THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

SOUNDS OF THE MODERN BACKWOODS:

AMERICAN OLD-TIME MUSICS, HERITAGE, PLACE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

BY

LAURA C.O. SHEARING

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JUNE 2020

—For Henrietta Adeline, my wildwood flower

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

Dissertations take shape over long stretches of time. During this time, they become a part of everyday life and when the author is in the ethnographic field, they *become* life. I am grateful for the individuals who have supported me through this project, both academically and emotionally. First of all, to my parents Hazel and Paul Shearing, thank you for all of the sacrifices you have made for my education, and for always showing up. I am so excited to finally share this research with you.

At the University of Chicago, I have had the privilege of working with many inspiring Faculty members within the Department of Music. To my dissertation co-chairs Travis A. Jackson and Philip V. Bohlman, thank you for overseeing this project from start to finish, and for the ways that you challenged me to push my thinking, writing, and ethnographic work as far as possible. Thank you, too, for your encouragement, especially when I doubted myself. To my committee members Anna Schultz and Lawrence Zbikowski, your wisdom has greatly enriched this project. Berthold Hoeckner and Kaley Mason, thank you for believing in my work from the very beginning. Beyond UChicago, Martin Stokes, thank you for setting me on the ethnomusicological path. Gregory Reish, thank you for being so generous in sharing your knowledge of old-time musics.

I have appreciated the support of many kind, smart, and thoughtful friends here at the University of Chicago: Jess Peritz, Julianne Grasso, Joseph Maurer, Anabel Maler, Ameera Nimjee, Mili Leitner Cohen, Max Silva, Zach Loeffler, William Buckingham, Michael Allemana, Meredith Aska McBride, Patrick Fitzgibbon, Ailsa Lipscombe, Rachel Adelstein, Courtney Wiersema, Lauren Schachter, and many others. Chloe Blackshear and Chaz Lee, thank you for making Chicago feel like home from day one. Kate Pukinskis, Elizabeth Alvarado, and Lindsay Wright—I'm beyond grateful for your friendship, love, support, and all of the other things.

When I started this project, I never imagined that fieldwork would be so life-changing. Sue Brownfield, thank you so much for your generosity and for sharing your home in Mount Airy—I see you as family now. Tanya Jones, thank you letting me work with you at the Surry Arts Council—I have many fond memories of days at the Old Time Music Heritage Hall. Travis Frye, Marsha Bowman Todd, and Ken White—thank you for your kindness and friendship. Mount Airy, North Carolina certainly feels like another home.

This project would not have been possible without the support and friendship of numerous old-time musicians and enthusiasts, many of whom sat with me for long stretches of time to share their stories, tunes, and perceptions. Matt Brown, I appreciate you. John Boatman, you were my first old-time friend. Rodney Clay Sutton, I won't forget your generosity. Leanne E. Smith, Christie Slingluff, and Robert Wood—you are the best festival buddies I could ever have wished for. Thanks for the music, the dancing, and the interesting culinary experiences at the Clifftop camp stove.

Thank you to my family and friends in England who, from afar, have provided ample emotional support during my years in graduate school. To my parents-in-law Pat and Steve Turner, thanks for believing in me. To my siblings and siblings-in-law—Beth, James, Katie, David, Ollie, Chantelle, Kelly, Matthew, and Natasha—it has been hard being so far away. To my oldest friends Ami, Vikki, Emily, Liz, Han, and Amy, thanks for cheering me on to the finish line.

To my husband Nick Turner, thank you for your support in life (and in tech). I appreciate you more than you could possibly know. To my daughter, Henrietta, you are an inspiration. Last but not least, thank you Jeni Barnett for taking me to see a film when I was a teenager that started all of this off.

Abstract

This dissertation examines varied practices of and debates that circulate around American old-time musics in the present day. Built upon multi-sited ethnographic work, I consider *how* and *why* a broad array of social agents orient themselves around and locate meaning in old-time—musics associated with the rural American past—focusing on the ways that parties of interest construct, shape, and navigate a complex discursive terrain around issues of heritage and place. In the first chapter, I problematize and destabilize the term "old-time," examining the musics' diverse historical trajectories and contexts, and the ways that they have been understood, shaped, and interpreted by various mediating agents from the early twentieth century to the present. I approach these issues through the interconnected lenses of commercialism, preservationism, and revivalism. Chapter 2 is a critical investigation of the means through which certain locales associated with rich musical heritage have achieved dominant, canonized statuses among practitioners, using Surry County, North Carolina as an illustrative example. To interrogate the complex ways that place functions in the construction of (old-time's) musical canons, I set forth a theory of musical "epicenters." Moving from a micro-regional to a wider regional focus, chapter 3 explores the construction of and the issues of cultural representation that surround two southern Appalachian music heritage tourism trails—the Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina and The Crooked Road of southwest Virginia. Chapter 4 approaches practices and presentations of old-time from an international perspective, examining the development of dedicated communities of practitioners and enthusiasts in the British Isles.

Introduction

The mythology surrounding musics labelled "old-time" places their origins in an idealized, rural American past. At various points since their emergence, these musics have served as both a point of orientation and for mobilization in the daily lives of a broad range of social agents within the United States and elsewhere in the world. In the rural locales across the U.S. where they once flourished, old-time musics were at the heart of family and community leisure pursuits. In the 1920s and 1930s, they were recorded and repackaged by the nostalgia-doused "hillbilly" recording industry, becoming the foundation for commercial country music. For so-called revivalist musicians from the late 1960s onwards, these musics presented possibilities around which to form *alternative* communities characterized by human connection and participatory musicking.[1] In other cases, old-time musics have become "products" in cultural heritage tourism endeavors and have reached wider public awareness via movie soundtracks and documentary films.

Through my ethnographic work, old–time musics and the communities of practitioners I have come to know exist primarily outside of the mainstream and generally do not attract regular or widespread media attention. In intensified bursts, however, musics that fit under or adjacent to the old-time rubric break into the public consciousness. At these moments, their presentations provoke fresh waves of reception among new (largely metropolitan) audiences where their mythologization, nostalgic appeal, and supposed "otherness" is fortified or challenged.

[1] I borrow the term "musicking" from Christopher Small's *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (1998).

For example, filmmaker Ken Burns's docuseries, *Country Music* (September 2019), aired on PBS marks a recent point of intersection where old-time sounds filtered out to the general public. Re-emphasized here in early episodes is the dominant role of old-time in the "birth" of a major style of American popular music. While acknowledgement of country's old-time, pre-commercial connection is certainly not new, audiences are presented with fresh footage of down-home music-making in the early twentieth century; images of country's rural, community-oriented roots that stand in stark opposition to the industry's money-oriented reputation and in many ways, to the socially fragmented U.S. in this current political climate.[2] Despite its mixed critical reception, the documentary attracted commentary from a diverse range of media outlets including the *New York Times,* CNBC, *The Washington Post*, *The New Yorker*, *Rolling Stone* and *Pitchfork* that indicate its expansive public outreach.[3]

North Carolina-born vocalist and musician Rhiannon Giddens's receipt of a 2017 MacArthur Fellowship marks a particularly prestigious point of public recognition for old-time. Perhaps best known for her role in the string band The Carolina Chocolate Drops, the fellowship acknowledged Giddens's work in "reclaiming African American contributions to folk and country

[2] *American Epic* (2017)—also aired on PBS—is another documentary series that situates old-time musics (among other styles) at the heart of the mystique-filled "birth of American popular music" narrative, presenting the sounds of bygone, rural Americana with nostalgia and as a curiosity. The accompanying filmed recording "session" whereby old-Americana-evoking producer T Bone Burnett works with musicians including Jack White, Elton John, Willie Nelson, and Merle Haggard marks a compelling and nostalgic recreation of the musical past in the present; the recordings made with "a single microphone, direct to wax discs on a weight-driven lathe" (American Epic n.d.).

[3] For varied media receptions, see Cantwell 2019, Caramanica 2019, CNBC 2019, Stuever 2019, Manuel 2019, Fear 2019, and Erlewine 2019.

music and [for] bringing to light new connections between music from the past and the present" (MacArthur Foundation n.d.).[4]

It was during an earlier burst into the mainstream that I first developed a strong interest in musics broadly understood as "old-time" as well as musics that sit in close stylistic proximity to it. Although so clichéd I feel almost embarrassed to share, my entry point (and likely that of many others) came via the soundtrack of Joel and Ethan Coen's movie *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000). Growing up in England and never having been to the U.S., the sounds to which I was exposed became a dominant sonic feature of my teenage years, existing alongside my serious practice of string chamber music and painstaking exploration of 1960s popular music. Rather than to the historic source recordings that have become significant to me in recent years, the soundtrack led me to alternative country and Americana artists like Gillian Welch, David Rawlings, and the Old Crow Medicine Show. Through these (highly mediated) musics, I developed my own romances for the antique sounds and places of rural America, feeling a difficult-to-describe sense of nostalgia for a time and place to which I was not connected.

My serious entry into old-time, however, happened during my first two years of graduate studies in ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago. Compelled to learn more about old-time musics and those who participate, I conducted preliminary fieldwork at the 2013 Swannanoa Gathering old-time week—an educational, residential folk arts workshop located near Asheville, North Carolina. Here, I made my initial transition from classical violinist to old-time fiddler. At the Gathering, I was exposed to a fascinating yet limited cross-section of old-time participants—namely,

[4] While Giddens's career trajectory and folk advocacy has attracted abundant media coverage, John Jeremiah Sullivan's extended piece for *The New Yorker*—"Rhiannon Giddens and What Folk Music Means" (May 13, 2019)—is particularly rich.

those who could afford to cover the steep entrance fees required for attendance. Nevertheless, through this intensive week of classes, jam sessions, concerts, lectures, and informal conversations, I became aware of some of the musical activities, debates, and issues that practitioners find meaningful and motivate their participation.

My initial experiences at the Gathering were followed by a broad array of multi-sited ethnographic encounters over a seven-year period in which I conducted fieldwork at fiddlers' conventions, festivals, folk arts workshops, jam sessions, square dances, online, and in locations associated with rich musical heritage (specifically, Surry County, North Carolina and Galax, Virginia). While my fieldwork was concentrated predominantly in the southeastern U.S., I also engaged in ethnographic work among dedicated old-time practitioners in England.

The world of old-time musics I have come to know and now feel a part of is occupied (sometimes uncomfortably) by participants of varied generational, cultural, regional, and national backgrounds united by shared musical interests. The musics are practiced today across the U.S. in rural, semi-rural, urban, and suburban settings as well as elsewhere in the world. Old-time's central activities, supporting infrastructures, and broad discursive terrains are shaped and negotiated by wide-ranging social agents with differing levels of, and reasons for commitment: musicians, enthusiasts, scholars, music industry professionals, activists, arts organization and tourism personnel, and heritage workers among them.

Like any "communities" or "scenes" that materialize around shared (musical) interests, the discursive landscape enacted among dedicated parties operates on a logic dictated by its participants. Thus, understandings of and participation in certain types of debates and activities affords (old-time) enthusiasts varied levels of insiderness or outsiderness. While engagement in the respective activities

and circulating debates can act as social glue that binds participants together, it can also cause friction and tension.

In its broadest sense, this dissertation is a multi-sited ethnographic examination of the varied practices of, presentations of, and debates surrounding old-time musics in the present day exercised among wide-ranging participants in diverse geographic locales and social settings. I consider *how* and *why* these various social agents orient themselves around and locate meaning in old-time. Of the countless debates I have witnessed among participants across my multi-sited field, intertwined issues of musical heritage and place have surfaced with prominence. More specifically then, this dissertation explores the various ways that interested parties construct, shape, and navigate a complex discursive landscape around issues of heritage and place, and how these issues become meaningful points of orientation for those who partake.

It is widely recognized that old-time musics are place-attached. In a figurative sense, the musics may evoke vague imageries of the rural American past. In more specific ways, however, old-time's broad repertory, its so-called tradition-bearing historic musicians (or heritage icons), and the musics' trajectories from past to present are frequently understood in relation to place. For example, when discussing songs, tunes, and instrumental techniques, old-time musicians often refer to how, where, and from whom they were learned. The musics, in many ways, become fused to personal and collective stories, histories, memories, and evocations of place, accruing new layers of meaning in each new context in which they are played, sung, or shared.

Debates about musical heritage and place often surface, for example, when interested parties navigate some of the more expansive issues surrounding the musics they enjoy—generic and stylistic questions concerning what old-time *is,* is not, or what one might think it is; its complex historical

trajectories; its mythologies; and the ways that it has been tied to questions of region, regional representation, race, and cultural or aesthetic authenticity, among other things. These concerns form the basis of the dissertation's opening chapter.

Questions about heritage and place also emerge when one considers the ways that certain locations (towns, cities, counties) associated with rich musical legacies, tradition-bearing musicians, and specific "sounds" or repertories have attained an iconic, sacrosanct, and sometimes contested status among enthusiasts, practitioners, and institutional agents. In chapter 2, I approach this issue through critical examination of the elevation and ascribed musical relevance of Surry County, North Carolina.

In recent years, old-time (and closely related) musics have enjoyed an increased presence in cultural heritage tourism endeavors. These projects—for example, the two southern Appalachian musical heritage trails explored in chapter 3—offer insight into the ways that culture-focused institutional agents construct and map musical heritage narratives onto physical places and the negotiations involved in this process. Still, different questions emerge when one considers vibrant, concentrated practices of old-time musics outside of the locations and country with which they are firmly associated—the British Isles case study of chapter 4 is illustrative.

The distinct case studies presented in this dissertation account for just a small portion of possible heritage-place–related debates and concerns that circulate among old-time participants in the present day. Before explaining the methodological, scholarly, and structural framing for the project, I share here a fictional vignette documenting a conversation between equally fictional amateur musicians at a jam session in Chicago, Illinois. The contents of the discussion are inspired by an amalgamation of real participant conversations I have encountered or been a part of in

numerous jam sessions over the past seven years. I use this vignette to illustrate the ways that musical heritage and place-themed discussions punctuate commonplace old-time activities and how they are evidenced in the *practice* of old-time. In the present day, informal, participatory jam sessions are a major musical and social outlet for many (but not all) old-time practitioners in the U.S. and further afield.

> [Fiddler 1 picks up his instrument and launches into the common, well-circulated D tune "Old Time Sally Ann." In advance, he had re-tuned his G-string up one tone to an A so he could make good use of the double-stops. Fiddler 2 smiles knowingly and quickly joins in, matching the pace of Fiddler 1. Fiddler 3 doesn't know this version of the tune yet listens carefully as its repetitive structure circles around three times. After this, she is able to make out the skeleton of the melody and joins in quietly, gaining a little more confidence with each play-through. Meanwhile, the guitarist and banjoist enter and the sound becomes full. After the group plays the tune for around ten minutes, Fiddler 1 raises his foot to signal the tune's final cycle. When the music stops, the musicians pause to reflect. All musicians present are based in Chicago and have lived in northern or Midwestern cities their whole lives.]
>
> **Fiddler 2:** [addressing Fiddler 1] Such a great tune—don't they call it the Surry County [North Carolina] National Anthem? You know, you've really gotten the hang of Tommy Jarrell's bow-rocking technique! That's hard. How did you learn it? I've been trying to figure it out by listening to Tommy's old recordings but I am having trouble. Some of those old recordings are so unclear it is hard to figure out what those musicians are doing from a technical perspective.
>
> **Fiddler 1:** [addressing Fiddler 2] I took a class with Brad Leftwich at the Swannanoa Gathering—I went down to Asheville last summer. Such a great fiddler. Brad is what they might call a revivalist musician who spent a lot of time in North Carolina with Tommy while he was still alive. He dedicated considerable time to learning the various aspects of Tommy's left- and right-hand technique and even compiled a book of tune transcriptions as a teaching resource.
>
> **Fiddler 3:** [addressing F1 and F2 who act a little surprised at her response] I've never heard that version. The version I know is the one from the Foghorn String Band's album "Weiser Sunrise" (2005)—you know, the contemporary band based in Portland, Oregon? To be honest, I don't spend a lot of time listening to old source recordings. I prefer to focus on living musicians who come up with their own interpretations of the old tunes or even create new ones. I prefer them to the musicians who try and play in the exact style of the older players.

F1: I must admit, I do spend a lot of time listening to the old guys and younger-generation musicians who learned from them. There is something so raw and authentic sounding about their stuff—a sound that is full of history; it is interesting, too, how it is passed down. I'm really not too familiar with the newer artists who are popular today. Not my thing.

F2: I mean, I think there is space for both the old and the new. I do think, though, that a bit too much attention is paid to a small handful of historic musicians like Tommy and to bodies of tunes like those popular down in Surry County. I mean, he's great. . .those tunes and that "sound" are great. . .but I do get tired of hearing those Surry County tunes over and over. Fun to play but as far as the old tunes go, I really prefer those crooked West Virginia tunes. Some of them are quite hornpipe-like. And notey. The stuff the Hammons family from Pocahontas County were known for playing.

F1: But aren't some of those Hammons family tunes hard to jam with? A lot of solo instrumental stuff?

F2: Yes, I guess you are right.

Banjoist: I don't know why everyone is so fixated on the old Appalachian stuff—in particular the North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia tunes. There is so much historic old-time music that came from Illinois! Hardly anyone plays that or talks about it. Also, there is more to old-time than the old, dead white guys!

[The banjoist, unprompted, starts off the next jam tune, "Black Annie"—a version he learned from a YouTube video of North Carolina-born African American musicians Joe (1918–2012) and Odell Thompson (1911–1994).]

Methodologies and "the field"

This dissertation is based on multi-sited, participant-observation ethnographic fieldwork carried out at multiple times between 2013 and the present day. The fieldwork was concentrated in various parts of the southeastern U.S., England, and to a lesser extent, in Chicago. Festivals, fiddlers' conventions, and residential folk arts workshops have been major sites of inquiry—sites that act as points of encounter for practitioners of varied cultural backgrounds. Pertinent events I attended in the U.S. include the Swannanoa Gathering (2013–2017); the Augusta Heritage Center Old-Time Week in Elkins, West Virginia (2015 and 2016); Mount Airy Old-Time Retreat (North Carolina,

2018); the Mount Airy Old-Time and Bluegrass Fiddlers Convention (2017 and 2018) the Appalachian String Band Festival near Fayetteville, West Virginia (2014–2017); the Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention in Virginia (2017); and the University of Chicago Folk Festival (2013–2018).

My most concentrated periods of fieldwork were in the springs and summers of 2016 and 2017. In the spring months, I explored instances of old-time in England, attending the Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week (Oxfordshire), the Orwell Bluegrass Festival (Suffolk), and a series of London-based jam sessions in the boroughs of Richmond-Upon-Thames, Hackney, and Islington.

I spent the summers of 2016 and 2017 based in Mount Airy in Surry County, North Carolina—a small city situated in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. During my stay, I served as an intern with the Surry Arts Council—an organization that places the preservation of local cultural heritage at the center of its work. In the daytimes, I worked as front-of-house at the Old Time Music Heritage Hall—a small museum dedicated to local practices of old-time situated in downtown Mount Airy. In evenings and weekends, I conducted interviews with local musicians, radio announcers, and arts council/museum personnel.

As my involvement with the Surry Arts Council deepened, in 2017 I assisted the Executive Director along with personnel from the North Carolina Arts Council with the design and inception of two annual old-time music retreats—the inaugural events occurred in March and June, 2018. Here, I gained valuable insights into cultural heritage programming. These experiences deeply informed my understandings of the curated nature of cultural heritage work and liaisons/negotiations it entails—a theme that runs through chapters 2 and 3. Inspired by ethnomusicologists Gregory Barz and Timothy Cooley (2008), these experiences prompted me to reflect upon the "shadows" I was casting in the field. In addition, Mount Airy was the base from

which I explored various sites featured and promoted on the Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina and The Crooked Road of southwest Virginia—two constructed music heritage tourism trails that form the focus of chapter 3.

Interlocutor interviews have been central to my processes of data collection for this project. Diverse in subject matter to serve the respective needs of each chapter, I collected fifty detailed interviews over a seven-year period. These interviews were conducted in person, via email, on the telephone, or through a comprehensive set of questions in survey format distributed by email (the latter applies to chapter 4). Formal interviews were supplemented by countless informal discussions with practitioners and enthusiasts across my multi-sited field. In addition, social media added a vital virtual dimension to my field experience. Dedicated Facebook pages, YouTube, and other websites like banjohangout.com and fiddlehangout.com have been valuable media through which to track prominent debates that circulate among enthusiasts. Since March 2020 and COVID-19 social distancing measures, old-time's virtual spaces have been particularly rich sites of activity.

My interlocutors were a mix of professional musicians, non-professional musicians, and non-musician enthusiasts (and the spectrum that sits between), along with a variety of institutional agents—in particular, arts council and heritage tourism professionals. Furthermore, interlocutors with whom I engaged came from diverse cultural, generational, and national backgrounds.

In March 2018, I received an Audio-Visual Research Fellowship from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to examine pertinent archival materials housed at the Southern Folklife Collection.[5] During my week of residence, I worked closely with primary source materials

[5] The Southern Folklife Collection is a significant archive dedicated to Southern U.S. culture housed in the Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

relating to the musical heritage of Surry County, North Carolina that supplemented my ethnographic work for chapter 2. In addition, I used this time to examine extensive runs of old-time fanzines *The Old-Time Herald* (established 1987) and *Old Time Music* (1971–1989). The purpose of this inquiry was to ascertain themes and issues that readers have deemed important over time, paying attention to consistencies or changes in subject matter.

I approached my fieldwork both as a scholar of ethnomusicology and as a musician. Since my initial experiences learning old-time fiddle at the 2013 Swannanoa Gathering, I have dedicated much time to building my skills in this area as well as to cultivating a broad knowledge of the repertory. Formal instruction occurred in classes with notable musicians at summer folk arts workshops and through a series of intensive, private lessons in Chicago with fiddler Matt Brown in 2015. Most of my experiences playing old-time, however, happened at the countless jam sessions in which I have participated as well as the times I have sat down with one or two musicians to learn in a more focused way. While the transition from classical violin (and my reliance on standard notation) to old-time fiddle where one learns by ear was challenging, it has afforded me deep insight into a previously unfamiliar aesthetic realm; into new instrumental techniques, alternative bowing patterns, and rhythmic articulation; and into a highly social form of music-making.

*

While my fieldwork was multi-sited and my understanding of old-time musics in regional terms is broad, I spent significant time in the area widely yet complexly understood as "Appalachia." As the region's more figurative associations will emerge during the course of this dissertation, I attempt here to describe the region in geographic terms. The Appalachians are an expansive network of mountains (including the vast sub-ranges of the Alleghany, Blue Ridge, and Great Smoky

Mountains) that run some two thousand miles down eastern North America. The Appalachian Regional Commission divides the wider region into various subsections—northern, north central, central, south central, and southern—although in practice, the distinctions between them vary considerably depending on the context.[6] My particular areas of focus in chapters 2 and 3 are the southern Appalachian (and foothills) areas of western North Carolina and southwest Virginia. Within this geographic expanse, topographies, racial demographics, economic histories, and cultural practices are wide-ranging, contrary to the longstanding stereotype that Appalachia is a culturally homogeneous place of curiosity steeped in the past.

Scholarly contexts

This dissertation is grounded firmly in the discipline of ethnomusicology, contributing to the ways that it returns to one of its foundational areas—that of folk music scholarship. It draws on wide-ranging scholarly threads pertinent across the field of music studies. Among them are works on musics of the American South; the notion of folk "revival;" "scenes;" music's role in the formation of personal and collective identities; and varied physical and figurative connections between musics and "place." Beyond music studies, the project engages with interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholarship on the curated nature of cultural heritage work, heritage tourism, place, and regional representation.

[6] See Appalachian Regional Commission n.d. for a map of these subsections. Susan L. Yarnell, however, envisages southern Appalachia as "the State of West Virginia, southwestern Virginia, eastern Kentucky and Tennessee, western North Carolina and South Carolina, northern Georgia, and northeastern Alabama" (1998, 1).

Although my understandings of old-time in stylistic, repertorial, and historical terms situate the musics well beyond the American South, my project engages with it in predominantly southern and southeastern U.S. contexts. Thus, the dissertation contributes to ever-burgeoning scholarship on musics of and musical communities in this wider region. Old-time, however, has not received the same level of scholarly attention enjoyed by related commercial genres like country and bluegrass. Studies of country music—especially those focused on its old-time roots, issues of authenticity, and cultural/regional representation—have deeply informed my work (Reish 2017; Malone and Neale 2010; Malone 1993, 2002; Peterson 1997; Fox 2004; Wolfe and Olson 2005; Pecknold 2007, 2013; Miller 2010; Huber 2013; Hubbs 2014). Likewise, the more succinct body of scholarship on bluegrass has enlivened my research (Rosenberg 2005; Cantwell 2003; Rockwell 2012; Bidgood 2017).

Among the concentrated studies of old-time that do exist, many of them interrogate specific, spatially-bounded traditions and select musicians from historic and/or ethnographic perspectives. Although my work differs in approach, it is enriched by studies of this kind—especially in the ways that I engage with the musics of Surry County, North Carolina in chapter 2. On Appalachian and foothills contexts, insightful texts include Milnes 1999, Marshall 2006, Anderson-Green 2002, Lilly 1999, and Beisswenger 2002. Elsewhere in the U.S., detailed investigations include Bronner 1987 on New York State; Marshall 2012 on Missouri traditions; Cauthen 2001 on Alabama; and Wolfe 1997 on a series of geographically scattered expert fiddlers. Furthermore, I have turned to detailed tune anthologies on a number of occasions when thinking about versions and specific regionally-associated styles (Titon 2001; Leftwich 2011; Milliner and Koken 2011; Bolick 2015).

Scholars and practitioners almost uniformly acknowledge that old-time's rise in (relative) prominence stems from the so-called mid-century U.S folk "revival" and the interconnected string band revival that gained momentum in the 1970s. Studies pertaining to the U.S. folk revival are extensive and have formed an important foundation for my project (in particular, Cantwell 1996, Filene 2000, Cohen 2002, and Cohen and Donaldson 2014). More specifically, research dedicated to the string band revival has provided vital insight into the ways that self-conscious old-time communities have materialized across the U.S in urban and suburban settings (Gura 2000; Wooley 2003; Bealle 2005; Allen 2010). Concerning the more theoretical approaches to the notion of music revival, I have found useful the analytical models set forth by Tamara E. Livingstone (1999 and 2014) and Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill (2014, 3–42).

Throughout the project, I use the terms "folk," "traditional," and "vernacular" interchangeably. I do so, however, with the understanding that each term comes with a contested terrain and a history of varied (and sometimes conflicting) usages. I take the lead here from Philip V. Bohlman (1988) who acknowledges the complexity of such terms and the fact that their myriad meanings very much depend on context.

The case studies presented in chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation engage heavily with the concept of "heritage," interrogating and emphasizing its constructed, curated nature. Thus, critical interdisciplinary scholarship on the theme of heritage is instrumental to the arguments I present. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (1995 and 1998) analyses of the complexities and contradictions embedded in heritage work have been a particularly strong source of inspiration. The following definitions of heritage provided by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and David Lowenthal are ones to which I

return with frequency. Taking issue with the common propensity to muddle heritage with history, Lowenthal writes that

> . . .heritage is not history at all; while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not just an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in a past tailored to present day purposes. (1998, x)

Similarly, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett argues that "while it looks old, heritage is actually something new. Heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present day that has recourse in the past" (1998, 7). The fact that heritage is culturally produced and curated, she argues, does not suggest that it is something false, fabricated, or inauthentic (1995, 370–1). Rather, its meaning and significance relies on complex interactions between select "things" from the past and human agents in any present day.

"Place" is another lens through which I investigate practices of and mythologies surrounding old-time musics. While expansive interdisciplinary discourses exist around the theme of place, I am informed by approaches that focus on the ways that place is sensed, imagined, and experienced, and the ways that places become imbued with meaning and memory (Nora 1989; Feld and Basso 1996; Low and Lawrence-Zúniga 2003; Low 2017). While this body of scholarship has been enlightening, my project does not attempt to extend it.

I engage with research on cultural heritage tourism as a way to understand some of the more concrete relationships between (musical) heritage and geography. Chapter 3 of the dissertation contributes to a growing body of work on the function and construction of multi-sited cultural heritage trails that has materialized in the scholarly fields of leisure and tourism (see Timothy and Boyd 2015; MacLeod 2013 and 2017; Hayes and MacLeod 2007). Critical interrogations of music trails, however, are noticeably scant. Regarding musical heritage tourism more generally, my work resonates well with critical approaches to blues tourism (King 2004 and 2011; Radishofski 2017;

Grazian 2003) and popular music heritage tourism (Roberts 2014; Lashua, Cohen, and Schofield 2010).

In music studies, research that examines vital connections between musical heritage and place is wide-ranging, even if the two concepts are not always addressed explicitly as intertwined units for critical analysis. Beyond the music heritage tourism scholarship that addresses this issue, two other approaches have also informed my work. First are studies of a predominantly ethnographic and/or biographic nature that situate historic expert musicians (or "tradition bearers") firmly in their local landscapes, cultures, and environments. Nuanced examples that document traditional musicians and practices in North American contexts include Ives 1978, Marshall 2006, Wade 2012, Beisswenger 2002, and Feintuch 2010.

Second, questions about musical heritage and place are explored (or implied) in studies that examine the processes through which place-attached musics associated with one locale take shape in another. In chapter 4, I interrogate concentrated practices of American old-time in the British Isles. Scholarship that has influenced my approach here includes research on bluegrass in the Czech Republic (Bidgood 2017), salsa in Japan (Hosokawa 2002), as well as heavy metal (Wallach, Berger, and Green 2011) and Celtic musics in assorted worldwide settings (Bohlman and Stokes 2003).

*

The social agents that animate this dissertation are individuals for whom old-time musics have become an important part of their lives and a significant social outlet. Throughout the project, I refer interchangeably to old-time "scenes" and "communities." By examining the activities of scene participants and the discursive terrain that materializes, one gains valuable insight into the ways that these individuals construct and shape personal and collective identities.

For music scholars, the concept of "scene" has been both a popular and problematized unit of analysis (see Straw 1991; Kruse 1993 and 2010; Shank 1994; Hesmondhalgh 2005; Jackson 2012).[7] As Barry Shank (1994) and Travis A. Jackson (2012) demonstrate, music scenes encompass far more than the groups of people who amass around a specific musical style or genre in static geographic locales. Instead, individual scenes are constructed from and rely upon a complex of social, historical, and spatial conditions that facilitate their development and determine their sustainability. Jackson's model of scenes as they pertain to jazz can be applied largely to old-time, even if some of the social agents differ between the two contexts:

> Each one [scene] consists of groups of participants (musicians, audiences, teachers, venue owners, managers, recording industry personnel, critics, and historians), as well as educational institutions, performance venues, record labels, and publications, which collaborate to present, develop, and comment on musical events in both recorded and live forms. The specific shape of any local scene is dependent upon the participation of different combinations of these groups of agents and institutions. (2012, 57)

As practices of old-time in the present day are geographically diffuse, it is difficult to conceive of a unified old-time "scene." Instead, there exist multiple large and smaller groups of people (across the U.S. and worldwide) who come together to participate in more localized scene formations. For example, a bi-monthly old-time jam session at a pub in Richmond, London or a weekly square dance at a Ruritan club in North Carolina represent scene activities on a local level. A larger old-time scene can be imagined, however, when the transient spaces of annual folk arts workshops, fiddlers' conventions, and festivals bring together participants from across the country

[7] For an overview of critical music scholarship on "scene" and the challenges the concept poses, see Jackson 2012 (54–57).

and the world. Social media, too, acts as another way to unite participants who are geographically scattered.

On the topic of old-time dance-music scenes in the U.S., Thomas Turino (2008) provides a compelling and insightful point of departure. Here, Turino distinguishes between two types of followers: those who participate in rural, local events that are "simply a part of the community's social life over time" (159), and groups of folk revival-inspired, often urban/suburban white, middle-class individuals who did not grow up with the music yet chose to adopt it (160). The latter group, he argues belong to self-consciously constructed "cultural cohorts" (159–153). My ethnographic experiences, however, informed me that these groups are not always clear-cut and that they often intersect in complex ways.

As I witnessed during my ethnographic work, old-time participants situate themselves in relation to the music in differing ways. Geography is a prominent means through which musicians "authenticate" (or de-authenticate) their positions in relation to old-time. For example, musicians who are connected in some way to the places and regions with which the musics are historically associated might use their geographical attachment to deepen their status as a cultural insider—a move that sometimes has political or controversial consequences. Turino's distinction outlined above does not acknowledge the nuanced ways that practitioners position themselves as locals, "near" locals, relocated locals, visitors/tourists or in the blurred spectrum that sits in between these categories.

For many of my interlocutors, old-time music is a hobby (rather than a career choice) that exists among other pastimes, interests, and life commitments. On the topic of music-making and grassroots musical organizing among non-professional or "amateur" (to use this term cautiously)

musicians, I have learned much from approaches of Ruth Finnegan in her pioneering study *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (1989). Although this text is now thirty years old, it still resonates well in the present. Grounded in the field of urban studies, Finnegan highlights the value of paying serious attention to music-making in non-professional settings, acknowledging the often-hidden labor that goes into its coordination and sustenance, and the meaning it brings to human lives.

Among my interlocutors, questions concerning musical "authenticity" circulated in abundance. Historically prevalent in debates that surround practices of traditional musics, desires for authenticity (and differences in opinion as to what constitutes authenticity) often result in the formation of persuasive boundaries and value judgements that are policed or actively resisted by parties of interest. My research is informed by various approaches to the notion of authenticity as outlined by music scholars. As Keir Keightley (2011) and Allan Moore (2002) demonstrate, musical authenticity is not something that exists within the musics' sonic fabric. Instead, it is ascribed, contested, and transformed over time by the musical cultures that hold it up as relevant. Thus, the varied parameters of authenticity navigated by old-time enthusiasts are built on the logics that make old-time communities different from other musical communities. Their parameters of authenticity, for example, differ from those that set by fans of rock music (Keightley 2011; Moore 2002), indie rock and pop (Kruse 2010 and 2003; Bannister 2006; Dolan 2010), or communities of Historically Informed Performers (Kenyon 1998; Taruskin 1995; and Shelemay 2001).

As engagement with Appalachian places and musical practices are prominent in the dissertation, my work is inspired considerably by scholarship in the field of Appalachian Studies. While scholars in this area cover expansive subject matter, my writing and thinking has been

informed by work that engages with issues of regional and cultural representation and/or stereotype (see, for example Batteau 1990; Billings 1999; Billings, Gurney, and Ledford 1999; Harkins 2005; Harkins and McCarroll 2019) as well as cases of cultural intervention with folk arts at their center (Becker 1998; Whisnant 2009).

Chapter outline

This dissertation consists of four chapters with diverse aims that employ varied methodologies. While chapter 1 is contextual in nature, chapters 2 through 4 are responses to a broad range of personal ethnographic experiences. Chapter 1 problematizes and destabilizes the term "old-time," examining the musics' multi-regional, diverse ethnic, and historical trajectories and the ways that they have been understood, shaped, and interpreted by wide-ranging mediating agents from the early twentieth century to the present day. Through the interrelated lenses of commercialism, preservationism, and revivalism, I present old-time as a complex entity around which debates about geography, heritage, race, community, identity, and authenticity have accumulated and continue to amass.

Chapter 2 is a critical investigation of the means through which certain locales—through their association with esteemed historic resident musicians and repertories—have achieved dominant, canonized statuses; positions of privilege that at times are naturalized among practitioners and at others, provoke contestation. Here, I examine the elevation of Surry County, North Carolina—a location with musical heritage that has been a dominant point of discussion among old-time practitioners since the late 1960s. In order to understand the means through which musical "places" become imbued with significance and the ways they function in the formation of musical

canons, I propose a theory of musical "epicenters" that is useful in the context of old-time but resonates well beyond it. This case study demonstrates that musical epicenters form through the rigorous work of varied validating social agents and institutions with differing motivations and levels of involvement over unpredictable periods of time.

In a shift from micro-regional to wider regional concerns, chapter 3 explores the construction and rationale behind two state-supported, not-for-profit southern Appalachian music heritage tourism trails within which old-time musics feature strongly—the Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina and The Crooked Road of southwest Virginia. Focusing on the work, negotiations, and complexities involved in cultural heritage and tourism programming, I build the chapter around interviews with three central trail programmers—personnel of the North Carolina Arts Council, the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership, and The Crooked Road. These music trails offer insight into the complex ways that musical heritage narratives are constructed around physical and figurative "places."

If old-time musics are understood as firmly place-attached both in physical and more symbolic senses, how might one understand concentrated practices of these musics in other worldwide contexts? Chapter 4 explores this issue by focusing on dedicated old-time communities that have taken shape in the British Isles. I investigate the infrastructures that support related activities in this alternative geographic setting, also asking how and why deeply invested practitioners in the British Isles have made the pursuit of old-time a significant part of their lives.

1. Contextualizing Old-Time

July 31, 2016: Downtown Galax, Virginia

As I drove into Galax for the first time, my ears popped as they adjusted to the elevation. Galax is a small city of rich musical heritage and a gateway to the Blue Ridge Parkway scenic driving route. Upon entering the city, I passed a sign that read "Welcome to Galax: World's Capital of Old-Time Mountain Music." It was Sunday morning and there were very few people around. In the quiet, I parked beside the vintage Rex Theater and wandered to South Main Street, peering into shop windows, taking stock of my surroundings. Hanging from one side of the street to the other was a banner advertising the 81st Old Fiddlers' Convention that was just over a week away. There was clear evidence that the city had been busy preparing for this much-anticipated event—a focal point on the national old-time calendar that attracts thousands of visitors each year. In one shop window was a haphazard pile of Fiddlers' Convention t-shirts, perhaps accidentally on display. On West Grayson Street in the window of Carol's Consignment Store was a collection of historic Convention programs, displayed in a fan-shape. Although activities had paused on this Sunday morning, I was convinced that vigorous organization would resume the following day.

May 5, 2016: Orwell Bluegrass Festival, Suffolk, England

Although advertised as a bluegrass festival, Orwell welcomes old-time musicians, too. I set up my tent in a field close to the river with a group of friends—we arranged a small ring of chairs beside our camp for jamming. As I wandered through the site on the festival's opening afternoon, numerous bluegrass and old-time jams were already in full flow. The atmosphere was convivial. Based on the content and location of the respective jams, while most old-time musicians appeared to be camping, a number of bluegrass fans showed up in comfortable, expensive-looking recreational vehicles and campers. One elderly Englishman who offered a spirited "hello" as I passed had hung a Confederate flag[1] from his camper. Although tempted to question his use of this flag, I decided to keep walking (later, I regretted this decision). Most striking about Orwell were the frequent allusions to an imagined American South in a rural English setting: the comingling sounds of bluegrass and old-time; songs delivered with imitation southern accents; cowboy boots, hats, and flags.

[1] The flag commonly known as the "Confederate flag" has a complex, controversial history. For further contextualization, see Strother, Piston, and Ogorzalek 2017.

July, 2016: Mt Airy, Surry County, North Carolina

The Historic Earle Theatre, a vintage picture house on Mount Airy's Main Street, is a multipurpose space integral to the musical life of this small city. Depending on the need, the space shifts from a movie theater to the Old Time Music Heritage Hall museum, to a concert hall, and to the venue that hosts the historic barn dance-style WPAQ broadcast, the Merry-Go-Round. While many visitors to Mount Airy come in a nostalgic search of the fictional town of Mayberry from the Andy Griffith Show (1960–1968), general visitors are likely unaware of its importance to the history of old-time music, or necessarily know (or care) what old-time is. To many old-time fans around the world, however, Mount Airy, Surry County, and a handful of musicians born in the first few decades of the twentieth century—Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, Benton Flippen, and Earnest East among them—hold a special significance. At the 2013 Swannanoa Gathering old-time week near Asheville, when new to the style, I asked a small group with whom I was jamming who "Tommy" (Jarrell) was. I'd heard him mentioned a number of times in very familiar, adoring ways. I was met with astonished looks, almost as though I'd just asked who the Beatles were.

August 2–9, 2015: Augusta Heritage Center Old-Time Week**,** Davis and Elkins College, Elkins, West Virginia

"I had no idea that old-time had so many black influences!" an elderly lady from Texas shared with our class. She admitted to being a little embarrassed by her ignorance. She was not alone. The educational and instructional class "African American String Band Traditions" attracted around ten participants and was led by Rhiannon Giddens and Hubby Jenkins—musicians of color associated with the widely celebrated string band, The Carolina Chocolate Drops. During the week, our group spent three hours per day engaging with the complex, sometimes uncomfortable history of black string traditions in Appalachia, learning of key historic expert musicians to add to our canons of predominantly white performers. Another sign of Augusta's clear educational activism in 2015 was the "19th Century Banjo" class taught by banjo historian and Smithsonian archivist Greg Adams. As Adams has dedicated much of his career to understanding and problematizing the banjo's multicultural history, the class focused on the instrument's roles in minstrelsy. At times on the Hallihurst Porch where students communed to jam in between classes, one could hear minstrel tunes juxtaposed with other old-time tunes and songs. Over dinner, an ethnomusicologist and multi-instrumentalist friend of color expressed his discomfort at hearing minstrel tunes played on the porch during social hours. It is one thing hearing them in the context of a sensitive instructional environment, he told me, but outside of that critical frame was something else.

Introduction

What are old-time musics? Why are these musics—supposedly relics of another time—so compelling to modern-day subjects? What might examination of old-time musics, their circulation, and uses tell us about how people experience or negotiate the complexities of modern life? Since the early twentieth century, what one might refer to as old-time has been caught within and shaped through entangled conceptual webs, historical moments, and scholarly discourses mediated by diverse social agents including musicians, enthusiasts, scholars, cultural workers, institutional players, and music and film industry personnel. While old-time as a musical category evades clear-cut definition, it has become a complex, multifaceted cultural entity around which generationally and geographically diffuse communities rally; where sounds and imageries of bygone rural Americana are reimagined in myriad contexts. The short vignettes above represent distinct moments from the field in which the meanings and functions of old-time extended far beyond issues of musical style, sound, and genre. While these examples highlight a variety of contexts and places in which one might encounter old-time, they demonstrate how the musics are bound intricately to issues of heritage, identity, race, geography, authenticity, and imaginations of "place."

While chapters 2 through 4 interrogate and problematize a series of distinct current-day engagements with old-time, this chapter provides a contextual foundation for what follows. It examines the trajectories of the musics from the early twentieth century to the present day through three pertinent frames: commercialism, preservationism, and revivalism. As these frames overlap in complex ways, I do not deal with them in strict sequence. Instead, I put pressure on the ways they

connect or contradict, drawing attention to the ways they accentuate concerns about heritage, place, race, and identity.

As a point of departure, the chapter opens by zooming in on select moments in which musics associated with the rural American past—a vague category within which old-time might be understood—have entered the wider public imagination. Beyond this, I demonstrate the difficulties of defining old-time before shifting my attention to three moments that have shaped and complicated understandings of old-time in historical, cultural, and music-stylistic terms. First is the rise of commercial "hillbilly" recording and radio artists in the first half of the twentieth century; second, the activities of early twentieth-century folk preservationists working in southern Appalachia; and third, the renewed interest in old-time musics by "revivalist" musicians from the late 1950s onwards.

An "old-timey" sound

In 1996, Californian singer-songwriter Gillian Welch and musical partner David Rawlings released their critically acclaimed album, *Revival.* Appearing on the major label Almo Sounds, the album was produced by the prominent recording industry figure T Bone Burnett.[2] The sepia-toned album cover art has the qualities of an old photograph: a demure Welch, sitting upright in a simple 1930s-style polka dot dress, looks away from the camera. The album's tracks sound stark, stripped-down, and intimate.[3] The song lyrics penned by Welch and Rawlings deal with Depression-era poverty, rural

[2] T Bone Burnett has produced numerous prominent artists including Elvis Costello, Los Lobos, and Roy Orbison. Near-contemporary to his work on Welch's *Revival* is the production of the Counting Crows' *August and Everything After* (1993) and Sam Phillips's *Martinis and Bikinis* (1994).

[3] As Pamela Fox explains, Gillian Welch and David Rawlings were fascinated by and determined to recreate the technological "impurity" (2008, 137) of the vocals heard on old recordings of traditional musicians. "To

life, religion, and delivery from "trouble times" that seem incongruous with the artists' own middle-class upbringings (and Berklee College of Music educations).

There is much about the album's sonic sparseness and instrumentation, harmonic material, and vocal inflection that signifies a rural Southern, and, in particular, Appalachian musical past. Yet what is particularly striking about this album is the disjuncture between the high-profile circumstances of production (the producer, session musicians involved, and record label) and the self-consciously simple, antiquated nature of its tracks and cover art—aesthetic simplicity achieved at great monetary expense.

Also produced by Burnett, Welch's second album *Hell Among the Yearlings* (1998) sounds even more vintage, prompting Farnum Brown writing for American roots music magazine *No Depression* to make the following comments:

> With Hell Among the Yearlings [sic], Welch and Rawlings have asked a bit more of their newfound fans. They've dug deeper into the past and found there an idiom peculiarly suited to a darker vision than modern pop forms are given to. It's a vision Greil Marcus writes of as belonging to "the old, weird America." (1998)

Similarly, *Billboard* journalist Paul Verna states that like *Revival, Hell Among the Yearlings* "sounds as if it could have been pulled out of a Smithsonian archive of early 20th century folk and country music" (1998, 16).

---

achieve this effect herself," Fox writes, "she [Welch] and . . .David Rawlings deliberately recorded some of *Revival*'s songs in lo-fi. In fact, their producer for that first album, T Bone Burnett, sought out the equipment used by none other than alt.country icon Hank Williams. Welch explains, 'We wanted the record to sound real and tough…real and small, with everything mashed together and one thing fighting through another. It gives the songs character'" (ibid., 136–139).

Welch's and Rawlings's output fits somewhere within the nebulous styles known as "alternative country" (alt.country) or "Americana" that emerged and grew in popularity in the mid-1990s. But as Grant Alden and Peter Blackstock explain, alt.country as a musical category is difficult to conceptualize in any coherent way. Although initially used ironically, the term came to signify many things: "to the mainstream industry (*O Brother* notwithstanding), it became code for 'doesn't sell'; to fans, it came to describe a network of hard-working bands that fused punk rock's DIY spirit to country music's working-class honesty" (2005, vii).[4]

As Pamela Fox observes, however, Welch herself is something of a generic outlier, her music fitting instead within a distinct subgenre occupied predominantly by female performers making music with "dark southern gothic tinges" that channels "an ostensibly authentic 'past' via…self-conscious ruminations on time" (2008, 134–5). While Welch and Rawlings did not claim to be making old-time music, they provided a fresh outlet for a broad array of styles associated with the rural American past (often glossed by journalists as old-time or bluegrass).

The near-simultaneous release of the Coen Brothers' film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000)[5]—the soundtrack another of Burnett's projects—ensured that old-time, bluegrass, blues, gospel, and other musics associated with the South and mountain southeast reached international

[4] See also the introduction to Fox and Ching 2008 for analysis of the term and its uses.
[5] For examples of critical scholarship on the use of traditional musics in *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* see Malone 2004, Filene 2004, Chadwell 2002, and Ching 2008b. For examples of commentary on the film's music in the media, see Moon 2001, Guarino 2002, and Cromelin 2000. For discussions of this music in specialized folk music-related magazines, see Royko 2001 in *Bluegrass Unlimited*, Pitts 2002 in *The Old-Time Herald*, and Posen 2001 in *Sing Out! The Folk Music Magazine*.

audiences.[6] Reflecting upon the widespread popularity of this soundtrack, journalist Tom Moon of *Rolling Stone* magazine states that

> At early meetings to generate funding for *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* filmmakers Joel and Ethan Coen could be heard predicting a new musical craze. "We actually told people hillbilly music was gonna be the next big thing," says Joel Coen with a laugh. . .Now, of course, hillbilly music is huge. Since its release, the soundtrack—a set of loving re-creations of bluegrass and old-time country and gospel music—has sold 2 million copies and spearheaded an unexpected [renaissance] of Depression-era American roots music. To date, it is the fifteenth-best selling record of the year and currently sells about 70,000 copies a week, putting it on a pace with albums from Linkin Park, Nelly's St. Lunatics and Janet Jackson. (2001, 29–32)

Supporting a plot set in the Mississippi Delta and comprising a mixed bag of musics of a "generic southern rural" origin, the songs on *O Brother*'s soundtrack were described by the majority of critics, Bill C. Malone avers, quite inaccurately, as "Appalachian" (2004, 114–115). This process of regional labeling, he argues, "is best understood as an example of the lingering romantic appeal of Appalachia and of the lazy inclination to describe anything that seems old, rural, acoustic, and out-of-the-mainstream as 'Appalachian'" (ibid.).

While the idea of Appalachia as a place of intrigue has circulated in the popular imagination since the late nineteenth century,[7] movies like *O Brother, Deliverance* (1972), *Songcatcher* (2001),

[6] Musicians involved with the *O Brother* soundtrack include Harry McClintock, Norman Blake, The Whites, The Peasall Sisters, John Hartford, Ralph Stanley, The Fairfield Four, The Stanley Brothers, Gillian Welch, Alison Krauss, Emmylou Harris, James Carter, and Chris Thomas King. The opening track "Po Lazarus" (featuring James Carter and the Prisoners) is a field recording made in 1959 by folklorist Alan Lomax. In addition, *Down From the Mountain* (2000), a supplementary documentary film/live concert performed at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry was released featuring many of the musicians involved in the *O Brother* project.

[7] For studies historicizing the romanticization of the Appalachian region and the stereotyping of its people and culture, see Shapiro 1978, Batteau 1990, Pudup, Billings, and Walker 1995, Billings, Gurney, and Ledford 1999, Harkins 2005, and Whisnant 2009.

and *Cold Mountain* (2003)[8] provoked renewed waves of regional and cultural othering among wider publics. More recently, Ken Burns's *Country Music* (2019) docuseries and Bernard MacMahon's *American Epic* (2017)—both aired on PBS—have joined the conversation.

In the past decade, North Carolina-born singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Rhiannon Giddens has courted widespread media attention for her vintage, rural American sounds as well as her activism that resists the whitewashing of southern roots musics. Giddens is a musician of color perhaps best known for her participation in the Grammy-winning black string band The Carolina Chocolate Drops and more recently, for her eclectic solo projects. Central to her brand and musical presence are the ways she draws upon and validates the largely ignored African American contributions to American folk and country styles.

Giddens's music, activism, and biography has attracted ample media reception. Journalism documenting her activities and music is as wide-ranging as the outlets where she is featured: National Public Radio, *Rolling Stone*, *The New Yorker*, *No Depression*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *Opera News*, *The Economist*, *Time*, and most recently, Southern lifestyle magazine *Garden and Gun*.[9] In 2017, Giddens's public outreach was particularly diverse: she was the keynote speaker at the International Bluegrass Music Association conference; the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship for her contributions to American folk and country; and an actor in a handful of epsiodes of Country Music Television's fictional drama *Nashville*.

[8] The *Cold Mountain* (2003) soundtrack was also produced by T Bone Burnett.

[9] For a sample of online publications that cover aspects of Giddens's music, personal biography, and career, see Kater 2019, Fricke 2015, Sullivan 2019, Russell 2019, Davidson 2019, Melnick 2019, A.F. 2019, Lingan 2019, and Dickey 2020. For a scholarly perspective on Giddens and The Carolina Chocolate Drops, and their receptions as emblems of "Affrilachian" identity, see Barbour-Payne 2016 (43–58).

