Fund which supports students who attend and present papers at SAM meetings. So please get busy and find lots of stuff to bring to the meeting! Dianna Eliand Silent Auction Chair@keiland@yahoo.com or 703-765-8660.

The Society welcomes the following new members:

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<th>Gina Genova, New York NY</th>
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<td>Brian Mann, Poughkeepsie NY</td>
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<td>Rebecca Y. Kim, New York NY</td>
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<td>James McCalla, Brunswick ME</td>
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<td>Melva Huebert, North Lima OH</td>
<td>Valerie A. Austin, Gainesville FL</td>
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<td>Melissa Ursula Dawn Goldsmith, Baton Rouge LA</td>
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<td>Harlie Sponaugle, Arlington VA</td>
<td>Vanessa Raney, Houston TX</td>
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<td>Nelly Case, Canton NY</td>
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Awards of the Society for American Music

Further information is available at the website (www.american-music.org) or by contacting the SAM office.

H. Earle Johnson Bequest for Book Publication Subvention
This fund is administered by the Book Publications Committee and provides two subventions up to $2,500 annually. Application deadline is November 15th.

Non-Print Publications Subvention
This fund is administered by the Non-Print Publications Committee and provides annual subventions of approximately $700-$900.

Irving Lowens Memorial Awards
The Irving Lowens Award is offered by the Society for American Music each year for a book and article that, in the judgment of the awards committee, makes an outstanding contribution to the study of American music or music in America. Self-nominations are accepted. Application deadline is February 15th.

Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award
This award consists of a plaque and cash award given annually for a dissertation that makes an outstanding contribution to American music studies. The Society for American Music announces its annual competition for a dissertation on any topic relating to American music. The dissertation must be in English, and must be completed between 1 January and 31 December. Application deadline is February 15th.

Student Travel Grants
Grants are available for student members who wish to attend the annual conference of the Society for American Music. These funds are intended to help with the cost of travel. Students receiving funds must be members of the Society and enrolled at a college or university (with the exception of doctoral students who need not be formally enrolled). Application deadline is January 1.

Mark Tucker Award
The Mark Tucker Award is presented at the Business Meeting of the annual SAM conference to a student presenter who has written an outstanding paper for delivery at that conference. In addition to the recognition the student receives before the Society, there is also a plaque and a cash award.

The Bulletin of the Society for American Music

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