Message from the Chair

Greetings, Esteemed MPMLA Members!

Last April seems an unusually long time ago. Many of us can be forgiven for thinking the pandemic would have been over by now, at least in the United States. Vaccine resistance and the Delta variant have caused that happy outcome to recede before us like a tempting mirage and we find ourselves, at least here at University of Denver, still badging into buildings, testing regularly, meeting with colleagues on Zoom, and teaching wearing a mask.

Last May MPMLA held our second all-online Annual Meeting. As always, it was a pleasure to see colleagues and catch up with each other, and it no longer seemed so revolutionary to hold our meeting virtually. Congratulations to Collin Felter of University of Denver and Anita Breckbill of University of Nebraska at Lincoln, whose papers “The Meyers-Briggs of Quoting: A Typology of Musical Borrowing in Jazz Improvisation” and “Migration Fallout: Moving from Innovative Interfaces to Primo,” were voted “Best of Chapter.”

At our Annual Meeting we also held a special election to replace two vacancies on our board. Thomas Bell of Kansas State University was elected Vice-Chair / Chair-Elect, and will take his place as Chair at the end of next year’s Annual Meeting. Beth Fleming of Oklahoma State University was elected Member-at-large. Many thanks to Thomas and Beth for stepping up and serving! We also reconstituted a long-dormant Membership Committee under the statutory leadership of the Vice-Chair, and Thomas has started gathering committee members to work together in this area.

Over the summer, DU’s music library was finally allowed to re-open to patrons, and it has been especially rewarding to see how delighted people are to be able to use the library in person once again. Coming back to our library after such a long, enforced absence has naturally led me and my staff to view many

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things from a new perspective, and certain long-time practices and workflows have been dropped as a result. But Covid is not the only thing that has happened in the last year-and-a-half, and many of us are viewing our roles and the enterprise of librarianship itself in new lights – or in old ones we are more aware of than before.

Recently my work on DU Libraries’ “Task Force on the Anti-Racist Library” led me to read Richard Holeton’s *Educause* article, “Toward Inclusive Learning Spaces: Physiological, Cognitive, and Cultural Inclusion and the Learning Space Rating System,” and to use SPARQ’s Space Inclusion Quotient Test to assess our music library and how inviting it is to women and people of color.

Holeton takes the principles behind “Universal Design for Learning” (UDL) and applies them to a critical examination of the spaces in which learning takes place. Holeton’s argument is that learning spaces should meet the physiological, cognitive, and cultural needs of those who use them, and these needs are not the same for everyone.

Physiologically speaking, he points out that people experience difficulty learning when they are too hot or too cold, too hungry or thirsty, or too tired.

He offers evidence that gender affects people’s experience of temperature, with women more sensitive than men to temperature variations, especially in cooler conditions. (This important fact may already be common knowledge to married couples everywhere.) Holeton’s observation about hunger and thirst is a strong argument for allowing patrons to bring food and drink inside libraries, and I was pleased that our library had already provided a beverage station for patrons, though it has been suspended since the beginning of the Covid pandemic. His observation about the effect of fatigue is one that any overworked college student will attest to, and put me in mind of an occasion when I found an undergraduate student curled up on the floor under the study carrels. I thought he might be ill, but he just desperately needed sleep. I remember nodding off in the library’s beanbag chairs more than once myself as a student; maybe I need some of those beanbags in the library I manage now.

Cognitive inclusion in UDL includes diverse means of representation, diverse means of expression, and diverse means of engagement. Libraries by definition emphasize written representation, but wall art, posters, and book displays provide a much-needed complement of visual representation. Auditory representation is harder to include in a library space, where patrons generally expect some quiet in order to study efficiently, but our book displays can, and soon will, be enhanced with prominently displayed QR codes patrons can scan to be access specially-created Spotify playlists they can listen to privately. Diverse means of expression have had a place in our library with oversize mandala coloring sheets and music-themed magnetic poetry kits; I had never thought of these as more than a bit of fun, but now I can see them as a deeper enrichment of

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Hickey et al. “Perceived hunger in college students related to academic and athletic performance.”
the learning environment. Diverse means of engagement are provided with a combination of private study carrels and round tables for collaboration, along with computer workstations, a dedicated study room, and a listening room / private study area. But there are other ways to welcome cognitive diversity, too: it is little enough trouble to set up one left-handed computer workstation to go along with our right-handed stations. Interactive engagement is also possible: before the pandemic we had a weekly program called “Theremin Thursdays,” where we set up a Theremin for anyone who wished to come and interact with it. I look forward to reviving this soon.