Like that of Welch and Rawlings, Giddens's musical output is difficult to describe in any concise way. Across her media coverage, her music has been understood as, or discussed in relation to old-time, bluegrass, country, and folk—terms used with varying degrees of specificity. Beyond her wider public visibility, Giddens has participated in the more specialized old-time world—the communities to which this dissertation gives voice. The final ethnographic vignette that opens this chapter situates Giddens as an instructor at an old-time workshop. Interestingly, The Carolina Chocolate Drops formed out of a similar enthusiast event—the 2005 Black Banjo Gathering in Boone, North Carolina.[10]

In a similar way to that produced by Welch and Rawlings, Giddens's music is lauded for the authenticity achieved through its fresh, imaginative reactivation of forgotten or half-forgotten American sounds. Likewise, Giddens's seemingly authentic folk and folk-inspired music has also been released on major labels and her voice, too, shaped by formal training—she studied operatic singing at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music.

But what *is* old-time?

The difficulty of defining old-time in any precise way stems from the ways that the term has been used alternately as inclusive or exclusive, specific or general. While the heavily mediated portrayals of "old-timey" sounds outlined above contribute to this vagueness, specialist audiences often apply the term in more nuanced ways. For practitioners, to know *O Brother* is not to *know* old-time.

In its broadest sense, old-time might be understood as panoply of musics with varied ethnic, cultural, and historical origins that have long circulated across the rural, predominantly working-

[10] This origin story of The Carolina Chocolate Drops is discussed widely across Giddens's media coverage.

class United States. Here, old-time might include string band repertories, Anglo-Saxon ballads, solo instrumental tunes, rags, minstrel tunes, sacred harp and gospel hymns, and songs with popular origins reconceived as "folk."[11] In the early twentieth century, some of these musics achieved commercial success via the hillbilly recording industry, fueling tensions between the musics' presentations as "folk" and as "commercial." Likewise, they have surfaced from the 1950s onwards through various waves of folk revival.

As an entry point, Mike Seeger's (1933–2009) short article for *Bluegrass Unlimited* (1997) came up in a number of definition-oriented discussions during my fieldwork. As a prominent musician, folklorist, and member of the pioneering old-time revivalist band the New Lost City Ramblers, Seeger has an opinion that carries authority. Frustrated by the frequent difficulties he had when describing the music he played, Seeger made the following comments:

> I travel by air quite a lot and as I put my fiddle in the overhead bin, someone often asks me what kind of music I play. Sometimes I've answered "old-time music" but soon learned that that means little to the general public, as it could mean any kind of music that occurred before the time of our conversation. Sometimes I try "old-time country" and they might say "oh, like Hank Williams" or even Merle Haggard? "No," I say, "it's acoustic and more backwoods than that." Then sometimes (if they are really knowledgeable) they'll say, "oh, is it bluegrass?" I wish old-time music had such a nice handle. (1997, 62)

In an attempt to provide a definition, Seeger writes

> Old-time music was the old-time name for real mountain-type folk music. Old-time music is the main foundation for bluegrass music. It is the kind of music that Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers, and in fact most rural people prior to the mid nineteen twenties, were raised with. It is the old unaccompanied English ballads like "Barbara Allen," new American songs like "Wild Bill Jones," old fiddle tunes like "Devil's Dream," and newer

[11] An example of this is the song "Wildwood Flower" popularized by the Carter Family in the late 1920s. While popular in old-time, bluegrass, and general folk circles, Malone and Neal explain that this song was actually the work of a professional songwriter whose audiences were of a "northern, urban, middle-class" persuasion (2010, 10).

> banjo tunes like "Cumberland Gap." It's a rich and varied heritage of music—as rich as the roots music of any country. It was played throughout rural America but was extra strong and distinctive in the Southeast, especially in the mountains. . .It used to be played by African Americans as well as Anglo, French & Scotch-Irish, etc. Americans. (Ibid., 62)

From the outset, ambiguity pervades: "old-time music was the old-time name for real mountain-type folk music." His definition reveals the common geographical bias that old-time has a predominantly southern, in particular Appalachian ("mountain-type") designation, although admits that it was "played throughout rural America." What resonates most prominently in Seeger's entire article, however, is old-time's variegated historical development, along with its stylistic, instrumental, and ethnic diversity. In the remainder of the article, Seeger examines the differing applications of old-time at various points in time and assesses the term's relevance at the close of the twentieth century. While it served as a means of entertainment in the "pre-electronic days," he explains, old-time almost died out in the middle of the twentieth century before becoming an object of revivalist attention that resulted in the music finding "new life…being played, most informally, by people all over the country" (ibid., 62). Following the article is a list of twenty recordings that illustrate old-time's diverse scope, featuring compact discs from contemporary and (re-released) historic performers.

Musicologist Gregory N. Reish offers the following assessment of Seeger's definition:

> In these few pages, Seeger exposes most of old-time music's inherent contradictions and dichotomies at the end of the twentieth century: its agrarian roots and urban flourishing, its professionalization of homegrown folk styles, its strong but not exclusive relationship to the diverse cultures of the South, its Anglo-Celtic whiteness and intrinsic multiracialism, its reception as both an antiquated style and a manifestly contemporary one, its aesthetic valuation of authenticity and tradition as well as novelty and innovation, and its conceptual divisions between pre- and postrevival eras. (2017, 118–119)

Reish suggests that the article's placement in the magazine *Bluegrass Unlimited* ensures that it functions as an "old-time music primer for bluegrass enthusiasts" (ibid., 117). Definitions of bluegrass—a style with traceable commercial origins in the 1940s first associated with the pioneer musicians Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt, and Earl Scruggs—are useful for understanding what old-time is and what it is not. Yet defining bluegrass as a generic and stylistic marker, however, has its own difficulties (see Rockwell 2012). In the narrative sketch that opens *Bluegrass Breakdown: The Making of the Old Southern Sound* (2003), Robert Cantwell recounts an interaction between Monroe and a reporter from *The Baltimore Sun* in 1977*:*

> And just what *is* bluegrass? the reporter asks obligingly, sensing that Monroe is forming an idea of it he has not advanced before. "Bluegrass," Monroe discloses, "is the old southern sound, that was heard years ago, many, many years ago in the backwoods, at country dances. . ." But his sense today of its antiquity is strong and he is not quite satisfied. "Bluegrass brings out the old tones," he adds, "ancient tones." *Ancient,* the reporter writes in his notebook, with a bold underline, *ancient tones.* (14–15)

Here, Monroe authenticates bluegrass' commercialism through elusive, mesmerizing imagery that channels a distant, pre-industrial musical past—an era one might refer to as "old-time." These "ancient tones," he suggests, have an exclusive relationship to the South (the term "backwoods" suggesting a culturally isolated mountain southeast) thus Monroe's definition upholds the common regional bias. As Bill C. Malone and Jocelyn R. Neal demonstrate, however, bluegrass has roots within but also well beyond the southern and southeastern states (2010, 323).[12]

[12] For a detailed history of bluegrass, see Rosenberg 2005, Cantwell 2003, and Malone and Neal 2010 (chapter 10). For a study of the bluegrass industry and the ways it navigates the tensions between notions of "folk" and "commercial," see Fenster 1998. See Rockwell 2012 for an overview of the bluegrass genre debate among fans, practitioners, and institutional players.

As highlighted by Seeger and evidenced in musical commentaries surrounding films like *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, old-time and bluegrass are often conflated, or there is at least some confusion regarding their boundaries. While old-time and bluegrass are arguably stylistic cousins with some repertorial overlap, their ensemble interplay, relationships to the music industry, and ways respective scene participants understand their involvement can be quite different.

The context of a (revivalist) jam session—a small, informal, sometimes spontaneous event where musicians come together, share tunes, and socialize—is useful for understanding the differences in musician interplay within the two respective musical worlds. In both cases, musicians take turns to select tunes. When the tune begins in an old-time session, melody instruments (the fiddle or banjo, for example) play the tune together throughout, backed up by other instruments playing chords. The tune will be repeated over until someone raises a foot or calls out to signal its end. Bluegrass jams, however, offer space for individual musicians to come to the forefront of the musical texture, taking turns to play solo "breaks" while all other musicians take on temporary auxiliary roles.[13]

Fans who listen to bluegrass and/or old-time today, or those who actively seek out specific scenes, are sometimes protective over the stylistic and societal boundaries between the two. This protectiveness was particularly apparent during my fieldwork in England where I participated at the 2016 Orwell Bluegrass Festival and Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week. It makes sense, however, that events that act as meeting points for both old-time and bluegrass scene participants will display the most blatant distinctions. To provide a contrast, a number of my interlocutors in

[13] This description is based on extensive participation in and observation of old-time jams during the course of my fieldwork, as well as observation of bluegrass jams.

Surry County, North Carolina—a location with a strong string band legacy—played both old-time and bluegrass. These individuals were less concerned by generic or stylistic distinctions. "It is just music!" one fiddler exclaimed.

From old-time to "hillbilly"

> **August, 2016:** Augusta Heritage Center Old-Time Week
>
> *In an advanced fiddle class taught by Emily Schaad, around fifteen of us sat in a circle, fiddles under our arms, awaiting the day's repertory choices. On this morning, Schaad shared with us the notoriously difficult version of standard old-time tune "Sallie Gooden" performed by Texan contest fiddler Eck Robertson.[14] Recorded by Victor in 1922, this was one of the first commercially recorded hillbilly tunes thus making Robertson one of the first hillbilly artists. We moved our chairs closer to the audio speakers, listening carefully to the recording that combined mechanical crackles with the fiddle's bell-like clarity and machine-like rhythmic precision and articulation. We listened over and over. Each morning for the rest of the week, we re-listened, learning one part at a time.*

Two near-contemporary historical moments in the first half of the twentieth century complicate understandings of old-time musics and accentuate their folk/commercial dualities: the development of the hillbilly music industry niche and the activities of folk preservationists and cultural workers in southern Appalachia. While providing commentary on musical activity at a time when rapidly evolving technologies dramatically altered the relationships between rural and urban subjects, these moments contributed heavily to old-time's prevailing myths of whiteness and Southernness (or Appalachianness). As scholarly discourse on these historical moments is already dense and multivalent, what I present here is a concise overview.

[14] Robertson's "Sallie Gooden" was issued on Victor 18956-A (1922).

In the 1920s and 1930s, the rural hillbilly musician became a figure of public intrigue via recording executives and radio personnel—their activities integral to the origin narratives of commercial country music.[15] Central to these narratives are romantic depictions of rural musicians encountering urban recording executives wielding novel technology, and nostalgia-laden radio shows like Chicago's National Barn Dance on WLS (established 1924) and Nashville's WSM Barn Dance (established 1925, later becoming the Grand Ole Opry).[16]

As radio and phonographic technology grew in sophistication, this moment saw musics previously ignored or derided by music industry professionals gain public recognition and popularity. Moreover, this commercial context created new audiences and performance opportunities for musicians who were previously accustomed to playing only in local, rural settings. For contemporary audiences, commercial "hillbilly" or "old-time" musics—terms used interchangeably at this point—evoked bygone times, or, for urban migrants, sounds of the rural homeplace. For audience members who had not experienced rural life, hillbilly musics offered a highly mediated impression of it and fuel for the imagination.

As hillbilly musics began to gain traction, tensions elsewhere in the music industry provoked less favorable responses to this new commercial sensation. Industry-dominant Tin Pan Alley publishers, with their strictly managed "vaudevillians, musical comedy casts, and touring bands" and their promotion of a "relatively narrow spectrum of popular song" (Pecknold 2007, 24), paid little

[15] See Harkins 2005 for a nuanced examination of the usages of the term "hillbilly" along with the image and function of the respective caricature in the American popular imagination from the late nineteenth century onwards.

[16] For essays exploring the story of Chicago's WLS National Barn Dance, see Berry 2008, and for a historical study of WSM/Grand Ole Opry, see Wolfe 1999. With a focus on the careers and repertory of WLS-featured artists Karl Davis and Hartford "Harty" Taylor from Kentucky, Gopinath and Schultz 2016 offer compelling insight into the culture of and tensions surrounding the prominent Chicago-based barn dance radio show.

attention to hillbilly musics and artists. As Diane Pecknold notes, even though Tin Pan Alley associates were "among the first to identify hillbilly as a genre," (2007, 24), viewing the style as a possible antidote to jazz, there were personnel within the industry who could not regard it with seriousness, or saw it as a threat to their own economic sustainability:

> The aesthetic and economic values that Tin Pan Alley assigned to hillbilly were closely interconnected. Pop songwriters viewed their hillbilly counterparts as unprofessional and possessed of poor taste. More importantly, though, hillbilly songwriters posed a threat to the compensation structure of the music business. As late as 1943, *Time* summed up the sentiments of the pop music business. "Almost any simple soul might write hillbilly words and composition of hillbilly music has always been viewed by Tin Pan Alley as a variety of unskilled labor." (25)

While Malone and Neal show that some items understood as "traditional" or "folk" did enter the repertories of professional urban artists, rural performers themselves were overlooked by this segment of the industry because "they sounded strange and primitive to urban music executives who believed that the urban buyer would be repelled by the raw country sound (2010, 31–32)." It is somewhat ironic, then, that rural string bands frequently incorporated Tin Pan Alley items into their repertories.

Richard Peterson (1997) outlines class-based reasons why hillbilly musics and artists provoked some criticism or unease:

> The popularity of Fiddlin' John Carson[17] and the other early country music performers was very difficult for most popular entertainment impresarios to understand because they were urbane, middle-class sophisticates or recent rural-to-urban migrants who were trying to disguise their own rural origins. They did not see country music in its own terms but considered it simply the antithesis of their own aesthetic and worldview because it evoked the image of rural poverty and small-town morality that so many in the rapidly industrializing

[17] For a biographical study of Georgian recording artist Fiddlin' John Carson, see Wiggins 1987.

> American society were trying to escape. It was country to their city; the unchanged to their rapidly changing; traditionalism to their modernism; craft-made to their mass-produced; and aesthetically rear-guard to their avant-garde. The music's maker was the country bumpkin, rube, linthead, cracker, or hillican to their up-to-date city sophisticate. Given this mindset, the natural assumption was that those attracted to the music were responding to representations of an unchanged past. (6–7)

Although hillbilly music on radio and phonograph was prevalent by the late 1920s, it was through radio that it found its first major (and profitable) outlet (Pecknold 2007, 15; Malone and Neal 2010, 68). The early radio barn dance show exposed interested audiences to a regionally and stylistically diverse assortment of rural vocal and instrumental musics. Pecknold describes the repertory as "an agglomeration of regional vernaculars and old-time tunes based on nineteenth-century vaudeville numbers" (2007, 19) that found favor with the working-class and middle-class alike in both rural and urban settings.[18] Hillbilly music on the radio was not to everybody's taste but for many, it was deeply meaningful. Appalachian Studies pioneer Loyal Jones (2008) writes

> The National Barn Dance was an event to be looked forward to in the homes of rural people, as well as those who had left the Appalachians and Ozarks, the whole South, and the Great Plains to seek their fortunes in towns and cities. WLS introduced them to talented performers from places where they lived or had recently left, but it also introduced them to people of a different accent and music that were acceptable, even if they listened to them mostly because radio was a novel and interesting new happening. (viii)

[18] Susan Smulyan explains the lengths to which promoters of the National Barn Dance on WLS (Chicago) went to capture the attention of middle-class audiences—the group that "broadcasters had early identified as their target" (2008, 125). "The interpolated advertisements," she argues, "and the use of stars to sell themselves as products provided a commodified (and soon familiar) approach to middle class listeners. In addition, the program's emphasis on family, with performers presented as surrogate members of the listeners' families (as shown in listener letters), added to the middle-class tone of the National Barn Dance." (Ibid.). See also Pecknold 2007 (19–21).

From the mid-1920s, phonograph recordings of hillbilly artists were made and promoted by labels including Columbia, OKeh, and RCA Victor (Olson 2005, 2; Malone and Neal 2010, chapter 2). In the early period of recorded hillbilly music, studios in major cities including New York and Atlanta hosted recording sessions for rural musicians, while other potential artists were reached by talent scouts who traveled with portable recording equipment in tow (Olson 2005, 1–2).[19]

Central to the origin narratives of country music are recollections of the so-called Bristol Sessions (1927). These recording sessions initiated by Ralph S. Peer of Victor RCA were held over a two-week period in the city of Bristol situated at the Tennessee-Virginia border. While the sessions helped popularize artists including the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, and Ernest Stoneman, Peer made careful and calculated choices about the musicians' repertories and public presentations.[20]

The concepts of nostalgia, sentimentality, and authenticity are embedded deeply within narratives and perceptions of the hillbilly musician on phonograph record and radio.[21] It is important to note that the diverse selection of musics promoted in this category were already considered old and antiquated in the 1920s, yet the sounds presented were within the living memories of many of its listeners (Pecknold 2007, 20). As Malone and Neal explain,

---

[19] For biographical and discographical information on numerous commercially recorded fiddlers including Eck Roberston, Clayton McMichen, Clark Kessinger, and Arthur Smith, see Wolfe 1997.

[20] For detailed examination of the Bristol Sessions, see Ted Olson and Charles K. Wolfe's edited volume *The Bristol Sessions: Writings about the Big Bang of Country Music* (2005) which contains a series of essays documenting, reflecting upon, and redressing misunderstandings regarding these famed sessions. Wolfe's chapter, "The Bristol Sessions: A Cast of Characters", includes biographical information on many of the featured artists. For biographical work on the Carter Family, see Zwonitzer and Hirsh 2004, and for Jimmie Rodgers, see Porterfield 2007. See also the extensive CD boxed set documenting these recording sessions—*The Bristol Sessions 1927–1928: The Big Bang of Country Music* (2009, 1927).

[21] Gopinath and Schultz, through their nuanced musical and cultural analysis of WLS performers Karl and Harty's song "Kentucky" (1941), provide rich insight into the sentimental and nostalgic yet entertaining (sound)worlds of radio barn dance shows as well as their respective receptions (2016).

> Virtually all of the material performed in the early period was "anonymous" to the hillbilly musicians, whether it was a sixteenth-century ballad like "Barbara Allen," a play-party song like "Fly Around My Pretty Little Miss," a minstrel tune like Dan Emmett's "Jordan Is a Hard Road to Travel," or a recent parlor song such as Charles Harris' "Hello Central Give Me Heaven." These were indeed a body of "old familiar tunes" remembered by many Americans, northern as well as southern, and cherished perhaps as artifacts of an older and simpler society than the one taking shape in the 1920's. (2010, 44–45)

For some listeners, the familiar, sentimental sounds and rural imagery offered via hillbilly artists were comforting at a time of quickly accelerating urbanization, migration, and swift technological change (see Berry 2008b, 7; Reish 2017, 124–127; Pecknold 2007, 20). Yet audiences' desires for sonic products that evoked rural nostalgia were met through the recording industry's carefully structured marketing campaigns. As Reish highlights, advocates of the hillbilly music market repurposed evocative terms like "old-time" and "familiar" that had been in industry circulation since the nineteenth century (2017, 124–127). "The phrase 'old-time music,'" Reish argues, "reinforced to consumers in the 1920s that the music they already knew and loved had found a new outlet, a new medium for delivery" (122).

The development of the hillbilly music industry and the products and musicians it promoted is vital to the ways we understand concentrated old-time revivalist activity from the late 1950s onwards—a phenomenon covered in detail later in this chapter. Importantly, recordings made during this early commercial period became (and remain today) rich primary sources for musicians wishing to learn the old-time standard repertory for jam sessions, dances, and for competition circuits. On this topic, Reish argues that "old-time musicians, students, scholars, and fans have long since accepted that early country recordings qualify as authentic products of various interrelated folk traditions" and are therefore acceptable sources (2017, 128).

A well-discussed origin story of the so-called string band revival exemplifies the seemingly contradictory role of old-time as both authentic "folk" and as "commercial": the New York-based New Lost City Ramblers' (NLCR) encounter with Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* (Folkways 1952). Smith—an artist, filmmaker, occasional anthropologist, and record collector—compiled the *Anthology* from his own personal collection of commercially recorded hillbilly, blues, and gospel musics (among other things), which had a deep impact on folk revivalists who sought new source materials with voracity (Filene 2000, 115 and 272; Cantwell 1996, chapter 6).[22] The *Anthology's* hillbilly content proved particularly valuable to the NLCR, who dedicated themselves to recreating performance styles and sounds of the past (Allen 2010, 17).

Although the musics upon which the commercial hillbilly industry was based were found across rural America, the majority of artists in this category came from southern states. In response to the regional bias that has profoundly shaped understandings of early country music and old-time's role within it, a rich scholarly debate has emerged. The essays from a special issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* (2014) provide ample context and fuel for this debate.[23] In the opening essay, for example, Ronald D. Cohen calls for a broader, nationwide approach to the rural musics that formed the building blocks of the early country music industry, using a series of twentieth-century folklore collection projects in northern states as a point of departure. Cohen attributes the longstanding *academic* emphasis on, and preoccupation with southern musics in this context to the preeminent country music scholar Bill C. Malone and the first edition of his influential monograph, *Country*

[22] For thorough examinations of Harry Smith's *Anthology,* its conception, and wider implications see Moist 2007, Crutchfield 2009, and Perchuk and Singh 2010.
[23] For details on the scholarly debate surrounding the so-called "Southern Thesis" of country music, see Huber 2017 and Reish 2017 (128–130).

Music, U.S.A (1968). At the close of the issue, Malone provides a response, upholding the "Southern Thesis" he spent his professional life shaping.

As my fieldwork revealed, similar debates about regional prioritization circulate around old-time musics in non-commercial settings. Where the next section of this chapter illustrates this process through early twentieth-century ballad collection projects, chapter 2 of this dissertation engages with the ideas of place-based canonization more fully in relation to string band traditions. To understand how old-time's regional biases are made, one must examine the actions, motivations, and contexts of the persuasive personnel who have helped elevate certain musical locations over others.

It is also a common misconception (long perpetuated by scholars and recording executives) that only white performers recorded hillbilly musics while black musicians recorded styles such as the blues. The basis of this misconception lies in a series of carefully orchestrated marketing maneuvers by early twentieth-century music industry personnel. Recording executives established an arbitrary yet persuasive "color line" through the constructed marketing categories "hillbilly" and "race" (Miller 2010). [24] Yet as Karl Hagstrom Miller (2010) and Patrick Huber (2013) attest, hillbilly recording sessions were actually more racially integrated than often imagined. Huber, through his examination of Tony Russell's *Country Music Records: A Discography, 1921–1942* (2004), demonstrates that "African Americans actively participated in the hillbilly recording industry almost from its very beginning" (2013, 21).

[24] For further details on the impact of this "color line" in the emergence of the "hillbilly" and "race" recordings, see Miller 2010 (chapter 6).

Since the 1970s, scholarship that counteracts old-time's whitewashed history—both in commercial and non-commercial settings—has accumulated. In relation to early country, Miller's *Segregating Sound* (2010) and select essays from Diane Pecknold's (ed.) *Hidden in the Mix* (2013)—in which Huber's essay is featured—stand out.[25] Scholarship on black banjo traditions[26] (and the instrument's ties with minstrelsy) includes Conway 1995, Linn 1990 and 1994 (especially chapter 2), Winans 1976, 1979, and 2018, Pestcoe and Adams 2018, and Gibson 2018. While Djedje (2016) documents neglected traditions of black fiddling, Lornell (2012) situates black string bands within a broad spectrum of African American folk styles (178–179). In 2010, a special Appalachia-focused issue of the Black Music Research Journal contributed to knowledge of African American presence in regional traditional musics—particularly insightful were the essays by Fred J. Hay, Paul F. Wells, and Cecelia Conway.[27]

Folk collectors and festivals

> Dr. Lily Penleric: Deladis, where did you learn that song? [Following her vocal rendition of *Barbara Allen*]
> Deladis Slocum: My granny gave it to me.
> LP: Was your grandmother from England?
> DS: You mean, across the ocean? No, no. Granny lived and died right here in the mountains!

[25] Aside from Huber's essay, others on related subject matter in this volume are by Erica Brady, Jeffery A. Keith, and Kip Lornell.
[26] *Banjo Roots and Branches* (2018) edited by Robert B. Winans is a detailed study of the instrument's trajectories from West Africa to the Caribbean and United States, and its presence in a variety of cultural contexts at different points in time.
[27] The Appalachian case studies presented in this literature can be read within a broader scholarly context that addresses the invisibility or near-invisibility of the African American experience in histories of the Appalachian region and in respective narratives of cultural heritage. Cornerstone studies in this area include Turner and Cabbell 1985 and Inscoe 2001. These studies are complemented by scholarship on critical whiteness that has also materialized within the field of Appalachian Studies. A dedicated issue of the Journal of Appalachian Studies in 2004 (volume 10, issue 1/2) addresses this matter from varied critical perspectives. Particularly enlightening in this issue are articles by Griffin, Hartigan Jr., and Smith.

LP: . . .then where did she learn it?
DS: Granny said she got all those love songs from her mama.

(*Songcatcher*, 2001)

In many ways, hillbilly recordings from the 1920s and 1930s might be seen as fortuitous and unconventional preservationist items—recordings made for money that have since become primary sources for musicians wishing to learn songs and tunes. Without the activities of the hillbilly recording industry, the old-time world and its repertory today would look very different. While early twentieth-century music industry personnel were searching for rural talent to monetize, middle- and upper-middle–class folk preservationists were seeking out and collecting similar musics for ethnographic purposes, fearful of rapid modernization, the ever-widening reach of the phonograph and radio, and the lure of "popular" musics.

Early twentieth-century folk music preservationism in the U.S. was a broad endeavor with a wide geographical scope, and the Appalachian Mountains were a particularly rich site of exploration. While initiatives in the wider Appalachian region were diverse and multi-intentioned,[28] I focus here on two prominent types: quasi-scientific ballad collection projects and the production of regional folk festivals that exemplify processes of cultural intervention. Central to these endeavors were two convictions: that the musics most worthy of preservation were of Anglo-Saxon extraction and that southern Appalachia was a region where a simpler existence uncorrupted by modernity prevailed.

[28] David Whisnant's groundbreaking monograph *All That is Native and Fine* (1983, republished in 2009) provides a nuanced examination of the work of early twentieth century folk preservationists and cultural workers from middle- and upper-middle–class backgrounds active in the Appalachian region. Whisnant's study presents three central case studies that illustrate these processes of cultural intervention: an analysis of the educational missions of the Hindman Settlement School in eastern Kentucky; the cultural work and folk ideologies of Olive Dame Campbell; and the organizational/heritage preservation philosophies of the founders of the White Top Folk Festival in southwest Virginia.

Just as hillbilly recording executives filtered consumers' experiences through careful control of musicians' images and repertories, preservationists were making calculated choices about the places they visited and avoided as well as the musics they collected, promoted, and ignored.

Ballad collecting

Maggie Greenwald's film *Songcatcher* (2001)—a contemporary of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*—provides a compelling commentary on processes of folk preservationism in the American southeast. Set in the early twentieth century, it tells the story of fictional musicologist Dr. Lily Penleric and her travels through the southern Appalachians in search of old British Isles ballads. After failing to secure a promotion at a prestigious scholarly institution, Penleric left her job and home to live in the mountains with her sister who ran a struggling school. With feelings of resentment towards her professorial colleagues at home, Penleric's breakthrough discovery of what she believed to be "pure" and ancient British ballads more than compensated for her disappointment. With help from the young orphan Deladis Slocum and an overalls-clad, flannel-shirted school worker, Penleric dragged a weighty Edison phonograph by horse-drawn wagon and sled to some of the most remote corners of the mountains, recording and notating ballads in a meticulous fashion. Although mountain residents found the notion that their old songs were valuable just as ridiculous as the prospect of someone being a "Doctor of Music," Penleric formed amicable bonds with her interlocutors in the process of generating ample material.

While it is possible to find parallels between this fictional story and the real-life ballad collection projects of folklorist Olive Dame Campbell (1882–1954)[29] and English scholar Cecil

[29] See Whisnant 2009 (chapter 2).

Sharp (1916–1918), the links are tenuous at best. The film, however, serves as an effective visual and aural approximation of early twentieth-century Appalachian peoples as they figure in the popular imagination: ballad-singing, moonshining, shotgun-toting, yet hospitable humans seemingly unaffected by modern civilization. It also highlights the contemporary musicological and cultural phenomenon of voracious, quasi-scientific ballad collection as well as the romance of regional Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Ballad collectors included male and female folklorists and musicologists who sought and notated ballads from rural peoples in their homes, communities, or at settlement schools[30] using Francis James Child's ten-part *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882–1898) as a guide. These explorers saw ballad collection as vital, urgent work in light rapid modernization, industrialization, and the encroachment of popular musics.[31] Their sense of urgency, conveyed almost uniformly, resulted in the production of numerous articles and surveys published in academic journals, along with a handful of dedicated monographs (See Shearin and Combs 1911; C.A. Smith 1916; R. Smith 1914, 1915, 1934; Kittredge 1917; McGill 1917; Scarborough 1937; Sharp and Campbell 1932). Since the 1980s, scholars have produced nuanced analyses of these collection projects, praising their passion, challenging their narrow focus, and lamenting their persistent influence (Whisnant 2009, chapter 2; Filene 2000, chapter 1; Malone 2004, 116–117).

[30] It is important to note that Settlement Schools were not neutral ground. Whisnant highlights the irony that educators at the Hindman Settlement School, (one of Cecil Sharp's prime ballad collection sites), placed a premium on *teaching* mountain children ballads that were not otherwise part of their daily experiences (2009, chapter 1).

[31] For example, in a 1916 article for *The Musical Quarterly,* C. Alphonso Smith emphasized the moral obligation for preserving this important dimension of U.S. cultural heritage (with trans-Atlantic origins). Striving for comprehensive data sets, he suggested collection projects should be organized on a state-by-state basis (Smith 1916, 109).

The most discussed and mythologized ballad collection trips are those of English musicologist Cecil Sharp and his folklorist assistant Maud Karpeles between 1916 and 1918. Lasting a total of forty-six weeks at sites across North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia, the expeditions yielded hundreds of ballads, songs, and tunes of British Isles (predominantly English) provenance (See Sharp and Campbell 1932). While Karpeles transcribed ballad texts, Sharp translated the orally-transmitted melodies into standard Western notation. Their findings were published in the substantial volume, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (1917, 1932).[32] Sharp's Appalachian collection projects served two distinct national purposes: for the Englishman, the Appalachian Mountains presented English cultural artifacts at their purest; for the Americans, the cultural practices of a region on home soil registered as a heritage from the British Isles.[33]

The celebration and preservation of vernacular musics in the U.S. built momentum through the establishment of projects like the Library of Congress's Archive of Folk Song (founded 1928), Ralph Rinzler's Smithsonian Festival of American Folk Life (established 1967), and through funding opportunities provided by institutional bodies like the National Endowment for the Arts (See Gura 2000, 73–75).[34] The drive to preserve, collect, and celebrate American vernacular musics was

[32] Although Sharp was one of many contemporary ballad collectors, it is likely his expeditions are the most discussed because of the sheer amount he collected and because of his bold presence on the English folk dance and song scene. In his homeland, Sharp travelled from village to village collecting local tunes, published large collections including the five-volume *Folk Songs from Somerset* (1903–07), and played a key role in the revival of Sword and Morris dances (Brocken 2003, 4–5; Gammon 2015; Karpeles 1967).

[33] The Appalachian—British Isles myth (or exaggeration), however, went further than music. Sharp and fellow collectors Olive Dame Campbell and John C. Campbell, along with other cultural workers active at this time argued that mountain peoples also retained mannerisms and language traits from the bygone British Isles (See Whisnant 2009, chapters 1 and 2).

[34] For detailed explorations of early twentieth century folk/world music collection projects and the formation of significant archives see Nettl 2005, Shelemay 1991, and Jackson 2013. Jackson's overview (covering this period and beyond it) highlights the diverse motivations that inspired collectors (amateur, scholarly, or

catalyzed, too, by activist personalities (all with slightly different agendas) including John and Alan Lomax,[35] Charles Seeger,[36] Ralph Rinzler,[37] Moses Asch,[38] Harry Smith, and the members of the New Lost City Ramblers.

Despite the importance of ballad collection endeavors and the quantity of material they produced, the almost exclusive focus on balladry (at the expense of other styles) and on British Isles heritage at this time has produced a partial, unbalanced picture of regional musical life. In the

---

commercial) and the circumstances under which specific archives materialized. While the urge for preservation in light of dying traditions was important to many, others were motivated by scientific inquiry, personal enjoyment and intrigue, or by commercial music industry endeavors (705–14). It is important to note that many early collectors in the Appalachian region produced written transcriptions of ballads, songs, and tunes rather than phonographic recordings even though the phonograph was being used frequently elsewhere. For Sharp, Karpeles explains that although he had used the phonograph for various collecting trips in England, the challenging mountain terrain made the maneuvering of heavy equipment a challenge (Karpeles 1967, 157).

[35] Father and son, John and Alan Lomax are among the most prolific musical folklorists of the twentieth century. Between them they made thousands of recordings for archives including the Library of Congress's Archive of American Folk Song. For detailed biographical information on John Lomax, see Porterfield 1996 and for Alan Lomax, Szwed 2010. Regarding documentation of the Appalachian region, the Lomaxes carried out vital work on black musical traditions in the mountains—the compilation *Black Appalachia: String Bands, Songsters, and Hoedowns (*Rounder, 1999) features recordings made between 1933 and 1946. Other Appalachian recordings made by Alan Lomax are included on compilations *Sounds of the South: A Musical Journey from the Georgia Sea Islands to the Mississippi Delta* (1959) and *Southern Journey* (1959–60). In 1991, Alan Lomax made a documentary for PBS's *American Patchwork* series entitled *Appalachian Journey.* It is also important to note that contemporary with Sharp's (and other collectors') search for ballads of British Isles extraction, John Lomax was collecting the songs and "ballads" of Texan cowboys, culminating in the anthology *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (1910).

[36] From the 1930s, composer and musicologist Charles Seeger (1886–1979) was a pioneering advocate for the collection and formal study of American vernacular musics and their wider dissemination to the public. For details of Seeger's contribution to studies of American musical folklore, see Allen 2010 (chapter 2) and Tick 1999 (109–130) For Seeger's biography, see Pescatello 1992. In addition, it is important to note that Charles Seeger was the father of Mike Seeger of the old-time revivalist band the New Lost City Ramblers, and folk singer and activist Pete Seeger.

[37] Ralph Rinzler (1934–1994) was a preeminent folklorist (who made recordings of artists including Bill Monroe, Doc Watson, and Clarence Ashley) and co-founder of the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife. For details on the latter, see Cohen 2008 (113–119).

[38] Moses Asch (1905–1986) was a recording engineer who founded Folkways Records in 1946. This vast repository of recordings documents music from around the world with a large focus on vernacular musics in the U.S. Folkways was later sold to the Smithsonian Institute. For a recent exploration of Asch's life and legacy, see Olmsted 2003.

introduction to *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (1932), Karpeles confirms that little interested Sharp and his collection team beyond ballads:

> The instrumental tunes, which were played as accompaniments to the dance were of little value. A few dance-tunes were noted by Cecil Sharp, but these apart from the method and style of their playing have but little interest, and so I have not reproduced them. (Karpeles in Sharp and Campbell 1932, xviii)

Similar biases are evident in Texan collector Dorothy Scarborough's work *A Song Catcher in the Southern Mountains: American Folk Songs of British Ancestry* (1937). Her trip, she admits, happened amid the "raucous voice of Broadway megaphones, heard in many a remote mountain section and swamp and prairie, with phonograph and radio [drowning] out local song" (9). These popular (yet vital) influences are ignored in her project, and in the projects of other contemporary and near-contemporary collectors.

Assessment of the colossal impact of ballad collection and attempts to unravel the myth of pure British Isles ancestry has long occupied scholars of music and Appalachian cultural history alike, inspiring multiple revisions and reinterpretations. Reflecting upon the legacy of ballad collectors, some scholars have tried to imagine how things *might have been* had Sharp (and by extension, other collectors) gone to the mountains with an alternative agenda; had he/they traveled elsewhere in the ethnically and industrially diverse region. Appalachian Studies scholars Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings, and Altina L. Walker offer the following thoughts:

> One can only wonder what different impression of the cultural and ethnic diversity of the southern mountains his collecting might have conveyed had Sharp ventured into the central Appalachian coalfields of southern West Virginia, where half of the

> coal-mining workforce at the time were European immigrants and one-fourth were African Americans. (1995b, 3)

On this same theme, Bill C. Malone writes

> We cannot fault him [Sharp] for his preferences but can only conclude that in ignoring the products of the pocket songsters, sheet music, paperback gospel hymnals, minstrel shows, vaudeville acts, and phonograph records, all of which were present in the mountains, Sharp was not simply ignoring much music that was beloved by local people but was also rejecting the economic and social processes that had been transforming mountain life since at least the Civil War. (2004, 117)

The "transforming" forces to which Malone refers include the riverboats and railroads that transported peoples and sounds; the coal mines, lumber camps, and textile mills that brought together ethnically diverse groups; and the growth of towns offering amenities like movie theaters, vaudeville halls, and other forms of popular entertainment (ibid.).

In addition, the ballad-heavy focus resulted in scholars paying less attention to ubiquitous instrumental, non-ballad vocal, and string-band traditions. And, just as the hillbilly music industry marketed its products as "white," the Anglo-Saxon bent of ballad collection projects was another factor ensuring that the musical activities of African American mountaineers remained under-investigated until relatively recently. Fred J. Hay, in his vital call for work on African American musics/musicians in the Appalachians, argues that despite the inaccuracies of the British Isles myth, "many both inside and outside the region (and inside and outside of academe) still take it as truth" (2003, 5).[39]

[39] See Malone and Neal 2010 (chapter 1) for a nuanced analysis of the musical impact of Anglo-Celtic immigration across the rural South, highlighting the ways musics intermixed (most notably with African American styles), challenging the myth that songs, tunes, and ballads came across the Atlantic and remained intact and in their supposed "original" formats.

Although most recent scholarship on Appalachian musics departs from the well-trodden British Isles ancestry debate, Fiona Ritchie and Douglas Orr's *Wayfaring Strangers: The Musical Voyage from Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia* (2014) revisits it from a fresh perspective. Arguing that the musical effects of English migration to the region have received disproportionate attention, this study focuses on the role of Scottish migrants (the Scotch-Irish) who arrived in the U.S. via Ulster.

With a foreword by Dolly Parton, attractive illustrations and photographs, and poetic, accessible prose, it is clear the Ritchie's and Orr's book is aimed at a more general readership. The fact that it became a *New York Times* bestseller demonstrates the prevailing fascination with historic, transatlantic connections between the British Isles and Appalachia. Its popularity can also be read within the wider context of the appeal of Celtic musics and culture that grew and intensified during the late 1990s (Reiss 2003, 145–171), and through the success of Richie's long-running Celtic roots music program on National Public Radio, *The Thistle and Shamrock*.

Festivals, preservation, cultural intervention

Folklore festivals and fiddlers' conventions have long been part of the cultural landscape of the U.S. and are seen today as cornerstone events in the annual old-time calendar.[40] In the present, one can hear and play old-time at festivals and conventions all over the country and elsewhere in the world—the fiddle conventions in Union Grove, North Carolina and Galax, Virginia are particularly long-

[40] For general literature on the history of folk festivals in the United States, see Cohen 2008. Festivals covered in this text include the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival, American Folk Song Festival, White Top Festival, The National Folk Festival, Berkeley Folk Festival, Newport Folk Festival, and The Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife. For a history of fiddlers' conventions in the American South, see Goertzen 2008. For recent scholarly perspectives on the functions of and issues surrounding music festivals in the United States more generally, see the February 2020 Special Issue of *Journal for the Society of American Music* (Volume 14, Special Issue 1).

running.[41] Through critical examination of the ways that folk festivals are organized, one notices how varied acts of cultural preservation become acts of cultural intervention. That is, while these festivals provide a forum for the nourishment of traditional musics, festival organizers help shape audience engagement through careful programming choices, in the rules they set for artist participation or competition, and in the parameters of authenticity (however loose or strict, explicit or subtle) they project. Two early twentieth-century festivals analyzed by David Whisnant offer insight into these interlaced processes of preservation and intervention: Bascom Lamar Lunsford's Mountain Dance and Folk Festival established in 1928 (Asheville, North Carolina) and Annabel Morris Buchanan's White Top Folk Festival founded in 1931 (Grayson County, Virginia).

Lunsford (1882–1973) was a folklorist, recorded musician, and attorney born in Madison County, North Carolina who was invested deeply in the preservation of mountain music and dance traditions.[42] As Whisnant argues, Lunsford's Mountain Music and Dance Festival offers

> . . . a complex and instructive example of intentional intervention into traditional culture by a forceful entrepreneur who did what he did because, as he said, he "just liked mountain people," but who viewed those people from his special perspective as a member of the small

[41] The Old Fiddlers' Convention in Galax was founded in 1935 while Fiddlers' Grove (Union Grove) can be traced back to 1924. Other prominent festivals in the old-time calendar are Appalachian String Band Festival (West Virginia), Mount Airy Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddlers Convention (North Carolina), Gainsborough Old-Time Festival (Lincolnshire, England), Mountaingrass Festival of Old-Time and Bluegrass Music (Victoria, Australia), Berkeley Old Time Music Convention (California), and the National Old Time Fiddlers Contest and Festival (Weiser, Idaho). One can also encounter old-time along with other styles at long–running festivals like the University of Chicago Folk Festival (Illinois), Smithsonian Folklife Festival (Washington, DC), and the Newport Folk Festival (Rhode Island).

[42] See Jones 1984 for extensive biographical information on Lunsford.

> but important local, intellectual, effectively bi-cultural elite, whose role in mountain life has never been adequately comprehended. (1979–80, 136)[43]

Through this festival, Lunsford filtered audiences' experiences through his own biases, agendas, and aesthetic ideals. He executed this through the strict selection of certain musics, dances, and performers he deemed as suitable for elite audiences. His musical focus was equally narrow, both stylistically and ethnically—he favored white string band musicians (ibid., 141–149). In addition, Lunsford dictated the ways that musicians and dancers dressed, encouraging a simple look that emphasized the stereotype of Appalachian rural simplicity—an antithesis to the costumes of contemporary popular musicians (ibid. See also Cohen 2008, 5–7).[44]

Whisnant presents a similar story in his analysis of the White Top Folk Festival (1931–1939) in southwest Virginia. Like Lunsford's festival, White Top's coordinators were instrumental in manipulating mountain culture to fit an elitist model. For founder Annabel Morris Buchanan, the musics most worthy of preservation and festival presentation were folk songs and tunes with British Isles origins—her preferences very much at odds with what local musicians actually practiced (2009,

[43] While Lunsford's engineering of musicians and repertories at the Mountain Music and Dance Festival provides an example of working-class American vernacular musicians/dancers presented "suitably" to middle- and upper–middle-class audiences, complementary studies from other contexts include Moore 1997 and Labajo 2003. While Robin Moore documents the selective appropriation of working-class Afro-Cuban musics by the elite throughout the twentieth century, Joaquina Labajo examines the historical disjuncture between flamenco in everyday expression and the popular staged endeavors that were saturated with stereotype and competing notions of authenticity.

[44] As Whisnant writes, Lunsford's preferred performer dress code was reflective of his negative attitude towards commercial popular musics, insisting "that his performers not adopt either the cowboy costumes currently being worn by popular musicians in the 'country' idiom or the hillbilly garb urged upon mountain musicians by commercial recording companies and radio advertisers" (1979–80, 144).

194–97).[45] Commenting on the relationship between cultural intervention and cultural sanitation apparent in early twentieth-century folk festival culture, Jane S. Becker argues that

> For these middle-class leaders of the folk festival movement, it was just a small step from distinguishing between folk and popular culture to passing judgment on different types of folk material. They proceeded to sanitize culture, weeding out the vulgar and the crude and presenting only those forms that upheld their middle-class standards of propriety and taste. Annabel Morris Buchanan argued that festivals should encourage only the "highest type of native material." Modern chain-gang songs, hillbilly tunes, and humorous songs, as well as songs based on famous murders and local tragedies, she rejected, not because of their contemporary nature, but because of their crudeness and vulgarity. (1998, 37)

Today, folk festival and fiddlers' convention organizers project their bespoke, personalized notions of musical and cultural authenticity through event construction and festival publicity. At the annual Appalachian String Band Festival of Fayette County, West Virginia, for example, the following rules and judging criteria are made explicit to competition participants:

> Contestants in all traditional categories will be judged on rhythm/timing, tonal qualities, expression/soul, difficulty, and old-time style. . .with highest scores going to traditional old-time tunes/songs played in a traditional old-time style. [46]

Success in the "traditional" categories at this particular festival, then, relies on participants' understanding of what constitutes "traditional" in this context, and what might be valued as "authentic" in old-time circles and in the minds of competition judges. Of course, not everybody enters the competitions to win.

---

[45] To provide evidence for this phenomenon, Whisnant explains that that there were a higher proportion of ballad singers at the 1934 festival than in previous years, indicating that organizers' repertory desires did not necessarily match or reflect with accuracy the local musicians' preferences (2009, 197). In addition, he highlights that in the same year, a handful of string bands were rejected in the competition heats because of their supposed sonic adherence to commercial "hillbilly" musics.

[46] See West Virginia Division of Culture and History 2019.

The competition rules for the Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention display similarly selective criteria, disallowing "bluegrass banjo style picking" in old-time bands and specifying, among many things, that "only authentic folk songs in the public domain will be used in the folk song contest."[47] With respect to the acoustic, technology-free nature of supposedly authentic old-time and bluegrass, Galax officials demand the following: "no boom boxes, no amplified music, and no amplified instruments to be played at any time during the conventions. Anyone violating this rule will be subject to being removed from the park, and charged with disturbing the peace."

During my fieldwork at a number of flagship festivals including Clifftop, Galax, and Mount Airy, it became clear that individual festivals enjoyed differing reputations among participants and that to place well in a competition in one festival did not guarantee success in another. Aside from stylistic concerns that might result in winning entries, other factors—like regional alliances—were also at play. At the Mount Airy Fiddlers Convention in 2018, for instance, I watched the competition with a musician and dancer who had been participating there for many years. He was not from Mount Airy but explained that local musicians from Surry and surrounding counties often placed better in the competition than non-local musicians. As the emcee announced the winners of the various categories, the musician with whom I sat laughed knowingly and rolled his eyes as local and near-local musicians fared particularly well.

The string band revival

Why Old-Time? (2009), a documentary film produced by Chris Valluzzo and Sean Kotz, explores a wide variety of motivations for old-time participation in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

[47] See Old Fiddlers' Convention, Galax, Virginia 2019.

Presented in a "talking heads" format, the documentary makers elicit responses to the question posed in the film's title from various respected musicians, dancers, and folklorists: Mike Seeger; multi-instrumentalist Bruce Molsky; dancer, musician, and scholar Phil Jamison; folklorist David Holt; dulcimer maestro Don Pedi; and Rhiannon Giddens among them. The film features ample footage of intergenerational musical participation at festivals and jam sessions that illustrate old-time's vibrancy in a twenty-first century context.

For some of the musicians interviewed, the grit, realness, and honesty of the music coupled with its connection to simpler ways of life was particularly appealing. Others commented on the pleasing social aspects of belonging to an old-time scene and the "communion" felt when playing or listening to the music in the company of others. Some interviewees focused on the visceral sensations achieved when playing old-time in a group: the satisfying feeling of finding a "groove," and the power felt when musicians "lock in" with one another.[48] Over the course of my fieldwork, I have heard these sentiments expressed again and again

Today's old-time world is generationally diverse and geographically widespread and its participants (with differing levels of dedication and ability) engage with the musics for myriad reasons. Current old-time scenes operate on local, national, and international levels in rural, urban, and suburban settings. While old-time communities exist in locations like Galax and Mount Airy where the musics have lengthy and notable legacies, others have taken shape in places not associated with old-time—Chicago and London are examples from my own fieldwork. Kiri Miller (2008) in a monograph on the scenes that have flourished around practices of shape note singing —a vocal

[48] For an exploration of experiential dimensions of playing old-time among varied groups of participants, see David Wood's doctoral thesis, "A Mixed-Methods Study of Affective Difference in the Old-Time Music Revival in Appalachian Virginia and North Carolina" (2015).

tradition that fits within a much broader definition of old-time—speaks of a similar diversity in participant backgrounds and motivations for involvement.

Social media sites (especially Facebook and YouTube) act as extensions of the old-time world's physical sites where enthusiasts share information about events, swap tunes and songs, promote new recording projects, and discuss or debate issues like style and politics. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, old-time's virtual spaces have become a vital means through which participants across the U.S. and the world remain connected—many festivals and gatherings scheduled for 2020 have been cancelled, postponed, or moved to virtual platforms.

Ethnomusicologist Thomas Turino (2008) argues that old-time musics and dance offer enthusiasts abundant opportunities for active participation—many jams and dances welcome participants of all levels of ability. For Ray Allen, to engage with old-time in the twenty-first century is as much about "the desire to explore the constellation of extra-musical values associated with those bygone cultures, be they real or imagined" as it is about the music (2010, 248). And, as the exemplary prewar contexts of these musics recede further into the past, Reish posits that playing old-time in modern contexts "has increasingly become a performance of reenactment" (2017, 119).

The intricacy of the present-day milieu has been shaped by the activities of musicians, scholars, folklore collectors, record collectors and distributors, and fans during the so-called old-time music or string band revival that began to take shape in the late 1950s and early 1960s. As Philip F. Gura suggests, this revival grew into something of a "national subculture" by the 1970s and 1980s (2000, 75. See also Allen 2010; Wooley 2003; Bealle 2005, chapter 1).

Central activities among revivalists at this time included folkloric fieldtrips (often to southern states) in search of tradition-bearing musicians; the presentation of rural musicians to urban

audiences; the inception of dedicated fanzines like *Old-Time Music* (established 1971) and *The Old-Time Herald* (est. 1987); and re-releases of commercial hillbilly and scholarly, ethnographic 78 rpms in LP format (see Bealle 2005, 17–19). As Reish explains, the term "old-time" accumulated new layers of meaning and significance in revivalist contexts:

> To postwar generations of revivalists from the late 1950s to today the phrase "old-time music" evokes not only a specific time period, romanticized culture, and its associated styles, but a politically charged alternative to the societal, cultural, and musical mainstreams of the late-twentieth and twenty-first centuries. (2017, 127)

Analysis of the string band revival can be situated within wider critical studies of music revivals that explore the tangled cultural, historical, political, and aesthetic factors that foster their development.[49] According to Tamara E. Livingstone, "music revivals can be defined as social movements which strive to 'restore' a musical system believed to be disappearing or completely relegated to the past for the benefit of contemporary society" (1999, 66). What is striking about revivalists, she argues, are the ways they "position themselves in *opposition* to aspects of the contemporary cultural mainstream, align themselves with a particular historical lineage, and offer a cultural alternative in which legitimacy is grounded in reference to authenticity and historical fidelity" (ibid.).

