
Editors' Note

And then there were two. Issue 36.3 marks the moment when we officially cross over into the second half of our final year as *JPMS* co-editors—36.3 is the penultimate issue of our tenure. And with that, we're in a transitional period. While still technically current co-editors, we're prepping and preparing for the two new incoming co-editors of the journal (who will be announced in our 36.4 issue). In essence, we've developed a future-focused editorial orientation in the present that will simultaneously serve as a readying for and transitioning into our editorial positions of the past (i.e., as soon-to-be former *JPMS* co-editors). Such engagements with, transitions between, and relationalities across divides (or assumed/imagined divides)—whether it's past and present, present and future, old and new, etc.—are the thematic subjects of this 36.3 issue.

Indeed, the pieces in this issue's Field Notes section are centered on various conversations concerning human/tech relations in popular music performance. Nathan Hesselink's interview with famed rock drummer Stan Lynch opens things for us. Hesselink is interested in responses to the emergence and ubiquity of the click track in rock music, and finds in Lynch the perfect interlocutor as his production, songwriting, and live and recorded music performance career spans technological shifts in rock music from “analog to digital, human feel to machine feel, and group/synchronous recording to isolated/asynchronous recording.” Lynch provides a detailed assessment of his career over the past several decades, and explicates the ways in which the advancement of the click track expanded his possibilities as a producer and songwriter but confined his abilities as a drummer, leaving him to ultimately lament that “technology has made the music more intriguing, more bizarre, and more layered. But the soul, it's gone.” Our next Field Notes article, an interview between Brooklyn-based DJ Ian Friday and Field Notes associate editor Kavita Kulkarni (who also provides an introduction to the series of conversations in this Field Notes dossier), further interrogates the relationship between technology and the human, but with a particular focus on dance music culture. Friday takes the opposite perspective of Lynch, and argues against the jettisoning of soul as the inevitable outcome of technological advancement in popular music. Grounding his assessment in the particular Black, Caribbean, and queer heterogeneity of New York DJ and dance music culture, Friday believes that a community- and world-building vision must and can be maintained irrespective of the digital. As Friday informs Kulkarni that it's “really just about human spirit. You're always going to feel the spirit, human spirit, even through technology, if human spirit is applied.”

Our final two interviews in the Field Notes section extend DJ Ian Friday's insight into technology and community building, and they do so within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Michael Lyndon's conversation with Lauren Alex O'Hagan stresses the importance of social media fan groups during COVID-19, and in particular, Instagram community groups dedicated to the cross-genre Irish singer-songwriter and performer Rory Gallagher. O'Hagan describes the deep feeling of isolation during the initial year of the pandemic, and how that drew her to Instagram, where she discovered Gallagher fans and fan pages, eventually created her own fan page, and participated in and helped develop a social media community of cross-generational women fans—who O'Hagan dubs the Gallagher Girls. For O'Hagan, this community is not simply about sharing an adoration for Gallagher, but more importantly, it's a lifesaving community committed to supporting mental health (something that Gallagher himself struggled with). Such emphasis on mental health management during the pandemic is central to the interview between Field Notes associate editor Jonathan Leal and musician and mathematician Project.JDM (Jairo Mora). Project.JDM initially took to social media at the start of the pandemic for pedagogical reasons, sharing and starting challenges based on complicated polyrhythms. He then transitioned into "rhythmic visualizations and animations" that showed audiences these layered rhythms "and how they could manifest in different ways." These videos quickly went viral not simply for their pedagogical and entertainment value, but also because audiences found that such visualizations aided people dealing with depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and more. Despite the intellectual theft of Project.JDM's work, he remains steadfast in it and its potential to inspire and create otherwise possibilities.

Field Notes' attention to personal narratives, through interviews, carries over to the first article in our peer-reviewed section. George Grinnell's manuscript examines the emergent world—and worldmaking potential—of punk memoirs. For Grinnell, while "punk has always sought to document itself" and has "long been grounded in personal artistic expression," punk memoirs have long been elided in punk scholarship (with more attention given to music, live shows, and zines and other ephemera). Grinnell's focus on memoir, thus, is an attempt to push scholars to attend to it as an archive and archiving practice. Surveying an array of punk memoirs from the likes of Phuc Tran, Sasha taqwšəblu LaPointe, Nancy Barile, and Laura Jane Grace, Grinnell offers these memoirs as intersectional critiques that "return to the past and reframe axiomatic assumptions or develop new vocabularies for old ideas" concerning the racial, gendered, and sexual norms of punk. And it's the punk memoir's temporal play that Grinnell finds to be most compelling. Though memoirs tend to be life writings that document a past, their circulation helps to (re)define and (re)shape the present, and provides alternative ways for us to consume, evaluate, and engage punk in the future.

In sticking with the notion of how certain forms of music writing shape what we know and how we know it, our next article, authored by Ajitpaul Mangat, explores the role of music journalism, mainly *Pitchfork*, in the production and categorization of "indie rap." Drawing on the work of one of *Pitchfork*'s hip hop darlings, Ye (formerly known as Kanye West), Mangat contends that *Pitchfork* treated rap as a fixed and stale art in need of "elevation" by the cutting-edge aesthetics of indie rock. And as rap was and is associated with Blackness and (indie) rock with whiteness, *Pitchfork*'s privileging

and lauding of rap artists'/producers' partnerships with indie rock acts (hence "indie rap") were products of and practices in anti-Blackness that established "a series of binary oppositions that associate Blackness with pastness and whiteness with futurity." Mangat's article illustrates the ways in which indie rap in reality failed to conform to this racist temporal trope, and instead embraced a cross-racial and cross-genre politics of collaboration that hearkened back to earlier roots and routes of hip hop performance.