Cultural representation is the third need described by Holeton, and one that can have a strong effect on making people feel welcome or unwelcome in a learning space. I regret to say that in looking around our library, I saw signage all in English, even though native speakers of Spanish and Chinese are well represented among our student patron base. The point here goes beyond simply making the library accessible to non-native English speakers – students wouldn’t be at DU if they didn’t have some basic competence with English – but to the powerful message sent by multi-lingual signage, that says, “Yes, this space is for you. You belong here.” I have since taken preliminary steps in the direction of substituting multi-lingual materials for our existing signage, browsing guides, and the all-important instructions for using printers and copiers. On the plus side, the visually restrained interior of our library means that book displays stand out prominently, and our current book display on “Queer Afro-Diasporic Music Communities” comprises a variety of inclusive representation. My deepest thanks to Library Assistant Krista Beckman for curating this and many other diversity-themed displays.

Of course a library’s collection is its most profound commitment to representation, so here must my greatest effort lie. I am continuing to collect all the recordings I can of Native American music; having mostly exhausted the resources of specialty record labels, I have recently turned to the list of recordings selected for nomination to the Native American Music Awards. Elsewhere, I am using the “Cumulative Bibliography of LGBTQ Scholarship” prepared by the American Musicological Society’s LGBTQ Study Group to guide my efforts to build more diverse points of view into our book collection.

These admittedly modest steps will not make the music library overnight into a space of radical inclusion, but they will help – bit by bit – to create experiences where someone sees an image or a message that tells them the library is for them, and may have things for them they might not have have expected. To foster the musics of the future, we must not only preserve the musics of the past. We must also actively invite voices who have been historically excluded – who may reasonably wonder if there is a place within our walls for them – and tell them, “Yes, this space is for you. You belong here.”
Anne Myers – University of Northern Colorado

We’re restructuring our University Libraries departments right now, and we want to launch some form of employee recognition program to help encourage community and make sure our staff and faculty know they’re appreciated. We’re currently leaning toward a nomination system, so that colleagues can nominate anyone they have recently been impressed by or who have recently made a large accomplishment.

Some ideas being thrown around include...

- Gift baskets
- Gift cards
- Highlighted on website/in newsletter
- Experiential rewards (for example, zoo membership)
- Additional time off

Obviously a lot will depend on our Dean and budgets, but we’re at the early stages, so I’m reaching out to collect as many ideas as possible before we really get down into it.

If anyone has any information about doing the same recently, or some examples of programs they thought worked really well, I’d love to hear from you!

Additional note from Anne at UNC: Our student supervisor and student employees put this display together. They included multiple formats (LPs, CDs, scores, books) and multiple different kinds of spooky music (musicals like Beetlejuice and Carrie, operas like Strauss’ Salome and Bertwistle’s Minotaur, jazz like Lewis’ Jazz Funeral in New Orleans and goth music like Goth Box) as well as books on death and fear in music. My personal favorite is the score for The Dracula Spectacula (upper right.)

Janice Bunker – Brigham Young University

News from Provo, UT, via the keyboard of Janice Bunker at Brigham Young University:

Things are relatively the same, in that people are still wearing masks in class and when they aren’t able to be socially distanced from others. I decided to just wear a mask whenever I’m not in my office or outside. Our library asked all employees to be back at work in the library full time at the beginning of August. There are exceptions, of course, and a method for getting permission.

Things are also the same in the level of construction going on in our library. They
finished two sections of the main floor and started on another section. They are closer (theoretically) to the start date for redoing the 4th floor where the music collections are, but no one knows how or when the changes will start to occur. We on the sixth floor (cataloging) are relatively untouched for the time being.

Things are the same in school but I’m a senior now (!) and will have my final recital in the spring, although I won’t be completely finished for at least another semester. Some of the classes I need are only taught once every couple of years and so I have to wait until they appear again. I’m still having COVID tests weekly because I’m in a flute choir.

Other things aren’t the same at all. I am quietly celebrating the three empty shelves that have appeared in my cataloging storage closet since I finished one part of a larger cataloging project. I should also celebrate that I no longer have cataloging overflow in the student cataloging room.