While in 1999 Livingstone argued that revivals are bound inextricably to the middle-class experience, she later revisited this assertion, claiming instead that revivals should be read through the

[49] For scholarship theorizing the broad parameters of music "revivals" see Livingstone 1999, Rosenberg 1993, and various essays presented in Bithell and Hill 2014. From this latter volume, the most important essays that relate to this dissertation are Bithell and Hill 2014b, Ronström, Rosenberg, Jabbour, Livingstone, and Blaustein. See also Slobin 1983, 2000, and 2002 for varied work on the revivals of "ethnic" musics and Klezmer.

lens of cosmopolitanism (Livingstone 2014, 64). Furthermore, following Turino's (2008)[50] analysis of the distinctions between "presentational" and "participatory" methods of music-making, Livingstone suggests that special attention should be paid to the participatory nature of much revivalist activity:

> Closely examining the nature and role of participatory aspects of revivals has the potential to shed light on a number of interesting questions, including the tension between fidelity to authoritative historical sources and musical innovation and creativity. (2014, 68)

Revivals of old-time musics are often understood within the wider context of the North American folk revival ("boom", or "folksong revival") as it progressed from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, but are not circumscribed by this context.[51] At this time, various "folk" and "traditional" musics gained unprecedented popularity across the U.S. and further afield, most prominently among the politically left wing, urban-based youth determined to resist various cultural mainstreams.[52]

[50] For an examination of the participatory nature of old-time music and dance revivalist activity in a Midwestern context as examples of "cultural cohort" formation, see Turino 2008 (chapter 6). For Turino's theorizations of the "participatory" and "presentational" contexts of music, see chapter 2 of the same monograph.

[51] The history of the old-time revival can be understood within a much wider context. Where, for example, might the early twentieth century revivalist activities of industrialist Henry Ford fit into the story (See Gifford 2010)? How might one incorporate the Fiddlers' Association movement from the mid-1950s into this history (Bealle 2005, 24–26)? Regarding the old-time revival's place within the broader 1950s and 1960s North American folk revival, folklorist and musician Alan Jabbour provides an interesting perspective. As a member of the revivalist Hollow Rock String Band active from the 1970s in the Chapel Hill/Durham area of North Carolina, Jabbour argues that "we [the old-time revival] were not a footnote to the folksong revival—we were a kindred but different revival with strong links to the folksong revival, but also ties to bluegrass, ties to a parallel dance revival, and, like the folksong revival, important ties to collectors and academics" (2014, 122).

[52] As this historical moment is well documented and debated in abundant scholarly literature, in-depth description and analysis will not be reproduced here (See Cantwell 1996; Filene 2000; Cohen 2002; Cohen and Donaldson 2014; Petrus and Cohen 2015; Allen 2010; Rosenberg 1993).

The musicians most active in generating interest in old-time musics among young urbanites at this time were the New Lost City Ramblers who formed in 1958— Mike Seeger, Tom Paley, John Cohen, and later, Tracy Schwarz. They presented their unique, antiquated music to audiences at flagship events like the Newport Folk Festival, the University of Chicago Folk Festival, and the University of California Folk Festival, playing an integral role in the formation of the New York based Friends of Old Time Music[53]—an organization responsible for bringing notable rural musicians to the urban stage (Gura 2000, 65–66). The NLCR's legacy and musical activities have been the subject of detailed scholarly investigation. Particularly nuanced examinations are set forth by Gura (2000) and Allen (2010) and discussions of the band's importance appear with frequency across literature on folk revivals in the U.S.

The NLCR engaged in the painstaking study and imitation of commercial hillbilly recordings from the 1920s and 1930s and documentary field recordings made in the Appalachian southeast for the Library of Congress (Gura 2000, 61; Allen 2010, 53–54). With a vast repertory that incorporated "string-band breakdowns and rags to ballads, love songs, songs of drinking and gambling, blues, and gospel numbers" (Allen 2010, 53), most striking was the musicians' mastery and imaginative recreation of instrumental techniques they heard on the vintage recordings. As Allen explains, the band went to great efforts to learn techniques like "the subtle bowing patterns of the fiddle, the intricacies of two-and-three finger banjo picking and frailing, the complete three-finger

[53]See *Friends of Old Time Music* (Siegel, 2006) CD boxed set that contains recordings made by the organization from 1961–1965. Among the musical styles presented are old-time, classic bluegrass, blues, and gospel. Featured musicians include Maybelle Carter, Bill Monroe and His Blue Grass Boys, Clarence Ashley, Mississippi John Hurt, Roscoe Holcomb, Dock Boggs, Bessie Jones and the Georgia Sea Island Singers, Doc and Arnold Watson, Hobart Smith, and The Stanley Brothers. The extensive liner notes (sixty pages with illustrations) provide additional context.

and flat picking guitar techniques, and the alternative banjo and fiddle tunings employed by traditional musicians" that required close attention to detail (ibid., 54).

Just as their repertory and performance style differed from that of their contemporaries, their public image was equally unique. To this end, Robert Cantwell offers the following appraisal:

> The New Lost City Ramblers raised the nap of the revival with newly esotericized discographic sources and a performance style that sounded as exotic as a Tibetan prayer. In addition to their expert musicianship, arcane scholarship, and a demeanor sober enough for the recital hall, they presented themselves like railroad stationmasters or telegraph operators of 1885, in vests, shirtsleeves, and neckties, and posed for an album photograph, its surface artificially mottled and cracked, with the blank faces and straight spines of a portrait studio of the last century. Yet they were not above self-parody: clowning with their many instrument changes on stage, which their own versatility and accuracy to their sources demanded, they typically identified themselves to nightclub audiences as an underground version of the Kingston Trio. (1996, 330)

By marking themselves as alternatives to commercialized popular folk acts like the Kingston Trio and the Weavers and by displaying themselves as visually and sonically anachronistic, the NLCR, Gura explains, presented themselves such that fans viewed their old-fashioned-ness as cutting edge or "avant-garde" (2000, 70).

The NLCR (along with other contemporary activists and folklorists) also played significant roles as cultural brokers by presenting (and translating) rural musicians to urban audiences. These heavily mediated encounters, however, share similarities with themes that emerged earlier in this chapter: recording industry personnel shaping consumer engagement with hillbilly artists and their repertories, and early twentieth-century acts of cultural preservation and intervention. Among the musicians the NLCR presented in this way were Tommy Jarrell, Eck Robertson, Elizabeth Cotten, Dock Boggs, and Roscoe Holcomb (See Gura 2000; Allen 2010; Cantwell 1996, 42).

John Cohen's fascination with east Kentuckian banjoist and singer Roscoe Holcomb is particularly illustrative of this form of cultural brokerage. Spending over a month in the summer of 1959 recording Holcomb and a handful of other musicians, Cohen brought him to the University of Chicago Folk Festival as well as to the Friends of Old Time Music in 1961 (Allen 2010, 61–62). Cohen's engagement with Holcomb, a man he viewed as a relic of an idealized rural past and of lost cultural values, extended beyond concert presentation to the creation of visual and audio documentary projects (ibid). Reflecting on Cohen's longstanding fascination with the musician, Allen explains how some critics were displeased by his over-simplified, sensationalist understandings of Appalachian culture and peoples, stating that "a complex interweaving of folk romanticism and existential angst shaped John's view of southern music as well as his efforts to serve as a cultural liaison between traditional performers and urban audiences" (ibid., 62).

A more recent act of old-time cultural stewardship is evidenced in the ways that Rhiannon Giddens and The Carolina Chocolate Drops increased public awareness of African American fiddler Joe Thompson (1918–2012). Prior to his surfacing in the wider public consciousness in the twenty-first century, Thompson had already been lauded by twentieth century revivalists, attracting the special attention of ethnomusicologist Kip Lornell in the 1970s who is often acknowledged for his "discovery." Among many public appearances, Thompson performed at Carnegie Hall, the Festival of American Fiddle Tunes, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. In 2007, Thompson was the recipient of a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).[54]

[54] Biographical details of Joe Thompson are shared in Iris Thompson Chapman's documentary film, "The Life and Times of Joe Thompson" (2004). For a public-facing biography, see Martin 2012 for the New York Times. For details of Thompson's NEA Heritage Fellowship, see National Endowment for the Arts (n.d., a). In scholarly texts, Thompson receives some coverage in Conway 1995; Carlin 2004; Wells 2013; and Lornell 2012 and 2013.

By the 1970s and 1980s, interest in old-time grew and local scenes began to emerge across the U.S. Likewise at this time, festivals where one could hear and play this music increased in number. Influential revivalist bands from this period include the Hollow Rock String Band,[55] Fuzzy Mountain String Band,[56] and the Red Clay Ramblers who were a part of the scene that developed around Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and the Highwoods String Band from Ithaca, New York (See Gura 2000; Wooley 2003).[57]

Within this revivalist context, many musicians, folklorists, activists, enthusiasts, heritage workers, and small label promoters engaged in research and musical discovery activities including ethnographic work, anthology making, recording projects, and musician apprenticeships (some funded by federal schemes like the NEA). An important consequence of this work was the role revivalist musicians played in the canonization of select expert musicians (with or without ties to the hillbilly music industry) active in the early twentieth century—a theme I explore in detail in chapter 2. [58]

In the present, many of the musicians associated with this wave of string band revival remain active in their respective old-time scenes and maintain a strong presence at national and international festivals. Those who have achieved particular prominence teach regularly at folk arts workshops and

[55] See Jabbour 2014 and Carter 1991 for information on the activities of the Hollow Rock String Band.
[56] See Hicks 1995 for a brief history of the Fuzzy Mountain String Band.
[57] For information on the scene around Chapel Hill and Durham, NC, see Carter 1991 and Jabbour 2014. For scene in Bloomington, Indiana see Bealle 2005, and for old-time revivalist activity around Surry County, North Carolina, see Ruchala 2011. Larry Edelman's documentary on the Highwoods Stringband (2018) offers insight into the wider string band revival milieu, especially to the activities that took shape around Ithaca, New York and Berkeley, California. Stephan T. Wishnevsky's quirky and informal text, *How the Hippies Ruin't Hillbilly: A Historical Memoir 1960–2000* (2007), offers humorous insights into the activities of the string band revivalists. In addition to colorful recollections, the text incorporates interviews with revivalist musicians including Mike Seeger, Joe Thrift, Tom Mylet, and Nancy Sluys.
[58] See Feintuch 1993 for an analysis of the wider processes of canonization/elder musician adulation within revivals of traditional musics.

other educational institutions, acting as conduits to the musical past (and perhaps seen as setting new benchmarks for authenticity) for those they instruct.

The career of New York-born multi-instrumentalist Bruce Molsky (b.1955) illustrates the success and influence of a revivalist musician.[59] While he learned from an older generation of musicians, he is celebrated for his distinctive virtuosic style of playing. As Molsky has performed alongside esteemed members of a younger generation of old-time musicians—fiddler Tatiana Hargreaves and banjoist Alison De Groot among them—new lineages have taken shape. Furthermore, Molsky's teaching position at the Berklee College of Music demonstrates old-time's increasing presence in and validation by preeminent educational institutions that raise further questions about musical canonization and institutional interventions into tradition. [60]

Today, it is worth questioning whether or not the frame of "revival" is still a fruitful one through which to understand and assess certain contexts for contemporary old-time practice. Is current-day activity among this respective population of participants best seen as an extension of the revival? Or is it rooted in the revival but can be seen to have extended beyond it? Might this contemporary activity suggest new strains of revival governed or inspired by recent social, cultural, and political issues? Assessment of these questions would require extensive and sustained ethnographic inquiry.

[59] See Bruce Molsky 2019 for details of the musician's career and critical reception.
[60] Other universities with traditional music programs or those that offer concentrated instruction include Warren Wilson College (Asheville, North Carolina) and East Tennessee State University (Johnson City, Tennessee).

Conclusion

This chapter provided historical and cultural contextualization for old-time, offering insight into activities of the diverse parties who have engaged (or continue to engage) with these musics from the early twentieth century to the present day. Through the interrelated lenses of commercialism, preservationism, and revivalism, I explored old-time's contextually contingent meanings and significances, uncovering a wide range of mediators and agents involved with the musics: scholars, folklore collectors, cultural workers, the music and film industries, musicians, and enthusiasts. This chapter brought into sharp focus the (sometimes contentious) debates around themes of region, race, cultural intervention, identity, and "place"—themes that arise elsewhere in this dissertation—as well as discussions on the blurry borders between musical categories of folk and popular, alternative and mainstream, commercial and non-commercial.

2. The Making of an Old-Time Heritage Epicenter in Surry County, North Carolina

Introduction

On February 14, 2015 I attended the University of Chicago Folk Festival[1] eager to see a performance by the Buckstankle Boys—a young string band from Surry County, North Carolina. At this time, I had not yet visited Surry County but had become increasingly curious about the varied ways this local musical tradition spanning back multiple generations stirred much admiration and debate among old-time fans and musicians of differing cultural, generational, and geographical backgrounds. First, I was fascinated by the ways my interlocutors drew meaning from the lives and music-making of select Surry County expert musicians (many of whom have passed away), sharing with one another pertinent tune versions, anecdotes, and stories as a form of social bonding. Second, I was intrigued by the resulting debates (some of which were contentious) about the parameters of a supposedly distinct "Round Peak" style and "Surry County sound," as well as its sonic prevalence at jam sessions and in festival soundscapes across my multi-sited field.

The Buckstankle Boys walked onto the stage at Mandel Hall, took their places, and checked that their microphones and instruments were well-positioned. "We're from Surry County!" one musician exclaimed, eliciting a short "whoop" from a handful of audience members. After a brief vocal introduction, the musicians launched into series of rhythmically tight, high-energy renditions of popular old-time dance tunes including "Susananna Gal" and "Breakin' Up Christmas"—tune

[1] The University of Chicago Folk Festival is a historically significant campus festival established in 1961 that runs to the present day. For a detailed account of the festival's early years, see Cohen 2008 (71–74). Importantly, Old-time musicians have been well represented at this festival since its inception. Documentation on and recordings of the 1961–1995 period are included in the Chicago Folk Festival archive within Special Collections at the Chicago Public Library accessed May 17, 2017.

versions and a performance style that knowledgeable old-time practitioners would likely associate with Surry County's older musical generation. "We're the Buckstankle Boys and we're from Surry County!" another band member shouted out in a brief gap between tunes, this time, provoking a slightly heartier audience response. At multiple other points during the set, band members situated themselves quite explicitly in relation to their homeplace.

At the interval, an ethnomusicologist friend with whom I had attended the festival asked me if I knew why the band had felt the need to mention their connection to Surry County "at least ten times." These references to "place," I realized, were more than quick reminders to audience members who might have a short memory span. Instead, by stating and restating their attachment to Surry County, and by executing locally associated tune versions with techniques and sonic attributes that clearly marked the influence of their predecessors,[2] these young musicians situated themselves in a matrix of historically significant local performance practices. As I have come to learn, a personal or musical connection with an idolized older-generation Surry County musician is powerful currency in the old-time world.

*

In the present day, select towns, cities, and counties—through their associations with celebrated expert musicians and supposedly distinct micro-regional styles and/or repertories—have

[2] For example, band member Andy Edmonds's fiddling bears many of characteristics of his mentor Benton Flippen (1920–2011) including similar bluesy fiddle licks and long, smooth bow strokes. While Edmonds learned from Flippen (we discussed in detail the nature of this musical relationship in a personal interview in August, 2017), band member Wes Clifton is the grandson of esteemed Surry County mandolin player Verlen Clifton (b.1928). Interestingly, their presence on the Mandel Hall stage was predated by other prominent Surry County musicians including Tommy Jarrell, Oscar Jenkins, and Fred Cockerham in 1969 and Benton Flippen and the Smokey Valley Boys in 1988. Information accessed through Special Collections at the Chicago Public Library, May 17, 2017.

become physical and symbolic points of orientation through which geographically widespread old-time enthusiasts engage with and imagine the musical past. Although there are revered older-generation musicians (and, by extension, styles and repertories) associated with regions all over rural North America, some areas have attained an elevated, canonized status through the accumulating actions of various mediators over unpredictable periods of time.

Two regions considered widely (and marketed) as *epicenters* of old-time musical heritage in the southeastern U.S. are Surry County, North Carolina—the musical home of the Buckstankle Boys[3]—and the counties surrounding Galax, Virginia. Situated in close proximity on either side of the state line, these areas are each associated with their unique pantheons of venerated older-generation musicians born in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These historic musicians are celebrated extensively across the old-time world, their "discovery" and relative popularity owing much to the work of and endorsement from passionate, authoritative folklorists and musicians who visited, made recordings, and produced documentation. The historic musical activity of both locations has provoked debate across the old-time world concerning micro-regional stylistic distinctiveness: is there, for example, such a thing as a "Surry County sound," "Round Peak style," or a "Galax style?"

To share further similarities, Mount Airy and Galax—the cities at the center of these respective areas—host major annual fiddlers' conventions that attract musicians on a local, national, and international scale. Each location has a regional radio station with regular live old-time and

[3] Today, the Buckstankle Boys do not play together as frequently as they once did. However, a number of musicians from the band (Andy Edmonds and Wes Clifton among them) play as the award-winning New Smokey Valley Boys. In honor of Edmonds's mentor, the band was named after the Smokey Valley Boys—a Surry County group that featuring local icons Benton Flippen and Paul Sutphin.

bluegrass shows broadcast locally and online for worldwide audiences: WPAQ in Mount Airy (founded 1948) and WBRF (established 1961) in Galax. Both areas have arts councils active in the promotion and memorialization of local traditional musics, and both cities are flagship sites on state-supported music heritage trails. And while Mount Airy is a notable destination on the Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina, Galax is a significant location on southwest Virginia's The Crooked Road.

This chapter provides a critical examination of the processes through which Surry County with the city of Mount Airy at its center became, and continues to function as, an epicenter of old-time musical heritage. To interrogate more generally the means through which certain locations accrue intensified musical significance, I propose a theory of "musical epicenters," focusing in particular on the variant of the "heritage epicenter." While the term "epicenter" is often used quite uncritically to describe a location with abundant musical activity, interchangeable with other descriptors including "hotbed," I argue that the metaphor might be used more systematically to investigate how and why locations associated with plentiful musical activity become intensified, hierarchically dominant points of physical and symbolic orientation for interested parties. Furthermore, by examining how "place" becomes tied to debates about musician, repertorial, or stylistic dominance, one comes closer to understanding the role of place in the formation of musical canons.

To explore Surry County's significant status within the wider old-time world, I investigate the activities of validating agents from the late 1960s to the present day who have catalyzed and supported the location's dominance in old-time heritage narratives: folklorists, musicians, documentary filmmakers, folk arts workshop organizers, radio announcers, local and state arts

council professionals, and parties involved with cultural heritage preservation or tourism on local, state, and national levels.

First, I interrogate the circumstances surrounding the so-called "discovery" and subsequent adulation of the region's older-generation musicians initiated by younger musician and scholar visitors. Within this context, I focus on the means through which fiddler and banjoist Tommy Jarrell (1901–1984) attained a sacrosanct status that remains strong to this day. Second, I explore discourses surrounding the so-called "Round Peak style" and "Surry County sound"—two terms often used interchangeably—as well as resulting discussions about its sonic omnipresence at jams and festivals across the wider old-time world. And third, I present Mount Airy as a self-consciously constructed old-time music "destination," interrogating the ways that musical heritage has become central to civic identity and local cultural programming.

When epicenters are recognized, debates concerning their legitimacy and hierarchical prioritization emerge. As explained in chapter 1, similar discussions circulate around the dominant narratives of country music history and their emphases on activity in the American South, leaving out vital contributions of musicians, industry personnel, and radio in other regions. This chapter, however, approaches similar questions from a micro-regional perspective.

The ethnographic materials that fueled this chapter's central questions came from a variety of musical and social experiences across my multi-sited field since 2013. The most concentrated materials, however, emerged from extended periods in Mount Airy during the summers of 2016 and 2017. At this time, I served as an intern with the Surry Arts Council—an organization whose central aims include efforts to "facilitate the preservation and validation of traditional art forms" and

"encourage tourism."[4] In this role, I worked at the Old Time Music Heritage Hall—a small museum located in the Historic Earle Theatre in downtown Mount Airy that presents to the general public a narrative emphasizing the singularity of local musics.

To contextualize the place, Surry County, founded in 1771, is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina.[5] The economic hub of Surry County is Mount Airy, a city of approximately 10,000 residents, situated a few miles south of the Virginia state line. Downtown Mount Airy sits around forty miles northwest of Winston-Salem and approximately 100 miles north of Charlotte.

Figure 2.1: Map highlighting the location of Surry County, North Carolina. (Annotation added by author). Source: Wikimedia Commons

[4] See Surry Arts Council n.d.,a.
[5] See Boyles and Hiatt (2000) for a pictorial history of Surry County.

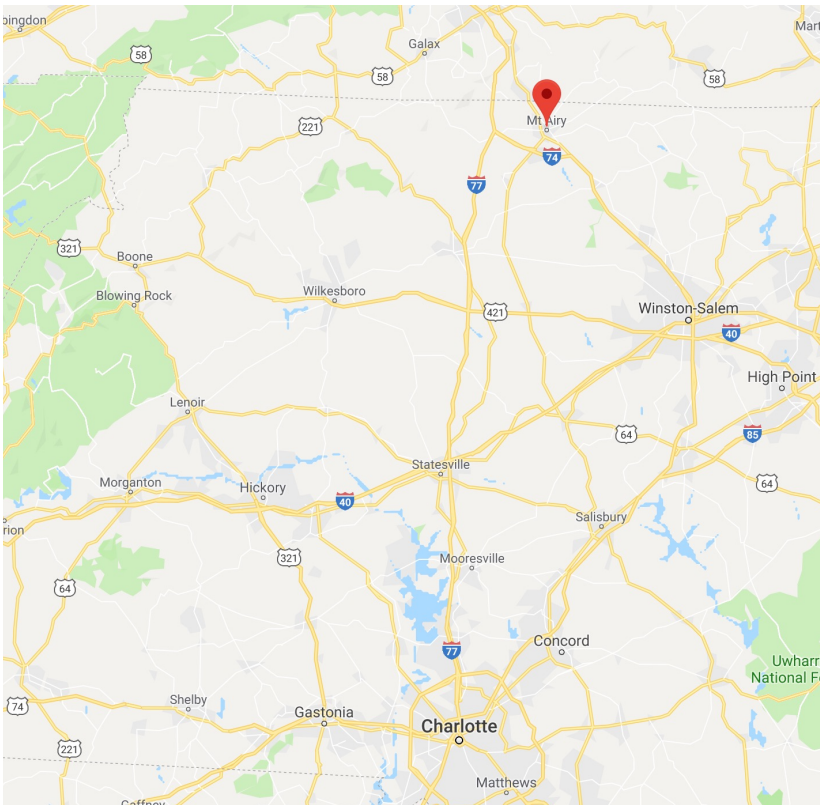

Figure 2.2: Map pinpointing the location of Mount Airy, North Carolina. Source: Google Maps

While Mount Airy has become a focal point among old-time practitioners for its rich musical heritage, the city is perhaps best known as the home of actor Andy Griffith (1926–2012) and as the inspiration behind the fictional town of "Mayberry" from the 1960s television series *The Andy Griffith Show*. And while agriculture, textiles, granite, and tobacco have been major economic forces in Surry County's history, today, Andy Griffith tourism, musical heritage, and wine draw thousands of annual visitors. "Mountains, Music, Mayberry, Merlot" reads the slogan of the Mount Airy Visitors Center.[6]

[6] See Mount Airy Visitors Center n.d.

Understanding musical epicenters

At any point in time, a neighborhood, town, city, or county might emerge as a musical "epicenter"—a location from which concentrated, style-significant musical activities seem to radiate. While epicenters are recognizable as the same physical environments where localized music "scenes" materialize (see Kruse 1993; Shank 1994, Jackson 2012),[7] not all such places become epicenters. Instead, they emerge when the activities comprising select place-attached localized scenes, through various means and media over unpredictable time periods, attract intensified attention and inspire diverse cultural production.

As a result, these places—both physically and figuratively—come to occupy dominant (and perhaps contentious) positions within the narratives of the styles and genres to which they relate; their strength accumulating from the varied ways that interested parties understand, imagine, or construct deep alliances between place, musician personalities, and musical production. By their very nature, epicenters point towards and are shaped by agents and circumstances beyond the location where one perceives them; from them emanates a proliferation of cultural production, commentary, and mythmaking. Some epicenters appear relatively rapidly while others become apparent only over longer stretches of time; some persist while others are temporally fleeting.

Among numerous potential attributes, musical epicenters likely register via influential resident musicians (some seen as figureheads) whose creative work is viewed by commentators as exemplary, unique, or perhaps stylistically unconventional. From a sonic perspective, there may be strongly perceived, idealized, and/or marketed links between music made and local geography: how,

[7] In the introduction of this dissertation, I outline and examine in detail the scholarly work on "scene" as it pertains to music.

for example, might "place" be audible?[8] If it is not, why are sound and location so often understood together? To provide examples, this location/sound alignment can be seen in ways that commentators have discussed or capitalized on notions of "Merseybeat," (Inglis 2010) the "Nashville Sound," (Hemphill 2015, 1970, 60–61; Jensen 1998, 118–13)[9] the "Seattle sound," (Pray 2004, 1996)[10] or in relation to this chapter, the "Surry County sound."

Regarding related physical environments, the sites and spaces around which these musical activities materialize(d) are invested by enthusiasts with specialness or quasi-mythical potential, attracting secular "pilgrims" and in some cases, tourists. In Surry County, for example, an important locale for dedicated fans is Tommy Jarrell's small white house—this site's significance is explored in detail later in this chapter. Another is WPAQ's historic studio. For civic organizers, the presence of an active local scene (and its subsequent reception) may affect the ways physical space is utilized and the ways that local identity is constructed or perceived. Additionally, shrewd civic branding and tourism infrastructures might contribute to an epicenter's strength and polemic potential—Nashville, Tennessee, marketed as "Music City" (see Sanjek 1998; Jensen 1998; chapter 8 in Malone

[8] Ian Inglis 2010, using commercially recorded popular music as a frame, explains the complexities inherent in these sonic–place-based associations. While acknowledging that the practice of aligning a seemingly localized sound with a physical location is fairly commonplace, (a move, he argues, that has become "less a convention than a cliché," ibid., 11), Inglis asks "but does this routine exercise in labeling reflect the existence of authentic causal connections between a city's social practices and its music? Or is it merely a shorthand device for naming and marketing musical outputs that usually have very little in common than their point of origin?" (ibid.) To examine the tensions in this statement, Inglis focuses his discussion on "Merseybeat" and the wide variety of receptions and interpretations the term has come to hold.

[9] Like Inglis with Merseybeat, journalist and novelist Paul Hemphill 2015, 1970 (60–61) reveals a similar story of ambiguous reception around the concept of a "Nashville Sound" among his interlocutors of music industry personnel and musicians in the late 1960s.

[10] Doug Pray's 2004, 1996 documentary film "Hype!" explores the development and growth of the Seattle grunge scene—the makers of the so-called "Seattle sound"—charting its trajectory from local to global popularity.

and Neal 2010; Hill 2016) and Austin, Texas as "the world's center of live music" (see Shank 1994) are cases in point.

Musical epicenters in any present day develop around musical styles from the dominant to the niche; from those represented by major or independent record labels, music publishers, or pedagogical institutions to those that operate outside of these arenas. Whereas the localized scenes around which epicenters might be recognized are empirically verifiable—humans making music in time and measurable space—a location's status as an epicenter and its apparent prioritization is challengeable. As explained previously, resistance-fueled questions pertaining to Surry County's perennial relevance circulate broadly among old-time enthusiasts today. Yet, in some ways, epicenters acquire even more strength from their polemic and divisive potentials.

In theory, one might distinguish between epicenters that are predominantly institution-initiated and those that are agent-initiated—in reality, however, most cases sustain input from both areas. The former refers to those shaped and fortified by the presence of residential music industry infrastructures or institutions like universities, conservatories, schools, music centers, clubs, bars, and concert halls. Industry activities in Bristol, Tennessee, (late 1920s) and Nashville (from the late 1950s), for example, were instrumental in the development of two country music epicenters. While the former moment centering on Ralph Peer's 1927 Victor recording sessions[11] was relatively fleeting, the latter retains an active status in the present, building continuously on its own past.[12]

[11] The "Bristol Sessions"—Ralph S. Peer's cornerstone recording sessions for Victor RCA in 1927—are central to the origin narratives of the country music industry. These sessions popularized artists including the Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, and Ernest Stoneman (see chapter 1 of this dissertation for further context).
[12] See Hill 2016 for examination of the ways that city officials have capitalized on various moments of Nashville's musical past.

In contrast, agent-initiated epicenters are those where intensified musical activity stems from musicians when the (dominant) music industry and/or other institutions are, at least initially, peripheral or altogether absent. While institution-initiated case studies might attract criticism for being artificial or constructed, agent-initiated examples are likely romanticized as "grassroots" or organically formed. This romanticism is fortified by idealized origin narratives that amass around the musical scenes under question; narratives that help distract from the subsequent attention and intervention of other players that support an epicenter's identification. Well-documented examples of agent-initiated epicenters with (mythologized) origin narratives are Liverpool, England in the late 1950s and early 1960s ("Merseybeat") and Seattle in the 1980s (grunge). Although Surry County's elevation from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s was catalyzed by musicians without (or with minimal) institutional ties, it is important to acknowledge the role of institutions on a local, state, and national level that have helped sustain the location's musical prominence into the present.[13]

In terms of musical production, it is possible to distinguish between epicenters where musical activities are primarily novelty-oriented and those where they are heritage-oriented. While the musical output in the former is characterized by the ways that resident or locally active musicians push at the boundaries of the styles and genres under question, the latter relies on the perpetuation of local musical "heritage" in the present. To borrow terminology from Raymond Williams, music-making in novelty-oriented epicenters is animated by ideas of the "emergent" while that of heritage epicenters is characterized by the maintenance or reinforcement of the culturally "residual" (1977, 121–127). This distinction, however, is not to suggest that musicians within novelty-oriented

[13] The elevation of Madison County as a center of British Isles ballads has similar layers of mediation and institutional involvement that began with English musicologist Cecil Sharp's expeditions to the county in the second decade of the twentieth century.

epicenters fail to acknowledge or draw inspiration from the musical past, or that within their heritage epicenters nothing new is produced.

Musical epicenters, thus, are complex entities that do not just appear and are not self-sustaining. For a location to retain its elevated status, the residential musical activity must remain productive on the one hand while continuing to provoke commentary/inspire cultural production on the other. When these vital, combined factors slow, cease entirely, or their relationships weaken, it is likely that the moment as epicenter has passed.[14]

The heritage epicenter

Surry County is an example of a heritage epicenter—an entity more likely to develop in locations associated with rich vernacular traditions. Locations of this kind encompass musician-driven, lineage-perpetuated hubs of musical significance like Surry County, Galax, and Madison County

[14] A formerly recognized epicenter at a future point, among numerous possible outcomes, might become a piece of history or obscured entirely from historical narratives and/or living memory. Where traces of its existence or former prominence are present, they may survive in individual or collective memories, (scholarly) research, archives, ephemera, recorded sound, musical notation, or as residues around the physical sites and spaces where musical activity once occurred. When civic authorities see benefits in marketing a bygone local musical moment, that moment might be museumized in the present. Examples include the ways Liverpool's city authorities have capitalized retrospectively on the legacy of the Beatles (See Brocken 2015) and the ways that Bristol, Tennessee, has essentially been transformed into a curated museum of country music history. At times, it may be difficult to distinguish between a former epicenter that has undergone museumization and an active heritage epicenter. A location like Clarksdale, Mississippi—the self-marketed "birthplace of the blues"—with a tourism infrastructure that arguably overwhelms residual strands/local lineages of musical continuity exemplifies this dilemma (see Radishofski 2017; King 2011, chapter 3). At present, this theory of epicenters is its early, exploratory stages. There are other dimensions that could enrich its theoretical terrain as well as other kinds of musically significant "places" at its peripheries that would challenge or broaden the current scope. How, for example might the theory encompass locations that attain specialness not from vibrant musical activity but instead from being the hometown of a prominent musician? Where might locations with heavily manufactured relationships between place, musical style, and music's material ephemera fit? The fierce campaign that lead to the establishment of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio exemplifies this kind of relationship (see Santelli 1997; Reising 2001, Schmidt Horning 2011; and Adelt 2017).

(North Carolina)—definable micro-regional musical traditions with evident (yet complex) continuities in the present day. They also include institution-driven, constructed "folk" destinations like Mountain View, Arkansas that become focal points for the "continuity" and preservation of wider regional music traditions (in this case, the Ozarks).[15] In each situation, local musical heritage becomes a central facet of civic self-identity and sometimes the focus of tourism and/or cultural preservation endeavors. Beyond the location's tangibility, heritage epicenters will accrue symbolic significance among enthusiasts, surfacing in debates about style, sound, musician idolization, and canonization.

"Heritage" in its tangible and intangible forms can be understood as comprising of select cultural entities from the past refashioned for present-day purposes (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, 1998). As musical heritage epicenters become recognizable via the varied preoccupations of present-day agents with aspects of a local musical past, their formations and foundational narratives are shaped by complex and conflicting ideas about musical or cultural authenticity, tradition continuity (or the illusion of continuity), reconstruction, and tradition invention.[16] In addition, one might consider the extent to which heritage epicenters form out of and are sustained by agents' sentiments of "restorative nostalgia"—collective desires to reconstruct or recapture something special from the past in the present (Boym 2001, xviii; chapter 4).

---

[15] Mountain View, Arkansas—the self-declared "world center of folk music"—rose in prominence following acts to encourage local civic regeneration. Attractions like the Arkansas Folk Festival (founded 1963) and the establishment of the Ozark Folk Center State Park (1973) have become major capital generators for this small town. The musics celebrated and showcased in Mountain View are regionally focused (the Ozarks) rather than micro-regionally specific. For documentation on Mountain View's rise to folk destination, see Arkansas Folk Festival and the Ozark Folk Center 2017. This oral history project was funded by the Arkansas Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

[16] For the often-quoted debate on inventing traditions, see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992.

Within the geographical parameters of a heritage epicenter, explicit visual and aural manifestations of the musical past may be evident. First, the musical past might be evoked through acts of civic memorialization (for example through museum exhibitions, commemorative festivals, art installations, and information plaques). In Surry County, for instance, the Arts Council sponsors the Tommy Jarrell Festival each February and coordinates downtown Mount Airy's Old Time Music Heritage Hall museum among other things. Second, heritage epicenters likely contain within them sacrosanct sites that are of interest to more invested enthusiasts—birth houses, gravesites, and musician places of leisure and music-making among them. Third, traces of the sonic past are prominent in a heritage epicenter's soundscape where live music is likely abundant; where related recorded music may filter regularly into public spaces. Across Surry County, resident old-time bands,[17] WPAQ's frequent old-time and bluegrass programs, public jam sessions, and two annual fiddlers' conventions[18] contribute to the local soundscape at different times. Harder to quantify are the related private musical gatherings in peoples' homes and in other non-public settings

As musical epicenters come more clearly to represent something powerful through both their physical manifestations and symbolic potentials, there may be disconnections or tensions between civic efforts to capitalize on local musical heritage and the broad range of abstract meanings a location might accrue among enthusiasts. It is possible, too, that many enthusiasts are unaware of related civic/tourism endeavors in the location under question.

[17] Prominent local bands active in Surry County today include the Slate Mountain Ramblers, The Zephyr Lightning Bolts, The New Smokey Valley Boys, The Pilot Mountain Bobcats, and the South Carolina Broadcasters.

[18] The Mount Airy Fiddlers Convention is held annually in June, while the Surry Old Time Fiddlers Convention is held at the Surry Community College in Dobson, North Carolina every April.

How, then, do heritage epicenters generate meaning beyond their geographic boundaries? Central to the strength of locations like Surry County and Galax are select, emblematic resident musicians acknowledged among geographically dispersed networks of enthusiasts as links to a deeper musical past. For interested parties, these figurehead musicians are understood as firmly rooted in "place;" their repertories, styles, and instrumental/vocal techniques likely understood as micro-regionally distinctive. As benchmarks of musical authenticity, these musicians (and by extension, their associated physical environments) are sometimes invested with legendary qualities, becoming the subject of mythmaking. As explored later in this chapter, the rhetoric surrounding visitations of young musicians to Tommy Jarrell's home is evocative of quasi-religious experience. Furthermore, the circulation of stories and anecdotes about the lives of these heritage figureheads among enthusiasts creates bodies of shared knowledge which in turn generate feelings of insiderness and intimacy. Although many enthusiasts who partake in these story-sharing practices never met the musicians of whom they speak, they nevertheless find meaning in "getting to know" them this way.

Musician lineage—a phenomenon that has received diverse analyses among music scholars—is a prominent means through which the influence of heritage epicenters radiates outwards.[19] In the

[19] The practice of tracing lineage through teachers as a means to establish credibility, and as a way for performers to situate/ground themselves within a specific tradition is found in numerous musical practices across the world. Taking as his example musical life at the American conservatory, Henry Kingsbury makes some illuminating comments on the importance of lineage (1988, 44-46). One prominent way lineage is expressed, he argues, is through frequent verbal (in lessons, workshops, or informal discussion) or written references (program notes, biographies) to teachers/mentors a specific musician studied with. Regarding this practice of "name dropping" (something that happens frequently among old-time musicians), Kingsbury argues that its function is to "present each faculty member as the individual conservator of a distinct and distinguished musical heritage. The implicit message is that if one studies with a particular teacher, then one steps into a particular line of musical descent." (46) Other examples include Daniel Neuman's 1990 (chapter 2) exploration of lineage through examination of the gharana model evident in the Hindustani classical tradition of North India and Thomas A. Hale's (1998) and Banning Eyre's (2000) studies of the griot tradition in West Africa.

case of Surry County, the wide range of musicians with differing regional and national backgrounds who learned from resident artists have become authorities on and mouthpieces for this local musical past. Today, those who can claim direct musical or personal encounters with Surry County's figureheads have risen the ranks of old-time's competitive hierarchy, remaining active at local, regional, national, and international festivals and folk arts workshops—events where new, extended, and fragmentary lineages materialize.

Central to the symbolic power of heritage epicenters are the debates that circulate among practitioners and enthusiasts engaging with issues of micro-regional style, repertory, and resident master musician technique. In relation to Surry County, rich discourse across the old-time world has taken shape around the existence or non-existence of a distinct "Surry County" sound or "Round Peak style." These discourses have materialized on the pages of dedicated fanzines, scholarly texts, online, and in other related forms of cultural production; in touristic rhetoric; in casual discussions among musicians and enthusiasts; and in contexts of musical practice. Beyond such debates, symbolic work of some kind happens each time a musician in the present (regardless of their geographic location) learns or plays a related tune or song. What, for example, might a musician learn about place and the past when trying to capture the nuances of Jarrell's left-hand finger patterns or his often-confounding rhythmic bow articulation from another musician, video, recording, or instructional manual?

In the remainder of this chapter, I map the characteristics of the heritage epicenter with more specificity onto Surry County. First, I examine the elevation and adulation of select local musical personalities from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s by musician and scholar visitors. Second, I explore debates that circulate among enthusiasts concerning the parameters of the so-called "Round

Peak style" or "Surry County sound." And third, I outline the ways that this musical heritage is supported, presented, and promoted in the location itself via assorted cultural heritage preservation and tourism institutions on a local and state level.

Surry County as a heritage epicenter

Encounters: "St Thomas of Toast"[20] and a host of friends

The origin story—a moment of contact—that initiated the rise of Surry County's musicians from little known to nationally and internationally recognized heritage icons is not dissimilar from others that capture initial moments of contact between young, predominantly urban revivalist musicians and the older generation—a process that began to accelerate from the late 1950s.[21] Oftentimes, these serendipitous encounters have been characterized, sometimes problematically, through narratives of "discovery."

While examples of these so-called "discoveries" and subsequent acts of cross-generational cultural stewardship became widespread in revivalist contexts, particularly well-discussed examples are the elevation of rural Kentucky banjoist Roscoe Holcomb (1912–1981)[22] and African American, North Carolina guitarist and singer Elizabeth Cotten (1893–1987) initiated by members of the New Lost City Ramblers. "Discovered" and recorded in 1958 on a southern fieldtrip by John Cohen,

[20] The name "St Thomas of Toast" comes from James Leva's play, "A Kindly Visitation" (2011).
[21] While there was an acceleration of this process from the late 1950s through the 1960s and 1970s, celebration of the "folk musician" as a creative individual, rather than just the vessel or transmitter of a valuable body of traditional music, has a longer history that is explored in Bohlman 1988 (chapter 5). Regarding points of contact/encounters between older generation musicians and so-called revivalists, see chapter 1 of this dissertation for further examination.
[22] See Carlin 2000b for detailed biographical information.

Holcomb came to stand for many as a paragon of rural Southern "authenticity," exposed to wider audiences via recording projects, concert series (the New York Friends of Old Time Music, for example), and national folk festivals (See Gura 2000, 66–67; Allen 2010, 2, 61–62).

Through a similar route of recording projects and festival presentation, Elizabeth Cotten—a former housekeeper at the Seeger residence in Chapel Hill—was recognized in 1984 as a National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) (Allen 2010, 60–61, 89–90). These older musicians, in many ways, became access points for younger musicians to connect with times passed. They were to be cherished; their legacy and artistry preserved. While these musicians became objects of veneration, they were also understood as *real* (perhaps charmingly anachronistic) human beings with rich life stories and wisdom to share. In many cases, deep friendships formed between members of the older and younger generations of musicians—heritage icons thus becoming intimate icons.[23]

Surry County's musical discovery narrative has been particularly well documented. In 1967, Alan Jabbour—a graduate student at Duke University and old-time musician with the Hollow Rock String Band, later becoming the founding director of the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center—attended the annual fiddlers' convention in Galax, Virginia. Following the recommendation of Jarrell's son, B.F (Benjamin Franklin) who had heard about Jabbour's musical and research interests—"you ought to hear my daddy play fiddle," he suggested—the young musician-scholar visited Thomas Jefferson Jarrell, or "Tommy," at his now iconic house in the small

[23] In chapter 1, I explain a similar case of cultural stewardship in relation to cherished African American fiddler Joe Thompson.

Surry County community of Toast (see Malone 2011, 138; Carlson 2016, 51–52; McGee 2000, 94).

As a commonly circulating story tells, Jarrell had not been playing music for many years at the time Jabbour visited. Shortly after this encounter, whether or not directly inspired by Jabbour's visit, numerous enthusiasts journeyed to this North Carolina county to experience its apparent musical riches firsthand. Among the musicians "found" there were Jarrell, Fred Cockerham,[24] Kyle Creed,[25] Paul Sutphin,[26] Verlen Clifton,[27] and Benton Flippen[28]—musicians whose large portraits now adorn the walls of the Old Time Music Heritage Hall in downtown Mount Airy.

Among the visitors from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s were musicians (some holding NEA Folk Arts Apprenticeships to study with "master" musicians),[29] folklorists, ethnomusicologists, documentarians, dancers, and independent record label personnel (in particular of Heritage, County, and Mountain Records). High profile visitors included Mike Seeger; singer and instrumentalist Alice Gerrard;[30] musician David Holt;[31] broadcaster, journalist, and old-time

[24] See McGee 2000 (50–51) and Carlin 2000a for biographical information.
[25] See McGee 2000 (53) and Leftwich 1999 (9–10) for biographical information.
[26] See McGee 2000 (152–154).
[27] See Ibid. (51–54).
[28] See Ibid. (65–66).
[29] Musicians Alice Gerrard, Paul Brown, and Terri McMurray were among those who received NEA Folks Arts Apprenticeships to visit Surry County musicians.
[30] Alice Gerrard (b. 1934) is a celebrated old-time musician and bluegrass singer. Gerrard was part of the influential female bluegrass duo, Hazel and Alice. Gerrard also founded the fanzine, *The Old-Time Herald* in 1987. See Hicks Henry 2013 (113–135) for more extensive biographical information.
[31] Texan-born, Asheville, North Carolina-based David Holt (b. 1946) is a Grammy winning multi-instrumentalist, television host, and documentarian of North Carolinian folkways. See Carlson 2016 (127–140) for biographical profile.

musician Paul Brown;[32] and recordist, musician, and journalist Ray Alden.[33] While many traveled long distances to Surry County, others were fortunate to live within close proximity. Local musicians including Richard Bowman (fiddle) and Chester McMillian (guitar) who played frequently with Jarrell and his contemporaries remain to this day active emblems of Surry County's musical heritage.

It is perhaps surprising that Surry County's musicians were not encountered sooner considering that folk collectors and documenters had been active since the 1930s in nearby counties of southwest Virginia. For example, by the 1950s, musician Wade Ward (1892–1971) of Galax, Virginia had made several recordings for the Library of Congress—John Lomax recorded him in the 1930s; Alan Lomax in the 1940s, returning to make further recordings in the 1950s as part of his so-called "Southern Journey." Mike Seeger, later one of Tommy Jarrell's visitors, also made recordings of Ward in the 1950s (Cohen and Donaldson 2014, 134–135; Cohen 2016, 126).

Fiddler Emmett Lundy (1864–1953) of Grayson County, Virginia was another musician who piqued the interest of collectors, also making Library of Congress recordings at the behest of Alan Lomax. It is vital to emphasize that many of these musical encounters were the result of luck and chance—the alignment of musicians and interested parties in the right places at the right times. Furthermore, as rural fiddlers' conventions became sites ripe for encounters of this kind, it is

[32] Born in 1952, Paul Brown is an active old-time musician, broadcaster, storyteller, and journalist based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. His journalism and broadcasting career includes extensive work with Surry County's WPAQ radio and National Public Radio. In the present day, Brown hosts a weekly public radio music show entitled "Across the Blue Ridge" on 88.5 WFDD. Brown performed alongside fiddler Benton Flippen as part of the Surry County-based band, the Smokey Valley Boys in the 1980s.

[33] Ray Alden (1942–2009) was a key advocate of Surry County's musical heritage who wrote about, and made numerous field recordings of, local music and musicians (later releasing them through his organization the Field Recorders' Collective). See Brown 2009 for biographical profile and obituary.

important to note that the convention in Galax, Virginia founded in 1935 was established almost forty years before the Mount Airy counterpart (founded 1972).

Nevertheless, when Surry County was firmly on the radar of interested musicians and folklorists, the volume of visitors this small area received was unprecedented. This influx of musical visitors resulted in the production of an abundance of recordings and documentary materials—many of these materials remain in circulation within old-time communities to this day. For example, recordings of local musicians were made, released, and sometimes re-released on independent labels such as Heritage, County, and Mountain Records. In addition to recorded sound, the accompanying (often detailed) liner notes written by authoritative figures like Richard Nevins, Barry Poss, and Dave Freeman provide perspectives and theoretical reflections on local musical sound and style.

These recordings, on their initial circulation, were hugely influential and in demand: old-time communities across the country who accessed them, hungry for new tunes, received them with voracity. This was a sentiment expressed to me in personal interviews with musician, scholar, and dancer (and former director of Old-Time Week at the Swannanoa Gathering) Phil Jamison and musician, broadcaster, and journalist Paul Brown. Jamison explained that whenever a new old-time LP circulated (regardless of the regional musics it contained), musicians would learn and play that selection of tunes for some time: "if an LP of Mississippi tunes was released, that summer, we'd all be playing Mississippi tunes!"[34] Brown, in relation to the circulation of LPs featuring Surry County musicians, stressed the importance they played in establishing canons of tunes and performers.[35]

[34] Phil Jamison in discussion with the author, July 2016.
[35] Paul Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.

Two significant (and frequently discussed) pieces written for the fanzines *Old Time Music* and *The Old-Time Herald* provide insight into the world of Surry County's celebrated musicians: Ray Alden's "Music from Round Peak" (1975–1976)[36] and ethnomusicologist Nancy Dols Neithammer's two-part "Tommy Jarrell's Family Stories 1830–1925" (1991; 1992). Documentary films that deliver rich visual evocations of their world include Les Blank, Alice Gerrard, and Cecelia Conway's *Sprout Wings and Fly* (1983), Blank's *My Old Fiddle: A Visit with Tommy Jarrell in the Blue Ridge* (1994), and more recently, *Folkways: Music of Surry County* (2010) narrated by David Holt. Other influential materials in circulation are two self-instruction textbooks written by Jarrell protégé Brad Leftwich (b. 1953): *Round Peak Style Clawhammer Banjo* (1999) and *Old-Time Fiddle Round Peak Style: History, Tips and Technique* (2011). These manuals contain contextual information about place and history; some theorization of the so-called "Round Peak style;" an audio guide, and detailed tune transcriptions.

Today, folk arts workshops are significant sites of contact of a different kind: between musicians who learned directly from the older generation and those who did not, thus encouraging new, fractured lineages to form. At the Swannanoa Gathering from 2013 to 2017, I paid special attention to class programming and musician staff hires. While featuring a broad spectrum of esteemed musicians and dancers offering classes that encompassed regionally diverse styles and histories, there was a noticeable presence of Surry County advocates: Brad Leftwich, John Hermann, James Leva, Kirk Sutphin, Alice Gerrard, Paul Brown, and Terri McMurray among them. I restate

[36] Alden's article was also published for a wider audience of folk enthusiasts in *Sing Out! The Folk Song Magazine* in 1972 (vol. 21, no.6, 1–11).

here that to claim a connection with Tommy Jarrell and/or another enshrined Surry County musician is powerful currency.

If direct interventions from visiting, non-local musicians and cultural stewards are key to helping heritage epicenters flourish, one must assess the extent to which their presence shapes the supposed "traditions" under question. Following Gregory Barz and Timothy Cooley's (2008) reflections on ethnographic presence more generally, it is fruitful to consider the "shadows" these external parties of interest cast/have cast. The written and aural documentation on Surry County's musical heritage created by visiting musicians and scholars—along with the ways these participants continue(d) to share their stories across the wider old-time community—have been prominent means through which others have interpreted, understood, and reflected upon the traditions under question.

It is important to note, too, that at the time visitations to his home intensified, Jarrell had only recently returned to music. Thus, the validation he received through external parties catalyzed his elevation from Surry County resident to civically-celebrated local hero, state-endorsed heritage icon, and NEA National Heritage Fellow (1984). If visiting musicians and folklorists helped inspire Jarrell to play again, the music he shared with them was delivered the way he remembered it in the late 1960s—it was not, then, a "tradition" he was active in perpetuating at this time.

A pilgrimage to "Tommy's" house

> There was no host more gracious than Mr. Thomas Jefferson Jarrell of Toast, North Carolina. Saint Thomas of Toast. As I woke up that morning, I could smell bacon frying and biscuits baking. Even though he was in his seventies and I was 19 or 20 years old, here he had got breakfast going and was playing the fiddle. Half awake, I heard that ancient, haunting sound Tommy got out of a fiddle.
>
> –Excerpt from "A Kindly Visitation" by James Leva, 2011

Musician James Leva's play, "A Kindly Visitation," shares with the audience many of his own fond memories of visits to Jarrell's home in the 1970s and 1980s, hinting at some of the broader ways he gathered such symbolic value. Premiered at Washington and Lee University, Virginia in 2011 (and staged subsequently at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, in 2014), the play featured a revolving cast of musicians and dancers each with personal connections to Jarrell. While Leva's description of Jarrell in saintly terms is commentary on the esteem and reverence with which the musician was received and continues to be held across the broader old-time community—he was not, of course, an actual religious leader—wide-ranging documentation on, and reflections of, visits to Jarrell's home frequently employs language evocative of religious experience.