And it's on this topic of race, roots, and borders that Michael J. Millenheft III's article examines the history of the hardcore punk powerviolence scene in Southern California, and especially in the Chicana/Latina area of El Rio. Using interviews with members of the group Sordo (Spanish for "deaf"), his own performances with the band, and analyses of Sordo's music, Millenheft III argues that Sordo proffers a unique sound that he calls "borderlands noise-music." For Millenheft III, Sordo employs "abrasive and chaotic noise assemblage," sonic distortion, a blend of Spanish and English lyrics, and lyrics detailing racialized working class life in El Rio. In so doing, Millenheft III illustrates how bands like Sordo not only refute and speak back to the dominant racial imaginaries of hardcore punk (and punk in general) outlined in Grinnell's aforementioned article, but most importantly, that they articulate critiques of racism, capitalism, and nation that have come to disproportionately affect—that have disordered and been powerfully violent toward—the everyday lives of Latinx people in El Rio.

Our final peer-reviewed article, by Ruth Opara, also considers (trans)nation, geography, and contends with divides in popular music, but does so with attention to Afrobeats. Afrobeats has recently gained immense popularity in the U.S. with artists like Selena Gomez, Nicki Minaj, Janet Jackson, and Beyoncé collaborating with Afrobeats artists and/or incorporating Afrobeats music in their work. Such a crossover moment provides Opara with the occasion to further scrutinize the genre, its circulation, and its reception. Indeed, Opara examines two of the most prominent Afrobeats artists, Burna Boy and Tiwa Savage, and finds a distinct wealth gap between the two. Rather than a simple difference based on individual taste and popularity, Opara argues that such a divide is systemic and the result of compounding violences and institutional oppressions of colonization, racism, colorism, patriarchy, and misogyny.

We conclude 36.3, as always, with a series of book reviews. The first is Jason Guthrie's review of Bob Dylan's *The Philosophy of Modern Song*. While Guthrie lauds *The Philosophy of Modern Song* as being at times "insightful . . . hilarious . . . and even hilariously insightful," he cautions readers that this is not a "historically informed philosophical treatise." Guthrie uses the example of Dylan's chapter on Stephen Foster's "Nelly was a Lady" as an illustrative case study for the ways in which Dylan fails to situate the song within the context of racism and blackface minstrelsy, leaving Guthrie to decry "if you are going to characterize your writing as a 'philosophy' you have to consider the entirety of your message—both what you intend and what you leave out."

Matthew Jones's review of Shana Goldin-Perschbacher's *Queer Country* is up next. Jones starts with a personal story of being a queer youth hating and distancing himself from country music, only to realize such music covertly followed and shaped his life.

Jones's personal move from past to present allows him an opening to applaud Goldin-Perschbacher for providing insight into the "long history of queer country" while also bringing "queer country into the present moment through in-depth interviews." With such a robust analysis, Jones contends that *Queer Country* "invites us to refashion ourselves, our art, and our culture to make queer country a reality."

For our third book review, we move from a book exploring a subgenre to one centered on one song. Elizabeth Lindau assesses Joshua Clover's *Roadrunner* about Jonathan Richman's/the Modern Lovers' "proto-punk garage rock classic" of the same name. Lindau explains that *Roadrunner* is less about simply providing "the conventional wisdom" as it relates to the song, and more so about broadening its scope. For example, Clover explores M.I.A.'s interpolation of "Roadrunner" on her *Kala* album and its intersections with the virality of avian flu. In so doing, Lindau underscores a strength of *Roadrunner* in taking a single—a singular track—and tracing how its "mass replication and circulation enable individual and collective listening" that speak to broader sociohistorical and sociopolitical worlds.

Amanda T. Martinez's review of Francesca Royster's *Black Country Music: Listening for Revolutions* returns us to the world of country, but with a focus on Black queer and non-queer country artists and listeners. While Martinez is critical of Royster's sidestepping of the country music industry in her analysis, Martinez ultimately commends such a decentering because it allows Royster to develop and deploy "a Black feminist lens to grant Black artists the agency to reclaim country music and its potential to represent liberatory possibilities." That is, it's through centering artists and listeners that Royster shines light on Black radical actors and actions in and of country.

Our closing book review is Amy Skjerseth's review of LJ Müller's *Hearing Sexism: Gender in the Sound of Popular Music*. Using feminist film and psychoanalytic theories, *Hearing Sexism* "argues that sexism manifests in an area largely unaddressed by popular music scholars: vocal sounds that are both bodily and culturally produced." Skjerseth is seemingly most impressed with the broad appeal of the text as Müller not only provides a detailed overview of their theoretical frameworks that will be "particularly useful for graduate and advanced undergraduate seminars," but also to its scaffolded physiological close reading practices that are "narrated extensively as they happen so that readers can listen to the song and follow along. . . [including] charts that organize song structure (introduction, verses, pre-chorus, refrain, etc.), the lyrics that begin these sections, timestamps, and bars—which assist readers no matter their musical training." Despite being written in a way that will interest a wide audience, *Hearing Sexism*'s case studies are centered only on white women singers. Nevertheless, Skjerseth finds hope that the text ultimately proffers "pathways for further research on queer, trans, and disabled singers and artists of color." ■

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