And in my personal life, things aren’t the same because my mother died in early September, a child moved to New York State for grad school, another child moved out, and my husband and his sisters are busy cleaning out their mother’s home because she has to be in memory care now. We were supposed to start a remodeling project on our kitchen and downstairs bathroom but have put that on hold until I don’t know when.

The only child left at home had COVID the last two weeks of September.

I worked from home during that time on some journal CDs from Jazz Magazine and a sheet music project for Janet Bradford, which included three pieces by local Utah composers and two pieces by a Colorado woman (I already emailed Laurie about her), none of which are in OCLC already.

Myrna Layton – Brigham Young University

During the pandemic I discovered how much I enjoy researching and writing about people. Before 2020, I had written several articles for the Latter-day Saints Arts Encyclopedia (they are focusing on composer biographies only at this point) but during 2020 I submitted seven articles, and have been writing more this year. Recently, I wrote about Peggy Clinger, a young woman who lived a short life, and wrote music for The Partridge Family and other television shows in the 1960s-70s. She had hits recorded by David Cassidy, Donny Osmond and Cher.
My name is Maria Souliotis (pronounced "so-lee-oh-tis") and I am an Instructor of Library Services and Music Subject Area Librarian at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK. I also serve as the liaison to the College of Business and Technology and the Department of Music. I started in this position back in August of this year and I am loving every minute of it! In this role, I serve as a resource coordinator for my assigned areas and provide reference assistance and library education to faculty and students in these disciplines. I am also tasked with making collection development decisions for the Music, Business, and Technology collections.

I am a new member of MPMLA, though I have been a member of MLA for the past 3 years. I hold an MLS from Texas Woman's University and an MA in Musicology from the University of Denver (so I am acquainted with Woody Colahan and some of his library staff!). I look forward to conducting research in Music Librarianship as I progress in my career, and I look forward to meeting and networking with other MPMLA members!

Laurie Sampsel – University of Colorado Boulder

I have two new articles out that might be useful for those doing music information literacy instruction, especially in a graduate level research and bibliography course. The first focuses on teaching citation using the new (7th edition) of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. The other is about incorporating digital humanities methods and tools in the research process. The article in Notes began as a presentation for our chapter when we met in Salt Lake City in May 2019!


Anita Breckbill – University of Nebraska Lincoln

A new music building. How does that sound?

Since 1980, the Music Library at UNL has called the basement of the music building home. There aren’t stunning views in that basement, but I have begun to understand that the library has a luxurious amount of space. While planning for a new music building, at a price of about $600 per square foot, the Music Library’s size has been looked at with a critical eye by music administration.

Current plans are for a music library with about a third the space of the current library. Only the most used books and scores will be kept on site, and lesser-used materials including all sound materials, stored off-site. Our lovely archival and special collections will move to the general Library’s Spec/Archives. Out of sight, out of mind.

On the plus side, there is the possibility of windows looking out on greenery and the university’s sculpture garden. In the nearer future, the music library will probably need to move for two years while the new building is erected. It will be fascinating to see how planning proceeds, given the web of relationships with architects, with music administration, and with library administration. The probable opening date of the new building is fall of 2025.

Daryll Stevens and Dave Dymek – Colorado College

The Seay Music Library at Colorado College is happy to report that we’ve been open since June, when we assisted Colorado College’s Summer Music Festival, back in partial force. How wonderful to see people up close (socially-distanced, of course), experience their artistry, and dip our toes in a return-to-in-person service mode. Since then, we’ve returned to work, resumed our pre-Covid hours, and trained an all-new student staff. As we’d closed shortly following our complete renovation, our digs were new to many people.

Our best news: the campus hiring freeze has been lifted!!!! Thus, we are currently hiring our Music Cataloging Coordinator position (FT paraprofessional). We encourage all interested folks to apply. Applicants will most likely come
to us from Colorado, as this is a non-exempt position, at the lower end of the College’s FT allotment (28 hours per week). Benefits are excellent, however!! And our campus library community (as well as the College community) is highly collaborative, supportive, and ....did I mention that we’re nestled the beautiful Rocky Mountain region? Please encourage interested folks to apply via this link, and share this opening broadly!

And.....you’ll see, we’ve just decorated for Halloween, with spooky, atmospheric music guaranteed on the big day and ghoulish snacks provided...costumes optional!

May we all move forward in the best, most creative ways we can!