The notion of secular "pilgrimage" as it relates to enthusiasts' profound engagements with musical personalities (and by extension, musical styles) has received abundant and diverse scholarly attention.[37] In literature describing musician visits to Jarrell's home, terms like "pilgrimage" (and

[37] While interdisciplinary theorizations of secular "pilgrimage" (and potential motivating factors) are found in edited volumes like Reader and Walter 1993 and Margry 2008, wide-ranging case studies exploring musician adulation and the varied ways fans mobilize themselves around their idols, associated physical locations, and objects are found in Jones and Jensen 2005, Sylvan 2002, and Cohen, Knifton, Leonard, and Roberts 2015. In popular music culture, noticeable concentrations of this idolization phenomena and "pilgrimage" have been observed in relation to rock musicians like the Beatles (R.J. Kruse 2003; Tessler 2006; Brocken 2015; Bennett 2016; Cohen 2007); Elvis Presley (Doss 2005 and 2008; King 1993); Bruce Springsteen (Cavicchi 1998); and the Grateful Dead (Sylvan 2002, 83–116; Bryan 2012, 126–139; Goodenough 2007, 157–177;

associated terms like "rite of passage" or allusions of traveling to "Mecca") appear fairly consistently—almost to the point of oversaturation. Presented here are nine examples of such language from a variety of publicly accessible source types:

1. Ray Alden, "Tommy Jarrell" liner notes to Field Recorders' Collective CD (FRC211, 2009)

   Soon [after the "discovery"] many young musicians began making pilgrimages to see him [Jarrell], which kept him enjoying music until his death at the end of January 1985.

2. Elizabeth A. Carlson, "Tommy Jarrell" in *North Carolina String Music Masters: Old-Time and Bluegrass Legends* (2016, 54)

   Young people began to flock to Surry County. Some people heard about Tommy through Alden's article. Others heard Tommy play on one of the County LPs. Others heard of Tommy at music festivals or through the powerful old-time grapevine. People came from around the country and from as far away as Germany, Australia and Japan. Over the years, thousands of young music pilgrims came to Surry County to learn from Tommy Jarrell, the grand old man of the Round Peak style.

3. Marty McGee, "Tommy Jarrell" in *Traditional Musicians of the Central Blue Ridge* (2000, 9–10)

   Many aspiring fiddlers made the pilgrimage to Mount Airy to learn from Jarrell in the 1970s.

4. Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, "Tommy Jarrell: Historic Artist Profile" (Blue Ridge National Heritage Area 2018a)

   On his retirement after 41 years working for the North Carolina Highway Department, Tommy Jarrell returned to playing the music he had learned in his youth. He came to the attention of young revivalist old-time musicians, many of whom he hosted at his house. "Going to see Tommy" became something of a pilgrimage and rite of passage for this younger generation of musicians, and Jarrell's hospitality remains legendary.

Ward 2015). To provide an example outside of popular music, Abigail Fine's (2017) work investigates the ways that devoted followers of composers like Mozart and Beethoven in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germany and Austria invested deep significance in associated physical locations, spaces, and objects.

5. Amy Snyder (Curator, Mount Airy Museum of Regional History) "Thomas ('Tommy') Jefferson Jarrell" in *Conversations: A Publication of the North Carolina Humanities Council,* vol.2, issue 2 (Summer 2009)

   From the late 1960s through the early 1980s, Jarrell's unpretentious home without a telephone became a mecca for young folk artists and other aspiring musicians. People young and old would just show up at Jarrell's back door or front porch and were invited to stay and 'play' for as long as they wanted. They were eager to learn from the man they called "the Master of Round Peak Music."

6. UNC-TV documentary film: *Folkways: Music of Surry County* (2010)

   [In this scene, narrator David Holt stands outside Jarrell's home in Toast, North Carolina]

   This unassuming little white house was headquarters of the Surry County Round Peak world domination. This is the home of Tommy Jarrell. A Surry County homegrown fiddler who never worked as a professional musician; never drove a car; never even had a telephone. And yet in the 1970s, from far and wide, if on a pilgrimage, a whole new generation of young musicians, myself included, came to this house eager to learn from the master. [transcription author's own]

7. Guidebook to the Blue Ridge Heritage Trails by Fred C. Fussell and Stephen Kruger (2018, 28)

   Surry County remains a place of pilgrimage for old-time music fans seeking to experience the kind of community and events that gave the world such beautiful and distinctive music. For a modern-day traveler happily witnessing or even participating in a late-night jam session at the Mount Airy Fiddlers' Convention, the words that Tommy Jarrell and his father Ben before him sang so often might reflect the mood of the impromptu gathering:

   I'll eat when I'm hungry
   Drink when I'm dry.
   Get to feeling much better,
   Gonna sprout wings and fly.

8. Tim McElhannon, Review of "A Kindly Visitation" by James Leva, *No Depression* (February 14, 2011)

   Music was the reason that [James] Leva and his friends, who were still in their teens and early twenties, visited Jarrell but what they took away was much more. The young pilgrims who

traveled to Tommy's house took away a valuable collection of lessons about making your way through the tough times of life in the rural South during the early part of the 20th Century. Tommy and his contemporaries routinely experienced physical, emotional, and psychological hardships that few of us can imagine.

9. Henry Sapoznik (musician and musicologist) interview for Folkstreams (Folkstreams n.d.)

   I feel bad for people who never made the pilgrimage, not that they can't play, but I feel if you don't meet the people who made the music, look into their eyes and have a tune with them, humanize the music, then the depth of what is being played is no deeper than the thickness of the record you learned it off of. I just think that it makes all the difference. I was really lucky, not that I made a big deal about it; I didn't end up doing any more field work I didn't find anyone else and I didn't 'find' these old guys, there was already a well worn rut in the road leading to Tommy and Fred's [Cockerham] homes.

The liberal and frequent use of language associated with religious experience, along with imagery of crowds flocking, almost with urgency and out of necessity, to a Master and leader of humble material means yet extensive cultural riches, is quite striking: "I've heard him referred to as 'Swami Tommy!" musician Riley Baugus (and Jarrell visitor in the 1970s) explained to me in an interview.[38] "Tommy was unusual," Paul Brown told me.[39] As one of Jarrell's frequent visitors, it is perfectly clear to Brown why so many viewed the musician as some sort of "guru."

What, then, was it about Jarrell, his personality, and musical ability that evoked such responses? Why did he gain traction among so many young musicians from all over the country (and further afield), and why did they turn to him for friendship and (musical) guidance? How did a "visit to Tommy's"—to his humble residence in Toast—become the stuff of legend? The magnetic

[38] Riley Baugus in discussion with the author, August 2017.
[39] Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.

appeal of Jarrell and his continued, posthumous relevance among old-time musicians today is a key factor in *sustaining* Surry County's status as old-time heritage epicenter.

For many, Jarrell acted as a dynamic link to an older time. Born at the opening of the twentieth century to a family of Scotch-Irish descent in the Surry County community of Round Peak—the geographic location after which the local "style" has come to be known—Jarrell grew up in an older, rural world quite different from that of his younger visitors.

The man was a wise, masterful storyteller; the stories he told captured with vividness the world of his youth characterized by heavy duty work, hardships, farm life, moonshine-making (both he and his father distilled whiskey), feuds, gatherings of friends and family, and death. The colorful characters he animated and the life events (from the mundane to the remarkable) he documented were conveyed with nuance, emotion, and oftentimes humor.

The richness of these stories is captured well in the ethnographic work of Ray Alden (1975–1976) and ethnomusicologist Nancy Dols Neithammer (1991), as well as the evocative documentary films *Sprout Wings and Fly* (1983) and *My Old Fiddle* (1994). The musicians and dancers I have interviewed who spent time with Jarrell—Richard Bowman, Chester McMillian, Paul Brown, James Leva, Riley Baugus, Phil Jamison, and Rodney Clay Sutton—also shared with me many of their fond personal "Tommy" anecdotes. Had this musician not welcomed strangers into his home, had he been reticent and shy, he likely would not have courted this level of attention.

Footage from the documentary *Folkways: Music of Surry County* (2010) invites modern-day spectators into one of Jarrell's musical soirees at his home: a high density of musicians and dancers crammed into his living room and kitchen; Jarrell, playing fiddle and singing "John Hardy" from his green vinyl sofa, sitting in the thick of the action. Juxtaposing these scenes of energy and ebullience

with "talking heads" reflections of visits to Jarrell's home that feature David Holt, Paul Brown, Mike Seeger, and Alice Gerrard, viewers get a sense of just how special these memories are: "Often, in my mind's eye, I had a picture of the walls just pushing and beating from the sound of the music!" Brown exclaims to viewers. Seeger comments, with humor, that "people from local would come by and see. . .what kind of weirdos might have shown up!"

Jarrell welcomed musicians and dancers into his home quite indiscriminately, regardless of their background. Attracting a large number of young, "bohemian" types, Brown explained to me that Jarrell's acceptance of difference among his visitors was quite astounding considering Surry County's strong conservative political ambiance—individuals widely "suspicious of anti-Vietnam sentiment. . .and very suspicious of long hair. . .hippies."[40]

Riley Baugus (b. 1965) of nearby Walkertown, North Carolina, began visiting Jarrell in his teenage years along with young fiddler and banjoist Kirk Sutphin—Sutphin's style of fiddling, I have been told by numerous musicians, is perhaps closer to Jarrell's than any other who has attempted to master his sound and technique. Baugus recalled that "there was a guy that used to meditate in Tommy's front yard. . .Tommy's son went out and poked him one day to see if he was still alive. . .he's the same guy who went and camped in the tree for several days. . ."[41] The distinction between this widely accepting older musician and the political conservatism of his habitus (especially among his own generation) marks him as different, as anachronistic—an ideal figurehead, perhaps. In interview, Brown shared with me a striking image of Jarrell's singularity:

[40] Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.
[41] Baugus in discussion with the author, August 2017.

> There's a great photograph. . .it's at this fiddlers' convention and people have obviously been up all night and there's a van, a truck nearby. . .and there's a campfire burning and. . .there may be a couple of people just dead asleep out in the field. And sitting there in trousers and a white shirt and a straw hat. . .sitting on a log or on a rock, I can't remember, by this burning-out camp fire in profile in this black and white snapshot. . .is Tommy Jarrell. . .which means that he'd been hanging out with these kids all night making music while they danced. . .and there he was, surveying the scene and just sitting there, accepting of these kids and clearly, obviously, he'd had the time of his life.[42]

Jarrell's welcoming, magnetic persona was accompanied by his remarkable musicality and distinctive technical execution of the fiddle and banjo. Not only was he generous with his stories, commentators have remarked that he was happy to show anybody a tune. Jarrell's willingness to share musical expertise with patience was a sentiment expressed in my discussion with fiddler Richard Bowman—one of Jarrell's local visitors.[43] Another salient factor of his perceived musical specialness was the antiquity and noticeably archaic nature of his style, sound, and fiddle technique––exemplified by the bow rock and stuttering triplet bow motif heard on many of his recordings—that possessed none of the traits of bluegrass or country, even though his father had made commercial recordings.

As Ray Alden (1975–1976) illuminates, Jarrell grew up around a small circle of skilled musicians both inside and outside of his immediate family—members approximately of his own generation (including Kyle Creed, Fred Cockerham, Paul Sutphin, Verlen Clifton, and Earnest East), his father's and an older generation still who lived during (or fought in) the Civil War. Among his central influences were his father Ben Jarrell (1880–1946)[44]—a notable fiddler who recorded for

[42] Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.
[43] Richard Bowman in discussion with the author, August 2017.
[44] See Leftwich 2011 (7) for biographical profile.

Gennett Records in 1927 with string band Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters,[45] banjoist Charlie Lowe (1878–1964),[46] as well as Confederate veterans Zach Payne (1845–1929)[47] and Preston "Pet" McKinney.

A handful of Jarrell's recordings for County Records from the mid-1970s were made with his students in mind and are instructional in nature. Tracks on the LP "Sail Away Ladies" (1976)[48] include a vocal introduction at the outset of the tunes in which Jarrell explains something of a tune's context, who he learned it from, and sometimes how he learned it. Through these introductory vignettes—precious relics themselves—the listener gets a sense of musical lineage and is transported, for a moment, to a deeper, more distant past. Two examples are found attached to recordings of tunes "Sail Away Ladies" and "Cotton Eyed Joe:"[49]

> Here's a little tune I learned from old man Pet McKinney, he's an old Confederate Veteran. I met him in the road I started to a dance when I was about fifteen or sixteen years old and I had my fiddle under my arm. He said, "son, let us see your fiddle." He took it and tuned it like this [demonstrates by plucking the strings E-A-D-G in turn] that's the first time I ever heard a fiddle tuned that way. And he played that tune over. . .I said "how about playing that again, Mr. McKinney' and he played it again for me. And I learned that tune right there. [transcription author's own]

> Here's a tune called "Cotton Eyed Joe" and it's played two different ways: the old-timey way and the Charlie Lowe way. And I learned it the Charlie Lowe way. And Charlie Lowe was

[45] See Russell 2007 (23–25) for a profile of the band Da Costa Woltz and the Southern Broadcasters.
[46] See Leftwich 1999 (7) for brief biography of Charlie Lowe.
[47] See Leftwich 2011 (10) and Carlson 2016 (47–48) for biographical details on Zach Payne.
[48] The liner notes, written by album producer Barry Poss, state that "it was with his many devotees and 'students' in mind that Tommy conceived the idea of this fiddle album. As though playing for them in his home, he introduces each tune with important information about tunings and sources, and his fiddling is unaccompanied to assist those who wish to learn his tunes."
[49] These recordings are featured on *The Legacy of Tommy Jarrell Volume 1: Sail Away Ladies* (CD) by County Records in 1999. The tracks were originally released by County Records on LP *Sail Away Ladies* (756) in 1976.

> one of the best…I'll say the best old-time banjo picker I've ever heard. But Charlie. . .Charlie played with my dad. He was two years older than my daddy. He was born in eighteen and seventy-nine, seventy-eight. . .and daddy was born in eighteen and eighty and he played with my dad and then I come up and he played with me. [transcription author's own]

Personal circumstances likely played a role in Jarrell's maintenance of a particularly antiquated style in comparison to that of his contemporaries. Before visitors started showing an active interest in the musician, Jarrell had taken an extended musical hiatus, perhaps explaining why folklorists collecting over the state line had not encountered him in previous decades. Following the near-simultaneous circumstances of his retirement from the North Carolina Highway Department, the unexpected of death of his wife, and the growing interest in his life among external parties, Jarrell returned to music. James Leva, who started visiting Jarrell as a teenager during the 1970s stated why this older style was so captivating: "if you're nineteen years old and talking to Tommy Jarrell and he's telling you about Pet McKinney, I'm one person away from someone who fought at Gettysburg. And that's pretty powerful!"[50]

A "guru," "master," leader, figurehead or, as Mike Seeger remarked, "old-time central for the East Coast" (Holt 2010): Tommy Jarrell became, and continues to function as an international old-time intimate icon. It noticeable, too, that many practitioners today who did not meet Jarrell often employ loving, familial language to discuss him, continuing to circulate anecdotes about his life and music-making learned second-hand. During my fieldwork, I witnessed on frequent occasions musicians without personal connections to Jarrell referring to him as "Tommy" and sharing his

[50] James Leva in discussion with the author, July 2017.

stories as if he were an old friend. This is similar to the ways that Beatles fans speak of "John," "Paul," "George," and "Ringo."

On a Saturday afternoon in late July 2016, I joined Paul Brown and fiddler and banjoist Matt Brown for a driving tour of Surry County, stopping at important sites of past musical activity as well as musicians' former places of residence. Pausing for a moment outside Jarrell's home, Paul Brown—a wonderful storyteller himself—shared a number of his own recollections of visits there. On this day, this once-dynamic site of musical activity—a space that brought together disparate communities of musicians—looked unremarkable, mundane, lived-in. Brown explained that today, the home remains in the Jarrell family.

A "Round Peak style," a "Surry County sound"

> Now here's the really interesting thing about the Surry County Round Peak style. Since old-time music started to be discovered by young folks in the 1960s and '70s, it's started being adopted and played enthusiastically all around the world. And it's the intense, bluesy, fiddle-driven Surry County sound that's become synonymous the world around with American old-time music. So, if you're listening to a string band in Tokyo or Oslo, the chances are, you're probably listening to the Surry County sound!
>
> —David Holt, *Folkways: Music of Surry County* (2010)

At Mount Airy's Old Time Music Heritage Hall, the documentary *Folkways: Music of Surry County* (2010) plays on loop, narrated by Grammy-winning musician and major advocate of North Carolina folklife David Holt. Made especially for the museum, the documentary paints a remarkable picture of Surry County's music heritage. It introduces and contextualizes influential local musicians and provides clues as to what might characterize the so-called "Round Peak style" and the "Surry

County sound." Likewise, it presents a narrative suggesting that the singular "sound"/ "style" of this small region has come to stand as an—or perhaps "the"—emblem of old-time music worldwide.

The assertion of sonic dominance encapsulated in the above epigraph is one I find particularly unsettling. Even though it connects to wider frustrations I encountered during fieldwork among individuals concerned that musics and musicians from Surry County have been overrepresented, Holt's statement is somewhat overblown. Here, the Holt goes one step further to suggest that local sound has "become synonymous world around with American old-time music" and that if one hears an old-time string band anywhere in the world, it is likely this local sound that they are experiencing.

It is unclear how literally one should take this assertion. Perhaps the statement is intended simply to acknowledge Surry County's musical visibility among many old-time participants worldwide. To take it literally, however, would be to view this county's musical output as an obliterating force—the point where the "Round Peak style" or "Surry County sound" *becomes* old-time. It is likely, however, that Holt is alluding to what Gregory Reish (2017) describes as the "festival style" that grew within (and extended beyond) old-time revivalist activities of the 1970s and 1980s. On this topic, Reish writes that

> The proliferation of old-time festivals as gatherings for large numbers of contemporary old-time musicians, many of whom travel long distances for such events, has given rise to an unmistakable homogenization and modernization of the music that has come to be known, often derisively, as the "festival style." North Carolinian Tommy Jarrell and his true vine musical associates Fred Cockerham and Kyle Creed made themselves unusually available to revivalists in the 1970s and 1980s; as a result, their Round Peak regional style and repertory (from Surry County, NC) came to dominate the festival scene along the East Coast and mid-Appalachian regions. (136)

Yet in the twenty-first century, Reish argues that the alleged "festival style" is now characterized by sonic and stylistic influences that reach beyond old-time—bluegrass, rhythm and blues, and rock n' roll among them—and certainly beyond the sounds of Surry County (ibid.). As Holt's hyperbolic declaration of Surry County's sonic dominance on the world's old-time stage likely refers to old-time as practiced in *revivalist* contexts, it does not take into consideration the activities of musicians associated with other deep-rooted local "traditions" who might not believe in (or be pleased by) this presentation of Round Peak as sonic bulldozer.

If the notion of a micro-regionally specific "sound" and/or "style" is a key component of a musical epicenter, how might one characterize the "Round Peak style" or "Surry County sound?" What are the qualities that make it unique and distinctive? Why do some musicians resist the very idea? Those certain of its existence often find it hard to describe this local style in words, conveying instead something of an essence or aura through varied descriptive strategies. In such commentaries, the term "style" is used liberally to incorporate aspects of instrumental technique, melodic and rhythmic characteristics, and a representative repertory.

The historic exemplars of this so-called "style" are a multigenerational group of instrumentalists (fiddle, banjo, guitar, and mandolin) each with their own signature performance style. While the terms "Round Peak style" and "Surry County sound" are often used interchangeably, Brad Leftwich makes a clearer, more specific distinction. "Style," he writes, "is what gives you a certain 'sound.' It has little to do with the tunes themselves and everything to do with the manner in which the tunes are played" (1999, 6).

Entry points for conceptualizing this local "sound" and "style" can be found in the Folkways documentary (2010), Leftwich's instruction manuals for fiddle (2011) and banjo (1999), and James

Ruchala's doctoral thesis "Making Round Peak Music: History, Revitalization, and Community" (2011, chapter 6). In the Folkways documentary, various traits are described: "fiddle-driven," "bluesy," rhythmically "driving" rather than melodically intricate; music for dance.

Musician Brad Leftwich's (b.1953)[51] textbooks for fiddle and banjo are well-articulated pedagogical tools. "To old-time fans around the world," Leftwich writes, "the name 'Round Peak' is legendary, bringing to mind the exhilarating, intricate fiddle-banjo duets of Tommy Jarrell and Fred Cockerham, and the tight, hard-driving band sound of the Camp Creek Boys[52] and its offshoots" (2011, 5). In this manual, Leftwich urges musicians to approach the "Round Peak style" as a flexible entity offering ample creative opportunities. Despite his conviction of a discernable local style and sound, Leftwich acknowledge that its musical originators each commanded their instrument in a unique manner.

In the fiddle manual, Leftwich is open about his narrow focus on Jarrell—rather than other local musicians—as an exemplar of the regional "old-style fiddling from just after the turn of the century" (2011, 5). To understand Jarrell's sound production, Leftwich places major emphasis on rhythmic bowing. Recalling his own visits with Jarrell between 1973 and 1985, Leftwich writes

> As inspirational as Tommy was, just visiting and playing with him was no guarantee of learning what he had to teach. You really had to heed his advice to watch his bow arm, which, in his opinion, "does all the work." And if the lesson was lost even on many visitors who watched him play and heard his admonitions about bowing, you can imagine the odds faced by those trying to figure it out on their own. (2011, 3)

[51] Leftwich began visiting Jarrell in 1973 at the age of twenty and continued his visits until the musician's death in 1985.

[52] A number of local musicians have been associated with the Surry County band the Camp Creek Boys including Fred Cockerham, Kyle Creed, Paul Sutphin, Ronald Collins, Verlen Clifton, Earnest East, Roscoe Russell, and from the 1960s, Benton Flippen.

Central to Jarrell's distinctive rhythmic bowing is the technique known as "rocking the bow" that Leftwich characterizes in the following way:

> Tommy used this term for a technique rarely heard in modern fiddle styles. Other old-timers call it "rolling the bow" or "figure-eight bowing." The bow hand almost never travels in a straight line, but describes circles, eights, and other curlicues in space as it weaves drone strings and double stops together with the melody of the tune. In conjunction with the use of a relatively flat bridge and alternate tunings, bow rocking gets several strings ringing at once, effectively creating a kind of backup to the melody and maximizing resonance and volume. It's a technique that harks back to a time when the fiddle was more of a solo instrument. (Ibid., 13)

Below, I share two of Leftwich's tune transcriptions that illustrate this bow rocking technique. The first example is the "A" part from two-part tune "Big Eyed Rabbit" in the key of A with the fiddle tuned AEAE. The second, the "A" part of "Rockingham Cindy" (also in two parts) in the key of D with the fiddle tuned to ADAE. To highlight obvious points where the technique might be utilized, I have added circles to the transcription:

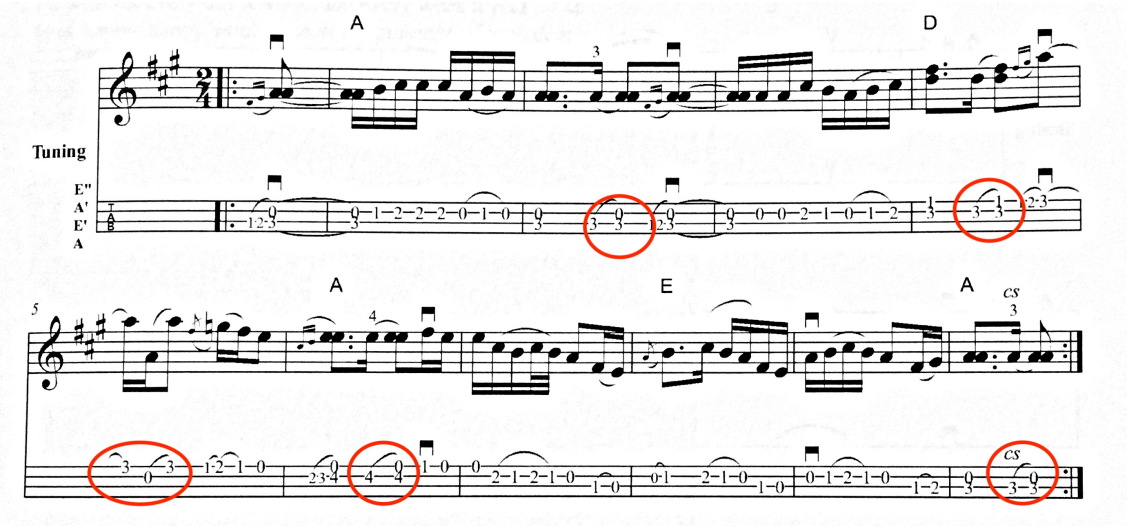

Figure 2.3: "A" part of "Big Eyed Rabbit." Transcription by Leftwich (2011, 19), reprinted by permission of Mel Bay Publications, Inc.

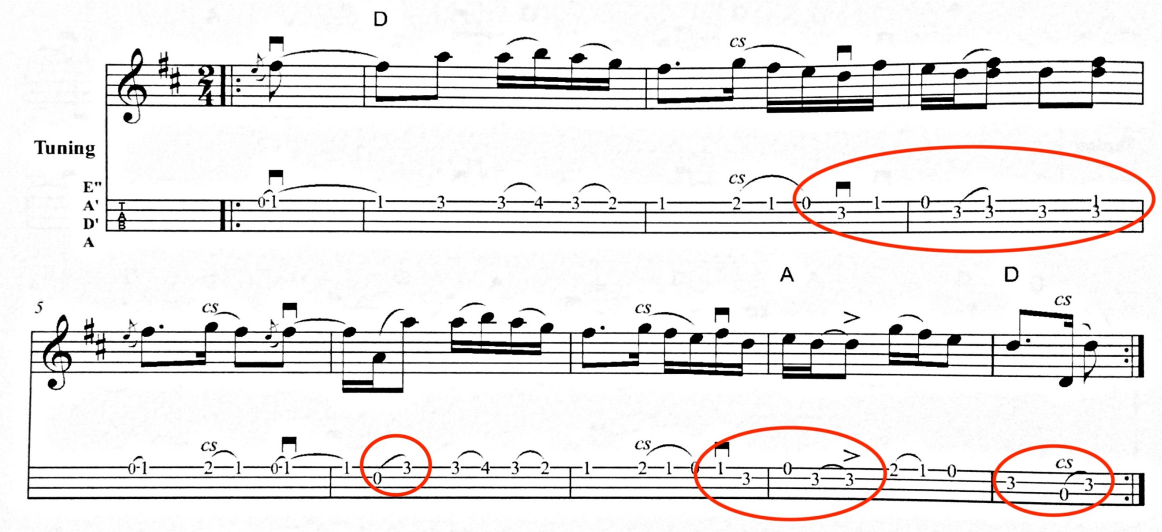

Figure 2.4: "A" part of "Rockingham Cindy." Transcription by Leftwich (2011, 94), reprinted by permission of Mel Bay Publications, Inc.

Leftwich's emphasis on bowing was echoed in the advanced fiddle classes he taught (and I attended) at the Swannanoa Gathering in 2013 and 2017. In class, we learned how these bow techniques might be actualized in Surry County-associated tunes like "Rockingham Cindy" and "Breakin' Up Christmas." During an afternoon class session in July 2017, Leftwich played ethnomusicologist Nancy Dols Neithammer's "Bowing Lights" (1982) video in which Jarrell sits in a dark room with a green light attached to his wrist. As he plays, viewers get a visual illustration of his intricate right-hand patterns and shapes.

The class was quite captivated; the video stimulated a lengthy (and opinionated) discussion among students regarding how this technique might best be executed. While bow rhythm is an important feature of the "Round Peak style" for fiddlers, Leftwich urges banjoists to pay special attention to the "double noting" practice evident in the playing in Charlie Lowe (1898–1964) — "the most influential banjo player in the Round Peak area"—emulated by musicians including Jarrell, Cockerham, and Creed (1999, 4–7). James Ruchala, in contrast, offers analyses of the

"Round Peak style" in relation to guitar, mandolin, and vocals, also interrogating how the locally associated repertory has been interpreted by successive generations of (revivalist) musicians (2011, chapter 6)

What, then, was it about the "Round Peak style," "Surry County sound," and the associated repertory that appealed so strongly to young visitors in the late 1960s through the mid-1980s? Among my interlocutors *not* native to Surry County who visited during this time, the themes of participation and musical accessibility arose with frequency across these interviews. For Paul Brown,

> The repertoire that they [Surry County's musicians] either brought in or developed was accessible to outsiders in terms of its melody and its words and it was also appealing to outsiders because of the characteristics of the particular repertoire there and the way it was played. And those characteristics included melodies you could understand and repeat. You know, a good melody or a song is worth a million dollars. If you can hum it or whistle it back. . .Well, the Round Peak tunes that survived are just that sort of melody. Even the ones that don't have many words. They have distinctive, repetitive, accessible melodies. And the music is also good humored. You know, a lot of the old ballads aren't. And some of the fiddle tunes from up around Galax are absolutely lovely, but they are difficult to play and they have a sort of a wistful, austere tonality to them. And they don't have a lot of syncopation. They sound Celtic, they really do. So somehow in Round Peak, and I don't know if we'll ever know how this all came down, but somehow, you had a small group of people who played with incredible drive. . .there was clear African American influence in the way that they phrased tunes and in some of the actual tunes that they played…tunes like "Old Time Backstep Cindy" which is a syncopated tune with very little melody and it sounds, you know, ever so much like an old African melody.[53]

Fiddler James Leva discussed with me why Surry County's style and related repertory so captivated him and his musician friends. Based in Lexington, Virginia, Leva spent his young adult years visiting significant older-generation musicians across North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia—Tommy Jarrell and the celebrated Hammons Family of West Virginia among them. Leva

[53] Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.

also drew distinctions between the various local styles with which he engaged based on their participatory possibilities:

> Now one thing, if you went to visit the Hammonses, both Burl and Sherman played fiddle and banjo but they never played fiddle and banjo together. I never heard them and I don't think anybody I know has. And so, you know, they kept those Celtic ornaments because they don't have other instruments crowding them out of the way. But, for young guys that wanted to play in a band, there were great tunes but it wasn't, you know, what we wanted to do.[54]

Leva continued that the Surry County style and repertory, as opposed to the West Virginia traditions with which he was also familiar, offered ample opportunities for him and his friends to play as a band.

Riley Baugus made frequent visits to Jarrell's home as a teenager in the 1970s. For him, Surry County's repertory and style was appealing in that it was "fairly straight dance music, in the key of D or A in 4/4 time" with a distinct, unmistakable "drive." It was the community that went with the music, Baugus elucidated, that was particularly extraordinary—a community that was welcoming to so many young players.[55]

In interview, fiddler Richard Bowman (b. 1953) shared his thoughts on the supposed existence of a micro-regionally distinct sound and style, offering his perspective as a local. Bowman grew up in Patrick County, Virginia and today resides in Mount Airy. In addition to his frequent visits to Jarrell's home in the late 1970s through the mid-1980s, Bowman played regularly with other prominent musicians in nearby North Carolina and Virginia counties. In the late 1980s

[54] Leva in discussion with the author, July 2017
[55] Baugus in discussion with the author, August 2017.

following Jarrell's death, Bowman was invited to play the fiddle at two concerts in Washington, DC in acknowledgement of the near simultaneous donation of Jarrell's fiddle, Fred Cockerham's banjo, and Elizabeth Cotten's guitar to the Smithsonian Institution. [56] Upon asking if Bowman believed there to be a discernable "Round Peak style" or a "Surry County sound," his answer was "no." He shared with me his perceptions on how repertory, sound, and style might be understood together, emphasizing the *differences* of musicianship among historic local instrumentalists rather than the similarities:

> The "Round Peak style". . .It is a term I think maybe Ray Alden was the cause of it being started. Ray Alden was from New York and he came down during the summers. I learned all the music I know from different places [nearby counties in North Carolina and Virginia], even Tommy, before I heard that term "Round Peak style.". . . .Fred Cockerham, Kyle Creed, Tommy Jarrell, Benton Flippen, Earnest East—the ones I knowed personally was from this general area. And every one of them plays a different style of music. They don't even sound remotely close to one another when you hear them play. . .The Surry County music is no different from the Patrick County music in Virginia . . .or Stokes County—the next county over on the North Carolina side. They all played the same tunes that everybody else played and they got their own styles, too. All you have to do is go and listen to those people play and pick up nothing that sounds like the next thing you listen to. They play the tunes the same but they don't *sound* the same.[57]

Elsewhere in our discussion, Bowman expressed frustration about members of the younger generation of local musicians wishing to sound exactly like their predecessors; those trying to solidify the notion of a local sound and style. He did not, however, mention the names of any specific performers:

[56] See Smithsonian Institution n.d. for acquisition details. Information about the concert in Washington DC materialized during my discussion with Bowman in July 2016.
[57] Bowman in discussion with the author, July 2016.

> But the ones that comes after me that's a-playin', they wanna make it [ideas of a local style] something real big. They wanna build that Surry County or Round Peak style or stuff up. And I don't know why they want to do that. And they want to copy what somebody else is doing. . .they want to copy what Tommy does, or Benton, and they don't want to get a style of their own. It's kinda odd that they wanna do that. I've never wanted to do that, even though I was around most of them. I didn't want to be them. I wanted to learn them tunes but I didn't want to play them and sound like them a-playin' them.

Bowman's daughter, Marsha Bowman Todd (b. 1982) is an award-winning musician and clogger. In interview, she expressed to me that while she has cultivated her own unique style of playing and has no interest in sounding like anybody else, she believes there is a specific local "sound"—something she found difficult to render in words:

> . . .being from this area, it's the same with dancing, you can hear someone play and you can tell kinda where they're from. I can watch a few people dance and I can tell where they're from. It's just the pull, the sound, the inflections they put on the music. . .You can hear it if you know it. . .a lot of people come here to try and learn it and strive to learn it but you can't *learn* that sound. You have to be from here, even to know it.[58]

These diverse opinions about a local style and sound, and the subsequent debates they evoke about region and identity have contributed heavily to the strength of this epicenter. While debates of this kind have circulated among musicians connected in some way to Surry County—locals and visitors—they have also materialized among enthusiasts worldwide in-person, in print, and online.

[58] Marsha Bowman Todd in discussion with author, August 2017. These discussions were reminiscent of Thomas Turino's distinctions between old-time participants who grew up with this music as a "basic part of a community formation" and those of a separate "cultural cohort" who sought out the music and adopted it (2008, chapter 6). Yet among my interlocutors invested in the musics of Surry County, it was interesting to see how they positioned themselves in relation to the tradition as locals, near locals, or invested outsiders who achieved a feeling of insiderness through the close relationships they formed with members of this older musical generation.

Infrastructures of support

Musical epicenters are fortified by the ways that local musics become sources of civic self-identity, and through institutions that endorse (and sometimes profit from) them. A prominent historic institution central to Surry County's status as an epicenter is WPAQ radio founded in 1948 that remains active to this day (see Pruett 2002). Sitting atop "kudzu hill" in close proximity to downtown Mount Airy is the small, vintage studio that has become a potent location of musical memory. With its regular broadcasts of old-time and bluegrass musics, WPAQ has been a sonic staple in the homes of Surry County residents since its inception.[59] In 2009, however, WPAQ also went online and has since reached national audience and international audiences.

While WPAQ's studio has welcomed commercially famous musicians including Bill Monroe, Lester Flatt, Maybelle Carter, and Ralph Stanley through its doors (Pruett 2002, 153), the station has also been a major outlet for local Surry County musicians and a means through which the local sound and style has radiated outwards. The most distinctive WPAQ program is the Saturday morning Merry-Go-Round—a live barn dance style broadcast that has run continuously since the station's inception.

[59] My insights into WPAQ, its local relevance, and history came from personal interviews with station owner Kelly Epperson and announcers Tim Frye, Travis Frye, and Jennie Lowry in August 2017. Pruett 2002 provides extensive historical context for WPAQ.

Figure 2.5: WPAQ studio, Mount Airy. Photograph by the author

Today, the Surry Arts Council (SAC) and other local institutions also play an active role in supporting and promoting local musical heritage. The first major event celebrating local old-time traditions was "Tommy Jarrell Day" on November 3, 1984—a day officially dedicated by the mayor of Mount Airy centered around the screening of Les Blank's documentary *Sprout Wings and Fly* at the downtown Earle Theatre.[60] Since 1984, various projects initiated by the SAC have recognized local musical heritage as a symbol of pride as well as a means of generating capital—although limited capital in comparison to Andy Griffith tourism.

[60] Ephemera pertaining to Tommy Jarrell Day is included within the Alice Gerrard Collection, subset 102590 at the Southern Folklife Collection at University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. Accessed March 22, 2018. (See Gerrard 1984).

Among these activities were the establishment of workshops led by expert musicians at the Mount Airy Fiddlers Convention; the Tommy Jarrell Festival held annually each February; the Traditional Arts Program offering free tuition young musicians; the creation of the Old Time Music Heritage Hall; the inception of public old-time and bluegrass jams; and the launch of bi-annual Old-Time Retreats. Beyond the SAC, the North Carolina Arts Council and Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership include Mount Airy as a flagship site on state-endorsed Blue Ridge Music Trails. To offer insight into the institutional programming of local musics and the ways that it contributes to Surry County's status as a heritage epicenter, I turn my focus to creation of a single project—the Old Time Music Heritage Hall.

Constructing the Old Time Music Heritage Hall

The Historic Earle Theatre—home by day to the Old Time Music Heritage Hall (OTMHH) and at other times, a cinema and live music venue—sits in the heart of downtown Mount Airy. Opening its doors in 1928—a space "as modern as those Roaring Twenties were supposed to have been"—the Earle, as decades progressed, experienced changes in ownership (and name) as well as extended periods of closure before falling into disrepair and redundancy (Berrier 1994, 4C). In the early 1990s, the empty, crumbling theater, a vital site of local history, social life, and memory was acquired by the SAC which invested around $30,000 in its restoration (ibid.). The OTMHH, opened in 2010, expanded as it moved from its original location on the lower level of the well-

patronized Andy Griffith Museum to the Earle—its growing exhibits, portrait collection, and miscellaneous items spread throughout this unconventional museum space.[61]

My daily shift at the OTMHH began at 11am. I arrived a little early each day to unlock, set up, and prepare the building for visitors—the majority of whom had purchased tickets for The Andy Griffith Museum and were thus entitled to free entry. "What exactly *is* old-time music?" was a question a number of the vaguely interested patrons asked. Others just passed through, took a look at the vintage auditorium, and left. "What exactly does this museum have to do with Andy Griffith?" some wondered, quite confused as to why they had been directed there.

The building, with its creaks and groans and distinctive musty yet not unpleasant aroma, preserved many qualities of a vintage picture house—a marquee that required manual, letter-by-letter changes; checkerboard floor tiling; an old projector room and dark, voluminous basement containing redundant equipment and ephemera from times passed. The front glass doors offered a prime view of activities on Main Street or, for many visitors, an approximation of the charming, fictional town of "Mayberry" from *The Andy Griffith Show*.[62] Oftentimes, residents with whom I became friendly would visit me during opening hours sharing, among many things, colorful stories of local history that included supposed hauntings and unexplained happenings reported through the years in my current place of work. Most importantly, my local visitors (including fiddler Richard

[61] In discussion, Jones explained that the SAC received grants from a variety of local, state, and regional institutions that supported the creation of the OTMHH. Among the supporters are the NCAC, the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership, and the Surry County Tourism Development Authority.
[62] See Alderman, Benjamin, and Schneider 2012 for a study of the tourism mechanisms behind and problematics of Mount Airy's transformation into the "real life" Mayberry from *The Andy Griffith Show*. The rigorous touristic makeover of the city began in the 1980s and continues to thrive in the present.

Bowman and his wife Barbara) offered much insight into the vibrant musical past of this city and the surrounding county.

Figure 2.6: External shot of the Earle Theatre and entrance to the Old Time Music Heritage Hall. Photograph by author

The OTMHH contains abundant ephemera pertinent to local music heritage contextualized by interactive components. The walls of the main auditorium display nine black-and-white photographic portraits of select venerated local musicians and local radio personnel standing at around six feet tall. Portraits feature Tommy Jarrell, Fred Cockerham, Earnest East, Paul Sutphin, Kyle Creed, Verlen Clifton, Benton Flippen, WPAQ founder Ralph Epperson, and broadcaster Clyde Johnson. In the main foyer, a glass display case holds sundry donated items and musicians' personal effects: two felt hats that belonged to Benton Flippen; Tommy Jarrell's braided leather bolo

tie; a Jarrell family fiddle of uncertain origin; and an original WPAQ announcer tabletop microphone among them.

Elsewhere in the museum, a display case in the main auditorium adjacent to the stage contains a large number of Flippen's fiddlers' convention trophies. A case upstairs contains two of Jarrell's guest books filled with names and messages from visitors to his home in the 1980s; a scrapbook of newspaper clippings; and a large envelope containing Jarrell's portrait for a cover of *Life* magazine that was never printed. The stairwell walls are lined with local musicians' award certificates and plaques, and a selection of mounted vinyl covers. At the front of the stage in the main auditorium is a mounted iPad featuring a flatfooting dance demonstration led by Marsha Bowman Todd. In the upstairs foyer are a handful of red chairs from which visitors can view the aforementioned Folkways documentary.

Figure 2.7: Foyer display case. Photograph by author

The museum projects a rich picture and interpretation of local music heritage. First, it presents a hierarchy of valued musicians and radio personnel (the most important of whom received a portrait); second, the idea of regional musical singularity; and third, evidence of the global outreach and influence of local musicians, their repertory, and sound. This story, of course, is one presented from the perspective of the museum's curators and its folklorist and musician consultants. In a personal interview with Tanya Jones, the Executive Director of the SAC in July 2016, I asked about the circumstances under which the museum project materialized and about the collaborative efforts involved in its construction. In our discussion, Jones reflected a little on the history of the SAC and its engagement with the preservation and promotion of music heritage. Jones became

involved with the SAC as a board member in the late 1970s, transitioning to an active administrative role in the mid-1980s.

The SAC, incorporated in 1969, had not always been concerned with local musical heritage. Jones explained that in its early years, the organization did not have much money and showed little concern for regional musics. In interview, Paul Brown painted a similar picture of the SAC's early years, stating that the organization was preoccupied with "high art."[63] In the late 1970s, Brown explained that he, along with local musicians Frank Bode and Verlen Clifton, petitioned the SAC to rent The Andy Griffith Playhouse for one night a month for a live country music show—the Mount Airy Hometown Opry. This request, he told me, was seen at the time as a "radical proposal."

Although not a musician or artist by profession, Jones formed a close professional relationship with Wayne Martin, today's Executive Director of the North Carolina Arts Council (NCAC) who then served as the Director of the NCAC's Folklife Program. Martin—an old-time musician and folklorist who was (and continues to be) a strong advocate of traditional musics within and well beyond Surry County—was a key force motivating the SAC to value local musical heritage and initiate related cultural programming.

With guidance from Martin, one of Jones's initial tasks was transport WPAQ founder Ralph Epperson's stockpile of fragile recordings to the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for digitization and preservation. This collection, she told me, included around fifty years' worth of WPAQ recordings that had been stored in Epperson's water damaged home basement—recordings that were valuable artifacts documenting local musical history. In addition, the fact that numerous major artists also appeared on these recordings made

[63] Brown in discussion with the author, February 2018.

them fascinating sonic objects through which to track important stylistic shifts in old-time and bluegrass from 1948 onwards.

The exhibits displayed at the OTMHH, Jones shared, came together in piecemeal fashion—the majority of the objects were obtained as donations from local musicians' families. Regarding the growing acquisition of Jarrell ephemera, Jones conveyed

> Wayne Jarrell [Tommy's son], about three weeks before he died, came to the Arts Council with a pile of little things from Tommy and a scrapbook. Wayne said "Here, I want you to have these and I know you'll take care of them and do whatever needs to be done." Later, a granddaughter came in and said "well, I have this!" and that is how it [the collection] started.

The portraits depicting a select, exclusive group of individuals chosen for visual (and symbolic) enshrinement reflect an obvious instance of canon-making. Who, I wondered, selected the musicians among them? In July 2016, even after limited time in Surry County, I was aware that the region had been home to a much wider spectrum of musicians than those who had received a portrait.[64] I questioned Jones about the parties involved in the selection process. She explained that this was a question she had been asked on many occasions, especially by local musicians who wondered why *their* portraits had not been included. She stressed that portrait acquisition was a collaborative effort that included personnel from the NCAC's Folklife Program as well as input from folklorist David Holt. The portraits, Jones stated, were acquired one-by-one over several years. Some, like Jarrell's, were commissioned and created years before the museum opened: "of course," Jones stated quite emphatically, "Tommy is the father of old-time in Surry County."

[64] Donleavy 2004 is a relevant ethnographic study that situates Surry County's better-known musicians within a much wider pool of regional musicians across Surry County and in nearby counties on both sides of the North Carolina–Virginia state line.

The OTMHH, through its collaborative construction, its happenstance acquisitions, and specially-made documentary narrated by someone as persuasive and respected as Holt presents a bold narrative of local musical heritage and its supposed dominance. As a comparative exercise, in August 2017 I drove around twenty-five miles from Mount Airy along the Blue Ridge Parkway to the interactive "Roots of American Music" exhibit housed at the Blue Ridge Music Center near Galax, Virginia. As the exhibition purports to tell "the compelling story of the region's rich musical heritage" and educate visitors about "the development and national significance" [65] of musical heritage across the extensive Blue Ridge Mountain region, I expected to find more than a cursory mention of Surry County. Instead, the exhibition paid special attention to the musics of the areas surrounding Galax and town of Fries, Virginia.

As the Blue Ridge Music Center was founded by prolific folklorist Joe Wilson (1938–2015)—the instigating force behind The Crooked Road music heritage trail—it is perhaps not surprising that the exhibit's focus is Virginia-centric. Galax, like Surry County, has become another epicenter of old-time music with its own canon of historic expert musicians, associated repertory, and circulating discourses on the local "style."

Compelled by this observation, I approached Matthew Edwards, the Executive Director of the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History. While music is not the sole focus of the museum at which he works, it does have a vital presence. From this discussion, I sensed some competitiveness between parties active in the promotion of local musical heritage on either side of the North Carolina–Virginia border. Edwards explained that as he understood it, the "Roots of American

[65] See Blue Ridge Music Center n.d.

Music" exhibit at the Blue Ridge Music Center might be seen as an "add-on promotional piece for the Galax tourist department." "Up there," he told me, "WPAQ doesn't exist!"[66]

Conclusion

This chapter—with a focus on Surry County—explored the haphazard ways that musical epicenters form and the multiple agents and institutions that contribute to building and maintaining them. Through an examination of musical epicenters in both their physical and symbolic manifestations, one comes closer to understanding the ways that "place" functions in the creation and sustenance of musical canons, and how ideas about place proceed to shape musician identities, repertories, and notions of style.

In the third decade of the twenty-first century, the potency of Surry County as an epicenter of widespread importance may not be as strong as it once was. As the generation of musicians who documented Surry County's historic pantheon ages, and as new generations of practitioners carve alternative paths for old-time, this epicenter might lose even more of its concentrated strength among worldwide audiences in the future. Yet among local practitioners who keep a healthy scene alive, and among those who spent significant time in the region, the specialness and nuances of this musical past and its characters will likely enjoy greater longevity. Traces of it, too, will be carried within the associated repertory, musician stories, and tune versions as long as they continue to circulate.

[66] Matthew Edwards in discussion with the author, August 2017.

3. Musical Trail-Making in Southern Appalachia

August 18, 2017: Friday Night Jamboree at the Floyd Country Store, Floyd, Virginia—a Crooked Road "major venue"

On the small stage at the front of the Floyd Country Store, the string band launched into a familiar, rousing tune and the audience clapped and cheered. An elderly man left his seat—the first person to approach the dancing space in front of the musicians. Soon thereafter, individuals, couples, and small groups joined him on the wooden floor. It was not long before the space was crowded with around sixty dancers from multiple generations tapping, shuffling, and sliding their feet in polyrhythmic interaction with the music. Some wore taps on their shoes, others did not. The welcoming feeling in the room eventually inspired me to leave my seat and try out a few basic steps I learned earlier that summer from friends in the Green Grass Cloggers. Some participants danced in small groups while others danced alone, deep in concentration as they focused on their footwork. The bass was strident and precise. The fiddle and banjo maintained a steady, face-paced drive as the musicians looped the tune's melody over and over. The rhythm of feet caused the floor to throb and vibrate. The air in the room became hot, thick, and humid yet nobody seemed to mind. This must have been the closest thing to an old-time nightclub.

June 2, 2018: Early Evening at the Mount Airy Fiddlers Convention, Mount Airy, North Carolina—a site featured on the Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina

The first full weekend in June, Mount Airy's Veterans Memorial Park becomes the venue for the annual Fiddlers Convention. Having spent the summers of 2016 and 2017 based in Mount Airy, I had driven past this site many times. On a regular day, this sprawling field with wooded enclaves is characterized by a small bingo hall, a barn, a handful of administrative buildings, and a tall flagpole. How different it looked (and felt) filled with thousands of people, with an abundance of tents and recreational vehicles dotted across its expanse. Early in the evening, old-time and bluegrass jam sessions had sprung up among various clusters of campers. Standing back to listen, I heard the sonic melding of strings, vocals, and chatter from scattered jams. Other visitors gathered to eat and socialize at their campsites or at the heart of the park, close to the main competition stage. Food trucks exuded what I imagined to be a state fair-like aroma: sugary donut dough, cheeseburgers, onion flowers. Behind the main stage—a converted semi-truck—band contestants gathered, waiting in line to be called up to perform. The tiered seating area filled slowly with spectators, as did the space in front of the stage where onlookers sat in picnic chairs. The emcee approached the microphone and announced the first competing band of the evening. The musicians took their positions on the stage while elsewhere in the park, jam sessions and social gatherings continued to buzz.

Introduction

The Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina and southwest Virginia's Crooked Road are cultural heritage tourism trails that traverse some of the most romanticized physical and musical landscapes in North America. These trails showcase diverse practices and histories of old-time, bluegrass, balladry, and gospel,[1] emphasizing their deep roots, their present-day aliveness, and something of their supposed North Carolinian or Virginian distinctiveness. As nonprofit arts assets tourism initiatives created to stimulate area economic growth and generate memorable visitor experiences, they stand as multilayered projects of cultural preservation, representation, and intervention. The vignettes that open this chapter represent a moment on each trail from my fieldwork.

The content of these trails comprises various fixed as well as more transient representational media: relevant towns, cities, and public spaces; live music venues; concerts, festivals, and jam sessions; educational centers; museums and exhibitions; and assorted landmarks of music-historical interest. While selected sites are unified by the overarching theme of regional musical heritage, each site is rich in its own historical, cultural, and musical singularity, as are the towns, cities, and counties through which the trails run. The emphasis on "living tradition" contributes further to the trails' representational densities. As practitioners of traditional musics and dance become subjects at the center of the projects, trail content is dynamic and unpredictable; the parameters of what constitutes "tradition" are continually redefined and negotiated in real time.

[1] It is not my intention here to present old-time, bluegrass, balladry, and gospel as mutually exclusive musical categories. Chapter 1 explores the complexities of such categorization and the interconnected histories of musics found across the wider Appalachian region and elsewhere in the U.S.

