MUET 6000: Proseminar in Ethnomusicology

Syllabus

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Office Hours (rm. 313): by appointment

This Proseminar in Ethnomusicology seeks to understand the story we tell ourselves about ourselves as practicing ethnomusicologist—where we came from and where we are going as a discipline. What does it mean to be an ethnomusicologist at the beginning of the twenty-first century, to devote oneself to the study of musical experience? Are there still overarching themes that bind us together, or are we so hopelessly fragmented in the “interdiscipline” of our practice that it is hard to discern any disciplinary boundaries?

We will begin by building a genealogy of ethnomusicology, from its ancestral roots in the eighteenth century, to the beginnings of comparative musicology at the end of the nineteenth century, to the emergence of ethnomusicology in the 1950s. At the same time, we will engage current ethnomusicological praxis through critical readings of the latest publications from a wide variety of sources.

Class Structure:
Each week a member of the seminar will present a 1-2 page protocol that summarizes the previous week’s discussion and poses a series of questions that carries issues and concerns forward. Bring copies of the protocol to class for seminar participants.

Grade Assessment:
Seminar paper, two written assignments, and class participation. These various components cohere into an assemblage that cannot really be separated into discrete entities. Accordingly, your grade will be based on your body of work in the seminar.

Class participation
Several measures of engagement with the class include attendance (you can’t participate if you are not here), effectiveness of protocol presentations, and general level of contribution to discussions.

Assignments: (3-5 pages)
A comparative paper and a book review. We will discuss these assignments in-depth in class.

Paper: (15-20 pages)
An abstract of your paper (roughly two pages) is due the sixth week of class. Paper topics must be approved prior to the writing of the abstract.
Requirements:
- General graduate level understanding of the discipline
- Ability to conduct independent research
- Writing skills commensurate with a doctoral seminar

Readings:
Most readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Reserve: MUET 6000
On Course Reserve at the Music Library are recommended background readings for this course.


(electronic book accessible from the library website).