Daryll Stevens and Dave Dymek (For those who are unacquainted with Dave, he is the Music Circulation Coordinator at Colorado College.)

Stephanie Bonjack – University of Colorado Boulder

The Howard B. Waltz Music Library is open again after a long pandemic hibernation. We closed our doors in March 2020, and reopened in August 2021. During our closure, catalogers brought boxes of scores home to catalog and addressed our backlog in meaningful ways! We centralized reserves for all libraries under the main library, Norlin, and are still in that model. While physical reserves for music will probably return to the branch next year, prioritizing digital reserves will continue. This allows students who don’t live near campus (who can afford to??) 24/7 access to important course materials.
While many folks were happy to return to campus, almost all employees at the CU Libraries now work an in-person / remote hybrid schedule. This was a campus-wide initiative that sought to continue the positive outcomes we experienced while working remotely. It has also been a great equalizer, as faculty members typically had some work from home days before the pandemic, but it was rare for staff. Now, everyone in the Music Library works a couple days a week from home.

In addition to the pandemic, 2020 brought a massive reorganization to the CU Libraries. Our deans organized us under the “Agile” business model. We have a hierarchy of chapters, teams, and sections. The administrative unit of the branches was broken up, and individuals were grouped according to their work function. What this means for us is the branch manager is in a section with other branch managers. I am the section lead for collections-related individuals in the branches, which includes two music catalogers, two collection managers, and the reserves manager. Work and communication happens in a variety of structures: pods address specific tasks, guilds address a business need, and communities of practice bring together individuals across teams with a shared interest. In short, we all speak a totally new language here!

Jennifer Strayer – University of Wyoming

From Collections to Instruction: Music Liaison at the University of Wyoming

When I started my position at the University of Wyoming as a Collection Development Librarian (since rebranded as Resource Acquisition Management Librarian), my background in musicology was enthusiastically embraced by colleagues in several departments. UW Libraries has not had a staff member with in-depth musical knowledge for a few years now, causing much frustration in both the library and the music department. Although outreach has been difficult due to Covid, I’m finally making some progress. Most of my liaison duties thus far have been focused on collections but last week I co-taught an instruction session for the first time in my library career!

A professor in the vocal department is teaching a new course entitled Gender in Music. Students are expected to produce a piece of original research, selecting topics such as the masculine and feminine in Alan Berg’s Wozzeck, Feminism and Free Jazz, the experiences of women as brass players, and the treatment of female characters in musical theater.
For this course, I built a quick LibGuide especially for the course—a project I hope to continue building on as the course progresses. I then worked with a member of the Research and Instruction division to present a 50-minute instruction session via Zoom. We opened with a fun warm-up activity in which students had to think of a song that reflected how they felt about research and post their entry on Padlet. Pieces chosen included Haydn’s Surprise Symphony, Night and Day, and Bach’s Toccata and Fugue in D-minor. We then divided activities between broader library instruction and music-specific instruction. The session proved very successful with students and the professor. The students successfully found materials that related to their topics and I learned that not only can I participate in instruction, but that I rather enjoy it and hope to do more in the future!

Lucinda Johnston – University of Alberta

Hello from not-so-sunny Edmonton, Alberta, the land of the worst 4th wave outbreak in all of Canada...though happily the trajectory was much shorter in duration compared to past waves, and it appears we're finally on a downward trend. 😊 We're heading into our "dreary" fall weather, but just to be clear, I rather like dreary fall weather, so that adjective is not intended to be derogatory!! Lots of beautiful foliage under a grey sky...

I really don't have very much to report on this time around. The most exciting thing to happen is we opened up our libraries on Aug 16 (after a 17 months closure), and our campuses, with (I've been told) 80% in-person classes, though I have to say that when I’m on campus (usually 1 day/week) it sure doesn't seem like that many people, but I don’t mind... And with the opening of campus and libraries, I have been able to set up a new listening room (my library went through some significant renovations during the last 18 months), with a variety of somewhat state-of-the-art legacy playback equipment available to students...
BluRays, DVDs, VHSs, cassettes, LPs, CDs...even a couple of early smart TVs!

I’m still working about 80% from home, but enjoying the campus atmosphere when I’m on site. That’s all I’ve got! I hope all my MPMLA colleagues remain safe and healthy!

LIBRARY JOKES

Are libraries the tallest buildings in the world?
Yes, because they have so many stories!