The Blue Ridge Music Trails (BRMT hereafter) and The Crooked Road (TCR) are maintained by the collaborations of various stakeholders on local, state, and national levels. Rather than stimulating entirely new questions about cultural engagement and representation, the trails highlight some of the wider tensions that underpin cultural work with heritage at its center. For example, the projects exemplify the curated, subjective nature of cultural heritage programming as well as its inherently political nature (see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995 and 1998). The trails also raise questions about the role of "cultural intermediaries" (Bourdieu 1984; Negus 2002) and the complex terrain they navigate when selecting, presenting, and translating cultural entities to public audiences. Likewise, the trails accentuate frictions embedded in projects of a dual touristic–cultural preservationist nature, unsettling the boundaries between public folklore and cultural heritage tourism work (see Baron 2009; Atkinson Wells 2006).

Focused on the construction of the trails rather than their reception and economic impact, this chapter examines the ways that organizers of the BRMT and TCR create place-based narratives of musical heritage in western North Carolina and southwest Virginia, respectively. As carefully curated entities, the narratives of musical heritage these trails project exist among many potential others. In addition, an analysis of trail construction and the philosophies of representation that underpin them illustrates the significant extent to which organizers' musically-oriented decisions are determined by extra-musical concerns like geography, policy, and politics.

As cultural heritage endeavors in southern Appalachia, the trails contribute to a lengthy history of what David Whisnant terms "systematic cultural intervention" in the wider Appalachian region (2009, 13–14). As "Appalachia" is as much an idea as it is a geographical designation (see Batteau 1990; Whisnant 2009; Billings, Norman, and Ledford 1999; Becker 1998), the BRMT and

TCR navigate both its physical and more figurative terrains. Physically speaking, the trails highlight Appalachian music venues, communities, and landscapes. Figuratively speaking, the projects capitalize on the alluring conviction that the southern Appalachian Mountains are a cradle of active, authentic folklife steeped in a deep past.

This chapter is built around a series of interviews I carried out with central organizers of the BRMT and TCR between 2017 and 2019. In these discussions, my interlocutors expressed with nuance the philosophies of cultural representation and engagement that undergird their work, as well as the related obstacles they have faced when constructing the trails. I weave interview data with analysis of the trails' supplementary interpretive materials (guidebooks, web resources, and signage) and reflections on personal ethnographic experiences along both trails in the summers of 2016–18.

My primary interlocutors are Wayne Martin, Executive Director of the North Carolina Arts Council; Rob Bell, Senior Director of Programs at the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership; and Jack Hinshelwood, Executive Director of The Crooked Road.[2] I present these key organizers as cultural intermediaries who navigate the spaces between the trails' musical production and (touristic) consumption sides. While theoretical scholarship on cultural intermediaries is wide-ranging in its multidisciplinary contexts (see, for example, Bourdieu 1984; Negus 2002; Smith Maguire and Matthews 2014), the notion has gained some traction among music scholars. Examples include Keith Negus's (1992 and 1999) interrogations of cultural intermediaries in the popular music business and Jo Haynes's (2005) work on the world music industry.

[2] Since carrying out these interviews, Jack Hinshelwood left his position as The Crooked Road's Executive Director to become an Environmental Engineer Senior at the Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water.

Although the intermediaries of focus in this chapter assume multidimensional roles, I concentrate on the ways they participate in the production of musical heritage narratives across western North Carolinian and southwest Virginian territory. I restate here, however, that the narratives of *musical* heritage these trails emit cannot be separated from the abundant *extra-musical* concerns that have influenced both projects.

In the past two decades, cultural heritage trails have proliferated to become a noticeable feature of the broader heritage tourism market. Similarly, music trails have multiplied within the musical tourism niche. Complicated by their multi-site nature, heritage trails and the challenges of representation they present require a different set of analytical approaches from those applicable to single-site tourism initiatives. To provide a theoretical foundation for my argument, I draw on the growing body of critical scholarship on the trail phenomenon in the fields of tourism, leisure, and heritage studies.

Cultural heritage trails, music trails

Organized music heritage trails of varied lengths, themes, and levels of formality are found across North America and elsewhere in the world. Aside from this chapter's case studies, other examples include the Mississippi Blues Trail,[3] African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina,[4] Mountain Music Trail of West Virginia,[5] Rhythm and Routes Oklahoma Music Trail, [6] and the

[3] For information on the trail and maps, see Mississippi Blues Trail n.d.
[4] See Bryan and Patterson 2013 and African American Music Trails of North Carolina n.d.
[5] See Mountain Music Trail 2019. The Mountain Music Trail, with similar subject matter and economic development missions to the BRMT and TCR, traverses the Alleghany Mountain region of West Virginia.
[6] See Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department n.d.

Mississippi Country Music Trail.[7] Other music trail types range from single-city walking or bus tours like those that showcase, for example, the Beatles' Liverpool,[8] to expansive, multi-country trails like the European Council-certified European Mozart Ways.[9]

While the trails listed here differ in scope, format, and theme, they all demonstrate ways that musical pasts and/or presents can be understood and presented through varied multi-site, place-based approaches. Importantly, the place-based musical narratives these trails present materialize from careful decisions behind site selection. In addition to a trail's physical sites, these narratives are also made and presented in the itineraries or other interpretive resources created to guide visitors to and around the geographical nodes of importance: maps, guidebooks, flyers, signage, road-side plaques; web, audio, and visual resources; and mobile applications.

[7] See Mississippi Country Music Trail n.d.
[8] For an examination of place-based Beatles tourism in Liverpool, see Brocken 2015.
[9] See Council of Europe 2019. The European Mozart Ways traverse ten countries and highlights over 200 sites that trace the composer's various movements across the continent.

Figure 3.1: A Mississippi Blues Trail information plaque located in Chicago, Illinois. Photograph by author

Music trails exist among numerous other self-consciously constructed cultural heritage trail types. Other themes include those of historical, commemorative, culinary, literary, artisanal, and architectural natures. Over the past five years, theoretical scholarship on tourist-oriented trails has proliferated in the fields of tourism, leisure, and cultural heritage studies, forming a significant analytical foundation for this analysis of the BRMT and TCR.[10]

[10] Although constructed cultural heritage trails have proliferated across the worldwide tourism landscape over the past three decades (MacLeod 2017, 423), theoretical scholarship on the phenomena beyond individual case studies remains limited. Timothy and Boyd's monograph *Tourism and Trails: Cultural, Ecological and Management Issues* (2015) is a major intervention, providing theoretical frameworks for trail-based tourism. A

Dallen J. Timothy and Stephen W. Boyd offer a four-fold typology that delineates the general characteristics of constructed heritage trails. First, trails of this kind serve a cultural preservationist function (2015, 18). Second, they aid in place-based "image enhancement" which, in turn, seeks to boost visitor presence at the featured sites (ibid.) Third, tied intimately to point two, they contribute to efforts in area economic development and rejuvenation (ibid.). Finally, heritage-themed trails (like other cultural heritage endeavors) are characterized by their inherently political cores:

> Like other cultural heritage attractions, trails are sometimes bred to become political pawns or other instruments to exercise power and persuasion. . . . Their very role of conserving and interpreting elements of the human past renders them political by default, for the people or organizations that establish a given route are the ones who dictate the content of the events it aims to commemorate. (Ibid., 19)

Elsewhere in their study, Timothy and Boyd distinguish between "organically-evolved" and "purposive" trail types (ibid., 20–21). While the former category encapsulates historically established routes like pilgrimage pathways—for example, the Camino de Santiago in the north west of Spain[11]––the latter refers to trails that are constructed self-consciously around a theme. The BRMT and TCR, then, are classifiable as "purposive" trails—the routes to and around musical locations of significance they suggest are deliberately plotted rather than historically derived.

Cultural heritage trails are shaped by the interactions of diverse stakeholders across their multiple sites, and across geographically dispersed financial and institutional infrastructures (ibid.,

---

special edition of the *Journal of Heritage Tourism* (2017, volume 12, issue 5) is also dedicated to the matter. See Boyd 2017 for an overview of the theoretical issues and discussion on the perceived gap in scholarship.

[11] See Murray and Graham 1997 for analysis of the problematics embedded in the production and marketing of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage pathway for modern day "pilgrims" and tourists.

41). The nature of these relationships, in turn, has direct impact on the ways that featured sites are represented within each trail project, and in the resulting heritage narratives that support them. For example, a site whose organizers form a strong relationship with a trail project is likely to receive more coverage than a site whose owners who do not desire the same level of involvement. TCR's nine "major venues" of mixed ownership exemplify this type of relationship.

Nicola MacLeod illuminates the experiential dimension of heritage trails and their roles in "promoting [for visitors] a more engaged, multi-vocal and sensory experience of place" (2017, 423; see also MacLeod 2013 and Hayes and MacLeod 2007).[12] This observation is particularly applicable to the BRMT and TCR where live music and dance, situated within picturesque mountain locales, are available in varied capacities for visitor consumption and participation. The ethnographic vignettes that open this chapter illustrate the experiential vibrancy of two moments along the trails from my own fieldwork—evenings at the Floyd Country store and the Mount Airy Fiddlers Convention.

The peculiarities of music heritage trails—their tangible, intangible, and embodied dimensions—make them compelling vehicles of cultural representation and engagement. Despite the fact that "purposive" music trails have multiplied across the music tourism market—and as critical music tourism studies are on the rise—there is a noticeable lack of engagement with trails in this literature. While select case studies and cursory references to trails do exist—The Crooked Road (Chaney 2012 and 2017; Puckett 2016) and the Mississippi Blues Trail (Dempsey 2009, ch.4;

[12] Nicola MacLeod's scholarship follows the so-called "performance turn" of tourism studies whereby tourists are placed as agents at the center of their own touristic experiences (2017, 426). This works in opposition to earlier views of tourists as agency-less consumers soaking up industry-created environments in non-critical ways.

MacDonald 2015; McGinley 2014, chapter 4)[13] are perhaps best represented—there is an absence of sustained focus on the phenomenon and the nuances that differentiate music trails from other variants.

The Blue Ridge Music Trails and The Crooked Road

Backgrounds

While both trail projects have been developed significantly since their inceptions, the BRMT today encompasses much of the western portion of North Carolina and is segmented into six regions. While no single thoroughfare connects all relevant sites, the Blue Ridge Parkway—a "purposive" scenic driving trail carved through the eponymous mountain range—is relatively accessible from all locations (see Figure 3.2).[14] TCR, by contrast, runs for approximately 330 miles along a single road––U. S. Route 58 (referred to in promotional literature as Highway 58—crossing portions of the Virginian Blue Ridge and Cumberland Mountains. Although the trail includes sites located beyond this highway, they are presented as peripheral to the trail's nine "major venues." While the BRMT flanks southwest Virginia to the north, TCR skims the borders of North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia at various points along its expanse (see Figure 3.3).[15]

[13] For a more expansive examination of blues tourism in the Mississippi Delta, see King 2011.
[14] The Blue Ridge Parkway, constructed between 1936 and 1987, is a scenic driving route that runs 469 miles through the Blue Ridge Mountains of central and southern Appalachia. For a detailed history of the project, see Whisnant 2006. See also Blue Ridge Parkway 2019.
[15] Note, however, that the West Virginia portion of the trail does not coincide with any of the major venues that sit along Highway 58. Instead, affiliated venues/events are located there. See Figure 3.4.

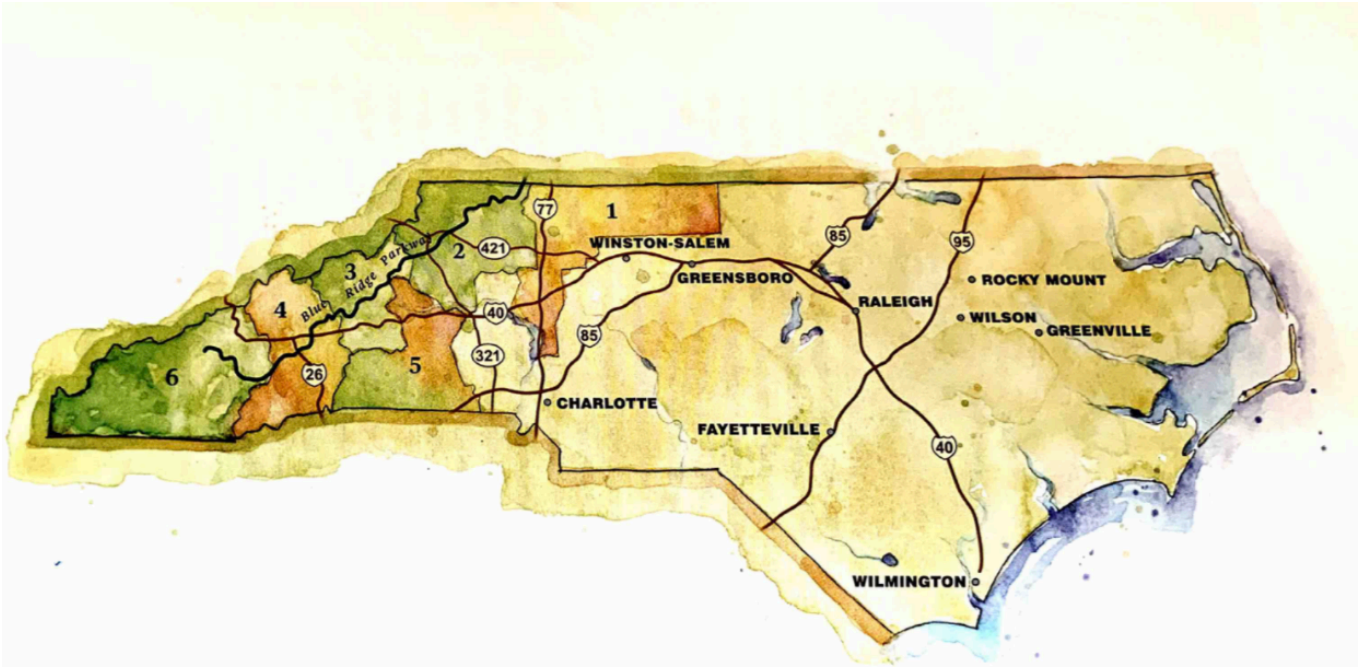

Figure 3.2: Map of the Blue Ridge Music Trails. Source: Fussell and Kruger (2018, n.p.). reprinted by permission of the University of North Carolina Press.

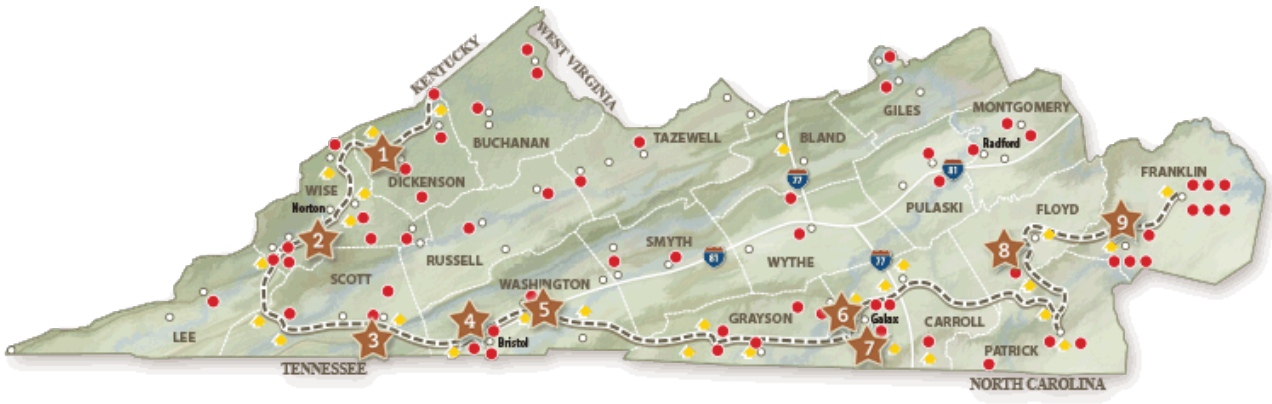

Figure 3.3: Map of The Crooked Road. (The "major venues" are marked with numbered stars that correspond with Table 3.2 shared later in this chapter. The dotted line illuminates the trail's use of Highway 58. The red dots indicate the locations of the

trail's peripheral attractions dispersed across the counties of the wider southwest Virginian region.) Source: The Crooked Road, (n.d.,b.) reprinted by permission of Virginia's Heritage Music Trail: The Crooked Road, Inc.

The BRMT project was initiated in the 1990s by Wayne Martin—today's Executive Director of the North Carolina Arts Council (NCAC) who served at the time as Director of the Folklife Program.[16] The BRMT sits among other heritage-focused initiatives coordinated by the NCAC. Notable are its wide-ranging arts assets tourism programs that include a handful of "purposive" themed trails. [17] Among them are the African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina,[18] Cherokee Heritage Trails,[19] and three less formally configured literary trails focused in the state's western, eastern, and Piedmont regions.[20]

Beyond trails, the NCAC provides support to local arts councils and organizations engaged in wide-ranging cultural heritage preservation endeavors. In chapter 2, for example, I outline NCAC's involvement with the Surry Arts Council on projects pertaining to the promotion and preservation of local vernacular musics. For its rigorous support of state cultural heritage, the NCAC has received national level recognition. In 2004, for instance, the organization won an inaugural Preserve America Presidential Award for heritage tourism within which the BRMT project was celebrated.[21]

[16] The North Carolina Arts Council is an agency of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.
[17] See North Carolina Arts Council 2019.
[18] See African American Music Trails of North Carolina n.d.
[19] See Duncan and Riggs 2003 and Cherokee Heritage Trails n.d.
[20] Information about the three literary trails can be found in the guidebooks by Georgann Eubanks and Donna Campbell (2007, 2010, and 2013).
[21] See Advisory Council on Historic Preservation n.d.

Today, the BRMT is sustained by the NCAC with the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Partnership (BRNHAP) and is funded by federal funds flowing from those agencies. The BRNHAP is one of fifty-five[22] Congress-designated National Heritage Areas with a mission to serve as "stewards of the living tradition" for the region, "protecting and promoting the unique music, crafts, outdoors, foodways, and Cherokee culture unique to western North Carolina."[23] In addition, the BRMT is supported and shaped by stakeholders from local arts councils, music venues, and tourism agencies as well as prominent musicians, dancers, and folklorist consultants—a project with many mediating voices.

While TCR is similarly collaborative in its partnerships,[24] the project is run as an independent nonprofit in Abingdon, Virginia. The idea for TCR emerged in the early 2000s from conversations between folklorist and former Executive Director of the National Council of the Traditional Arts, Joe Wilson (1938–2015), and Todd Christensen of the Virginia Department of Housing. In interview, Jack Hinshelwood, Executive Director from 2010–2019, explained to me that Wilson's and Christensen's unique professional backgrounds shaped the two primary facets of the project. First was the cultural heritage and preservation side of which Wilson had significant

[22] For an overview of the scope of the Congress-designated National Heritage Areas, see National Park Service 2019.
[23] For an overview of the activities of and mission statement for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, see Blue Ridge National Heritage Area 2018.
[24] As listed on their website, TCR has also received financial support from organizations including the Appalachian Regional Commission, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Program, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission, Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, Virginia Tourism Corporation, National Endowment for the Arts, Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. See The Crooked Road 2017a.

expertise; second, the community development and economic impact side where Christensen's strengths lay.[25]

In the present, Hinshelwood explained that the organization's board of directors (and smaller executive board) is composed of key partners from local government, tourism agencies, major venues, and planning district committees,[26] as well as a handful of musicians and local business owners.[27] This board of representatives, he stressed, come from counties across TCR's entire geographic expanse rather than from a handful of select locales. The self-conscious solicitation of input from personnel across the wider southwest Virginia region—from counties with their own unique heritage stories, topographies, economic structures, and social needs—hints at the project's desired inclusiveness.

Public folklore/tourism tension

The BRMT and TCR initiatives are complicated by their dual cultural heritage tourism and public folklore purposes. When studying tourism endeavors with heritage at their center, it is tempting to fixate on or criticize the ways that cultural products become commodified and monetized; on how complex heritage narratives are simplified and curtailed for public audiences. Select scholarship on blues tourism in the Mississippi Delta, for instance, proceeds with this tone (see Radishofski 2017; King 2011). In this study of the BRMT and TCR, however, I look closer at the rigorous public folklore work behind the projects—to the nuanced ways that organizers engage with and present

[25] Jack Hinshelwood in discussion with author, September 2017.
[26] In discussion with the author, Hinshelwood explained that "planning district committees" in Virginia serve to navigate cross-county jurisdictional issues. He stated that there are five planning district committees in the southwest Virginia region.
[27] Hinshelwood in discussion with the author, September 2017.

musical heritage, local communities, and traditional artists. Both projects, after all, originated from respected personnel experienced with public folklore; individuals aware of the ethical considerations of cultural work who advocated for detailed ethnographic inquiry and sensitive cultural representation.

In an essay documenting the disciplinary and practical challenges of public folklore in the twenty-first century, Patricia Atkinson Wells (2006) explains that despite an uneasy coexistence, public folklorists frequently find themselves working in close proximity with cultural heritage tourism personnel. Public folklorists engaged in tourism projects, she argues, assume roles as mediators. Oftentimes, they are required to liaise between institutional personnel and participating community members who practice the "traditions" under question (11). Knowledgeable of the "complex politics of culture *and* those of outside developers and government agencies" (ibid.), Atkinson Wells highlights that public folklorists are particularly well suited to bridge gaps between institutions and the cultural objects or subjects of focus.

Robert Baron (2010) emphasizes further the self-reflexive nature of public folklore work both inside and outside of tourism contexts. Conscious of their roles as mediators, Baron explains that public folklorists are also aware of the ways their work impacts and intervenes in the traditions they seek to understand (66; see also Whisnant 2009). To situate the careful public folklore work that underpins the BRMT and TCR, I share here the abridged backgrounds of key organizers: Wayne Martin, Jack Hinshelwood, and Rob Bell. In addition, I include a short profile on Joe Wilson of TCR who passed away before I embarked upon this project.

Georgia-born, North Carolina based Wayne Martin founded the BRMT with ample expertise in public sector folklore work and arts administration, his approach to regional folklife

shaped by experiences as an old-time musician, producer, sound recordist,[28] and ethnographic collector. [29] An avid supporter of traditional arts, Martin co-founded the Piedmont Council of Traditional Music (PineCone)[30] in the 1990s. Martin initiated the BRMT project while working as the Director of the Folklife Program at the NCAC.

Blue Ridge native Joe Wilson founded the TCR project with folklore experience on a national scale. From 1976 to 2004, Wilson worked as the Executive Director of the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) in Washington, DC and was instrumental in shaping the parameters of the National Folk Festival (Bartenstein 2007., xvi–xvii). According to Barry Bergey—a former Director of Folk and Traditional Arts at the National Endowment for the Arts—Wilson's work at the NCTA "set a standard for the field of folklore" through his firm belief in "intensive fieldwork, equitable representation, and responsible presentation of traditional arts and artists" (ibid., xvii).

In the early 2000s, Wilson focused his attention on two southwest Virginia projects. Along with the construction of TCR, he worked to establish the Blue Ridge Music Center—an educational and performance venue situated on the Parkway close to Galax (Bartenstein 2017, 40–41). In 2001,

[28] Wayne Martin's biographical details outlined here are drawn predominantly from a personal interview carried out in July 2017 unless specified otherwise.
[29] The Wayne Martin and Nancy Kalow Collection housed at the Southern Folklife Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill provides insight into some of Martin's ethnographic activities in the late 1980s. Among his many ethnographic activities and achievements is a large-scale anthology project that focuses on the little-documented musicians of the North Carolina Piedmont region—*Going Down to Raleigh: Stringband Music in the North Carolina Piedmont, 1976–1998* (2009).
[30] For information about the organization and activities of the Piedmont Council of Traditional Music, see PineCone 2014.

Wilson was awarded a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts for his commitment to and engagement with traditional arts and artists across the U.S.[31]

While visiting Galax for the 2017 Old Fiddlers' Convention, I attended a special presentation at the downtown Chestnut Creek School of the Arts entitled "Musical Passages: A Tribute to Joe Wilson." The commemorative event included performances from respected Virginia-based old-time musicians and spoken tributes from family members, friends, and colleagues (Hinshelwood was among them). It became clear that for many, Wilson's dedication to southwest Virginian musics, musicians, and folkways is considered significant—some participants were reduced to tears as they shared their stories, memories, and music.

Although Jack Hinshelwood—TCR's recently outgoing Executive Director—does not identify as a folklorist, his commitment to the wellbeing of folk arts in southwest Virginia surfaced strongly in our multiple communications.[32] Likewise, his knowledge of prominent musicians, their communities, and related repertories is shaped by his own practice as an award-winning old-time guitarist.[33] Hinshelwood's directorship at TCR marked a major change in career in which he served for over twenty years as a consulting environmental civil engineer. In 2019, however, Hinshelwood left his position at TCR to return to environmental engineering.

[31] For details of Wilson's NEA award and profile, see National Endowment for the Arts n.d.
[32] Hinshelwood's biographical details presented here materialized from our personal discussion in September 2017, and in follow-up email communication from 2017–2019.
[33] Growing up in Christiansburg, Virginia, Hinshelwood became interested in old-time musics as a teenager and in the early 1970s, finding a musical home within the vibrant old-time scene that had effervesced around the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg. As an old-time guitarist, Hinshelwood has worked alongside significant Virginian musicians including Carroll County banjoist Olen Gardener, guitarist and esteemed luthier Wayne Henderson, and hoedown fiddler Buddy Pendleton.

Rob Bell is the Senior Director of Programs at the BRNHAP and a key coordinator of the BRMT. While not a folklorist by training, Bell's inquisitiveness and commitment to the fair, sensitive representation of North Carolina folklife and the complexities embedded in cultural preservation work was evident across our series of discussions. Bell brings to the BRMT broad insights from his career in a major regional heritage advocacy organization, as well as experiences as an old-time musician and knowledgeable enthusiast.

Geographical configurations/content

The BRMT and TCR present differing spatial models for approaching musical heritage in place-based, state-focused terms. While the BRMT is organized around six sub-regions that each include clusters of contiguous counties, TCR utilizes a linear highway as its structural spine. Across their geographical expanses, the trails highlight and connect select venues and events that showcase the richness of musical heritage in their respective regions and by extension, states. Importantly, the majority of sites, venues, and events featured in both projects existed prior to the trails' creations and would likely continue to exist if the trails did not. The trails, then, act as frames that validate and connect these spaces, bringing them together in persuasive narratives of musical heritage.

Trail sites are animated by musicians, dancers, and luthiers engaged in the living traditions the projects seek to display. The trails, however, should not be confused with initiatives like "open-air" museums in which actors recreate or resurrect redundant cultural practices in the present (see Anderson 1984). [34] In contrast, the trails operate on the premise that the traditions they showcase

[34] Examples of open-air, "living history" museums in the Appalachian region include The Museum of Appalachia in Clinton, Tennessee (see Museum of Appalachia n.d.) and the Heritage Farm Museum and Village in Huntington, West Virginia (see Heritage Farms and Village n.d.).

never died out and remain vibrant today.[35] In addition to venues with live music, other sites on the trails are more commemorative in nature—museum exhibits and notable music-historical locations.

Figure 3.2 depicts how the BRMT divides western North Carolina into six constructed musical sub-regions. Within each sub-region, relevant locations are categorized further by county:[36]

Region	Featured North Carolina Counties
Region 1: "Sprout Wings and Fly"	Surry, Stokes, Rockingham, Yadkin
Region 2: "Feed Me on Cornbread and Beans"	Caldwell, Wilkes, Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga
Region 3: "It Strikes with Terror in My Heart"	Avery, McDowell, Yancey
Region 4: "Asheville Junction"	Buncombe, Madison, Henderson, Transylvania
Region 5: "The Flint Hill Special"	Cleveland, Burke, Rutherford, Polk
Region 6: "Walking the King's Highway"	Haywood, Swain, Graham, Cherokee, Clay, Macon, Jackson

Table 3.1: Breakdown of BRMT's six regions and corresponding counties. Source: Fussell and Kruger (2018, contents pages)

A wide range of event types is included within the featured counties. Region 1, for example, draws attention to the Surry County's annual fiddlers' convention in Mount Airy, the Tommy Jarrell Festival, and the weekly WPAQ Merry-Go-Round. Likewise, in Stokes County, the trail guides visitors to the Stokes Stomp—an annual community celebration of blues, bluegrass, and Americana. In Rockingham County, the Charlie Poole Festival (in honor of eponymous country

[35] A full examination of the concept of living tradition is beyond the scope of this chapter. The concept, however, is embedded with various tensions that can be read in relation to the trails and other cultural heritage tourism endeavors. For example, the idea of "living tradition" suggests a seamless, unbroken continuity (or illusion of continuity) of cultural practices from past to present. When presented in a heritage tourism context, the notion obfuscates processes of cultural revival or reconstruction. Second, cultural heritage programmers play key roles in determining and delineating the parameters of the traditions they seek to present in their respective projects. This raises questions about authority and balances of power between organizers and the artist practitioners featured in the projects.

[36] On the Blue Ridge Music Trails website, however, Iredell and Mitchell counties are also included in the trail.

recording artist) is featured. The Barn, offering weekly live bluegrass and gospel is included, as is the annual Yadkin Valley Bluegrass Convention (Fussell and Kruger 2018, 23–49).

The practice of categorizing musical traditions by county evident in the BRMT project complements the ways that many old-time practitioners understand and classify the music they play and enjoy. In chapter 2, I explore how for musicians and enthusiasts across the geographically dispersed old-time world, "counties" have come to signify a complex matrix of historic master musicians, micro-regionally associated repertories, and local styles or "sounds." This association is as much symbolic as it is physical—most musicians are likely not under the impression that musical traditions grind to a halt at human-constructed county lines.

The revised 2018 BRMT guidebook credited to independent folklorist, writer, and curator Fred C. Fussell is a primary medium of interpretation and representation that supplements the trail's physical dimensions. Likewise, the BRMT website offers additional resources, event information, and interactive components to enhance visitor engagement. The guidebook offers clues as to how the six ascribed sub-regions are arranged. Here, the major factor for grouping counties appears to be proximity, as well as shared topographical features and industrial pasts. Region 1, for example, is described evocatively as an area where

> the rolling land of the North Carolina Piedmont meets the easternmost foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. . . .A few decades ago, much of the land in this region was agricultural, planted in bright-leaf tobacco. And even though today the region remains mostly rural, fewer and fewer people here raise tobacco. While passing through, modern travelers can still see many of the small barns where tobacco leaves were once cured and stored before being taken to auction. (Ibid., 26)

More generally, the nesting of musical heritage (or an alternative cultural entity) within other place-based factors like landscape and industry is a key strategy of place-focused tourism. The rationale here is that in order to gain a finer-grained understanding of the cultural entity under question, one should learn about the surrounding landscape, the people who reside(d) there, and a location's history. Moreover, to *experience* the place in its full physicality—something the trails offer—adds a multi-sensory dimension to this understanding that initiates a deeper immersion.

How, then, might one traverse or experience the BRMT? With its scattered terrain, pluralized title suggesting more than one possible trail, and the fact that most of its featured "sites" are occasional events, the project is difficult to conceive of as a single journey. Even within the six specified regions, events listed occur at different times of the year thus preventing visitors from exploring the trails with a thorough, region-by-region approach. Although the trails include some permanent musical spaces that host more frequent events—for example, the Wilkes Heritage Museum and the Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame (Region 2)[37] and the Earl Scruggs Center (Region 5)[38]—to travel the trails more extensively, one would have to stay (or live) in western North Carolina for an extended time period or make a series of repeat visits.

[37] According to the museum's website, "The Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame exists to showcase and preserve the rich musical heritage of the greater Blue Ridge Mountains area from northern Georgia to northern Virginia" (Wilkes Heritage Museum, 2011). The Hall of Fame is located inside the Wilkes Heritage Museum which also includes various music-themed exhibits. While the Hall of Fame does not have a specifically western North Carolina focus, among its inductees are a number of North Carolina artists and related personnel including Tommy Jarrell, Ralph Epperson, Earl Scruggs, Etta Baker, the Green Grass Cloggers, and Bascom Lamar Lunsford.

[38] The Earl Scruggs Center of Shelby, North Carolina explores the life and career of pioneering bluegrass banjo player, Earl Scruggs, who was a native of Cleveland County. See The Earl Scruggs Center 2019.

Based on its geographically scattered format, Bell explained that one might approach the BRMT as a "choose your own adventure" experience.[39] Although there is something appealing about a "physical" trail like TCR that follows a neatly defined highway, he told me, this format was not possible given the western North Carolinian territory and its dispersed sites of musical significance. In the time since my initial discussion with Bell about the challenges of trail accessibility, the BRMT has come to offer eight day-trip itineraries where visitors can encounter musical events alongside other cultural entities. These itineraries combine BRMT-featured locations with outdoor pursuits; historical site visits; and arts, crafts, and culinary experiences. [40]

While the BRMT offers a "choose your own adventure," county-focused experience, TCR presents its place-based narratives of musical heritage in a more geographically linear fashion. And while occasional, transient events are incorporated into the trail, the project is centered around a series of permanent physical fixtures situated along Highway 58. More specifically, the trail is structured around nine "major venues" as well as various affiliated locations and multimedia Wayside Exhibits. While all of the flagship venues and the majority of Wayside Exhibits are located along Highway 58, the affiliated locations are spread more evenly across southwest Virginia. The nine major venues are as follows:

[39] Rob Bell in discussion with the author, July 2017.

[40] For details of the suggested itineraries, see Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina 2019a. These curated itineraries encourage visitors to visit Black Mountain; Eden; Lake Rodhiss, Valdese, and Granite Falls; Mount Airy; Sparta; Spruce Pine; Waynesville; and West Jefferson.

Major Venues	Town/City	Venue Type
1. Ralph Stanley Museum	Clintwood	Museum founded in 2004 dedicated to the life and music of Dr. Ralph Stanley and the musical traditions of southwest Virginia (Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center 2019).
2. Country Cabin II	Norton	Music venue featuring local old-time, country, and old-time musicians and bands every Saturday night and the annual Dock Boggs Festival each September. According to The Crooked Road website, while the original Country Cabin venue was constructed in 1937–38, Country Cabin II was built in 2002 to address growing audience sizes at the venue (The Crooked Road n.d.,c).
3. Carter Family Fold	Hiltons	Music venue honoring the Carter Family with performances every Saturday night. The site also features the relocated historic mountain cabin of A.P. Carter and Carter Family museum (The Carter Family Fold 2019).
4. Birthplace of Country Music Museum	Bristol	Located in the city often promoted as the "birthplace of country music," the museum opened in 2014. Exhibits focus on Bristol's rich associations with the birth of the country music industry (The Birthplace of Country Music Museum n.d.).
5. Southwest Virginia Cultural Center and Marketplace	Abingdon	Marketed as the "Gateway to Southwest Virginia," the site is a hub of present-day artisanal, musical, and culinary activities (Southwest Virginia Cultural Center and Marketplace 2019).
6. Old Fiddlers' Convention and Rex Theater	Galax	The Old Fiddlers' Convention is a prominent regional convention that has run since 1935. It is held annually in August and features old-time and bluegrass competitions. The historic Rex Theater situated in downtown Galax is the site of Virginia WBRF 98.1 FM's live old-time and bluegrass live show every Friday (see The Rex Theater n.d. and Old Fiddlers' Convention n.d.).
7. Blue Ridge Music Center	Galax	Purpose-built music venue with "Roots of American Music" museum operated by the National Park Service (The Blue Ridge Music Center n.d.).

Table 3.2: List and description of major venues located along Highway 58. (Numbers 1–9 correspond with the map showed in Figure 3.3)

Major Venues	Town/City	Venue Type
8. Floyd Country Store	Floyd	Old-time, bluegrass, and gospel music venue and country store. In the early twentieth century, the building was used as a hardware store. Since the 1980s, it has been the home of the celebrated Friday Night Jamboree (The Floyd Country Store, 2019).
9. Blue Ridge Institute and Museum	Ferrum	Created in 1937 by Ferrum College as a way to "document, interpret, and present the folk heritage of the Blue Ridge region." Site includes concerts, exhibitions, and educational experiences (Blue Ridge Institute and Museum, Ferrum College, 2012–2018).

Table 3.2 continued

While the majority of TCR sites operated prior to their inclusion on the trail, two of the major venues came to be through the efforts of the trail's founders. Joe Wilson was involved in the construction of the Blue Ridge Music Center—part open-air music venue, part exhibit of Blue Ridge musical traditions with a noticeable southwest Virginia bias[41] while Todd Christensen obtained funds to establish the Ralph Stanley Museum. TCR's textural richness stems from the diversity of stories and histories that emanate from each of its major venues. For example, on the trail, one can gain insight into the history of the early country music industry at the Birthplace of Country Music Museum (Bristol); witness a musical performance at The Carter Family Fold (Hiltons); and

[41] I speak more about my ethnographic observations of the "Roots of American Music" Museum housed at the Blue Ridge Music Center in chapter 2.

participate with old-time, bluegrass, gospel, and vernacular dance at the Floyd Country Store (Floyd).

In TCR guidebook published in 2006, Wilson contextualizes the ways in which flagship venues are connected to the histories of their respective towns, cities, and/or counties. This information, however, is not nearly as detailed as the equivalent material presented in the BRMT guidebook. Furthermore, as the text is outdated and as more sites have been included since its publication, it is far less useful a visitor resource than the website. The website, however, provides only brief descriptions of each venue and its ascribed significance therefore losing much of Wilson's finer place-based contextualization.

Unlike the BRMT, TCR is more conceivable as a single, extended journey because of adherence to Highway 58, and as many of its anchor locations are open to the public on a regular basis. Despite the trail's linearity and the fact that the major venues are labeled one through nine, there is no specified order that visitors are advised to travel its path. TCR's presence in the region is emphasized by distinctive signage found across its expanse—a frequent reminder that one is traveling "Virginia's Heritage Music Trail."

TCR's Wayside Exhibits are a prominent trail feature that draw attention to sites of music historical relevance. Here, one can pull over in their vehicle, read a plaque detailing the location's musical significance, and tune into FM radio for sonic accompaniment. The exhibit plaque in Woodlawn, Carroll County, for example, commemorates the residence of hillbilly recording artist Ernest "Pop" Stoneman (1893–1968) and other notable musical families who lived within close proximity:

Figure 3.4: Wayside Exhibit in Woodlawn, Virginia. (TCR's branded signage can be seen at the top center of this image.) Photograph by author

Today, the BRMT and TCR projects encompass initiatives beyond their featured sites. A central project of TCR, for example, is the annual, nine-day Mountains of Music Homecoming celebration held in June. The event promotes pre-existing musical and cultural events across southwest Virginia and includes several specially programmed concerts. In addition, TCR personnel have produced compact discs featuring southwest Virginia artists; created a touring concert series; and have engaged in traditional music education. The BRMT website hosts a specially-created, three-minute podcast series—"Down the Road"—that features old-time and bluegrass performances by a range of western North Carolina artists. The podcasts are created collaboratively by various

folklorist consultants in conjunction with WNCW-FM radio, adding further interpretive voices to the trail project.[42]

Mapping the trails/representing heritage

Music trail-makers are, in many ways, like anthologists. While a musical anthology offers a window into a style or genre, rarely are the mechanisms of its creation made explicit; seldom are the biases of, and constraints within which anthologists are working, made visible. Yet musical anthologies—whether notation-, lyric-, or audio-focused—can wield power. Importantly, anthologists and their resulting anthologies can contribute to processes of canonization or alternately, aid in canon deconstruction.

Music trails are anthology-like—"living" anthologies that operate in public spaces animated by human music-makers and the so-called traditions or styles upon which they are based. Like anthologies, music trails map the contents of a tradition, organizing them in ways that demarcate time and space. As music trails suggest ways for visitors to navigate musical pasts and presents in place-based terms, it is vital to acknowledge that the narratives trails project are filtered through and shaped by the biases and constraints of their curators—financial, political, institutional, personal.

In interview, I asked Martin, Bell, and Hinshelwood to explain how sites, venues, and places were selected for their respective trails. Martin gestured towards the inclusive nature of location selection for the BRMT. It is vital to note here that the original blueprint of the trail encompassed portions of Blue Ridge North Carolina and Virginia, and to stress that this original format predated

[42] The podcasts are the work of Laura Boosinger (folklorist, musician, and Executive Director of the Madison County Arts Council); folklorist Sarah Bryan (also Editor-in-Chief of *The Old Time Herald*); Elizabeth Simms; and Kim Clark (WNCW-FM).

the construction of TCR. For political and logistical reasons outlined later in this chapter, the trail was redesigned in 2012–2013 with an exclusively western North Carolina focus.

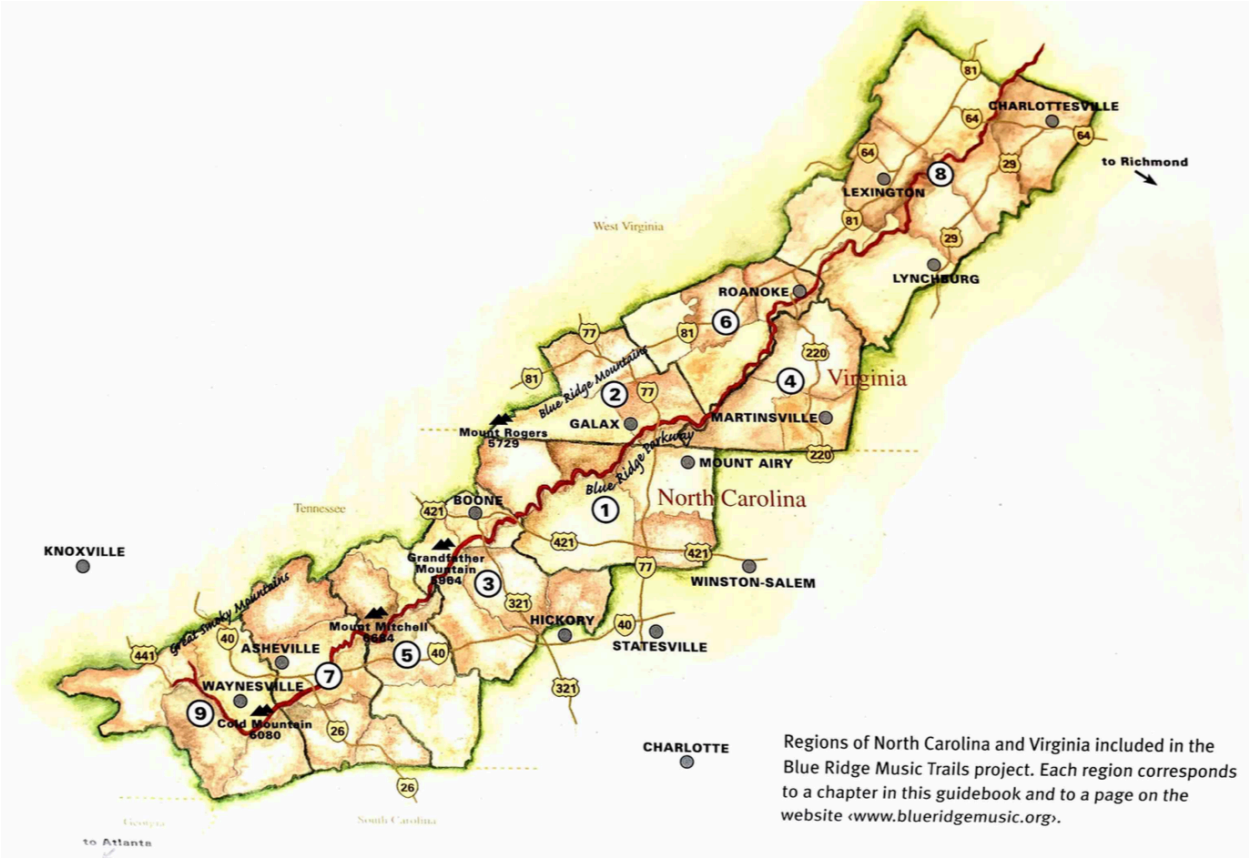

Figure 3.5: Map of the original Blue Ridge Music Trails. Source: Fussell 2003 (xxii), reprinted by permission of the University of North Carolina Press.

The project's original design was inspired by Martin's conviction that a distinctly *Blue Ridge* music tradition endemic to North Carolina and Virginia was "continuous across the region," that one could go to any county and "find some really interesting things going on."[43] With careful attention to various political boundaries, the planning team considered all counties on both sides of

[43] Wayne Martin in discussion with the author, June 2017.

the state line that were in close proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway. As Fussell explains in the original guidebook, the locations were selected based on their ability to do the following: "present programs of traditional music and dance that have been handed down in the region over generations, characteristic of and deeply rooted in communities, or are practiced by recently settled immigrant communities" (Fussell 2003, xxiv). In interview, Martin explained that all of the initial communities approached by trail planners wished to be included and were proud that their musical legacies had the potential to attract visitors.

In light of the trail's rebranding with a restricted western North Carolina focus, Bell stated that the break from Virginia enabled coordinators to incorporate into the project a number of westerly counties with intriguing musical heritages. Upon asking Bell if the trail today was at full capacity, he stated that the project continues to welcome participation from unrepresented communities and could keep expanding its musical offerings.

To balance out the presence of old-time and bluegrass, Bell is keen for gospel musics to be more fully represented. While the trail continues to evolve and grow, he expressed that there is only so much organizers can do within their own time constraints and alongside the other demands of their jobs. "We kind of feel like our plate is full," Bell told me, "there's so much more that we could be doing with what we already have."[44]

The county-focused layout of the BRMT and the ways that some counties receive greater coverage than others in the guidebook raises questions about location canonization and prioritization. Unsurprisingly, the musical counties that receive more detailed coverage here are those that have already achieved a dominant, canonized position among scholars, practitioners, and

[44] Bell in discussion with the author, July 2017.

enthusiasts. Featured heavily are Surry County renowned for its string band tradition; Madison County for its ballad tradition and as English musicologist Cecil Sharp's primary ballad collection site; and Buncombe County with Asheville at its center—the largest urban area and tourist destination featured on the trail.

Figure 3.6: Map of North Carolina counties. (Annotations added by author). Source: Wikimedia Commons

In interview, Bell stated that there were no intentional hierarchies of musical places built into the current version of the BRMT although in the future, the team would consider adding anchor locations. While the disproportionate focus on certain places over others in supplementary materials does imply a hierarchy, the project also draws attention to other, lesser known musical locations that fall outside of the dominant narratives.

In the North Carolina–Virginia version of the BRMT, however, hierarchies of place and local tradition are more explicit. In Figure 3.5 notice how sub-regions labeled one through nine do not proceed along the Blue Ridge Parkway in a consecutive order. In the 2003 guidebook, Fussell

emphasizes that Regions 1 and 2 form the core of the project, asserting boldly that these regions are "home to the strongest and most visible musical traditions within the Southern Appalachians" (2003, xxiv). Included in these regions are the cities of Mount Airy and Galax—cities at the heart of two old-time "epicenters" I describe in chapter 2. Regions 3–9 move outwards in each direction (one in North Carolina followed by one in Virginia), giving the impression that the music of both states received balanced coverage.

The BRMT personnel's generally inclusive approach to location selection fits well with its non-linear spatial format to which new sites (and musical heritage stories) can be added with relative ease. TCR, however, is more restricted by its use of Highway 58. While the initial design of TCR was mapped out prior to his role of as Executive Director, Hinshelwood explained that the original seven major venues were selected by Joe Wilson—locations Wilson felt were the most musically or culturally significant. Wilson's extensive, national-level folklore expertise and reputation likely invested these decisions with authority.

In the guidebook's introduction, Wilson writes "you'll note that this guide seldom ventures far from the road [Highway 58]. The wonder is that so many historic musicians either live or have lived along this narrow ribbon of mountain highway" (2006, 3). This narrow ribbon of mountain highway, however, only accounts for a relatively small percentage of the southwest Virginian territory (see Figure 3.4). By prioritizing sites along one road, many other venues of musical and historical significance are excluded. Although a number of the affiliated locations exist beyond Highway 58, their lack of "major venue" status implies their lower hierarchical position. As TCR is a significant economic force in the region, and as the project has attracted abundant media coverage

on a national and international scale, the place-based narratives of musical heritage projected (and the hierarchies embedded in them) are persuasive and widely visible.[45]

In interview, I asked Martin, Bell, and Hinshelwood to reflect upon the philosophies of cultural engagement and representation that underpin their work. At the inception of the BRMT project, Martin was adamant that the project *must,* the best it can, reflect how the featured communities viewed their own musical pasts and presents; how they discerned and verbalized their own senses of place. He stated that ethnographic inquiry was a key part of this process—a vital facet of his own background as a folklorist:

> What we wanted to do was to let the people of the communities where the traditions had been nourished and nurtured over generations as much as possible to give the interpretation. In the guidebooks, for example. . .I resisted when people kept saying "well, you need to define old-time music" and "you need to define bluegrass". . .I said, actually, I don't like these little one-or-two sentence definitions so I said "we're going to interview you as a resident of the region and those interviews are going to be transcribed," and in those interviews they're telling you what the music they play means. They say something about style, they say something about cultural identity, they say something about repertory, they say something about "place". . .It's by reading all of those interviews that you get a sense of what it really is…rather than saying "old-time music is played on the fiddle". . .you know, I just get really bored by that. But the idea was that in our music trail, somehow, we were grasping for, you know, "how can the people of the region actually interpret it for people who visit and for themselves?"[46]

The 2018 BRMT guidebook provides evidence of the project's multivocal scope. While the text itself is credited to folklorist Fred C. Fussell (with Steve Kruger), it features a number of distinct registers and voices that reach audiences in differing ways. Among them are historical and

[45] For a sample of the media coverage for The Crooked Road, see Tucker's 2011 article in the *Smithsonian Magazine*; McClain's 2017 article in *The Washington Post*; Richardson's 2019 article in the British newspaper *The Sun*; and Link's article (n.d.) in John Deere magazine, *The Furrow*.
[46] Martin in discussion with the author, June 2017.

ethnographic vignettes; interviews with and biographies of select regional musicians; archival and contemporary photographs; and an accompanying audio compact disc featuring music of distinguished, multigenerational western North Carolina artists. The guidebook closes with a lengthy acknowledgements section in which expert individuals and affiliated institutions from across the region are recognized for their involvement.

Martin authors the guidebook's opening essay which provides deeper context for, and history of, musics in western North Carolina. Here, he conveys the musics' historical complexity, ethnic diversity, and micro-regional stylistic variants (see Martin in Fussell 2018, 1–22). From the essay's outset, Martin challenges a number of misconceptions and generalizations found in conventional narratives of North Carolinian (and southern Appalachian) musics, namely the whitewashed, romanticized British Isles origins narrative and the presupposition that regional musics were isolated from outside influences before the influx of radio and commercial recordings (ibid., 1).

As sensitive presentation of human voices, musical traditions, and historical narratives are a key focus of the initiative, Martin and Bell both expressed frustrations about the gaps between their intentions and visitor receptions. For Martin, a central aim of the trails is to convey the thorough embeddedness of the musics and music-makers in "place," both historically and in the present day. His hope is that visitors gain a deeper understanding of this connection, perhaps having an experience or encounter on the trail that goes beyond a surface-level engagement. "I'm not really sure if [the trail] was successful in that way," Martin stated in interview, "but that's okay, everybody takes from it what they need."[47]

[47] Martin in discussion with author, June 2017.

Bell's comments on the gaps between the project's representational capacities and its myriad receptions focused more on issues of musical style:

> I guess what I'd really like to see is a greater appreciation for the depth and diversity of the music. I think a lot of visitors think it is all bluegrass. . .I'd love to see. . .kind of on the interpretive angle. . .audiences having a deeper understanding . . .even if they don't understand the nuances between old-time and bluegrass and blues and gospel and know how it all feeds in. . .that it goes back long ways in time and that it's cross-cultural. . .there's an African American element and even some Cherokee influence. That's my hope. That both locals and visitors from out of state will understand. I know it's a hard sell [he laughs]. You know the reality of that. . .working at the Old Time Music Heritage Hall![48]

My time working at the Old Time Music Heritage Hall museum in Mount Airy was indeed illustrative. As outlined in chapter 2, many visitors with whom I spoke at the museum were not particularly interested in the finer details—stylistic or historical—of old-time, let alone in the specific details of the local tradition upon which the museum focused.

When our conversation diverged from focus on the BRMT, I gained insight into Martin's more personal musical interests. Here, we shared with one another our passions for thorough place-based understandings of, and experiences with, the musical past. On this topic, Martin explained his fascination with and work at Jones Farm (Lenoir, North Carolina)—the resting place of Laura Foster who is memorialized in the well-circulated song "Tom Dula." He spoke of the affective qualities of experiencing this place in person, and how the attached musical stories and mythologies assumed a richer texture when one sees and senses the landscape.[49] Although Martin suspected that very few

[48] Bell in discussion with the author, July 2017.

[49] To help "uncover the cultural layers" of this site and memorialize it, Martin explained how he worked closely with the landowner on a project to establish farmland conservation order. Today, Jones Farm is also the site of the annual Happy Valley Fiddlers' Convention.

people today are truly invested in understanding these subtler connections between place and musical heritage, the trails were an attempt to spark this level of interest, even if just for a few individuals.

At many points during our conversation, Martin hinted at the tensions embedded in the trail's dual public folklore and tourism foci. Despite the careful placement of featured communities and musicians at the center of the project, he explained the resistance he faced from the members of the scholarly audience at the project's inception:

> I got attacked by members of the academy. . .there was a prominent folklorist from the University of Virginia that wrote to my funders and said, "you've got to pull your funding from this project" . . .He believed tourism was evil and that because this had a tourism component to it, that it was really bad for the people of the region. He was thinking back to when. . .the Park Service removed people when they were building the [Blue Ridge] Parkway. So my answer back to him was "what this project is trying to do is to give people a way to interpret what they do. . .really, it's trying to empower. . .that's a big word, but. . . we're really trying to give power to these communities." We had community meetings up and down the Parkway and time and time again, they would say, "well, it's about time you. . .the state realizes what an asset this [music] is and tries to hold it up and say 'this is who we are as a people.'" So we got a lot of really positive feedback from musicians and from people in the communities. But academic people were very suspicious. . .It was, I don't know, public folklore with too much public in it, or something? I don't know. If the people in the communities had said that, I hope I would have said "let's ditch the project" but that wasn't what we got.[50]

Martin expressed his surprise at the overall scholarly response—the perception that instead of advocating for and protecting the communities under question, his project was bound to endanger them. This anecdote resonates with some of the concerns expressed by Atkinson Wells (2006) and

[50] Martin in discussion with author, June 2017.

Baron (2010) about folklorists working in the heritage tourism sector. Also, it suggests a broader tension between the academic and public-facing contexts of cultural work.

In the present, evidence of the intended support for and empowerment of local musicians runs throughout the project's entire fabric. One example of musician advocacy is demonstrated through the "Traditional Artist Directory" produced by the BRNHAP and housed on the trail's website.[51] This directory includes profiles of several western North Carolina musicians and artisans, past and present, as well as contact details for artists offering instruction or seeking hire for dances or community events.

This directory, however, is another area of the project characterized by acts of selection and exclusion. The relevant BRMT webpage indicates that the directory was compiled by regional folklorists and arts representatives who filtered through "hundreds of nominees" and selected artists "based on the excellence of their work and their representativeness of the region's heritage."[52] Excellence and representativeness then, as determined by a series of unnamed, authoritative voices.

The idea that a music heritage trail might empower the community members it presents, instill them with pride, and offer opportunities for exposure was expressed over and over by Hinshelwood in our discussion on TCR. Here, Hinshelwood emphasized quite modestly that rather than trying to creating anything new (although two featured venues came to be through efforts of TCR co-founders), the trail simply accentuates cultural practices already there:

> We just shined a light on what was here [and] the end result is that there's been an enhanced sense of pride in the music here, and the culture here, that came about when that light was shone on it. . .People across the country, people around the world got a chance to look at it

[51] To access the Traditional Artist Directory, see Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina 2019e.
[52] See Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina 2019d.

> and their response was, "wow, that's pretty cool!" That's where the enhanced sense of pride comes in. That might be one of the biggest and best contributions that The Crooked Road has made—how people view themselves, and how they view their culture, and the musical aspects of that culture. That's huge.[53]

For Hinshelwood, enhanced pride in the place one lives and in its cultural offerings translates to a better quality of life. A better quality of life, in turn, is heightened by thriving local economies, and thriving economies help generate that better life quality—a cyclical process. Importantly, TCR has become a major catalyst for economic development and rejuvenation in southwest Virginia.[54]

TCR's involvement in economic growth is a part of wider regional (and national) efforts to rebrand small towns and cities as "cultural centers" to attract visitors and benefit local residents. In southwest Virginia, Hinshelwood explained, this refocus in civic promotion became necessary at the point when the industries that had long reigned in the region like lumber, coal, textile, and furniture began to decline.[55] While area economic development priorities underpin both TCR and the BRMT, full analysis of this dimension of the projects is beyond the purview of this chapter.

Despite its deployment of broad representational strategies and interpretive media, TCR project resonates with the dominant, authoritative voice of Joe Wilson. In addition to initial venue

---

[53] Hinshelwood in discussion with the author, September 2017.

[54] A thorough economic assessment study of TCR was carried out by the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development in 2016 (Lyon-Hill, Dowd, and Burke 2016). Regarding the extent of regional economic development, the report states that "analysis of interviews and surveys indicates that marketing by The Crooked Road facilitates $6.4 million of spending annually in SWVA, from which an equivalent of 108 full-time jobs are created or sustained annually, and $2 million funnel into households through workers' wages. As this money circulates within the region through business and employee spending, additional money and jobs are created, resulting in an annual impact of approximately $9.2 million and 131 jobs in SWVA due to The Crooked Road."

[55] For case studies in which small Appalachian or foothills towns and cities have been transformed to cultural centers of kinds through tourism, see Alden, Benjamin and Schneider 2012 who write about Mount Airy's transformation into "Mayberry" and Kruse 2015 who explores the role of heritage tourism in the reinvigoration of Pleasant Point, West Virginia.

selection, his idiosyncratic, expressive written voice permeates the guidebook[56] and a handful of other supplementary trail resources.[57] Yet one should take seriously Barry Bergey's words presented earlier in this chapter—that Wilson was driven by his belief in "intensive fieldwork, equitable representation, and responsible presentation of traditional arts and artists" (Bartenstein 2017, xvii).

A major physical and interpretive difference between TCR and the BRMT is the former's use, and latter's absence of themed roadside signage and informative plaques to mark historical points of interest. When I inquired about the BRMT's lack of interpretive signage, Martin explained that the decision was influenced in part by limited funding available in the project's early days. He also shared his belief that information plaques risked injecting projects of this nature with the kind of authoritative voice he hoped to avoid. Reflecting more generally on the use of historical markers across North Carolina, Martin commented that

> Unfortunately, when historical markets are written, they are often written by historians that often have a certain perspective or point of view, or have been training in a certain way but they leave out some of the most interesting parts of the story.[58]

Subsequent engagement with signage on the Mississippi Blues Trail, however, apprised Martin of its possible usefulness. In positive ways, he stated that signage can give visitors a sense of the pervasiveness of music across a wide geographic expanse and offer a bold, visual proclamation that the state values its cultural assets.

---

[56] For examples of Joe Wilson's written voice, see essay collection Wilson and Bartenstein 2017.
[57] As the prose contained within the Wayside Exhibit plaques appear authorless, I asked Hinshelwood in a follow-up email in September 2019 who wrote them. He stated that Wilson should be credited as writer or as responsible for approving the majority of the exhibits even when written by other authors. Hinshelwood worked with Wilson on the exhibit in Wise, Virginia.
[58] Martin in discussion with the author, June 2017.

Politics of geography/geography of resources

The establishment of human-constructed geographic borders—from the formation of national borders, counties, cities, and roadways, to the plotting of cultural heritage trails or national parks—are actions inspired or shaped by varying political forces. In the making of heritage trails, organizers often work across terrains of mixed ownership; operate within various parameters set by investors, participating institutions, and communities; and navigate other constructed borders like town, county, or state lines. A salient example of the politics and polemics of trail-making is evident in reactions to the building of the Blue Ridge Parkway from 1935 to 1987 and the community and land ownership negotiations it entailed (see Whisnant 2006).

To a significant extent, design decisions behind the BRMT and TCR were (and continue to be) shaped by the politics of geography. Beyond their presentation of micro-regional (towns, counties) and regional (western North Carolina and southwest Virginia) nuance, in their broadest senses both trails categorize a panoply of southern Appalachian and foothills musics along state lines. Although my interlocutors are acutely aware that musical traditions in practice are not circumscribed by human-created state borders, the trails' layouts have been shaped by an array of political and logistical concerns that have imposed geographical restrictions.

To illustrate this point, I consider here the original design of the BRMT project. Rather than categorizing musical heritage according to state, the trail incorporated sites in both North Carolina and Virginia to explore a distinctly "Blue Ridge" tradition (see Figure 3.5). The original project was part of the Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative—a four-state partnership between North Carolina,

Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia—and was supported by various North Carolina and Virginia cultural organizations (Fussell 2003, xxvii).[59]

The notion of a "Blue Ridge" music tradition unique to western North Carolina and western Virginia here is compelling. It suggests that the idiosyncrasies of life in the Blue Ridge Mountains, rather than the respective states, are the dominant forces shaping the cultural practices that occur(ed) there. The 2003 guidebook offers rich contextualization and justification for this project; the opening essay, this time, is penned by Wayne Martin and Joe Wilson.

As appealing a model this was from a musical perspective, Martin and Bell expressed in interview that it was unsustainable. Although the musical traditions under question *were* fluid across state lines, they told me, the infrastructures and funds that supported them were not. Over a series of conversations, Bell outlined several factors that contributed to the project's split from Virginia. One issue, he stated, was that the NCAC and BRNHAP—the trail's main programming bodies—are organizations intended to support North Carolina communities rather than wider, multi-state cultural initiatives.

Another factor was the near-simultaneous development of TCR. Although there was little geographical overlap between TCR and the BRMT, the former attracted intensified financial backing from institutions including the Virginia tourism office and the Appalachian Regional Commission, deflecting potential support from the BRMT. Today, a scaled-down version of the

[59] For comprehensive details of the original project, see Fussell 2003. As listed by Fussell, partnerships included the North Carolina Arts Council and Department of Cultural Resources, North Carolina Folklife Institute, Virginia Commission for the Arts, Blue Ridge Institute (Ferrum College), Blue Ridge Parkway (National Park Service), North Carolina Department of Commerce, National Endowment for the Arts, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, and American Express Company (xxvii–xxx).

BRMT exists in Virginia—a project supported by the Virginia Commission of the Arts and the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum of Ferrum College.[60] It is not, however, officially affiliated with the western North Carolina project.

Across the U.S., the tourism offices of individual states are driven by an expansive range of motivations that determine which facets of state life are presented for and promoted to tourists. Importantly, differing state tourism infrastructures and priorities in North Carolina and Virginia have had considerable impact on the creation and maintenance of BRMT and TCR. In interview, Bell acknowledged that TCR has received significantly more external recognition—media coverage and financial backing—than the BRMT. Aside from its memorable branding and easy-to-travel terrain, he explained that among many investors, TCR has had ample support from Virginia's tourism office. While Virginia's tourism office invests heavily in cultural heritage, convinced of its appeal as a visitor attraction and its ability to generate income, Bell stated that North Carolina's tourism interests are focused elsewhere.

Representing Appalachia

Even though the BRMT and TCR convey many of the nuances—musical, topographical, cultural, historical—of their respective regions, a portion of the rhetoric that supports them draws on more romanticized notions of Appalachian "place" and folklife. This includes emphases on the timeless, authentic nature of the region's cultural practices, as well as the idea of Appalachia as an intriguing place steeped in the past. While this more clichéd language does not saturate either project, it appears prominently in introductory vignettes presented in supplementary trail materials. It is

[60] For details of the included territory, see Blue Ridge Music Trails—Virginia 2019.

interesting, however, that language associated more generally with "Appalachia" is recast here to describe heritage presented as distinctly Virginian or North Carolinian. The following examples from both projects are illustrative—the former taken from TCR guidebook, the latter from the BRMT website:

1. Virginia is one of the places where America invented its music. Of course, historic music is kept by persons from hundreds of other places, but people from communities along the Crooked Road have had an influence upon the music of their nation that is highly disproportionate to their relatively small numbers. . .Virginia is justly famous for saving many of the oldest historical sites in the nation. The Virginians who live along the Crooked Road quietly keep their historic strand of living culture, one very much at home in the 21st century (Wilson 2006, 1–2)

2. Traditional music is flourishing across many parts of America, but in the mountains and foothills of North Carolina, more so than elsewhere, the music is part of the fabric of community life. If you look around, you'll find:

- Fiddles and banjos ringing on stages and front porches every night of the week
- Music halls where local musicians and music lovers gather to swap tunes and stories
- Teams of cloggers, young and old, dancing up a storm
- Ballads being sung as they were hundreds of years ago

Music traditions continue to be handed down in families and communities; at the same time, musicians are moving here from other parts of the country to be at the heart of these wonderful traditions. Most importantly, the music here is to be shared. Opportunities to listen in and to join in are plentiful. (Blue Ridge Music Trails, 2019c)

In light of my interlocutors' backgrounds, it is evident that reinforcing regional and cultural stereotypes is not an intention. In fact, the preface to 2018 BRMT guidebook attempts to combat stereotyping at the outset:

> The soundtracks of popular television programs and motion pictures have introduced mountain music to people from outside the region who might otherwise never have heard it. Yet mountain residents are sometimes frustrated by the way outsiders perceive mountain

> culture. . .An authentic experience of mountain music in the community is far richer than shows like these portray. (Fussell and Kruger 2018, xiv)

With a focus on the discourses of cultural authenticity that surround TCR, anthropologist Ryan Chaney (2017) sets forth a compelling symbolic interpretation of the trail and its visitor appeal. The power of TCR, he argues, emanates from its joining of longstanding mythic and nostalgic associations of "the road" (and road trips) in the American popular imagination with the conviction that Appalachia is a past-drenched bastion of authentic cultural heritage. By traveling, quite literally, a "crooked road" that bends through rural Virginia, and by witnessing living heritage along its expanse, visitors may experience a temporary escape from the bustling, impersonal modern world—a world connected by interstates, not quaint country roads.

Language of cultural authenticity caters to heritage tourism audiences and is the immediate, affective language that potential investors might expect to find in grant applications. By placing too much emphasis on the trails' generalizing, authenticating narratives, however, one risks overlooking the subtler, non-homogenizing presentations of musics, peoples, and contexts embedded within them. For the BRMT and TCR, one might view these larger-scale authenticating narratives as icing on dense, multi-layered cakes. The complexity of representation that lies beneath the surface is located in the multiple voices and mixed media that the projects incorporate; in the singularity and complexity of the events and sites included; and in the multiple avenues of reception the projects receive. For the casual visitor, however, the more explicit narratives of cultural authenticity may be all that they take away from the experience. This, however, need not always be a bad thing.

Since the late nineteenth century, varied acts of cultural intervention have shaped both Appalachia's physical and figurative terrains. According to David Whisnant, "systematic cultural intervention" refers to the processes by which

> someone (or some institution) consciously and programmatically takes action within a culture with the intent of affecting it in some specific way that the intervenor thinks desirable. The action taken can range from relatively passive (say, starting a museum) to relatively active (like instituting a cultural revitalization). Its intent can be either positive (as in a sensitive revitalization effort) or negative (as in the prohibition of ethnic customs, dress, or language). Moreover, a negative effect may follow from a positive intent, and vice versa. (2009, 13–14)

Analysis of the tangled, sometimes controversial processes of cultural intervention in the region and the networks of agents involved has been a major focus of Appalachian Studies scholars. Whisnant's pioneering, polemical study on cultural workers from settlement school founders to folk festival organizers and ballad collectors in the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries exemplify such inquiry (ibid.).[61] Another prominent contribution is Jane Becker's (1998) examination of the cultural politics of the southern Appalachian handicraft revival of the 1930s and 1940s. In both instances, ideas about what constitutes "folk" and "tradition" are shaped by and filtered through diverse networks of mediating individuals and organizations with varied motivations.

As cultural heritage tourism programming can be seen as a form of systematic cultural intervention, the BRMT and TCR participate on a number of levels. In a "passive" way (following Whisnant's definition), trail organizers construct and present persuasive narratives of musical

[61] Interestingly, Bascom Lamar's Mountain Music and Dance Festival—a central case study of Whisnant's study and a problematic example nonetheless—is a featured event on the Blue Ridge Music Trails. This provides further evidence of the trail's representational complexity. I cover the Mountain Music and Dance Festival more thoroughly in chapter 1.

heritage for public consumption that are mapped across physical terrains. Passive interventions, however, pave the way for more "active" interventions: the trails' roles in area economic development and rejuvenation, and in the ways that they help shape the traditions they present.

In interview, I asked Bell and Hinshelwood to comment on the interventions they feel the trails have made in relation to the traditions with which they engage. Of the BRMT, Bell stated the following:

> I really think that our impact on the traditions themselves has been minimal. We're just not that big. There are much larger forces at play in this postmodern age—increasing mobility, the internet, new modes of instruction and learning—which are shaping the future of these traditions. I do think we have moved the needle a little on public appreciation and respect for the music.[62]

He adds that as far as organizational personnel are aware, none of the locations featured on the BRMT have been "overrun with tourists generated by the initiative," thus minimizing the possible perception that musicians showcased on the trail act as display pieces lacking agency. Interestingly, the venue surveys and economic development data with which Bell provided me suggest that the majority of visitors to individual venues were North Carolina residents rather than out-of-staters.

Hinshelwood restated his opinion that the biggest intervention of TCR is the way it has helped reframe the *value* of the musics and cultural practices in the minds of its practitioners:

> The way a culture of people think of themselves can be a powerful motivator for positive growth and change. Not having that sense of pride can have the opposite effect, i.e., a feeling of resignation to external factors that leads to a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy of inaction when people do not appreciate their own abilities and values.[63]

[62] Bell, email correspondence with the author, August 2019.
[63] Hinshelwood, email correspondence with the author, August 2019.

Hinshelwood explained that TCR has intervened in a positive way by creating more opportunities for young people to become involved with regional musics—individuals likely to act as conduits for future musical generations and prevent the traditions from fading away. The Traditional Education Program is a vital component of TCR's youth outreach. According to its mission statement, the program "is designed to support existing traditional music programs and instructors, to encourage the implementation of new traditional music programs, to support youth music performance, and to incorporate traditional music coursework and instruction in southwest Virginia's schools."[64] This initiative included the creation of an instruction manual, *Traditional Music in the Classroom—A Teacher's Guide,* that advises instructors on how they might incorporate traditional musics into K-12 and college curricula.

These instruction manuals and designed curricula participate in the validation and canonization of the curated heritage narratives, repertories, and expert musicians they present. TCR's Traditional Education Program exists in a constellation with other music heritage educational initiatives throughout the Appalachian region. Examples include the flagship Junior Appalachian Musicians program, a specialty college degree program offered at East Tennessee State University, and instruction offered at annual folk arts workshops like the Swannanoa Gathering and Augusta Heritage Center.

To emphasize the importance of TCR's capacity to inspire young musicians, Hinshelwood reflected on his personal experiences growing up with old-time:

> In my own lifetime, I have seen a complete reversal of attitudes towards our traditional music. When I was young, playing "hillbilly" music was looked down on in many quarters.

[64] See The Crooked Road 2017d.

> Nowadays, parents buy their kids the best instruments they can afford, get them teachers, and support them in every performance opportunity they can get. The youth enrolled in after-school traditional music programs are looked up to, even envied by their classmates. When I was school aged, I didn't mention that I played that kind of music with my peers. It did not have the cachet it does now. The Crooked Road has been part of helping change those attitudes.

Contemplating the slow rate at which traditions transform and the complex, multidimensional processes that initiate these changes, Hinshelwood shared his conviction that TCR will be a part of this process of change in southwest Virginia—"just one of many factors guiding what these traditions will be a hundred years from now." [65]

Conclusion

This chapter presented the Blue Ridge Music Trails and The Crooked Road as complex entities that engage with and represent musical (and cultural) heritage in place-based terms. Both trail projects offer insight into the inherently political nature of cultural heritage programming, demonstrating the large extent to which this work is shaped by factors that exist beyond the cultural entities under question.

What I presented in this chapter, of course, does not paint a full picture of the trails' representational capacities and complexities—instead, it offered a series of snapshots. While I have focused on the perspectives of select trail organizers, a fuller examination would pay close attention to other mediating voices that have shaped the projects and study the ways that participating musicians, local community members, and visitors receive the trails and assess their impacts. This analysis would require detailed ethnographic inquiry and engagement with official visitor surveys

[65] Hinshelwood, email correspondence with the author, August 2019.

and venue data. Likewise, to arrive at a deeper understanding of the trails' richness, one might examine the historical and cultural singularity of each featured site, venue, and event.

As I write this conclusion in April 2020, almost four years since my initial engagement with the trails, the projects are responding to a major new extra-musical challenge—the COVID-19 pandemic. In observance of social distancing rules, many featured venues have been shuttered for indefinite periods of time, numerous gatherings and festivals have been canceled or postponed, and limits on communal activities will likely be imposed into (or perhaps beyond) the summer months. As tourism projects with robust development missions, it is unclear at present what roles the trails (and other arts assets tourism initiatives) will play in local economic relief efforts—the full impact of the pandemic on the economies of rural towns, cities, and counties remains to be seen. While it is inevitable that the trails will have to transform and respond, the resilience of the musics and artists coupled with the passion of trail organizers in their work paints a hopeful picture.

4. American Old-Time in the British Isles

May 25, 2016: Bruce Molsky concert in Islington, London

A sizable crowd gathered in the upstairs room of the historic Old Queen's Head pub to hear fiddler Bruce Molsky on the London leg of his United Kingdom tour. The dimly lit room with its quintessential "English pub" smell soon became cramped as audience members located free seats, stools, or booths—all of which were soon in short supply—or found places to stand near the bar at the back. At the front of the room was a small stage upon which two fiddles, a banjo, and guitar hung from instrument stands. To the right of the stage was a table displaying Molsky's CDs and instructional manuals around which small groups clustered. Surveying the room, I recognized a number of people I had met previously at Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week (Oxfordshire), the Orwell Bluegrass Festival (Suffolk), and at London-based jam sessions—in particular, the Richmond and Shakespeare's Head sessions. To my left in the booth closest to the stage sat a frail Tom Paley—alumnus of preeminent revivalist band the New Lost City Ramblers who had long been a patron of London's old-time scene.

Molsky walked onto the stage with modesty, nodding gently to acknowledge the audience as they engaged in rapturous applause. Alongside him on stage was the emcee from The Nest Collective—a London-based folk and alternative music promoter—who introduced the performer.[1] *Evidently humbled by the unprecedented number of attendees, the emcee exclaimed that it was the first time the small upstairs room of the Old Queen's Head had "been transformed into an auditorium!" It was clear that among British old-time enthusiasts—as well as those in the United States from my experience—this New York-born revivalist musician in his sixties has a somewhat legendary reputation. Molsky treated the audience to an intimate, multi-instrumental performance; the intimacy was enhanced by the crowded room, the performer's unassuming stage presence, and the warm, carefully attentive reception he received. The following day, various social media pages frequented by old-time enthusiasts in the British Isles were abuzz with glowing commentaries detailing Molsky's performance. Individuals in attendance urged those who were not to catch the show while they still had the chance.*

[1] See Nest Collective 2019. According to the organization's mission statement, The Nest Collective is "London's way to experiencing folk, world & new music, creating a community that seeks unique sonorous experiences in unusual spaces."

Introduction

My first intensive engagement with old-time practitioners and enthusiasts was at the 2013 Swannanoa Gathering located near Asheville, North Carolina. Folk arts workshops like Swannanoa are prominent sites of encounter for old-time musicians from across the U.S. and worldwide. Likewise, events like the Appalachian String Band Festival in West Virginia ("Clifftop" hereafter) serve as annual meeting places for geographically spread old-time audiences. During a series of consecutive trips to Swannanoa and Clifftop, I became acquainted (and developed friendships) with a handful of musicians and dancers visiting from various parts of the British Isles.

These encounters prompted two field trips to my English homeland in the springs of 2016 and 2017, as well as a series of briefer repeat visits to explore an instance of concentrated old-time participation *outside* of the U.S. While old-time participation in the British Isles is evidently (and unsurprisingly) niche, it is deeply meaningful for those who are actively involved. Built primarily around ethnographic work, this chapter explores the ways in which musicians and enthusiasts in the British Isles cluster around, locate meaning in, and built communities through old-time musics—musics that strongly signify another time and place. As questions about old-time, heritage, and place are at the heart of this dissertation, the chapter offers insight into the ways that agents *without* regional or national connections to the musics integrate them into their lives, participating in an alternative national setting shaped by its own historical, social, geographical, and cultural peculiarities.

The ethnographic experiences that underpin the chapter include participant-observation fieldwork (as a scholar and musician) at the Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week (Oxfordshire, 2016 and 2017), the Orwell Bluegrass Festival (Suffolk, 2016 and 2017), and at a

series of London-based old-time jam sessions in the boroughs of Richmond-upon-Thames, Islington, and Hackney. To explore participant motivations and entry points into old-time, I draw on data from twenty-three interviews[2] with old-time musicians and enthusiasts in the British Isles and reflect upon numerous informal conversations I had with practitioners at sessions, workshops, festivals, and concerts both in England and the U.S.

What emerged from this ethnographic inquiry is evidence that concentrated networks of active old-time participants are dispersed throughout the British Isles. These networks consist of small, localized scenes built around regular or semi-regular jam sessions; centralizing, volunteer-run organizations like the Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance; festivals, concert series, and workshops with a strong old-time component; and dedicated social media groups. In addition, there are many strands that connect old-time activities and musicians on both sides of the Atlantic.

In this chapter, I use the phrase "active participation" to refer to individuals who do more than simply "like" or listen to old-time. Instead, I am concerned with those for whom engagement with old-time has become a significant factor in their lives, providing a vital social outlet. Active participants, for example, might seek out and attend related events or be involved in the organization of these events and special interest societies.

As the British Isles are a secondary field site in this dissertation project that focuses predominantly on the Appalachian southeast, the scope of the chapter is inevitably limited. Rather than providing an intensive survey of all related activities dispersed across the ascribed landmass, I focus on activities in England. Likewise, my twenty-three interviewees—the majority of whom were self-selecting, volunteering participants—do not and could not provide an all-encapsulating overview

[2] These data were amassed from a mix of in-person, telephone, and survey-based interviewing methods.

of why individuals in the British Isles are drawn to old-time. This chapter, then, offers a glimpse into a wider story of participation, providing a foundation for further research that sits beyond the scope of the dissertation.

The chapter is divided into three sections. First, I examine the structure and geography of the British Isles old-time scene(s). Second, drawing on materials and stories that emerged from participant interviews, I outline the various ways that my interlocutors became involved with old-time musics and interrogate why related endeavors are meaningful to their lives. In the final section, I embark on a fine-grained examination of a particularly vibrant localized scene based in Richmond, London. Here, I shift my focus from participation to grassroots musical organizing—to the (unpaid) efforts behind the coordination and sustenance of related activities in this locale.

To provide historical and cultural context, I situate my argument within the tangled notion of folk revival—another theme that runs through this dissertation. Here, I focus on mid-twentieth–century folk revivalist activities in the British Isles that helped create audiences sympathetic to "roots" musics from around the world. While I do not suggest that the mid-century revivalist milieu (and its later offshoots) caused a small old-time scene to develop in the British Isles, there are certain threads that likely contributed to its formation. I focus in particular on prominent revivalist activities through which British audiences were exposed to American vernacular musics.

In a broader sense, this chapter raises questions about musical mobility—a theme that has circulated extensively among music scholars for the past several decades. More specifically, to study old-time activity in the British Isles is to gain insight into ways that a non-commercially dominant American musical style has become relevant and significant in an alternative geographical context. Unlike other mobile "American" musics that are tied to discourses of domination or to foreign

policy—for example jazz in U.S.-occupied Haiti (Averill, 1997, chapter 2) or as a diplomatic tool during the Cold War (von Eschen 2004; Davenport 2009)—old-time musics have evaded this kind of politically fueled circulation overseas. This chapter, then, draws inspiration from studies of musical interchange where the sites under question do not exist in the same kind of fraught relationship. Shuhei Hosokawa's work on salsa scenes in Japan (2002), Lee Bidgood's study of bluegrass in the Czech Republic (2017), and Jeremy Wallach's research on heavy metal in Malaysian, Singaporean, and Indonesian contexts (2011) are illustrative examples.

Old-time scenes in the British Isles consist predominantly of "amateur" music-makers and are characterized by grassroots, voluntary musical organizing.[3] For the vast majority of participants, engagement with old-time exists among other life "pathways" (Finnegan 1989, chapter 21)—other pastimes, responsibilities, and interests—and is a part-time pursuit. The prominent questions I ask in this chapter are inspired by Ruth Finnegan's landmark study *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (1989). Here, Finnegan investigates the often-veiled processes of grassroots music-making, the assiduous work behind its organization, and the various ways that musical participation instils human lives with meaning.

The multi-sited case studies presented in this dissertation highlight the significant extent to which the sustenance of old-time musics in the present day relies on the tireless labor of human agents working in various capacities with differing levels of commitment. While elsewhere in the dissertation the focus has been upon institutional players (arts councils, heritage organizations, state

[3] As Ruth Finnegan explains, the boundaries between "amateur" and "professional" musicians are sometimes difficult to determine. While "amateur" in its broadest sense refers an individual who does not make a living through music, Finnegan argues that the scale between "amateur" and "professional" is often blurred and depends on the context as well as the individuals under question (1989, 12–18).

governments, education centers, the recording industry) and other authoritative, validating agents (prominent musicians, scholars, activists), this chapter recognizes the contributions and efforts of "ordinary" (to use this term broadly) musicians and enthusiasts. While the development and durability of music scenes in general rely on grassroots work and interactions between broad networks of social agents (Jackson 2012, 57), old-time's niche, non-commercial nature, as well as its lack of regional connection to the British Isles means that its infrastructures have taken great effort to build and sustain.

I bring to this chapter personal experiences and insights as a British citizen and resident of England from 1986 to 2011, and as a frequent visitor since moving to the U.S. Although I only became aware of old-time activity in the British Isles following fieldwork in the southeastern U.S., my nuanced understandings and lived experiences of the culture, customs, and landscapes of my homeland have influenced the shape of this chapter and the perceptions I have drawn from the supporting ethnographic work.

Folk "revival" in the British Isles

In the mid-twentieth century, folk "revivalist" activity flourished on both sides of the Atlantic. In these contexts, growing interest in folk musics prompted the development of supporting infrastructures—the establishment of dedicated venues, folk clubs, and festivals; the creation of specialist radio and television programs, recordings, and fanzines.[4] While revivalist activity in the British Isles was characterized by a growing appreciation for and reimaginings of homegrown folk

[4] See Boyes 1993, Brocken 2003, Sweers 2005, Young 2010, and Cohen and Donaldson 2014 for scholarly coverage on folk revivalism in the British Isles.

traditions that developed in response to myriad domestic historical, political, and socio-cultural factors, there are circumstances and personalities that connect the revivals on both sides of the Atlantic. On these connections, Cohen and Donaldson (2014) provides valuable historical insight. In addition, within this mid-century context, a variety of American vernacular musics—both in supposedly authentic and popularized forms—reached British Isles audiences via several channels that are explained below.

Prior to mid-century revivalist endeavors, scholars have acknowledged an earlier wave of folk revival in the British Isles—a wave that situated homegrown folk sources (or reinventions of them) at the heart of nationalistic projects. Prominent among the earlier generation of folk advocates was English musicologist Cecil Sharp (1859–1924), who played an integral role in the revival, self-conscious reconstruction, and educational distribution of English folk song and dance (see Brocken 2003, 3–11; Gammon 2015; Knevett 2018). In addition to Sharp's folkloric collection expeditions on British soil were his well-documented and heavily romanticized southern Appalachian ballad-seeking fieldtrips—the circumstances of which are outlined in my opening chapter.

Rather than a celebration of the cultural riches of rural America, Sharp's Appalachian project was more a reflection of his attempts to prove the existence of pure, unadulterated "English" musics that had taken root in the southeastern U.S. Nevertheless, his expeditions mark a significant moment of encounter between a British subject and U.S. vernacular musicians and their musics. Although the results of Sharp's research reached relatively small audiences at the time, the encounter continues to attract scholarly and public reflection in the present day. In July 2016, for example, the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) hosted a series of celebrations and a one-day academic conference to mark the centenary of Sharp and Maud Karpeles's southern Appalachian

expeditions.[5] In addition, the Cecil Sharp House in London—a major venue of the EFDSS—offers frequent concerts and workshops dedicated to U.S. vernacular musics.

When I began research among practitioners of old-time in the British Isles, I was curious if their affinity with the musics stemmed from a Sharp-eque romance concerning the musics' supposed Anglo-Saxon origins. This curiosity was prompted by reception I had received regarding my status as an English woman doing fieldwork in western North Carolina from a handful of my American interlocutors. In a number of informal conversations—enough for me to notice a trend—the British Isles origin narrative was particular potent. For example, on several occasions I was informed (quite inaccurately) that "most" of the musics with which I was fascinated came from my homeland. I wondered: was I being positioned as modern-day Maud Karpeles? As my ethnographic engagement in the British Isles deepened, however, my conviction of this potential Sharp-esque fantasy proved naïve and unfounded. As I outline later in the chapter, the reasons why my interlocutors came to old-time musics and remain invested are multifarious and for the most part, not fueled by romanticism of this kind.

In the mid-century revivalist context, Cohen and Donaldson (2014) delineate an array of factors through which British Isles audiences were exposed to American "folk." Among them are Alan Lomax's activities while resident in London; the presence of visiting musicians from the U.S. like Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Burl Ives, and Jean Ritchie; and the development of the folk-pop hybrid, skiffle. Here, I focus briefly on two of these moments—Lomax's London-based activities and the impact of skiffle.

[5] For details of the conference and related celebrations, see English Folk Dance and Song Society n.d.

From 1950 through 1958, Lomax resided in London, using the city as a base from which to carry out folkloric collection trips across the British Isles and Europe. Instrumental in introducing British audiences to a diverse spectrum of American musical traditions, however, were a series of specialist radio programs he created for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).[6] Among his America-themed BBC programs was *Adventures in Folk Song* (1951). Here, Lomax alongside singer Robin Roberts performed a selection of songs that, according to E. David Gregory, incorporated a "skillful mix of traditional narrative ballads, pioneer songs, lullabies, cowboy songs, bad-man ballads, lumberjack songs, shanties, field hollers, Afro-American folksongs and blues, and compositions by Woody Guthrie" (2002, 140). Other America-focused programs included *Patterns in American Folk Song* (1951) that investigated connections between British Isles ballads and their American variants; *The Art of the Negro* (1951) on the theme of gospel, spirituals, New Orleans jazz, and blues; and the U.S.-themed portions of *Memories of a Ballad Hunter* (1957) (ibid., 140 and 155).

In addition to programming for the BBC, Lomax formed close personal and musical relationships with pivotal British folk artists Ewan MacColl and Shirley Collins (Cohen and Donaldson 2014, 44–45; Gregory 2002). While best known for their promotion and re-imaginations of traditional musics of the British Isles, MacColl and Collins were also strident advocates of American folk sources and participated in their circulation. For example, East Sussex-born Collins accompanied Lomax on his 1959 expedition in the southern U.S.—her reflections on which are presented in the memoir *America Over the Water* (2004).[7]

[6] Detailed documentation of Alan Lomax's time in Britain and Europe can be found in E. David Gregory 2002 and Szwed 2010 (chapter 11) with briefer mentions in Cohen and Donaldson 2014 (39–45).
[7] With Lomax, Collins collected musics in Virginia, Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, and the Georgia Sea Islands. See Collins 2004.

The development and rapid proliferation of skiffle in the mid- through late 1950s offers another point of intersection between British Isles listeners and a panoply of American folk traditions.[8] For a brief period, this pop–folk hybrid style of grassroots music-making that recast American jazz, folk, and blues sources in a quintessentially British mold became a significant outlet for youth amateur music-makers across the British Isles (see Dewe 1998; Brocken 2003, 72–77; Bragg 2017). Sustaining this scene were networks of skiffle clubs, competition circuits, and coffee houses that emerged in response to the music's growing popularity. While the majority of participants were amateur musicians, a handful of artists achieved widespread visibility (Brocken 2003, 72–77; Dewe 1998, chapter 6).

Among the commercially successful musicians was Glasgow-born, London-transplanted Lonnie Donegan (1931–2002) whose 1956 rendition of "Rock Island Line"—a convict song collected by John Lomax in Arkansas during the 1930s popularized by Lead Belly—achieved sustained prominence on the British singles charts (Young 2010, 123; Brocken 2003, chapter 5). Other skiffle bands who received commercial acclaim were the Chas McDevitt Group, the Vipers, and Johnny Duncan and the Bluegrass Boys (Brocken 2003, chapter 5). While skiffle played a key role in introducing British Isles listeners to a multitude of American folk sources, it is also integral to the origin stories of bands like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones (Bragg 2017, chapter 26; Dewe 1998).

As emphasized by Gregory (2002, 149–151), Cohen and Donaldson (2014, 76–77), and Szwed (2010, chapter 13), Lomax and his cohort of British-based folk activists played a role in

[8] Examinations of the complex history, trajectories, and impacts of skiffle in Britain in the 1950s and beyond are found in Bragg 2017 and Dewe 1998.

validating skiffle. Lomax, for example, was publicly vocal about his enjoyment of the music, appreciating its uniquely British takes on diverse American folk sources and also participated in a skiffle band—Alan Lomax and the Ramblers—along with musicians including MacColl, Collins, and Peggy Seeger (Cohen and Donaldson 2014, 76–77). E. David Gregory goes further to position Lomax as a central *instigator* of the mid-1950s skiffle explosion. He writes that while skiffle musicians were evidently inspired by musicians like Woody Guthrie, Big Bill Broonzy, and Josh White, there was a considerable amount of Lead Belly material in the circulating repertory—Lead Belly, of course, was recorded by John and Alan Lomax in Louisiana in the 1930s (2002, 150).

While interest in skiffle came up among three of my interlocutors born between 1939 and 1949, I also noticed clear reportorial connections in jam sessions on both sides of the Atlantic. Looking at Lonnie Donegan's discography, for example, a handful of his songs in their old-time formats are jam session staples: "Cumberland Gap," "Don't You Rock Me" (known in old-time circles as "Sail Away Ladies"), "John Hardy," and "The Battle of New Orleans" (old-time version known as "Eighth of January"). This connection was fortified in a session I attended in Richmond, London with my father in 2017. While not an old-time musician himself, my father (b.1955) left the session humming several of the melodies. When I asked how he knew the tunes, he detailed the sonic pervasiveness of skiffle in his own childhood in North London. He explained, too, that his very first encounters with American folk songs and tunes came via artists like Lonnie Donegan and Burl Ives on the BBC radio programs "Family Favourites" and "Children's Favourites."

These select mid-century points of intersection between folk activity in the British Isles and the U.S. offer insight into a much more complex story of musical exchange between the two locales that accelerated rapidly from this point forward. Mid-century revivalism also paved the way for a

number of domestic musical developments that included the growth of folk rock (see Burns 2012), "electric" folk (see Sweers 2005; Young 2010; Brocken 2003, chapter 6) and so-called "nu folk" (see Winter and Keegan-Phipps 2016, 8).[9] In the British Isles today, commercially viable modern folk artists and a burgeoning homegrown folk industry[10] exist alongside more niche, traditional-leaning and participatory practices centered around folk musics and vernacular dance of varied ethnic and national extractions. It is within this latter context that present-day engagements with American old-time can be understood.

Contexts of old-time in the British Isles

> **April 16–21, 2017:** Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week, Oxfordshire
>
> *For one week every Eastertime, a critical mass of British and European bluegrass and old-time enthusiasts converge at Kingham Hill School in Oxfordshire. Having attended residential old-time workshops in the U.S. nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains or the hills surrounding Elkins, West Virginia—locations that boast deep historical connections with the musics under question—the English private boarding school setting in the story-book Cotswold hills felt a little austere and jarring; old-time in a different sense. The setting reminded me of the classical string chamber music camps I had attended as a teenager and also of my own early school years in England. Also, the "old English school smell" transported me back into my own past and provoked feelings of nostalgia. I wondered, then, the extent to which the experiential dimensions of old-time camps in the U.S. are enhanced by their setting and their explicit place-attachment. There is, of course, something special about playing long-circulating tunes from the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Or is this just one way I have come to romanticize old-time's various places and pasts?*

[9] Interestingly, as Trish Winter and Simon Keegan-Phipps note, the nebulous term "nu" folk—used here to incorporate the output of commercially successful artists like Mumford and Sons and Laura Marling—is "directly locatable in the British and American folk movements of the mid-twentieth century," consisting of "singer-songwriters whose music foregrounds those acoustic instruments that have arrived in Britain via American folk culture" (2016, 8). "Nu" folk, then, is an example of more recent U.S–British Isles (folk) musical exchange.

[10] In an English context (and pertaining to English traditional musics), Winter and Keegan-Phipps 2014 report that folk arts are currently in a period of resurgence. Their data suggest that infrastructures supportive of folk-related activities in England are multiplying (festivals, educational institutions, organizations) and that the audience demographic is getting younger.

The energy, passion, and love for the music demonstrated by Sore Fingers participants, however, was as potent as I had felt it at similar camps in the U.S.[11] *Animated conversations and debates frequently bubbled up over dinner about tune versions, recordings, and musician preferences. There was an intimate, familial atmosphere within which many participants were delighted to catch up with old, likeminded friends. Even though this was only my second year in attendance, I already felt part of the community, recognizing many familiar faces. Informal, impromptu jam sessions sprung up in between classes, at breaktimes, and in evenings in any free nooks that musicians could find. It was clear that participants were there because they loved the music. Evidently, too, they thrived in the special community that the music fosters.*

One evening was particularly memorable. As it appears to be custom, an old-time jam session started up in the small, on-site bar. Amid chatter, beer drinking, and sounds bleeding into the room from the multiple bluegrass jams underway in the adjacent dining hall, the jam started by three or so musicians gradually attracted more and more. At the center was John Herrmann—an Asheville-based musician on staff who had learned from the Surry County musician Tommy Jarrell—and fiddler Sammy Lind of the celebrated Oregon-based Foghorn String Band. These musicians were joined by British old-time fiddlers Jock Tyldesley and Emily Smith who were also on staff. Around them amassed a growing cluster of camp participants—a number of whom were friends and acquaintances I had made at festivals in the U.S. and England, respectively. I took my seat and picked up my fiddle as the group fired through one Surry County-associated tune after another—not a surprising repertory choice based on Herrmann's personal musical lineage. I was enthralled to play these familiar tunes as they reminded me of my own attachment to Surry County and the fieldwork I had carried out there. In fact, I was set to return to Mount Airy in a matter of weeks. In the jam, we sat in close proximity, leaning in to hear one another better and to lock ourselves into the tight rhythm. "Wow, this is <u>quite</u> the Round Peak marathon tonight!" my English jam neighbor commented.

[11]Sore Fingers is a residential bluegrass and old-time music camp established in 1996. For a brief history, see Sore Fingers n.d.

Figure 4.1: Old-time jam at Sore Fingers Bluegrass and Old-Time Week, 2017. Photograph by author

In a similar way to dispersed U.S.-based old-time practices, it is difficult to speak of a single British Isles old-time "scene."[12] Instead, participation is concentrated around a series of localized clusters—namely, around regular or semi-regular jam sessions, workshops, or concert series scattered throughout the British Isles. While some of these sessions enjoy sustained longevity (the Shakespeare's Head jam I attended in Islington, London is an example), others come and go with the waxing and waning of participants' interests. One can conceive of an old-time scene in a broader sense, however, through considering the larger annual events and festivals that unify participants

[12] An overview of scholarship on the notion of music "scenes" is included in the introduction of this dissertation.

across their respective local scenes. While pinnacle old-time festivals and conventions in the U.S. attract audiences in the thousands, the number of attendees at comparative events in the British Isles is in the hundreds. Because of smaller numbers, one is likely to encounter familiar faces should they attend multiple events of this kind. Among many of my interlocutors, the intimacy and friendliness of the British Isles scene is a dominant factor motivating their sustained participation.

Founded in 1993, the Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance (FOAOTMAD) is a volunteer-run organization dedicated to uniting musicians and enthusiasts across the UK. The organization was established by the late English old-time musician Keith Johnson who had developed a vast network of connections with musicians in both the UK and the U.S. (Banks 2015, 9). Today, FOAOTMAD runs educational workshops, camps ("picking" weekends), and an annual festival. FOAOTMAD's Gainsborough Festival held each February in Lincolnshire is a significant event in the British Isles old-time calendar that showcases artists from the U.S. and British Isles, respectively.[13] According to current chairperson Alan Pridgeon, FOAOTMAD has around 415 active, dues-paying members in the present day; their Facebook page has close to 4000 worldwide members.[14]

As explored in chapter 1, "old-time" as a musical category is particularly hard to define. How, then, does FOAOTMAD define the musics it supports? The quotation below is compelling in its limited regional purview:

> Old-time is the term which is used to describe the traditional folk music of the Appalachian Mountains in the USA. Its roots are in the British, Irish and Scottish tunes, songs and dances

[13] For information on the Gainsborough Festival, see Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance 2019a.
[14] Alan Pridgeon, email correspondence with the author, September 2019.

> which settlers took with them and over time these have developed their own American flavour. The greatest difference in the music are the introduction of the 5-string banjo and a sound made up largely of stringed instruments—concertina, drums and whistles are rarely used. Some of the songs are British ballads but many are American originals. . .The term old-time is also applied to the later commercialisation of this music when recording came into use, sometimes referred to as Hillbilly Music. It is one of the main roots from which Country and Bluegrass music later emerged. (Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance, 2019b)

In this description, the unspecified author positions old-time as something specifically (and perhaps exclusively) "Appalachian" and as a musical style with strong British Isles roots. This definition fails to encapsulate the musics' multi-ethnic origins although for knowledgeable parties, mention of the five-string banjo implicitly signals black influence. By drawing attention to the absence of the concertina, drums, and whistles, the author marks old-time as thoroughly distinctive from (albeit related to) British folk traditions. This definition lacks specificity, is Appalachia-centric, and uses the term "American" in a vague way. Among my interlocutors, however, far more nuanced understandings of old-time, its history, and its stylistic and cultural complexities circulate.

FOAOTMAD publishes a quarterly magazine—*Old Time News*—that is arguably a companion to the U.S. publication *The Old–Time Herald*. This glossy magazine of around forty A4-size pages per issue includes detailed event reports and photographs; reviews of books and recordings; lists of upcoming events; musician interviews; and notated tune or song transcriptions. Each issue features articles written and photographs taken by members of the British Isles old-time community—the result is a collaborative, grassroots effort. Moreover, the magazine offers insight into the vibrancy of old-time activity in the British Isles and highlights strong connections and ample dialogue between musicians on both side of the Atlantic.

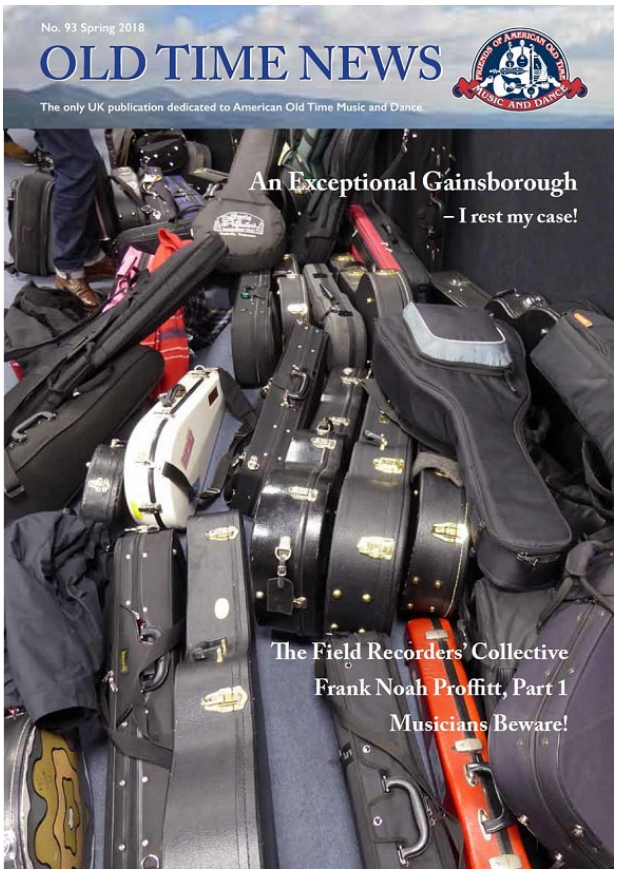

Figure 4.2: Cover of *Old Time News,* Spring 2018

Prior to the inception of *Old Time News* in the 1990s, British music historian and collector Tony Russell edited and published a London-based journal, *Old Time Music,* that ran from 1971 to 1989.[15] More academic in approach than the FOAOTMAD counterpart—its contributors included prominent scholars of southern U.S. musics including Kip Lornell and Charles K. Wolfe—its content is directed at parties including musicians, scholars, and enthusiasts. Although there is no extant data on readership figures, the fact the publication existed and was sustained over an eighteen-

[15] For context of Russell's publication within a broader landscape of old-time and country music fanzines on both sides of the Atlantic, see Reish 2017 (130–134).

year period suggests that there was at least a small receptive audience in the British Isles at this time.[16] Russell's definition of old-time, however, is broader in stylistic and regional terms than the definition provided by FOAOTMAD. As explained in *Old Time Music's* inaugural journal, Russell argues that old-time encompasses "stringbands and Western swing bands, cowboy and Cajun, blues and bluegrass—and a great deal more" (Russell 1971, 3).

Old Time Music, however, does not offer much insight into British Isles-based old-time events in the 1970s and 1980s—likely because there were just a handful of them at this time. Instead, the magazine features painstaking discographic data aimed at record collectors; performer biographies and interviews; field reports from U.S.–based events; and recording reviews, among other things.[17] In a similar way to *Old Time News,* Russell's magazine relied heavily on input from enthusiasts—his attempts to create a more consolidated community are apparent. The following call-out for participation is illustrative of this community-building urge in a pre-social media age:

> Old time enthusiasts are scattered over a huge area, and it takes time for news to spread. What happened in your town yesterday may not reach your fellow-enthusiast's ears for weeks—and this can lead to disappointments, lost possibilities. We are especially anxious, at OTM, to make contact with old time musicians. If any reader knows such people, and thinks that they would be willing to correspond with us, we should be glad to hear about it. (Russell 1971/1972)

[16] Curious about the fanzine's international distribution, I contacted musicologist Gregory N. Reish who has carried out research on Russell's publication. Reish explained that the magazine was distributed in UK, U.S., Japan, Denmark, Australia, and Finland. This international outreach suggests that Russell wanted to unify old-time enthusiasts on a transnational scale. (Reish, email correspondence with the author, September 2019).
[17] At the Southern Folklife Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I embarked on a close analysis of Russell's magazine from 1971 to 1989. In the archive, I worked with a near-complete run of magazine, examining its materials to determine what the captive audience might have found interesting and relevant. As *Old Time Music* was effectively a one-person operation, there are a number of gaps in its publication—especially in the 1980s.