Why did Dracula go to the library?
He wanted to sink his teeth into a good book.

Why can’t you go to the world’s best library?
It’s always overbooked.

How do librarians flirt?
They ask for your call number.

Why did the librarian fall down?
He was in the non-friction section.

What book did the librarian take out for her cat?
The Prince and the Paw-purr.

How do libraries keep the tomes warm?
They give them book jackets.

What advice do you get from a librarian?
Believe in your shelf.

Why did the ghost keep coming back to the library?
He went through his books too quickly.

What did the librarian tell the person who checked out 100 books?
Don’t overdue it.

Where does the library keep books about Big Foot?
The large-print section.

Did you know?

Marci Cohen (Boston U) posted about scores and public performance on the MLA listserv. Marci is not a lawyer, but formerly served as the editor of the MLA Copyright website. Here is her advice, provided here in case anybody needs to know:

Purchasing a score does not automatically confer public performance rights, so it doesn’t matter whether you purchased it or borrowed it via ILL (Interlibrary Loan). You need to obtain performance rights, which typically happens in one of two ways:

1. Most college campuses have licenses with BMI and ASCAP, the major performing rights organizations (PROs) that cover all music performances across the campus, from student recitals to the marching band to the DJ playing recorded music at dances in the student union. This will cover you whether you purchased or borrowed the scores; no further action is needed.

2. If your campus doesn’t have PRO licenses, you’ll need to license public performance rights from the publisher. This is frequently done with rental scores, where the price covers public performance rights as well as use of the materials. You could contact the publisher about licensing if you already have a legally-obtained score. Library borrowing, including ILL, is legal under the doctrine of first sale.

Regarding copies and scans: you need one copyright-compliant part for each performer. However, performers might want to make personal copies that they can annotate rather than annotating the borrowed copies. (Please encourage them to never mark a library score with colored pencil!). These copies should be discarded when the original parts are returned.
We are all excited that MLA 2022 will meet within the boundaries of our chapter, in Salt Lake City! (Hopefully! Fingers crossed!)

When: March 2-6, 2022
Where: Hilton Salt Lake City Center

There will be great participation from members of our chapter. I am not on the program committee, so I may accidentally miss someone, but here is a short run-down of what is known:

One of the plenary sessions will be “The West Through Sheet Music” and will feature our own chapter members Laurie Sampsel (UC Boulder) and Janet Bradford (BYU) with two other presenters. Another plenary will feature MPMLA member Lisa Chaufty (U of U) with Michael Hicks (BYU emeritus) and Roger Miller (U of U emeritus). Their session is titled “Snapshots of Utah Music History: Three Glimpses into the Past.”

Myrna Layton (BYU) will be presenting a revised version of the paper she gave at MPMLA 2021, with the title “Does the composer matter? A journey through time and copyright.” Rick Anderson (BYU) will present on his long-running CD Hot List. Jared Oaks and Zach Milliman, both BYU alums, and Briawna Anderson (U of U alum) will present on “From Institutions to Piano Benches: Creating an Archive of Utah Musical Knowledge.” Jared is currently the musical director at Ballet West.

Rachel Wishkoski (USU) will be part of a large panel/presentation entitled “A Teaching Flight: New Initiatives and Services from the Instruction Subcommittee.” Jason Rabb of Salt Lake City Public Library is on a presentation called “Building a Community-Driven Local Recordings Collections,” and Seth Keeton, a voice professor at the U of U, is presenting about SongHelix.

Way to represent, MPMLA! If there are others in our chapter who are presenting at MLA, apologies that I did not know about you so I could include you here. In any case, just this short sample of papers to be presented at MLA is interesting and varied, and we hope that many from our chapter plan to attend MLA 2022 in Salt Lake City. If you are not on the MLA listserv, you can check at this website for updated information.

We are very hopeful that our Mountain Plains Chapter meeting will take place in person at the University of Oklahoma in May 2022. However, given the uncertainty of the pandemic, the board has decided to continue to monitor what is happening with conferences—we have observed that some organizations are switching to online depending on varying conditions. A decision will be made by late February or early March. Matt Stock is preparing to host, but we are reserving the right to switch to fully online if health indications point in that direction.

Newsletter Editor and Listserv Note:
Myrna Layton is the newsletter editor and manager of the MPMLA listserv. Contact her at myrna_layton@byu.edu.