Prior to Russell's fanzine, Cohen and Donaldson highlight the existence of a small community of hillbilly recording collectors active in Britain in the 1950s (2014, 71–72). Although the existence of the Hillbilly-Folk Record Collectors' Club (and the accompanying quarterly *Hillbilly-Folk Record Journal* running from 1954 to1957) does not offer much insight into *practices* of old-time musics in the British Isles at this time, it does suggest there was at least a small captive audience.

Old-time events in the British Isles

The data presented in the following table highlight significant events that punctuate the British Isles old-time calendar. The table does not, however, include more generalized folk festivals that might have a modest old-time presence, or localized jam sessions of which there are numerous. The data are gleaned from FOAOTMAD's 2019 annual calendar as well as from information provided by my interlocutors. While many of the events listed here have a strictly old-time focus, others attract a strong old-time contingent (bluegrass festivals, for example). The map that follows the table highlights the locations of listed events:

Event	Location	Month
1. Gainsborough Festival	Gainsborough, Lincolnshire	February
2. Irish Old Time Appalachian Music Gathering	Lisdoonvarna, County Clare	February
3. Richmond Old Time Music Gathering	Richmond, London	April
4. Sore Fingers Old-Time and Bluegrass Week	Kingham, Oxfordshire	April
5. Crossover Festival	Congleton, Cheshire	May
6. Albion to Appalachia	Crowcombe, Somerset	May/June
7. FOAOTMAD Spring Camp	Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire	May
8. Fire in the Mountain	Near Aberystwyth, Wales	May
9. Knockdown Picking Weekend	Shrawley, Worcestershire	June
10. Alsia Fest Old Time and Americana Campout	Penzance, Cornwall	July
11. Ghost Hill Old Time Picking and Fiddling Weekend	Mullion, Cornwall	July
12. Windermere Old Time Music and Dance Weekend	Ulverston, Cumbria	July
13. Didmarton Bluegrass Festival	Cirencester, Gloucestershire	September
14. Sweet Sunny South Festival	Hastings, East Sussex	September
15. FOAOTMAD November workshops	Kington, Herefordshire	November

Table 4.1: British Isles Old-Time Events

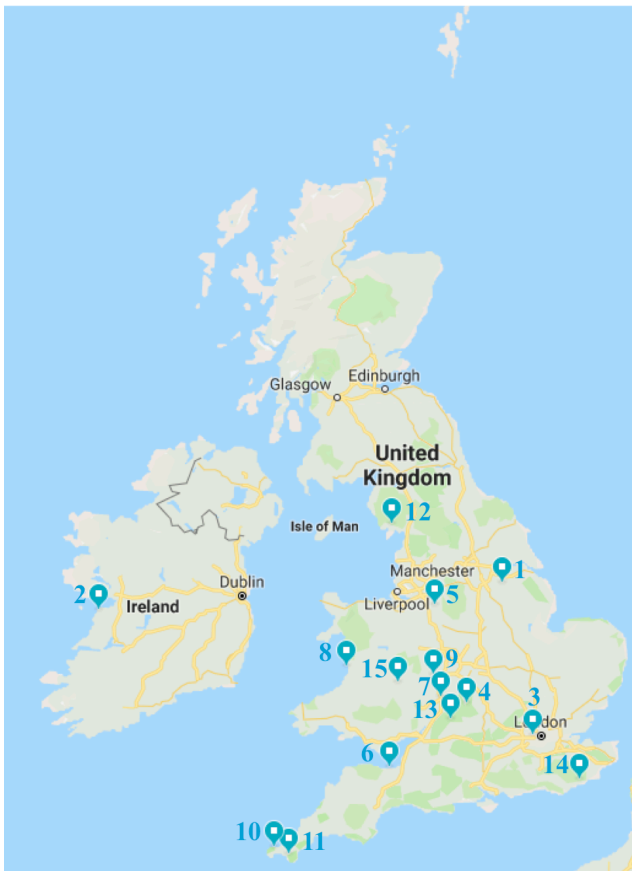

Figure 4.3: Map of British Isles old-time events. (The numbers correspond with the table above.) Source: Google Maps. Annotations by author

In the spring and summer months, a number of these events occur in close succession. In a similar way to participants at U.S–based festivals during this season, dedicated enthusiasts try to attend several temporally contiguous events—many of my interlocutors admitted to doing this. As one will likely see familiar faces from one event to the next, the sense of community is fortified. For example, in the springs of 2016 and 2017, I attended Sore Fingers followed by the now-defunct Orwell Bluegrass Festival at a time when I knew very few British Isles-based participants. Across these two events, I recognized many faces and quickly felt a part of the community.

Old-time activities in the British Isles, however, do not exist in a vacuum—there is considerable interchange between musicians and enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic and elsewhere in Europe. While U.S. artists often headline at British Isles-based festivals or participate in concert series and workshops, connections are strengthened, too, through social media pages. Furthermore, a number of my interlocutors spoke of their close friendships with U.S.-based musicians, stating that they had hosted visiting musicians at their homes or had been hosted, themselves, when they had traveled to America. While visiting U.S.-based artists undoubtedly come with a desirable coating of authenticity, there are a healthy number of old-time bands and professional musicians native to the British Isles. For example, the 2019 Gainsborough Festival featured twelve acts. Among them were a selection of respected British Isles-based bands including Old Mother, the Wagonhoppers, and the Firecrackers.

There are multiple strands that connect old-time activity in the British Isles to the equally vibrant homegrown bluegrass scene(s). Delineating the shape and development of bluegrass participation in the British Isles, however, is beyond the purview of this chapter. Old-time and bluegrass participants are connected predominantly through events that cater to both audiences—Sore Fingers, Didmarton, and Orwell festivals are cases in point. My ethnographic work, however, revealed that old-time and bluegrass enthusiasts in the British Isles operate largely in separate spheres and identify themselves apart from one another. While this distinction is perhaps not surprising considering differences in musical style and ensemble participation, it was especially marked among my British Isles interlocutors. At Sore Fingers and Orwell, for example, old-time and bluegrass jam sessions were noticeably separate from one another with little-to-no musician overlap. Likewise,

distinctions between the two scenes were made by a number of my interlocutors—their comments focusing on differences in style, musicianship, and scene culture.

Inroads into old-time

Methodology

In this section, I present findings drawn from twenty-three interviews with selected and self-selecting participants to explore various factors that have inspired, driven, and helped sustain their personal engagement with old-time musics in the British Isles. This sample consists of sixteen individuals born between 1939 and 1965; four born between 1965 and 1972; and three born between 1981 and 1988. As the majority of my interlocutors were aged between fifty-five and eighty, this sample is, of course, incomplete and unbalanced—my fieldwork revealed that old-time participants in the British Isles are distributed more evenly across a broader spectrum of age groups. Nevertheless, even within this sample group, personal entry points into old-time and reasons for sustained participation are diverse.

While eleven of the interviews were conducted in person or on the telephone, twelve responses materialized from a request I posted to the FOAOTMAD Facebook page seeking willing volunteers to take a survey. Among my interlocutors, eleven individuals identified as being (or having been) active in the organization of old-time events in the British Isles— current or former FOAOTMAD committee members as well as those who have coordinated sessions, workshops, or concert series. It is important to note that across my entire sample group, eight participants have never visited the U.S. in pursuit of old-time. Twelve participants shared that they travel to the U.S for this reason on an annual (or near annual) basis, and three stated that they have visited only once

or twice for musical activities. Finally, while the majority of my interlocutors did not identify as professional musicians, three among them make a living (or supplement their income) through music.

Entry points, motivations, stories

There is an absence of written accounts that document the genesis of concentrated old-time activity in the British Isles. With the development of centralizing, consolidating forces like FOAOTMAD in the 1990s and the establishment of a string of festivals since this time, it is now easier to track some of the activities and personalities that have shaped (and continue to shape) the scene. How, then, and in what capacities were enthusiasts involved with old-time musics in the British Isles prior to the 1990s and before the emergence of said infrastructures? Partial answers to these questions lie fragmented in the stories and memories of participants, as well as in sundry documentary traces—for example, select moments in Russell's *Old Time Music* magazine or *The Old–Time Herald*.

When I began this inquiry, a number of enthusiasts urged me to interview Ray Banks—a long-time participant who could offer insight into old-time (and related) activities in Britain dating back to the 1950s. I had already encountered Banks several times in the U.S at the Swannanoa Gathering and Clifftop but interviewed him during a break between classes at Sore Fingers in April 2017. What emerged from his story was his firm grounding in the 1950s and 1960s British folk revival milieu. At this time, he was exposed to multiple strands of American folk that paved the way for his life-long interest in and participation with old-time. Similarly, as with my other interlocutors, Banks's interest and involvement with the musics is nested within the other "pathways" of his life—other interests, musical affinities, and responsibilities.

Banks (b.1942) is a retired British Coal scientist who grew up in South Wales and moved to Yorkshire, England in the late 1960s.[18] While old-time banjo is a major pastime—he attends old-time camps and festivals on both sides of the Atlantic whenever he can—Banks is also a keen mountaineer. Among his earliest musical influences was skiffle in the 1950s—a lot of the repertory as he saw it consisted of "old-time tunes done in a flash new way." When explaining skiffle's appeal, Banks explained that it was the music's participatory nature: "the simplicity of the fact that a couple of guys with a guitar and a washboard or something and a tea chest bass . . .could actually turn out music."

In discussion, Banks shared numerous colorful, witty stories and anecdotes. For instance, in 2000, while playing in an old-time session at the Sidmouth Folk Festival (an event dating back to the mid-1950s) Banks recalled noticing a figure standing behind him. The figure, it turns out, was skiffle celebrity Lonnie Donegan. As a long-time fan, Banks engaged Donegan in conversation:

> We were talking about this, that, and the other and I asked, "this skiffle you've got is mostly old-time tunes! Where did you find the tunes and stuff? Did you go to America and get them?" "No!" he said, "I didn't go to America. I got them all [here] from junk shops."

Banks speculated that a lot of American folk recordings that ended up in British junk shops at that time "had probably been brought over by the GIs during the war. And abandoned. Records that would have just been lying about. . .doing nowt."

Around 1963, Banks purchased a five-string banjo from a local junk shop, borrowed his friend's copy of a Pete Seeger banjo instruction manual, and learned how to frail. He distinctly

[18] Ray Banks in discussion with the author, April 2017. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this in-person interview.

remembers the popular old-time tune "Cripple Creek" as being the first that he mastered. During the 1960s, Banks explained that hearing artists like Pete Seeger, Peggy Seeger, and Tom Paxton perform at folk clubs were foundational moments that deepened his engagement with American vernacular musics.

In 1964, during his university years, Banks formed an old-timey, American-flavored folk band, The Virginia Bootleggers, with English and Welsh musician friends. "It wasn't really a string band," Banks commented, "but a folk band doing American songs with a vaguely American-ish instrumentals. . .well, guitar and banjo and harmonica. . .we didn't have a fiddle."

He spoke fondly of the band's television debut on the Welsh-speaking folk program *Hob y Deri Dando*. "Our band was probably the first old-time band to be on Welsh television!" he exclaimed. "It was done in a studio made to look like a barn with bales of hay all over the place." I asked if Banks had been aware of any other British-based old-time or American folk-focused bands active in the United Kingdom at the time. After pausing to think, he mentioned the celebrated, London-based Malcolm Price Trio who had made a handful of commercial recordings. "There might have been some others, you know. I lived in the sticks of Wales!"

Banks moved to South Yorkshire in 1969 to work in a British Coal research laboratory set up in the aftermath of the 1966 Aberfan coal disaster. He explained that this move coincided with a hiatus from old-time musics. Banks surfaced on the old-time circuit again in the late 1990s and between 2004 and 2009, served as the chairperson of FOAOTMAD. At this time, the president of the society was Tom Paley of the New Lost City Ramblers who had taken up residency in England. "I'm very proud of being chairperson of something Tom Paley was president of!" Banks explained, beaming. "Tom used to play with Woody Guthrie! He's played with Lead Belly!"

Guy Tucker (b.1939) also traces his involvement with old-time music in the British Isles to a time before there was the consolidated notion of a "scene." Tucker was born in India, has resided in various locations across England, and lives today in Torquay, Devon.[19] Like Banks, his early exposure to skiffle as a teenager laid a solid foundation for his later embrace of old-time. While initially taking up the banjo around the age of fifteen to play in a jazz band with his younger brother, the pair soon started playing skiffle with a group of friends: "we used to go to places like The Shoot. . .a little folk club in London. . .and play a few tunes and we'd get a free spaghetti bolognese!"

Upon asking Tucker if he was aware of earlier engagements with American old-time in the British Isles, he shared an illuminating story:

> When I was playing skiffle, I had an uncle who turned up one day with a fiddle and sat down and started playing "Old Joe Clark," "Skip to My Lou," and all the rest of them. He used to do it in the 1930s. They used to get on their motorbikes and go out into the country and have a picnic and play music. And it used to be all the same stuff, you know, so the old-time music [in England] must have been going on in the 1930s!

While attending art college, he bought another banjo second-hand. Located inside the instrument case was a Pete Seeger instruction manual—the famous "red" book, he told me—likely the same (or a similar) book to which Ray Banks had referred. As Tucker did not read standard notation, he admitted that working through that manual slowed his musical progress quite significantly. It was through Art Rosenbaum's "Art of the Mountain Banjo" instruction book (originally published in 1975), however, that he became engaged with old-time in a serious way. By this time, Tucker was frequenting English bluegrass festivals in search of other old-time enthusiasts.

[19] Guy Tucker in discussion with the author, June 2017. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this in-person interview.

With clarity, he remembers the impact of attending the Edale Bluegrass Festival in Derbyshire. Tucker recalled a transformative moment at Edale in which he found himself playing alone on the periphery of a bluegrass jam:

> One day, I was playing [old-time banjo tunes] alone and I always play with my eyes closed. I could hear this fiddle playing, too. I thought I was imagining it. So I opened my eyes and there was a fiddler and a guitar and a couple of other people playing with me. So it grew from there. We eventually had quite a load of people who took up this old-time. . .or came out of the woodwork that could play it and had a tent at Edale. . .which was quite extraordinary because it was *the* bluegrass festival. Two thousand or three thousand people used to come before it collapsed.

In the early 1980s, Tucker formed an old-time band in Manchester called Grey Eagle and also played banjo for Appalachian dance troupes in Manchester and Torquay. In the 1990s, he became the inaugural chairperson of FOAOTMAD—a position he held for seven years. Although Tucker admits to being slightly disconnected from the activities of the British Isles old-time scene today, he still maintains a close affinity with the musics and remains in contact with the friends he has made through it. Old-time, he explained, sits alongside his passion for Western art music—in particular, the works of Franz Schubert (1797–1828) and Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625).

While skiffle was an entry point for Banks and Tucker, a handful of my other interviewees approached old-time following close engagement or involvement with other American musical styles. Scottish-born, Wales-based Jock Tyldesley (b.1966) is a prominent old-time fiddler who performs regularly at old-time and other folk festivals in the UK.[20] He also teaches the style at camps and workshops. Tyldesley's passion for old-time developed in the 1990s following success in the UK as a

[20] Jock Tyldesley in discussion with the author, April 2017.

traditional Cajun fiddler with his band, the Flatville Aces. Concerning his entry into Cajun musics, Tyldesley told me that he was first drawn to the sound in his early twenties: "I'd heard some in a movie, I think, and also on a music documentary. There was also a guy called Andy Kershaw who had a late-night [BBC] Radio 1 show and he played some. . .it just kind of grabbed me, enough to get my fiddle from my parents' house and learn that style."[21]

To explain his inroad into old-time, Tyldesley recalled a particularly transformative moment. In the late 1990s, he flew to Mexico City to play a gig with esteemed American musician Dirk Powell.[22] Following this, he returned to Powell's home in Louisiana for a Mardi Gras celebration. Also staying with Powell at this time were a number of notable old-time musicians from North Carolina and New York with whom Tyldesley jammed: "it was just a massive thing and it kind of like overwhelmed me," he explained, "so I went back the next year for more and picked up a lot of it [the repertory] then." Today, Tyldesley plays old-time and Cajun musics with a selection of British Isles-based bands, teaches at folk arts camps, and acts as a sideman for touring U.S. musicians. Even though he has traveled to Louisiana a number of times for musical purposes, Tyldesley is yet to attend a U.S.-based old-time festival.

Welsh-born Ben McManus (b.1988)—the youngest of my interlocutors—attributes bluegrass as his most direct entry points into old-time. Multi-instrumentalist McManus is an audio engineer who is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Library and Information Sciences—a degree he hopes will pave the way for a career as a musical folklife archivist.[23] Before serious inquiry into

[21] Tyldesely, email correspondence with the author, September 2019.
[22] Tyldesley in discussion with the author, April 2017.
[23] Ben McManus in discussion with the author, April 2017. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this in-person interview.

bluegrass, McManus explained three formative experiences that inspired his affinity for musics considered "folk" or those with folk roots: a concert of British revivalist guitarist Bert Jansch; viewing Martin Scorsese's Bob Dylan documentary, *No Direction Home* (2005); and hearing bluegrass artists Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs for the first time.

In his early twenties, once fully immersed in bluegrass and playing bass with a Cardiff-based band The Dead Regulars, McManus took his guitar to the Welsh folk festival Fire in the Mountain. It was there that he first encountered an old-time jam session:

> I was like, "they're playing bluegrass! This is great!" I didn't even notice the difference, you know [between old-time and bluegrass]. So I went in with my guitar and I started playing all these massive fast bluegrass runs over this slow old-time music. And there were these Irish guys after the first song they were like "woah. . .you need to calm down a bit with that picking!". . .so they kinda taught me how to do it that night, and I just sat there for about nine hours with them all night until it got light, drinking tons of whiskey with them.

Today, McManus is well connected with musicians in both the British Isles and U.S. and is a regular attendee at sessions and festivals in England and Wales. To pursue a deeper understanding of the musics's history, McManus undertook a folk archive internship at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC in 2016–2017, and in addition a variety of old-time album projects on which he has performed, has toured the British Isles and U.S. with Colorado-based fiddler Clara Delfina to promote their self-made album *Homespun* (2017).

Three of my interlocutors became involved in old-time musics through their connections with English vernacular dance. Among them is Somerset-based Nick Pilley (b.1953) who worked in computing grew interested in a panoply of folk styles during his teenage years.[24] While at college in

[24] Nick Pilley, email correspondence with the author, August 2017.

the northern English city of Durham, he frequented local folk clubs and developed an affinity for Morris dancing. Although he danced a little himself, Pilley more often accompanied Morris troupes on guitar or sometimes with the mandolin. In the early 1990s, while his wife was dancing with an English wooden shoe clog team, he was "roped in as a musician." Soon after, he joined his dancer wife as a musician with a British-based Appalachian clogging group.

When Pilley began accompanying Appalachian dance, the sound and technique of old-time was new to him: "the guy that led the local group did me a cassette," he explained. "On one side it had the Fuzzy Mountain String Band and on the other (an epiphany!!) the Highwoods String Band. I was totally hooked. . .It [the music to which he listens] has been about 85% old-time ever since." Among many related activities, Pilley has authored several articles about clogging including a co-authored piece for the *The Old-Time Herald* (Pilley and Rudd, 2002). Pilley joined the FOAOTMAD committee in 2003 within which he held a number of distinct roles—secretary, publicity officer, and as the organizer of the Gainsborough Festival. In the capacity of festival organizer (and through connections made via clogging), he and his wife developed close friendships with notable old-time musicians and dancers in the U.S.

Suzanne Ambrose (b. 1972) works as a caregiver in the northern English county of Cumbria. Her entry into the old-time world also came through sustained experiences with Morris dance.[25] Ambrose began Morris dancing at the age of thirteen—a pastime she undertook for around thirty years—participating with troupes in the counties of Kent and Cumbria. Around twenty years ago, Ambrose joined an Appalachian dance team, Legs Levens, based in the small village of Levens,

[25] Suzanne Ambrose in discussion with the author, September 2019. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this telephone interview.

Cumbria—a group she dances with to this day. Initially nervous about transitioning from Morris to Appalachian-style dancing, she explained she took to it fairly easily—she had danced in some form or another since the age of three. When I questioned the origins of the small yet appreciative Appalachian dance scene in the British Isles, Ambrose speculated that it likely emerged in response to the Irish dance show *Riverdance* in the mid-1990s. *Riverdance*, as she saw it, sparked a widespread public interest in various step-based dances of British Isles and U.S extractions.

It was through Appalachian clogging that Ambrose first became involved with old-time music as a bass player. "I got fed up of going to sessions and not being able to play anything!" she told me. "You can't dance to every tune!" Today, Ambrose attends around seven old-time and bluegrass festivals across the British Isles every year and coordinates a concert series— "American Roots in Cumbria"—that brings to her home county old-time, bluegrass, and Americana artists from the U.S and UK. Ambrose has visited the U.S for musical pursuits on two occasions—on her second trip she won first place in her age category in the flatfoot dancing competition at Clifftop.

Emily Poole Henley's (b.1958) story offers insight into a more happenstance encounter with the musics that led to a deeper, life-changing engagement.[26] Working in patient liaison for a mental health forensic hospital, Poole Henley came upon old-time music by accident while actively searching for new friends in the 1990s following a move to Somerset, England:

> I figured a good way to meet people was to go to a music session. So I went to a music session with my melodeon. . .but I'd never really played it with other people. I found a session in a pub and went there and they were playing Irish music. They were not particularly friendly. . .doing the "backs turned, three times through, ignore you" thing. And

[26] Emily Poole Henley in discussion with the author, June 2017. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this in-person interview.

> other than me there were a bunch of people sitting on the outskirts of the session looking equally ill at ease. They had banjos and things and they told me about a session somewhere else which I went to and that's how I got into old-time music.

Since then, Poole Henley has become a prominent force in the British Isles old-time scene and has played an integral organizational role in FOAOTMAD (along with her husband and former chairperson Andrew Henley). Furthermore, she belongs to several old-time string bands and has taught banjo classes at British-based folk arts workshops. As their love for the musics deepened, Poole Henley and her husband purchased a home in Mount Airy, North Carolina—the musical heritage epicenter I explore in chapter 2—as a base from which to explore old-time in the U.S. for several months each year.

These stories documenting entry points into old-time exist among many others that surfaced among my interlocutors in interview and in countless other informal discussions during my fieldwork. While a number of interlocutors expressed serendipitous encounters with the musics, stumbling upon them in public settings like pubs or community centers, others specified that their interest was sparked or intensified by the soundtracks of television shows like *The Beverley Hillbillies* (1962–1971), *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) and *Cold Mountain* (2003). A number of participants, too, explained that the participatory, supposedly non-hierarchical nature of old-time offered them low-stakes opportunities to revisit musical skills or instruments they learned as children.

Community building

When I asked my British Isles interlocutors what was particularly appealing to them about belonging to an old-time *community*, most highlighted the inclusivity and accessibility of musical

participation regardless of one's skill level, and the generosity of other community members. Below, I share a number of responses:

> It's a very friendly community where everyone's into the exact same thing as you are! Everyone's very open and willing to teach and invite new people into the scene. It's amazing that you can learn directly from your favorite musicians in workshops. There's a lot of late night sessioning at festivals which is always a lot of fun. And everyone keeps in touch through social media pages throughout the rest of the year, and are always willing to help out or offer advice when others ask.
>
> —*Caitlin Burchett (b.1988) Portsmouth, England. Occupation: Mental health nurse* (survey participant, July 2019).

> There will be some people who insist that a variant of a tune which will have been played by such-and-such a person should have this bowing style or that twiddle in the third B part, but overall, I find I can play with most people even if my version of the tune ain't exact…It's more about the coming together to celebrate the tune and its playing.
>
> —*Martin Kennard (b. 1957), based near Southampton, England. Occupation: Retired* (survey participant, August 2017).

> We are "kindred spirits" of the same "tribe." Unlike bluegrass, old-time music is not "competitive"—everyone plays the tune, and only the tune, together. This carries through to the people. When we meet, nobody cares who works at what or how successful a career they are having—it's all about the music.
>
> — *William Duddy (b.1951), Belfast, Northern Ireland. Occupation: Retired civil engineer* (survey participant, August 2019)

> [The old-time community offers] Good company, [and is] friendly and generous. Encourages all levels of playing but you don't have to join in to get along. Offers hours of self-produced entertainment and fun.
>
> — *Jane Lewis (b.1953), Midsomer Norton, Somerset, England. Occupation: Retired clinical biochemist* (survey participant, July 2019)

> What appeals to me about the community of Old Time musicians that I am a part of is that they don't care how good anyone is, they just want to share the great music. They want you

> to enjoy playing together with them. It is all about sharing. Sharing the playing, sharing the knowledge and skills, enjoying the music and encouraging you to have a go. I had only been playing [banjo] about four months when I went to my first camp. It was wet so we were in the pub in a crowded tight knit session of about fifteen or so players. I was aware that I was playing lots of wrong notes so I didn't play very loud because I thought everyone could hear them. A very good fiddler was sitting immediately in front of me and turned round and asked me to play louder because he couldn't hear me. I explained that I was a beginner but he said he didn't care about any wrong notes, he just wanted to hear the driving rhythm of my banjo. He will never know just how much he encouraged me that day. People from all over the UK have become good friends even though we don't see each other all the time but when we meet we just want to play Old Time together.
>
> —*Joan Abbott (b.1946), Sedbergh, Cumbria, England. Occupation: Retired* (survey participant, August 2019)
>
> [Most appealing is] the openness and friendliness I have come across, the people are very ready (almost insistent) to invite contributions from newcomers.
>
> — *John Rushton (b. 1949), Birmingham, England. Occupation: Retired electrician and hotel maintenance manager* (survey participant, August 2017).
>
> We've met a whole load of really nice people doing this music. It is a way of meeting people and experiencing life. It is something the two of us [he and his wife] do together…You meet all sorts of people.
>
> —*Andrew Henley* (b.1953) *Devon, England. Occupation: Doctor* (personal interview, June 2017)

For Jackie Kempton (b.1963), an Outdoor Education Officer in Pembrokeshire, Wales, however, the British Isles old-time community she entered in the early 1990s looks quite different in the present day:

> I have found that in the last seven years or so that the old-time community has changed somewhat, and feels quite competitive as the genre has become more popular. Initially for me it was the camaraderie of this small group of people who had a passion for the music and sharing of tunes freely with each other, chatting about the tune and its history perhaps, and generally socializing on a deeper level rather than just objectively gleaning information. I have felt in more recent years that it has become (in the UK) like people are fearful of sharing information freely orally, yet at the same time information is all over the internet and

> everyone is an expert (I didn't get this feeling when I visited the U.S.). I have started to hang out with folks in Ireland where the camaraderie is still very much about sharing and enjoying the music.[27]

Today, Kempton attends sessions, festivals, and folk arts workshops on a regular basis and organizes a concert series with a strong old-time focus that showcases prominent musicians from both the U.S. and the UK.

Organizing a local "scene": old-time in Richmond, London

The majority of old-time events in the British Isles result from the tireless work of volunteer organizers. From the efforts of FOAOTMAD's unpaid committee members to the coordination of concert series, festivals, and local jam sessions, much energy and time is invested to sustain these activities for the wider community. Yet, as Finnegan expresses in *The Hidden Musicians*, the labor that supports and catalyzes grassroots musical organization often goes unnoticed or is taken for granted (1989, 3).

In this section, I focus on the construction of a particularly productive localized old-time scene in the suburban town of Richmond situated in the London borough of Richmond-upon-Thames. Here, I draw on interviews with two of the scene's primary voluntary organizers—Julian Marshall and Emily Waddilove—to explore their motivations and to gain insight into the labor involved. What emerged from these discussions was their desire to form and help sustain a welcoming community based around shared musical interests. Likewise, to cultivate this local music

[27] Jackie Kempton, participant in the author's survey, December 2017.

scene was a way for the organizers to address several local-level, place-based issues concerning the lack of opportunities for live music and the arts.

Richmond is an affluent, picturesque town of abundant green spaces situated approximately nine miles from central London. With its "posh" reputation, Richmond, on first glance, is perhaps an unlikely location for a burgeoning old-time scene. Yet the two jam sessions I attended in 2016 at the Cricketer's—an upmarket, historic pub situated alongside the Richmond Green—were among the most hospitable and well-populated I have ever witnessed in England or in the U.S.

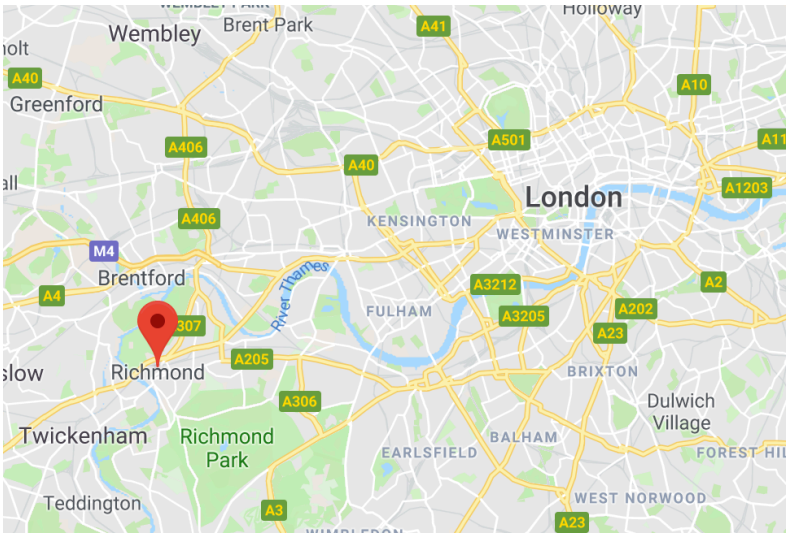

Figure 4.4: Map of Richmond, London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames. Source: Google Maps

Figure 4.5: Jam at The Cricketers, Richmond. April 2016.

Richmond's old-time scene originated with the inception of a regular jam session in 2014. When I carried out this research, "Richmond Old-Time Music and Dance" (ROTMAD) consisted of bi-monthly sessions, an annual two-day old-time gathering, a house concert series that hosts visiting artists from the U.S., and a semi-regular old-time square dance. Additionally, in nearby Chiswick, London, ROTMAD coordinates an open mic event entitled "Old-Timeyoke" which, as Julian Marshall explained to me, is "basically old-time karaoke!"[28]

Marshall (b.1969) is the principal coordinator of ROTMAD and acts on a voluntary, unpaid basis. By profession, Marshall is a journalist. As a pastime he plays old-time fiddle—the only musician I have witnessed playing a left-handed violin—and is a keen Appalachian square dancer

[28] Julian Marshall in discussion with the author, July 2018. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this telephone interview.

and caller. Marshall's interest in old-time fiddling developed around seven years ago after attending classes at London's Cecil Sharp House and Sore Fingers. Upon his return from Sore Fingers, Marshall sought out other musicians who lived nearby—a handful of informal musical gatherings among friends morphed into the ROTMAD session that runs to this day. Regarding attendance numbers at the initial sessions, Marshall stated that

> I would say there were six or eight of us at the first one and then it very quickly grew. There was a fairly consistent turnout of at least a dozen to fifteen people every time and it suddenly got more and more popular. A lot of people would come not just from London but people who lived down in Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Berkshire, Hampshire. . .people would come from quite a long way away because Richmond is quite an accessible point for people who were coming from that side of London. Rather than having to go all the way into central London, they could come here quite easily.

I asked Marshall to comment on the atmosphere and community he hoped the session would cultivate:

> I was very keen we should be open and welcoming from the start…I've been to other [less welcoming] sessions and it makes you feel. . .well. . .it makes you feel quite. . .I don't want to say *intimidated*, but. . .I think when people want to play music it is quite. . .you put yourself in quite a potentially vulnerable frame of mind in order to do that because you are playing music with other people. . .you become part of a group. And as with any social situation, people can encounter anxieties or a sense of not being very welcome or, you know, that sense that everybody else seems to know each other. . .I wanted people to feel welcome and I always tried to make a point of welcoming new people. . .introducing myself, asking what their name is and finding somewhere for them to sit down. I always felt that it was a really, really important part of what we are doing. And I still do, really.

This ethos of inclusiveness, regardless of one's background or musical ability, is a philosophy infused within each ROTMAD event. I asked Marshall to reflect on whether or not he felt that Richmond's upmarket reputation might discourage potential participants from attending:

> I wanted to dispel any feelings people might have about this being a snooty place [*he laughs*]. I've been coming to Richmond since I was a little boy because my aunty lived here so I knew it very well. . .and when I moved here, I thought it was a very nice place to live. In many respects, it is quite a smart kind of well-to-do borough. . .there are quite a lot of rich people living here, I suppose. But I wanted people to come here and feel that they were welcome and that they could enjoy it, too.

While the pub-based sessions are the most frequent old-time events in Richmond, the square dances and annual Eastertime gathering (offering classes, workshops, dances, jams, and concerts) are major focal points of this local scene that draw in participants from outside of Richmond's geographical boundaries. Beyond his passion for old-time, Marshall was motivated to coordinate these events to create more opportunities to hear and play live music in Richmond. "Richmond has got quite good musical heritage if you go back far enough!" he explained. Sharing with me some details about the town's musical past, he stated that the Rolling Stones, before reaching high levels of fame, played a regular Sunday night gig there; that the National Jazz (and Blues) Festival had been active there in the 1960s before relocating to the city of Reading; and that the town, unlike many other London boroughs, welcomes street performers ("buskers") outside of the railway station and along the riverfront. Although there are a handful of live music events that take place in Richmond's pubs today, Marshall stated that he was not aware of a regular music venue. "What I wanted to do with the session," he explained, "was to bring some nice music here because I felt that Richmond could be a good place for it. . . and that we *should* have music here. I also wanted to do something on my doorstep. . .there wasn't an awful lot going on culturally and musically that interested me here. . .there were open mic nights and things but nothing that I really felt very excited by."

It is important to stress here that Richmond's old-time activities are not supported by external funding sources or grants. Initiatives like the annual two-day gathering are sustained entirely

through the small entry fees charged to participants. The sessions, however, are free of charge and rely on local public houses donating space.

Securing venues for the regular session, Marshall explained, has been a major challenge. He stated that the initial venue that hosted the jam for two-and-a-half years—a historic pub called The Old Ship—was transformed into a "gastropub."[29] This change of business model ensured that there was no longer physical space to accommodate the musicians and it was likely, too, that the sounds of old-time were not compatible with the desired upmarket ambiance. The second venue, The Cricketers, hosted two sessions before the musicians were "kicked out" because of a noise complaint—an incident that happened while I was in attendance:

> I thought this room was going to be brilliant. . .it had a nice vibe to it. It was a good space and atmosphere and we had people coming up and saying how much they enjoyed it. We had a bay window opened onto the green and people would come up and say they liked hearing the music. Unfortunately, there was one person living next door who complained and that was it! So one person shut us down. Which is frustrating. So we had to move again.

As The Cricketers is located within close proximity to expensive housing in an upscale neighborhood adjacent to the picturesque Richmond Green, this set of circumstances is not too surprising. Furthermore, this incident offers insight into local-level tensions between live music programming and the respective environment. For the past two years, the session has been hosted at a small pub called The Triple Crown. Emily Waddilove (b.1971)—a keen fiddler, square dancer, and volunteer actively involved in the organization of ROTMAD—commented on the suitability of

[29] See Lane 2018 for an expansive history of pub culture in the England, the shifting present-day landscape, and an examination of the concept and socio-cultural impact of the "gastropub."

the session's current venue.[30] Stating that so many pubs in Richmond are now "posh gastropubs," Waddilove explained how hard it would be for ROTMAD to find another stable venue. The Triple Crown, she explained, is suitable in that it is "very *un*-Richmond:"

> [The Triple Crown] is an independent freehold pub with a crazy landlord. . .the pub looks like it is sort of stuck in the 1970s! It's not at all attractive and it's sort of tucked down a back street and it's a real sort of "locals" pub. It possibly does say something about Richmond that that's the pub we've ended up in![31]

As ROTMAD uses The Triple Crown free of charge, Marshall explained the importance of supporting the business that hosts the session. He makes a point to encourage participants to buy drinks and patronize the pub, rather than just "simply turning up and using the room." Marshall made further comments on the challenges of securing live music venues London, offering insight into the status of public social spaces in England:

> I think for people living in London, or for people who don't have big enough homes to host groups of people in, pubs are a lifeline, really. I know in the States, a lot of people have houses, gardens, or barns. . .spaces big enough to accommodate house concerts and dances and things. . .for most people living here [in London], you've got to find public spaces. . .a pub or church hall or school. . . a space where you can all meet. Pubs are really important.

A staple of British culture and sociality, public houses in the present day are under threat. While many are closing at a rapid rate, others are adapting their business models to attract new patrons—the gastropub is a prominent example of such transformation (Lane 2018, 2). As public houses have

[30] Emily Waddilove in discussion with the author, September 2019. All of the pertinent information and quotations that follow come from this telephone interview.
[31] Marshall in discussion with the author, July 2018.

long been prominent spaces for musical gatherings, their institutional decline and transformations pose a serious threat to practices of informal music-making.

In our discussion, Waddilove explained some of logistical and practical concerns encountered when coordinating ROTMAD's two-day annual gathering of workshops, classes, jams, and dances. Venue negotiations, she explained, are a major part of the process that take up much time. The gathering is hosted at the Odd Fellows Memorial Hall—the Oddfellows are a philanthropic "friendship" society established in the 1800s. Waddilove stated that the venue hosts are "not easy people to deal with" and that venue-related negotiations added a significant amount of stress to the work.[32] Beyond this, organizing the gathering involves committee meetings; budget planning sessions; the production of promotional materials; liaison with musicians; travel coordination for visiting performers; the solicitation of volunteers; and publicity work.

[32] Waddilove in discussion with the author, September 2019.

Figure 4.6: Poster advertising the 2019 Richmond Old Time Music Gathering

Although ROTMAD coordination is time consuming, both Marshall and Waddilove expressed that the community that has formed around the music has been a major reward. As Marshall explains,

> It takes up a lot of my free time! [*he laughs*]. I suppose there have been times when I've become slightly jaded or frustrated. . .and I try to make sure I don't take everything on myself and try to encourage other people to help. I try to let other people help and not be too, you know, controlling or dictatorial. I think I mostly enjoy organizing and I certainly enjoy the events we put together and I've got a lot out of it in terms of getting to meet other people. . .musicians from all over London and all over the UK and people from America. . .so it has a lot of rewards. . .not necessarily financial rewards. . .definitely no financial rewards! But it doesn't really cost me anything. . .mostly our events break even as a bare

> minimum. . .not factoring in volunteer's time. . .we don't cost our time into any of it. . .it takes up a lot of time. I really appreciate it when other people step up and offer to help.[33]

While this case study offers insight into the organizational processes behind one localized scene, a multitude of other events and local scenes across the British Isles are also supported through the tireless work of volunteer organizers.

Conclusion

This chapter explored a concentrated case of old-time participation outside of the U.S. within which practitioners and enthusiasts are not connected to the musics by regional or national affiliation. While many of these enthusiasts were drawn to old-time for its participatory nature and for the feelings of kinship it generates among scene members, their inroads to the musics are diverse, shaped by a variety of *domestic* circumstances and contexts. Importantly, the chapter offered insight into the making of a music scene centered around musics of a non-commercially dominant nature, and into the actions and efforts required to sustain a scene and encourage its longevity.

[33] Marshall in discussion with the author, July 2018.

Epilogue

August 7–13, 2017: The Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention, Galax, Virginia

Founded in 1935, the Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention is one of the longest running events in the world where one can encounter old-time and bluegrass musics. The convention is held at Felts Park—an expansive, twenty-eight-acre recreation area with multiple sports facilities and a 3000-seat grandstand. For the duration of the event, the space houses a colorful patchwork of tents, recreational vehicles, and food trucks—a sight not dissimilar from that of other fiddlers' conventions I had witnessed, just bigger.

I attended for the first time in August 2017, approaching the site in my car from the top of a hill. From this elevated position, one of the first things I noticed—it was hard to miss—was an oversized Trump-Pence flag that waved from the tallest flag pole in the park, and a scattering of smaller "Confederate" flags. Considering the geography and conservative political ambiance of the city of Galax, this observation was hardly remarkable. It was a stark reminder, however, that old-time (and bluegrass) musics and real-life politics cannot entirely be separated, even if the musics' supposedly participatory nature offers some enthusiasts a desired or imagined escape from political reality. It was a reminder, too, that old-time's participants of differing cultural backgrounds and diverse (sometimes divisive) political persuasions coexist, and that transient meet-up places like the Galax convention were vital sites of encounter.

At Galax, I camped with musician friends some might label as revivalists—they had been coming to the festival since the 1970s. Just days before, I had spent time with some of the same musicians at Clifftop—a festival that many describe as the closest thing to an old-time "utopia"[1] although not without its own problems. At Clifftop, my friendship group established a firm rule that anybody who brought up current politics (Trump or Brexit, to be precise) would be on dish-cleaning duty at the spider-filled wash station located by the wooden restrooms hut. At Galax, with irony, a number of these musician friends used the colossal Trump-Pence flag as a way to orient themselves in the vast park: "I'm going to a jam later. To find me, turn left at THE flag."

During the convention, I heard a series of stories and witnessed things that I found challenging and uncomfortable. For instance, while I regrettably missed this performance, a story circulated regarding some unfavorable reception received by Buenos Aires-based string band Che Apalache known for their fusion of Appalachian and Latin American styles. They entered the competition= and delivered on stage an acapella and harmonically rich bluegrass song about their resistance to the proposed southern border wall. Second, I spotted a man at the grandstand wearing a t-shirt with bold lettering—LGBT. Beneath each letter was an image: The Statue of Liberty. A gun. A beer can. Donald Trump's face. While generating compelling ethnographic materials, I was not sure how to process these experiences in light of my own political beliefs, and in relation to the

[1] See Wooley 2003 for a detailed study of the Appalachian String Band Festival.

musical world in which I was now heavily invested as a scholar, musician, and enthusiast. Even though old-time and bluegrass musics are often celebrated for their participatory musical ethics, how truly participatory and inclusive are their respective communities? The same can be said for their respective histories.

While the persistent heavy rain and the damp red dust that coated my belongings (and the inside of my tent) undoubtedly contributed to my feelings of unease, I was also distracted and horrified by the violent white supremacy rally underway that same weekend in Charlottesville, a mere 200 miles away.

*

The 2017 Galax Old Fiddlers' Convention marked the end of my most intensive period of fieldwork. The event was also significant in that it marked a turning point in my thinking about old-time, the variety of places where one might encounter it, and the diverse present-day communities that practice and locate meaning within it. I began my fieldwork in 2013 and left the "physical" field—albeit with breaks in between and subsequent follow-up visits—seven months into Donald Trump's presidency. Since then, I have participated predominantly via old-time's virtual platforms and through follow-up communications with several practitioners and close friends worldwide.

During this time, I have been intrigued by a number of perceptible changes and shifts within the old-time world that have been catalyzed by the prevailing political climate in the United States and since early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic. Among these changes is a burgeoning activism among certain segments of the wider old-time community—individuals taking bold steps to diversify old-time's social spaces, to challenge its whitewashed, male–dominated, and heteronormative canons and practices, and to celebrate difference. I share a selection of these activist moments in the short case study that closes this Epilogue.

I write this Epilogue in May 2020. In light of social distancing measures responding to the pandemic, enthusiasts worldwide have reshaped and enlarged old-time's *virtual* platforms in order to

stay connected, share music, and in some cases, supplement lost income as festivals, jams, classes, and workshops are canceled. The pandemic, too, has placed dedicated performance venues under immense pressure. The venues featured on the Blue Ridge Music Trails and The Crooked Road, for example, now face uncertain futures, as do the local economies to which they contribute. Of course, these wider political and pandemic-prompted concerns are felt within many other musical worlds beyond old-time.

In this dissertation, I have presented "old-time" as a complex cultural entity of myriad possible meanings—meanings generated, shared, and contested among the broad range of social agents who identify with and orient themselves around the musics. It particular, it focused on the ways that these agents navigate the musics' complex historical and cultural terrains, and how they create and shape rich discourses around questions of heritage and place. Moreover, this dissertation sought to underscore the ways that participants' musical concerns often become proxies through which they explore extra-musical anxieties about community, identity, and belonging.

The project presented a series of snapshots of the wider world of old-time participation, past and present—snapshots inspired and informed by my multi-sited fieldwork in the southeastern United States and southern England. The dissertation did not and could not, however, attempt to cover every possible area of related activity, nor could it capture the full spectrum of meanings and functions old-time has for its geographically, generationally, and culturally diverse followers. Importantly, my research demonstrated that the old-time world in the present is dynamic and ever-changing, that the musics continually accrue new meanings and receptions depending on the context. It also shows that the sustenance of old-time today relies on the strong commitment of

practitioners and enthusiasts, and the tireless work of individuals and institutions that support, promote, and organize around the musics.

Chapter 1 problematized and destabilized the term "old-time," situating the musics within their complex historical, cultural, and regional contexts from the early twentieth century through the present day. Through the overlapping frames of commercialism, preservationism, and revivalism, I explored the ways that old-time has been mediated and mobilized by interested parties—musicians, enthusiasts, cultural heritage workers, scholars, journalists, and music industry professionals among them. The themes captured in chapter 1 are woven throughout the dissertation and appear in numerous forms. A future version of this project will incorporate a fourth frame—activism—that brings present-day practices of old-time more firmly into dialogue with contemporary politics, also tracing earlier activist threads in the twentieth century through the lens of folk revival. Since my experiences at Galax in 2017, I have become increasingly fascinated by the tensions among participants of diverging political views and cultural backgrounds, some of whom who embrace political discussion and others who wish to keep music and politics separate.

In this dissertation, I highlighted the varied ways that interested parties have engaged with old-time by constructing a rich discursive terrain around questions of heritage and place. Although these questions obviously have larger-scale implications in light of recent political events, in this project, however, I focused on the more specialized or "insider" ways that old-time practitioners have engaged with these issues. In chapter 2, for example, I explored the elevation and persistent significance of a location with a strong old-time legacy—Surry County, North Carolina. I argued here that musical places are not "special" by default but come to be so through the rigorous work of individuals who advocate for and build discourses around them. Here, "place"—in its physical and

figurative senses—becomes a key player in the construction of musical meaning, identity, and in the formation of musical canons. To better understand how select locations achieve a dominant status and become meaningful points of orientation for enthusiasts, I proposed a theory of musical "epicenters." This theory, however, has ample room to grow. In its next stages of development, I will consider how it might be applied to other locales within the old-time world, but also to locations associated with vernacular musics beyond old-time.

The processes through which musical *heritage* epicenters are made—a variant of the wider theory I proposed—underscore the extent to which musical heritage narratives are constructed entities made, shaped, and contested by stakeholders with differing (and sometimes conflicting) motivations. The carefully curated nature of heritage narratives is demonstrated, too, in chapter 3 that focused on the making of two southern Appalachian musical heritage tourism trails—the Blue Ridge Music Trails of western North Carolina and The Crooked Road in southwest Virginia.

These trails offer explicit examples of the complex ways that heritage and place can be understood in tandem. In these endeavors, strings of physical sites selected as emblems of the musical past and evidence of its continuation into the present are united through carefully constructed narratives of regional and state musical heritage. My analysis highlighted the significant extent to which institutional personnel engaged in cultural heritage curation and presentation navigate a broad array of external political, economic, and geographical issues in their work. Likewise, it illuminated the uneasy relationship between the realms of public folklore and heritage tourism, raising further questions about institutional intervention into traditional musics. Various examples of cultural intervention initiated by individuals with and without institutional connections surfaced throughout the dissertation. Moments I highlighted here include the inception of the hillbilly music industry;

various early twentieth-century folklore collection projects; the organization of folk festivals; revivalist acts of cultural stewardship; the establishment of traditional music education programs; and the making of musical heritage epicenters.

Across the dissertation, I considered old-time musics and practices of them in relation to various geographical configurations—the micro-regional, regional, state, national, and international. In chapter 4, I reached beyond the U.S. to interrogate practices of old-time in the British Isles, exploring how the respective practitioners situate meaning within the musics and build communities around them in this non-American context. Exploratory in nature, this chapter provided a foundation for further research into communities that practice American vernacular musics in other national settings.

I entered the old-time world in 2013 as a curious researcher with little prior knowledge. Today, in May 2020, I identify as an avid enthusiast and practitioner. The deeper my engagement with old-time becomes, the more aware I am of the complexities of and tensions within the communities that exist and continue to form around the it. Among some practitioners, the term "old-time scene" is often used quite uncritically as a catchall phrase for all old-time participation. Yet, I reaffirm here what I stated in my introduction that the old-time world is best understood as consisting of multiple "scenes" and communities that interlock in some ways and come into conflict in others. Individual participants, too, may move between and within these various old-time communities, aligning more with some over others. Participants' senses of belonging in these communities is shaped by factors that include geography, race, class, political persuasion, and generation, among other things.

Since COVID-19 lockdowns and social distancing, old-time's virtual "communities" have become increasingly vibrant. For enthusiasts with internet access, old-time's newly invigorated online social spaces offer opportunities for participants worldwide to connect via virtual concerts, folk arts workshops (offered at a fraction of their usual price), instrumental lessons, and online jams. Since early 2020, numerous online events have already occurred while many more—including the Augusta Heritage Center workshops—are planned for the summer. When musicians are able to connect in person once again, it will be interesting to see if the old-time communities that have developed or solidified online will retain something of their current vivacity.

A closing case study: towards a more inclusive old-time world

In the aftermath of the 2019 Appalachian String Band Festival (Clifftop), related social media pages were abuzz with commentary from attendees discussing explicit examples of social and musical activism that occurred there. While I did not attend in 2019, I followed the event's reception closely on Facebook. An active commentator on the proceedings was Jake Blount—an award-winning multi-instrumentalist in his mid-twenties based in Washington DC.

Blount is a person of color and a member of the LGBTQ community who has become a prominent voice of old-time activism in its varied educational, ideological, and more practical manifestations. Among his recording projects that challenge old-time's less inclusive historical and repertorial dimensions are his forthcoming album *Spider Tales* (2020) that draws on black and indigenous Appalachian musical traditions, his self-released EP *Reparations* (2017) with fiddler Tatiana Hargreaves, and album *Pretty Little Mister* (2019) with fiddler Libby Weitnauer. The latter

is described by a journalist for *No Depression* as an attempt to "represent diversity within stringband music" (Hill 2019).

Evidently humbled by the vital steps taken towards community *and* repertorial inclusivity he witnessed at Clifftop 2019, Blount wrote the following post on his Facebook page:

> This year's Clifftop marked a sea change for old-time music. LGBTQ people came in first in every single contest, and nearly half of those are people of color. I became the first Black person to make the finals in banjo, taking first place with three tunes from Black banjoists. The Full Senders, an impromptu joining of @tui_music and the Moose Whisperers, took fourth place in the Traditional Band category. For those who don't know: contests are roughly analogous to awards ceremonies in old-time music. Clifftop is the most important one worldwide. These results (dubbed the Gay Sweep), set against the backdrop of . . .the Nest of Strident Feminism . . .the Rainbow Jam, and Black Clifftop, are an unprecedented sign of good things to come. Here's hoping that next year's solo contest finals will include everyone deserving of that honor, regardless of gender. We made great strides this year. Let's not stop now. (Blount, August 4, 2019. Facebook post reproduced here with permission from the author.)

Another recent example of explicit activism in the old-time world was the creation of the Facebook group "Traditional Music Today"[2] that has attracted close to 2000 worldwide members. The group's mission statement reads as follows:

> This group attempts to be a safe(r) space to discuss traditional music, culture and our lives as members of it. We live the values that represent Traditional Music Today. We are intersectional anti-racist and feminist. We do not tolerate harassment or denigration of

[2] This group was founded by Brooklyn-based old-time musician and activist A'yen Tran. Details of Tran's activism to make the old-time world more inclusive are reported in an online article for *Oldtime Central* (November 2019). *Oldtime Central* is an online resource that connects fans and enthusiasts across the world. Tran has also generated a collaborative resource that gathers names of marginalized and/or minority musicians who she hopes will be hired in the future for camps and workshops dedicated to traditional musics: the "Women/Black/Indigenous/POC/LGBTQIA+/People w/disabilities Music Instructor Nominee Directory." (See Oldtime Central 2019).

> marginalized groups. We are BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, intergenerational and allies, we are inclusive and diverse. We are people who play music and dance and are tired of racist, xenophobic, misogynist and transphobic attitudes getting in the way of our awesome community. We're a work in progress, as is this description. In order to join the group, we ask that you accept the group rules and offer your thoughts on a couple questions.

As outlined in chapter 1 of this dissertation, musicians like Rhiannon Giddens and her former band The Carolina Chocolate Drops have taken their strands of cultural and musical activism into broader publics. Similarly, members of the Grammy-nominated band Che Apalache (founded by North Carolina born, Buenos Aires based fiddler Joe Troop) have also become activist voices among wider audiences. In addition to their stylistic and linguistic inclusivity—their Appalachian–Latin American sounds and multilingual songs—the band has made a series of overt political statements and symbolic gestures in recent years. In 2019, for example, they performed their song "The Wall" at the U.S.–Mexico border—a moment captured in the band's short documentary, *Borderlands* (2019).[3] This is the song to which I refer in the vignette that opens this Epilogue. The song's lyrics are gripping, current, forward-looking; the rich vocal harmonies delivered with ringing clarity exemplify what bluegrass pioneer Bill Monroe famously referred to as that "old southern sound." I share here select verses:

> From way up high on a mountain side
> One can see the wide world over
> From way up there it's plain to see
> Regardless of one's race or creed
> In our hearts we're all the same

[3] For the full "Borderlands" documentary, see Borderlands 2019. The performance of "The Wall" at the border begins at 6:26. For media coverage of this moment, see Freeman 2019 (Rolling Stone) and Aviles 2019 (NBC News).

Come sisters, brothers gather near
For we've come to share our worries
We fear what some folks have been saying
About Latin Americans
The truth's been misconstrued

There's all kinds of talk 'bout building a wall
Down along the Southern border
'Bout building a wall between me and you
Lord, and if such nonsense should come true
Then we'll have to knock it down[4]

These examples of activism evident within the old-time and adjacent musical worlds today invite detailed ethnographic inquiry. Without this, it is difficult to assess how widespread among participants these sentiments are, the spectrum of themes they address, and the demographics of those involved. This research, too, would bring to light distinctions between old-time's respective "scenes" and its various social spaces, raising complex questions about race, class, region, and generation. While activism of these kinds would likely flourish in some of old-time's community settings, it would undoubtedly gain less traction or provoke antagonism in others.

At the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century, old-time participation remains firmly attached to myriad questions about heritage, place, community, and identity. These themes, however, have diversified and taken on a new relevance in the United States at this divisive political moment, presenting new opportunities for ethnographic research into a rich, compelling area of American music and cultural life.

[4] "The Wall" is featured on Che Apalache's Grammy-nominated album, *Rearrange My Heart* (2019), produced by Béla Fleck.

Bibliography

A.F. February 6, 2020. Rhiannon Giddens's music starts conversations about race and culture. *The Economist*.

Adelt, Ulrich. 2017. "Displaying the Guitar: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Museum of Pop Culture." *Rock Music Studies* 4 (3).

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. n.d. "2004 Preserve America Presidential Awards." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.achp.gov/preserve-america/presidential-award/2004-preserve-america-presidential-awards.

African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina. n.d. "Home." Accessed August 8, 2019. http://www.africanamericanmusicnc.com.

Alden, Grant, and Peter Blackstock. 2005. "Preface." In *The Best of No Depression: Writing About American Music*, edited by Grant Alden and Peter Blackstock, vii–ix. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Alden, Ray. 1975–1976. "Music from Round Peak." *Old Time Music* 19:8–16.

————————. 2009. Tommy Jarrell (Volume 1) (liner notes). Field Recorders Collective.

Alderman, D., S. Benjamin, and P. Schneider. 2012. "Transforming Mount Airy into Mayberry." *Southeastern Geographer* 52 (2):212–239.

Allen, Ray. 2010. *Gone to the Country: The New Lost City Ramblers and The Folk Music Revival*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Anderson, Jay. 1984. *Time Machines: The World of Living History*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History.

Anderson-Green, Paula Hathaway. 2002. *A Hot-Bed of Musicians: Traditional Music in the Upper New River Valley-Whitetop Region*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Appalachian Regional Commission, n.d. "Subregions in Appalachia." Accessed September 22, 2019. https://www.arc.gov/research/mapsofappalachia.asp?MAP_ID=31.

Arkansas Folk Festival and the Ozark Folk Center, 2017. "A Brief History of the Arkansas Folk Festival." Accessed August 20, 2019. http://web.lyon.edu/groups/mslibrary/rcol/festival.htm.

Atkinson Wells, Patricia. 2006. "Public Folklore in the Twenty-First Century: New Challenges to the Discipline." *American Folklore* 119 (471: Working For and With the Folk: Public Folklore in the Twenty-First Century):5–18.

Aviles, Gwen. November 20, 2019. Bluegrass with a little Buenos Aires: Che Apalache, and it's up for a Grammy. *NBC News*. Accessed May 13, 2020. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/bluegrass-little-buenos-aires-s-che-apalache-it-s-grammy-n1087466.

Banks, Ray. 2015. "Final Notes." *Old–Time Herald* 14 (2):9.

Bannister, Matthew. 2006. "'Loaded': Indie Guitar Rock, Canonism, White Masculinities." *Popular Music* 23 (1):77–95.

Barbour-Payne, Yunina. 2016. "Carolina Chocolate Drops: Performative Expressions and Receptions of Affrilachian Identity " In *Appalachia Revisited: New Perspectives on Place, Tradition, and Progress*, edited by William Schumann and Rebecca Adkins Fletcher. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Baron, Robert. 2010. "Sins of Objectification? Agency, Mediation and Community Cultural Self-Determination in Public Folklore and Cultural Tourism Programming." *The Journal of American Folklore* 123 (487):63–91.

Bartenstein, Fred, ed. 2017. *Lucky Joe's Namesake: The Extraordinary Life and Observations of Joe Wilson*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press.

Batteau, Allen W. 1990. *The Invention of Appalachia.* Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Bealle, John. 2005. *Old-Time Music And Dance: Community and Folk Revival*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Quarry Books—an imprint of the Indiana University Press.

Becker, Jane S. 1998. *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk, 1930–1940*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.

Beisswenger, Drew. 2002. *Fiddling Way Out Yonder: The Life and Music of Melvin Wine*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Bennett, Samantha. 2016. "Behind the Magical Mystery Door: History, Mythology and Aura of Abbey Road Studios." *Popular Music* 35 (3):396–417.

Berrier, R.J. April 3, 1994. "Main Street Theater Has a Proud History." *The Mount Airy News*, 4C.

Berry, Chad, ed. 2008. *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

————————. 2008b. "Introduction: Assessing the National Barn Dance " In *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*, 1–17. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Bidgood, Lee. 2017. *Czech Bluegrass: Notes From the Heart of Europe*. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.

Billings, Dwight, Altina L. Walker and Mary Beth Pudup, ed. 1995. *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Billings, Dwight B. 1999. "Introduction." In *Back Talk from Appalachia: Confronting Stereotypes*, edited by Dwight B. Billings, Gurney Norman and Katherine Ledford, 3–21. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Billings, Dwight B., Gurney Norman, and Katherine Ledford, eds. 1999. *Back Talk from Appalachia: Confronting Stereotype*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Billings, Dwight B., Mary Beth Pudup, and Altina L. Walker. 1995b. "Introduction: Taking Exception with Exceptionalism: The Emergence and Transformation of Historical Studies of Appalachia " In *Appalachia in the Making: The Mountain South in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Mary Beth Pudup, Dwight B. Billings and Altina L. Waller, 1–25. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

The Birthplace of Country Music Museum. n.d. "About." Accessed August 10, 2019. https://www.birthplaceofcountrymusic.org/about/.

Bithell, Caroline, and Juniper Hill, eds. 2014. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Blank, Les. 1994. *My Old Fiddle: A Visit with Tommy Jarrell in the Blue Ridge.* El Cerrito, CA: Flower Films, VHS.

Blank, Les, Cecelia Conway, Maureen Gosling, Alice Gerrard, and Tommy Jarrell. 2005, 1983. DVD. *Sprout Wings and Fly*. El Cerrito, California: Flower Films.

Blaustein, Richard. 2014. "Grassroots Revitalization of North American and Western European Instrumental Music Traditions from Fiddlers Associations to Cyberspace " In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 551–569. New York, NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blount, Jake and Tatiana Hargreaves. 2017. EP. *Reparations*. Self-released.

Blount, Jake and Libby Weitnauer. 2019. CD. *Pretty Little Mister.* Self–released.

Blue Ridge Music Center. n.d. "About the Blue Ridge Music Center." Accessed August 13, 2019. http://www.blueridgemusiccenter.org/about.htm.

Blue Ridge Institute and Museum, Ferrum College. 2012–2018. "About Us." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.ferrum.edu/blueridgeinstitute/about-us/.

Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina. 2019a. "Suggested Itineraries." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.blueridgemusicnc.com/find-music/suggested-itineraries.

———————. 2019b. "'Down the Road on the Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina' Podcast." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.blueridgemusicnc.com/listen-and-learn/down-the-road/.

———————. 2019c. "About the Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina." Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.blueridgemusicnc.com/about.

———————. 2019d. "FAQ." Accessed April 10, 2020. https://www.blueridgemusicnc.com/about/faq.

———————. 2019e. "Traditional Artist Directory." Accessed April 25, 2020. https://www.blueridgemusicnc.com/listen-and-learn/traditional-artist-directory.

Blue Ridge Parkway, 2019. "About the Parkway." Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.blueridgeparkway.org/about-the-parkway/.

Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. 2018. "About Us." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.blueridgeheritage.com/about/.

———————. 2018a. "Historic Artist: Tommy Jarrell." Accessed August 20, 2019. https://www.blueridgeheritage.com/artist/tommy-jarrell/.

Blue Ridge Music Trails–Virginia. 2019. "About." Accessed August 13, 2019. http://www.blueridgemusic.org/aboutbrmt.aspx?so=ABOUT%20BRMT.

Blue Ridge Music Center, n.d. "Roots of American Music Exhibition." Accessed August 20, 2019. http://www.blueridgemusiccenter.org/museum.htm.

Bohlman, Philip V. 1988. *The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bolick, Harry, and with Stephen T. Austin. 2015. *Mississippi Fiddle Tunes and Songs from the 1930s*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Boorman, John. 2007, 1972. DVD. Deliverance. Burbank, CA: Warner Home Video.

"Borderlands." 2019. YouTube video. Posted by Che Apalache. November 11, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPWvt2WPKNM

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. London: Routledge.

Boyd, Stephen W. 2017. "Editorial: Heritage Trails and Tourism." *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 12 (5):417–423.

Boyes, Georgina. 1993. *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Boyles, Carolyn, and Wilma Hiatt. 2000. *Surry County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing.

Boym, Svetlana. 2001. *The Future of Nostalgia.* New York: Basic Books.

Brady, Erica. 2013. "Contested Origins: Arnold Shultz and the Music of Western Kentucky." In *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, edited by Diane Pecknold, 100–118. Durham: Duke University Press.

Bragg, Billy. 2017. *Roots, Radicals and Rockers: How Skiffle Changed the World*. London: Faber & Faber.

Brocken, Michael. 2003. *The British Folk Revival, 1944–2002*. Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate.

————————. 2015. *The Twenty-First Century Legacy of the Beatles: Liverpool and Popular Music Heritage Tourism*. Surrey, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Bronner, Simon J. 1987. *Old-Time Music Makers of New York State*. First ed. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Brown, Farnum 1998. "Album Review: Gillian Welch—Hell Among the Yearlings." *No Depression: The Journal of Roots Music*, 31 August.

Brown, Paul. 2009. "The Connector: Ray Alden (July 2, 1942–September 19, 2009)." *The Old Time Herald* 12 (2):5–11.

Bryan, David. 2012. "The Grateful Dead Religious Experience." In *Reading the Grateful Dead*, edited by Nicholas G. Meriwether, 126–139. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Bryan, Sarah, Beverly Bush Patterson, and Michelle Lanier. 2013. *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina*. Raleigh: University of North Carolina Press.

Burns, Ken, Duncan Dayton, and Julie Dunfey. 2019. DVD. *Country Music*. United States: PBS.

Burns, Robert. 2012. *Transforming Folk: Innovation and Tradition in English Folk-Rock Music*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Cabbell, Edward J. 1985. "Black Invisibility and Racism in Appalachia: An Informal Survey." In *Blacks in Appalachia*, edited by William H. Turner and Edward J. Cabbell, 3–10. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Cantwell, David. September 15, 2019. "Ken Burns's Delightful 'Country Music' Gets the Big Things Mostly Right." *The New Yorker*. Accessed May 15, 2020. https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/ken-burns-delightful-country-music-gets-the-big-things-mostly-right

Cantwell, Robert S. 1996. *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival*. Reprint ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

————————. 2003. *Bluegrass Breakdown: The Making of the Old Southern Sound*. Paperback ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Caramanica, Jon. September 12, 2019. "Ken Burns's 'Country Music' Traces the Genre's Victories, and Reveals Its Blind Spots." *The New York Times*. Accessed May 15, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/arts/television/ken-burns-country-music.html

Carlin, Bob. 2004. *String Bands in the North Carolina Piedmont*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland.

Carlin, Richard. 2000a. Fred Cockerham. In *American National Biography (online resource)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

————————. 2000b. Roscoe Holcomb. In *American National Biography (online resource)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carlson, Elizabeth A. 2016. *North Carolina String Music Masters: Old-Time and Bluegrass Legends*. Charleston, SC: The History Press.

Carter Family Fold. "Home—The Carter Family Fold." Accessed April 25, 2020. http://www.carterfamilyfold.org/index.html.

Carter, Thomas. 1991. "Looking for Henry Reed: Confessions of a Revivalist." In *Sounds of the South: A Report and Selected Papers from a Conference on the Collecting and Collections of Southern Traditional Music, held in Chapel Hill, April 6–8, 1989, to celebrating the opening of the Southern Folklife Collection with the John Edwards Memorial Collection in the Manuscripts Department of the Academic Affairs Library, University of North Carolina*, edited by Daniel W. Patterson, 73–90. Southern Folklife Collection, Manuscripts Department, Wilson Library, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina

Cauthen, Joyce H. 2001. *With Fiddle and Well-Rosined Bow: A History of Old-Time Fiddling in Alabama*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Cavicchi, Daniel. 1998. *Tramps Like Us: Music & Meaning Among Springsteen Fans*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chadwell, Sean. 2002. "Inventing That 'Old-Timey' Style: Southern Authenticity in O Brother, Where Art Thou?" *Journal of Film and Television*: 2–9.

Chaney, Ryan. 2012. "Straightening the Crooked Road." *Ethnography* 14 (4):387–411.

———————. 2017. "“Heritage” as Alternative Place and Space: Old-Time Music and Roots- and Routes-Based Tourism in Southern Appalachia." *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 12 (2):125–138.

Che Apalache. 2019. CD. *Rearrange My Heart:* Free Dirt Records.

Cherokee Heritage Trails. n.d. "Home." Accessed August 13, 2019. http://www.cherokeeheritagetrails.com.

Child, James Francis. 1965, 1882. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. 5 vols. New York: Dover Publications.

Ching, Barbara. 2008b. "Meeting in the Marketplace: A Taste for Romance in *Songcatcher* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*" In *Old Roots New Routes: The Cultural Politics of Alt.Country Music*, edited by Barbara Ching and Pamela Fox, 111–133. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Ching, Barbara, and Pamela Fox. 2008. "Introduction: The Importance of Being Ironic—Toward a Theory and Critique of Alt.Country Music." In *Old Roots New Routes: The Cultural Politics of Alt.Country Music* edited by Barbara Ching and Pamela Fox, 1–27. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

CNBC. September 18, 2019. "Ken Burns on his new film series about the business of country music ". Accessed September 20, 2019. https://www.cnbc.com/video/2019/09/18/ken-burns-country-music-documentary-squawk-box.html.

Coen, Joel, and Ethan Coen. 2000. DVD. O Brother, Where Art Thou? Burbank, CA: Touchstone Home Video.

Cogdell DjeDje, Jacqueline. 2016. "The (Mis)Representation of African American Music: The Role of the Fiddle." *Journal for the Society of American Music* 10 (1):1–32.

Cohen, Ronald D. 2002. *Rainbow Quest: The Folk Music Revival and American Society, 1940–1970*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

————————.2008. *A History of Folk Music Festivals in the United States*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

————————. 2016. *Depression Folk: Grassroots Music and Left-Wing Politics in 1930s America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

Cohen, Ronald D. Spring 2014. "Bill Malone, Alan Lomax, and the Origins of Country Music." *The Journal of American Folklore* 127 (504):126–139.

Cohen, Ronald D., and Rachel Clare Donaldson. 2014. *Roots of the Revival: American and British Folk Music in the 1950s*. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press.

Cohen, Sara. 2007. *Decline, Renewal and the City in Popular Music: Beyond the Beatles.* Hampshire, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited

Cohen, Sara, Robert Knifton, Marion Leonard, and Les Roberts, eds. 2015. *Sites of Popular Music Heritage: Memories, Histories, Places*. New York and Oxford: Routledge.

Collins, Shirley. 2004. *America Over the Water*. London: SAF Publishing.

Conway, Cecelia. 1995. *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia: A Study of Folk Traditions*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Cooley, Timothy J., and Gregory Barz. 2008. "Casting Shadows: Fieldwork is Dead! Long Live Fieldwork!" In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, edited by Gregory Barz and Timothy J. Cooley, 3-24. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Council of Europe. 2019. "European Mozart Ways." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/european-mozart-ways.

Cromelin, Richard. 2000. "Sounds of a Lost America." *Los Angeles Times*, 12 November. Accessed 27 February 2017. http://articles.latimes.com/2000/nov/12/entertainment/ca-50526.

Crooked Road, The. 2017a. "About the Crooked Road Trail." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://www.myswva.org/tcr/about/.

————————, n.d–b. "The Crooked Road Map." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.myswva.org/homepage-slide/crooked-road-map/.

————————. n.d–c. "Major Venues on The Crooked Road: Country Cabin II." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.myswva.org/venue/country-cabin-ii.

————————. 2017d. "Traditional Music Education: About the Program." Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.myswva.org/tcr/tmep/.

Crutchfield, Rory. 2009. "Discovering Authenticity?: Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music." *Popular Music History* 4 (1):5–21.

Davenport, Lisa E. 2009. *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Davidson, Justin. March, 2019. "Rhiannon Giddens' 21st-Century Sound Has a Long History." *Smithsonian* 49 (10):6.

Dempsey, Brian Davis. 2009. "Refuse to Fold: Blues Heritage Tourism and the Mississippi Delta." Ph.D diss., Middle Tennessee State University.

Dewe, Mike. 1998. *The Skiffle Craze*. Aberystwyth, Wales: Planet.

Dickey, Bronwen. April/May 2020. "Rhiannon Giddens: The Storyteller." *Garden and Gun*. Accessed May 15, 2020. https://gardenandgun.com/articles/rhiannon-giddens-the-storyteller.

Dolan, Emily I. 2010. "'. . .This little ukulele tells the truth': Indie Pop and Kitsch Authenticity." *Popular Music* 29 (3):457–469.

Donleavy, Kevin. 2004. *Strings of Life—Conversations with Old-Time Musicians From Virginia and North Carolina*. Blacksburg, VA: Pocahontas Press, Inc.

Doss, Erika. 2005. ""Elvis Forever"." In *Afterlife as Afterimage: Understanding Posthumous Fame*, edited by Steve Jones and Joli Jensen, 61–78. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

————————. 2008. "Rock and Roll Pilgrims: Reflections on Ritual, Religiosity, and Race at Graceland." In *Shrines and Pilgrimage in the Modern World: New Itineraries into the Sacred*, edited by Peter Jan Margry, 123–141. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Duncan, Barbara R., and Brett H. Riggs. 2003. *Cherokee Heritage Trails Guidebook*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

The Earl Scruggs Center. 2019. "About the Earl Scruggs Center." Accessed August 14, 2019. http://earlscruggscenter.org/about-us/the-center/.

Edelman, Larry. 2018. *Dance All Night—the Highwoods String Band Story*: Piggysnout Productions and Mudthumper Music. Online film, http://www.folkstreams.net/film-detail.php?id=435.

The English Folk Dance and Song Society—Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. n.d "Appalachian Weekender at Cecil Sharp House ". Accessed September 16, 2019. https://www.vwml.org/vwml-news/220-may-2016/3598-appalachian-weekender-at-cecil-sharp-house.

Eubanks, Georgann, and Donna Campbell. 2007. *Literary Trails of the North Carolina Mountains: A Guidebook*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

————. 2010. *Literary Trails of the North Carolina Piedmont: A Guidebook*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

————.2013. *Literary Trails of Eastern North Carolina: A Guidebook* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Eyre, Banning. 2000. *In Griot Time: An American Guitarist in Mali*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Fear, David. September 14, 2019. 'Country Music' Revies: Ken Burns's Epic, Essential, Look at an American Artform. *Rolling Stone*. Accessed September 14.

Feintuch, Burt. 1993. "Musical Revival as Musical Transformation." In *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*, edited by Neil V. Rosenberg, 183-193. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

————.2010. *In the Blood: Cape Breton Conversations on Culture*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.

Feld, Steven, and Keith H. Basso, eds. 1996. *Senses of Place*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.

Fenster, Mark. 1998. "Commercial (and/or?) Folk: The Bluegrass Industry and Bluegrass Traditions." In *Reading Country Music: Steel Guitars, Opry Stars, and Honky-Tonk Bars*, edited by Cecelia Tichi, 74–97. Durham: Duke University Press.

Filene, Benjamin. 2000. *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory & American Roots Music*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

————. 2004. "O Brother, What Next? Making Sense of the Folk Fad " *Southern Cultures* 10 (2):50–69.

Fine, Abigail. 2017. "Objects of Veneration: Music and Materiality in the Composer-Cults of Germany and Austria, 1870–1930." Ph.D diss, Department of Music, University of Chicago.

Finnegan, Ruth. 1989. *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Floyd Country Store. 2019. "Home." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.floydcountrystore.com.

Fox, Aaron. 2004. *Real Country: Music and Language in Working-Class Culture*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fox, Pamela. 2008. "Time as "Revelator": Alt.Country Women's Performance of the Past." In *Old Roots New Routes: The Cultural Politics of Alt.Country Music*, edited by Pamela Fox and Barbara Ching, 134–153. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Fox, Pamela, and Barbara Ching, eds. 2008. *Old Roots New Routes: The Cultural Politics of Alt.Country Music* Vol. University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor.

Freeman, Jon. 2019. Watch Che Apalache Sing Protest Song "The Wall" at U.S.–Mexico Border. *Rolling Stone*. Accessed May 13, 2020.

Fricke, David. March 5, 2015. Rhiannon Giddens' Old-Time Religion. *Rolling Stone*.

Fussell, Fred, and Cedric N. Chatterley. 2003. *Blue Ridge Music Trails: Finding a Place in the Circle*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Fussell, Fred C., and Steve Kruger. 2018. *Blue Ridge Music Trails of North Carolina: A Guide to Music Sites, Artists, and Traditions of the Mountains and Foothills*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Gammon, Vic. 2015. "'Many Useful Lessons': Cecil Sharp, Education and the Folk Dance Revival, 1899–1924." *Cultural and Social History—The Journal of the Social History Society* 5 (1):75–97.

Gerrard, Alice. 1984. Miscellaneous documents contained within Scrapbook pertaining to "Tommy Jarrell Day". In *Alice Gerrard Collection*: Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Gibson, George R. 2018. "Black Banjo, Fiddle, and Dance in Kentucky and the Amalgamation of African American and Anglo-American Folk Music." In *Banjo Roots and Branches*, edited by Robert B. Winans, 223–256. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Gifford, Paul M. 2010. "Henry Ford's Dance Revival and Fiddle Contests: Myth and Reality." *Journal of the Society for American Music* 4 (3):307–338.

Goertzen, Chris. 2008. *Southern Fiddlers and Fiddle Conventions*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Goodenough, Mary. 2007. "Grateful Rites, Dead Initiation " In *All Graceful Instruments: The Contexts of the Grateful Dead Phenomenon*, edited by Nicholas G. Meriwether, 157–177. Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Gopinath, Sumanth, and Anna Schultz. 2016. "Sentimental Remembrance and the Amusements of Forgetting in Karl and Harty's 'Kentucky'." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 69 (2):477–524.

Grazian, David. 2003. *Blue Chicago: The Search of Authenticity in Urban Blues Clubs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Greenwald, Maggie. 2001. DVD. Songcatcher. United States: Lions Gate Home Entertainment.

Gregory, E. David. 2002. "Lomax in London: Alan Lomax, the BBC and the Folk-Song Revival in England, 1950–1958." *Folk Music Journal* 8 (2):136–169.

Griffin, Larry. 2004. "Whiteness and Southern Identity in the Mountain and Lowland South." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 10 (1/2):7–37.

Guarino, Mark. May 2, 2002. "The *O Brother* Effect." *Chicago Daily Herald.*

Gura, Philip F. 2000. "Southern Roots and Branches: Forty Years of the New Lost City Ramblers." *Southern Cultures* 6 (4):58–81.

Hale, Thomas A. 1998. *Griots and Griottes: Masters of Words and Music* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Harkins, Anthony. 2005. *Hillbilly: A Cultural History of an American Icon*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Harkins, Anthony, and Meredith McCarroll. 2019. *Appalachian Reckoning: A Region Response to Hillbilly Elegy*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press.

Hartigan Jr., John. 2004. "Whiteness and Appalachian Studies: What's the Connection." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 10 (1/2):58–72.

Hay, Fred J. Spring/Autumn 2003. "Black Musicians in Appalachia: An Introduction to Affrilachian Music." *Black Music Research Journal* 23 (1/2):1–19.

Hayes, Deborah, and Nicola MacLeod. 2007. "Packaging Places: Designing Heritage Trails Using an Experience Economy Perspective to Maximize Visitor Engagement." *Journal of Vacation Marketing* 13 (1):45–58.

Haynes, Jo. 2005. "World Music and the Search for Difference." *Ethnicities* 5 (3):366–385.

Hemphill, Paul. 2015, 1970. *The Nashville Sound: Bright Lights and Country Music*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press.

Heritage Farms Museum and Village, Huntington, West Virginia, n.d. "About." Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.heritagefarmmuseum.com/about/.

Hesmondhalgh, David. 2005. "Subcultures, Scenes or Tribes? None of the Above." *Journal of Youth Studies* 8 (1):21–40.

Hicks, Bill. 1995. "Where'd They Come From? Where'd They Go?: A Brief History of the Fuzzy Mountain String Band." *Old-Time Herald* 4 (7):20–24.

Hicks Henry, Murphy. 2013. *Pretty Good for a Girl: Women in Bluegrass*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Hill, Corbie. 2019. "Spotlight: As Tui, Jake Blount and Libby Weitnauer Showcase the Diversity in Stringband Music's Story." *No Depression*, July 1, 2019. Accessed September 29, 2019. https://www.nodepression.com/spotlight-as-tui-jake-blount-and-libby-weitnauer-showcase-the-diversity-in-stringband-musics-story/?fbclid=IwAR3p_zpfzOCeRjtaZ6bVLFoljoIn5R1PRHAS5NOp904jLsBUqu9CmSfy6Y8.

Hill, Jeremy. 2016. *Country Comes to Town: The Music Industry and the Transformation of Nashville*. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press.

Hill, Juniper, and Caroline Bithell. 2014b. "An Introduction to Music Revival as Concept, Cultural Process, and Medium of Change." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Juniper Hill and Caroline Bithell, 3–42. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger, eds. 1992. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holt, David. 2010. DVD. *Folkways: Music of Surry County*. North Carolina UNC-TV.

Hosokawa, Shuhei. 2002. "Salsa No Tiene Fronteras: Orquesta de la Luz and the Globalization of Popular Music." In *Situating Salsa: Global Markets and Local Meanings in Latin Popular Music*, edited by Lise Waxer, 289–311. London and New York: Routledge.

Hubbs, Nadine. 2014. *Rednecks, Queers, and Country Music*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Huber, Patrick. 2013. "Black Hillbillies: African American Musicians on Old-Time Records, 1924–1932." In *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, edited by Diane Pecknold, 19-81. Durham: Duke University Press.

————————. 2017. "The "Southernness" of Country Music." In *The Oxford Handbook of Country Music*, edited by Travis D. Stimeling, 31–53. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Inglis, Ian. 2010. "Historical Approaches to Merseybeat: Delivery, Affinity and Diversity." In *The Beat Goes On: Liverpool, Popular Music and the Changing City*, edited by Marion Leonard and Robert Strachan, 11–28. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Inscoe, John C., ed. 2001. *Appalachians and Race: The Mountain South from Slavery to Segregation* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

Folkstreams. 2018. "Folkstreams: Henry Sapoznik Interview, Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden." Accessed September 27, 2019. http://www.folkstreams.net/film-context.php?id=98.

Ives, Edward D. 1978. *Joe Scott, the Woodsman-Songmaker*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Jabbour, Alan. 2014. "A Participant-Documentarian in the American Instrumental Folk Music Revival." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 116–132. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Jackson, Travis A. 2012. *Blowin' the Blues Away: Performance and Meaning on the New York Jazz Scene*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

————————. 2013. "Disseminating World Music." In *The Cambridge History of World Music*, edited by Philip V. Bohlman, 705-725. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jarrell, Tommy. 1999. CD. *The Legacy of Tommy Jarrell Volume 1: Sail Away Ladies*. County Records.

Jensen, Joli. 1998. *The Nashville Sound: Authenticity, Commercialization, and Country Music*. Nashville & London: The Country Music Foundation Press and Vanderbilt University Press.

Jensen, Steve Jones and Joli, ed. 2005. *Afterlife as Afterimage: Understanding Posthumous Fame*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Jones, Loyal. 2002. *Minstrel of the Appalachians: The Story of Bascom Lamar Lunsford*. Vol. Reprint edition. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

————————.2008. "Foreword." In *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*, edited by Chad Berry, vii–x. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Karpeles, Maud. 1967. *Cecil Sharp: His Life and Work*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kater, Kaia. November 2, 2018. Rhiannon Giddens Is the 21st Century's Revelator. *National Public Radio*. Accessed May 14, 2020.

Keegan-Phipps, Simon, and Trish Winter. 2014. "Contemporary English Folk Music and the Folk Industry." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 489–509. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Keightley, Keir. 2011. "Reconsidering Rock." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, edited by Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street, 109–142. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keith, Jeffery A. 2013. "Fiddling with Race Relations in Rural Kentucky: The Life, Times, and Contested Identity of Fiddlin' Bill Livers." In *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, edited by Diane Pecknold, 119–139. Durham: Duke University Press.

Kenyon, Nicholas, ed. 1988. *Authenticity and Early Music*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

King, Christine. 1993. "His Truth Goes Marching On: Elvis Presley and the Pilgrimage to Graceland." In *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*, edited by Ian Reader and Tony Walter, 92–104. Basingstoke, Hampshire and London, England: Macmillan Press LTD.

King, Stephen A. 2004. "Blues Tourism in the Mississippi Delta: The Functions of Blues Festivals." *Popular Music and Society* 27 (4):455–75.

————.. 2011. *I'm Feeling the Blues Right Now: Blues Tourism and the Mississippi Delta*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Kingsbury, Henry. 1988. *Music, Talent, and Performance*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1995. "Theorizing Heritage." *Ethnomusicology* 39 (3):367–380.

————.1998. *Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kittredge, G.L. 1917. "Ballads and Songs." *The Journal of American Folklore* 30 (117):283–369.

Knevett, Arthur. 2018. "Folk Songs for Schools: Cecil Sharp, Patriotism, and *The National Song Book* " *Folk Music Journal* 11 (3):47–71.

Kruse, Holly. 1993. "Subcultural Identity in Alternative Music Culture." *Popular Music* 12 (1):33–41.

————. 2003. *Site and Sound: Understanding Independent Music Scenes*. New York: P. Lang.

————.2010. "Local Identity and Independent Music Scenes, Online and Off." *Popular Music and Society* 33 (5):625–639.

Kruse, Robert J. 2003. "Imagining Strawberry Fields as a Place of Pilgrimage." *Area* 35 (2):154–162.

Kruse, R.J. 2015. "Point Pleasant, West Virginia: Making a Tourism Landscape in an Appalachian Town " *Southeastern Geographer* 55 (3):313–337.

Labajo, Joaquina 2003. "Body and Voice: The Construction of Gender in Flamenco " In *Music and Gender: Perspectives from the Mediterranean*, edited by Tullia Magrini, 67–87. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lane, Christel. 2018. *From Taverns to Gastropubs: Food, Drink, and Sociality in England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lashua, Brett, Sara Cohen, and John Schofield. 2010. "Popular Music, Mapping, and the Characterization of Liverpool." *Popular Music History* 4.2:126–144.

Leftwich, Brad. 1999. *Round Peak Style Clawhammer Banjo*. Pacific, MO: Mel Bay.

————————.2011. *Old-Time Fiddle, Round Peak Style*. Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications.

Lilly, John, ed. 1999. *Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music from Goldenseal*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Lingan, John. February 21, 2019. “Rhiannon Giddens Is Reclaiming Heritage of American Folk Music.” *Time. https://time.com/5534379/songs-of-our-native-daughters-music-review/.*

Link, Joe D. n.d. “The Crooked Road: this is where country music was born, and the people here play it as passionately as ever.” Accessed May 15, 2020. *John Deere: The Furrow*. https://www.johndeerefurrow.com/2017/03/03/the-crooked-road/.

Linn, Karen Elizabeth. 1994. *That Half-Barbaric Twang: The Banjo in American Popular Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————————. Winter 1990. "The 'Elevation' of the Banjo in Late Nineteenth-Century America." *American Music* 8 (4):441–464.

Livingstone, Tamara E. 1999. "Music Revivals: Towards a General Theory." *Ethnomusicology* 43 (1):66–85.

————————. 2014. "An Expanded Theory for Revivals as Cosmopolitan Participatory Music Making." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Juniper Hill and Caroline Bithell, 60–69. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lomax, Alan. 1997–1998, 1956–1960. In *Southern Journey*. Cambridge, MA: Rounder, CD 13 vols.

————————.2006, 1991. DVD. Appalachian Journey. In *American Patchwork* Portland, OR: Media-Generation.

Lomax, John, and Alan Lomax. 1999. In *Black Appalachia: String Bands, Songsters, and Hoedowns*. Cambridge, MA: Rounder.

Lomax, John A. 1910. *Cowboy Songs, and Other Frontier Ballads*. New York: Sturgis and Walton Co.

Lornell, Kip. 2012. *Exploring American Folk Music: Ethnic, Grassroots, and Regional Traditions in the United States*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

————————.2013. "Old-Time Country Music in North Carolina and Virginia: The 1970s and 1980s." In *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, edited by Diane Pecknold, 171–190. Durham: Duke University Press.

Low, Setha. 2017. *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place*. Abingdon, Oxon, New York, NY: Routledge.

Low, Setha M., and Denise Lawrence-Zúniga, eds. 2003. *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*. Malden, MA: Blackwell

Lowenthal, David. 1998. *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge, UK & New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lyon-Hill, Sarah, Frances Dowd, and Patrick Burke. March 1, 2016. An Economic Impact Analysis of The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail. Accessed May 15, 2020. https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/bitstream/handle/10919/94596/2015%20Crooked%20Road%20EI%20FINAL%20REPORT%203.1.2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

MacArthur Foundation. n.d. "Rhiannon Giddens." Accessed September 22, 2019. https://www.macfound.org/fellows/987/.

MacDonald, Phillip. 2015. "'Birthplace of the Blues?' Dockery Farms, Mythic South, and the Erasure of the African American Lived Experience in Mississippi Blues Tourism." Master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

MacLeod, Nicola. 2013. "Cultural Routes, Trails and the Experience of Place." In *The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Tourism*, edited by Melanie K. Smith and Greg Richards, 369–374. New York: Routledge.

————————. 2017. "The Role of Trails in the Creation of Tourist Space." *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 12 (5):423–430.

MacMahon, Bernard, Allison McGourty, and Duke Erikson. 2017. DVD. *American Epic*. Arlington, VA: PBS Distribution.

Malone, Bill C. 1968. *Country Music USA*. Austin: University of Texas for the American Folklore Society.

————————.1993. *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Culture and the Roots of Country Music*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

————————.2004. "Music." In *High Mountains Rising: Appalachia in Time and Place*, edited by Richard A. Straw and H. Tyler Blethen, 114–135. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————————.*Music from the True Vine: Mike Seeger's Life and Musical Journey* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

————————.Spring 2014. ""The Southern Thesis": Revisited and Reaffirmed." *The Journal of American Folklore* 127 (504):226–229.

Malone, Bill C. and Jocelyn R. 2010. *Country Music, U.S.A*. 3rd rev. ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Manuel, Jeff. September 15, 2019. Will Ken Burns whitewash country music's multiracial roots? *The Washington Post*. Accessed September 15.

Margry, Peter Jan, ed. 2008. *Shrines and Pilgrimage in the Modern World: New Itineraries into the Sacred* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Marshall, Erynn. 2006. *Music in the Air Somewhere: The Shifting Borders of West Virginia's Fiddle and Song Traditions*. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press.

Marshall, Howard Wight. 2012. *Play Me Something Quick and Devilish: Old-Time Fiddlers in Missouri* Columbia, MO and London: University of Missouri Press.

Martin, Wayne. 2009. CD. *Going Down to Raleigh: Stringband Music in the North Carolina Piedmont, 1976–1998*. Raleigh, N.C.: PineCone.

McClain, Matt. 2017. "Strumming Along Virginia's Crooked Road." *The Washington Post*, July 3, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-sight/wp/2017/07/03/strumming-along-virginias-crooked-road/.

McElhannon, Tim. 2011. "Review: A Kindly Visitation." *No Depression: The Journal of Roots Music*, 14 February.

McGee, Marty. 2000. *Traditional Musicians of the Central Blue Ridge*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.

McGill, Josephine. 1917. *Folk-songs of the Kentucky Mountains: Twenty Traditional Ballads and Other English Folk-songs*. Pennsylvania, PA: Boosey & Company

McGinley, Paige. 2014. *Staging the Blues: From Tent Shows to Tourism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Melnick, Jennifer. September 2019. "Renaissance Woman: Singer, musician, composer and cultural historian Rhiannon Giddens defies categorization." *Opera News*. Accessed May 6, 2020. https://www.operanews.com/Opera_News_Magazine/2019/9/Features/Renaissance_Woman.html.

Miller, Kiri. 2008. *Traveling Home: Sacred Harp Singing and American Pluralism*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Miller, Karl Hagstrom. 2010. *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Milliner, Clare, and Walt Koken. 2011. *The Milliner-Koken Collection of American Fiddle Tunes*. Kennet Square, PA: Mudthumper Music.

Milnes, Gerald. 1999. *Play of a Fiddle: Traditional Music, Dance, and Folklore in West Virginia*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press.

Minghella, Anthony. 2004, 2003. DVD. Cold Mountain. New York: Miramax Home Entertainment.

Mississippi Blues Trail. n.d. "Home." Accessed August 8, 2019. http://msbluestrail.org.

Mississippi Country Music Trail. n.d. "Home." Accessed August 8, 2019. http://www.mscountrymusictrail.org.

Moist, Kevin. 2007. "Collecting, Collage, and Alchemy: The Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music as Art and Cultural Intervention." *American Studies* 48:111–127.

Molsky, Bruce. 2019. "Bruce Molsky." Accessed September 26, 2019. https://brucemolsky.com/bio.

Moon, Tom. 2001. "The *O Brother* Revival." *Rolling Stone* 32.

Moore, Allan. 2002. "Authenticity as Authentication." *Popular Music* 21 (2):209–223.

Moore, Robin D. 1997. *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920–1940*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Mount Airy Visitors Center, n.d. "Mountains, Music, Mayberry, Merlot." Accessed August 20, 2019. http://www.visitmayberry.com/summer-fun-in-mount-airy-nc-mountains-music-mayberry-merlot/

Mountain Music Trail. 2019. "Home." Accessed August 8, 2019. https://mountainmusictrail.com.

Murray, M., and Graham B. 1997. "Exploring the Dialectics of Route-Based Tourism: the Camino de Santiago." *Tourism Management* 18 (8):513–524.

Museum of Appalachia, n.d. "About." Accessed August 14, 2019. http://www.museumofappalachia.org.

National Endowment for the Arts. n.d. "NEA National Heritage Fellows: Joseph Wilson." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.arts.gov/honors/heritage/fellows/joseph-wilson.

————————. n.d, a. "NEA National Heritage Fellowship: Joe Thompson." Accessed May 10, 2020. https://www.arts.gov/honors/heritage/fellows/joe-thompson.

National Park Service. 2019. "National Heritage Areas." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/visit_nhas_online.htm.

Negus, Keith. 1999. *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*. London: Routledge.

————————.. 2002. "The Work of Cultural Intermediaries and the Enduring Distance Between Production and Consumption." *Cultural Studies* 16 (4):501–515.

Neithammer, Nancy Dols. 1982. *Bowing Lights*. Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, VHS.

————————. 1991. "Tommy Jarrell's Family Stories, 1890–1925 (Part I)." *The Old-Time Herald* 3 (1):22–29.

————————. 1992. "Tommy Jarrell's Family Stories, 1890–1925 (Part II)." *The Old-Time Herald* 3 (2):36–42.

The Nest Collective. 2019. "About Us." Accessed September 16, 2019. http://thenestcollective.co.uk/about/.

Nettl, Bruno. 2005. "Hanging on for Dear Life: Archives and Preservation." In *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts*, 161–171. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Neuman, Daniel M. 1990. *The Life of Music in North India: The Organization of an Artistic Tradition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Neuwirth, Bob, and Frazer Pennebaker. 2000. DVD. *Down From the Mountain*. Santa Monica, CA: Artisan Home Entertainment.

Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire." *Representations* 26 (Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory):7–24.

North Carolina Arts Council. 2019. "Arts Tourism." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.ncarts.org/economic-development/arts-tourism.

Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, n.d. "About: Rhythm and Routes Oklahoma Music Trail ". Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.travelok.com/music-trail/.

Oldtime Central. "Creating A Safer Space in Traditional Music." Accessed May 10, 2020. https://oldtime-central.com/creating-a-safer-space-in-traditional-music/.

Old Fiddlers' Convention, Galax, Virginia. 2019. "Rules of Competition." Accessed September 26, 2019. http://www.oldfiddlersconvention.com/rules.htm.

Olmsted, Anthony. 2003. *Folkways Records: Moses Asch and his Encyclopedia of Sound* New York, NY: Routledge.

Olson, Ted. 2005. "Introduction." In *The Bristol Sessions: Writings About the Big Bang of Country Music*, edited by Charles K. Wolfe and Ted Olson, 1–7. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers.

Pecknold, Diane. 2007. *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.

————————. ed. 2013. *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Peer, Ralph Sylvester. 2009, 1927. In *The Bristol Sessions 1927–1928: The Big Bang of Country Music*. Hambergen, Germany: Bear Family Records.

Perchuk, Andrew, and Rani Singh, eds. 2010. *Harry Smith: the Avant-Garde in the American Vernacular*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute.

Pescatello, and Ann M. 1992. *Charles Seeger: A Life in American Music*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Pestcoe, Shlomo, and Greg C. Adams. 2018. "Banjo Roots Research: Changing Perspectives on the Banjo's African American Origins and West African Heritage." In *Banjo Roots and Branches*, edited by Robert B. Winans, 3–21. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Peterson, Richard A. 1997. *Creating Country Music, Fabricating Authenticity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Petrus, Stephen, and Ronald D. Cohen. 2015. *Folk City: New York and Folk Music Revival*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Pilley, Nick, and Claire Rudd. 2002. "Appalachian Clogging in Britain: The Green Grass Legacy." *Old–Time Herald* 8 (3).

PineCone, Piedmont Council of Traditional Music. 2014. "Home." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://www.pinecone.org.

Pitts, Richard. Fall 2002. "Traditional Music in Tinseltown in 2002: What Does It All Mean?" *The Old-Time Herald*, 28–31.

Porterfield, Nolan. 1996. *Last Cavalier: The Life and Times of John A. Lomax, 1867–1948*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Posen, Shelly. Fall 2001. "Flying Away." *Sing Out! The Folk Song Magazine*, 98.

Pray, Doug. 2004, 1996. DVD. *Hype!* Santa Monica, CA: Republic Pictures.

Pruett, David. 2002. "WPAQ Radio: The Voice of the Blue Ridge Mountains." In *Country Music Annual 2002*, edited by Charles K Wolfe and James E. Akenson, 151–160. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky

Puckett, Anita. 2016. "Walking the Fence Line of the Crooked Road: Engaging in the Marketplace of Tourism while Empowering Place-Based Civic Commons." In *Appalachia Revisited: New Perspectives on Place, Tradition, and Progress*, edited by William Schumann and Rebecca Adkins Fletcher, 112–125. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky

Radishofski, Kathryn 2017. "Last (Un) Fair Deal Going Down: Blues Tourism and Racial Politics in Clarksdale, Mississippi." In *Navigating Souths: Transdisiplinary Explorations of a U.S. Region*, edited by Michele Grigsby Coffey and Jodi Skipper, 214–226 Athens: The University of Georgia Press.

Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center. 2019. "The Museum." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://ralphstanleymuseum.com/museum-information.

Reader, Ian, and Tony Walter, eds. 1993. *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture*. Basingstoke, Hampshire and London, England: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Reish, Gregory N. 2017. "On the Notion of 'Old-Time' in Country Music." In *The Oxford Handbook of Country Music*, edited by Travis D. Stimeling, 117–140. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Reising, Russell. 2001. "The Secret Lives of Objects; the Secret Stories of Rock and Roll: Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and Seattle's Experience Music Project." *American Quarterly* 53 (3):489–510.

Reiss, Scott. 2003. "Tradition and Imaginary: Irish Traditional Music and the Celtic Phenomenon." In *Celtic Modern: Music at the Global Fringes*, edited by Martin Stokes and Philip V. Bohlman, 145–171. Lanham, MD, and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Rex Theater. n.d. "About the Venue." Accessed August 13, 2019. http://www.rextheatergalax.com/about-the-venue.html.

Richardson, Julie. 2019. "Straight to the Crooked Road: Experience the Breathtaking Crooked Road." *The Sun*, June 15, updated June 20, 2019. https://www.thesun.co.uk/travel/9300110/breathtaking-crooked-road-trail-in-virginia/.

Ritchie, Fiona, and Douglas M. Orr. 2014. *Wayfaring Strangers: The Musical Voyage from Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Roberts, Les. 2014. "Talkin' bout my generation: Popular Music and the Culture of Heritage " *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (3):262–80.

Robertson, Eck. 1922. Sallie Gooden. Victor 18956–A, 78-rpm disc.

Rockwell, Joti. 2012. "What is bluegrass anyway? Category formation, debate, and the framing of musical genre." *Popular Music* 31 (3):363–381.

Ronström, Owe. 2014. "Traditional Music, Heritage Music " In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 43–59. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Rosen, Jeff, and Martin Scorsese. 2005. *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan*. Hollywood, CA: Paramount.

Rosenberg, Neil V., ed. 1993. *Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

————————. 2005. *Bluegrass: A History*. Twentieth anniversary ed. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————————.2014. "A Folklorist's Exploration of the Revival Metaphor." In *The Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, edited by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, 94–115. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Royko, David. February 2001. "*O Brother, Where Art Thou?* ." *Bluegrass Unlimited*, 34–36.

Ruchala, James Randolph. 2011. "Making Round Peak Music." Ph.D diss, Brown University.

Russell, Allison. December 16, 2019. ND Artist of the Decade: Renaissance Woman Rhiannon Giddens Transcends Borders and Time. *No Depression*. Accessed May 14, 2020.

Russell, Tony. 1971–1972. *Old Time Music* 3.

————————. 2004. *Country Music Records: A Discography, 1921–1942*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

————————.2007. *Country Music Originals: The Legends and the Lost*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Sanjek, David. 1998. "Blue Moon of Kentucky Rising Over the Mystery Train: The Complex Construction of Country Music." In *Reading Country Music: Steel Guitars, Opry Stars, and Honky-Tonk Bars*, edited by Cecelia Tichi, 22–45. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.

Santelli, Robert. 1997. "The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum." *Popular Music and Society* 21 (1):97–99.

Scarborough, Dorothy. 1937. *A Song Catcher in the Southern Mountains: American Folk Songs of British Ancestry*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Schmidt Horning, Susan. 2011. "The Architects of Rock and Roll: the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Cleveland." *Technology & Culture* 52:598–605.

Seeger, Mike. 1997. "What is old-time music? A brief description and personal selection of 20 currently available compact discs " *Bluegrass Unlimited* 31:62–64.

Shank, Barry. 1994. *Dissonant Identities: the Rock 'n' Roll Scene in Austin*. Hanover, CT: Wesleyan University Press.

Shapiro, Henry D. 1978. *Appalachia on our Mind: The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Sharp, Cecil J., and Olive Dame Campbell. 1932. *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*. Edited by Maud Karpeles. London: Oxford University Press. Original edition, 1917.

Sharp, Cecil J., and Charles L Marson. 1906–1911. *Folk Songs From Somerset*. 5 vols. London: Simpkin.

Shearin, Hubert G., and Josiah H. Combs. 1911. *A Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs*. Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing Company.

Shelemay, Kay Kaufman. 1991. "Recording Technology, the record industry, and ethnomusicological scholarship." In *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*, edited by Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman, 277–92. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

————————. 2001. "Toward and Ethnomusicology of the Early Music Movement: Thoughts on Bridging Disciplines and Musical Worlds." *Ethnomusicology* 45 (1):1–29.

Siegel, Peter K. 2006. Friends of Old Time Music. In *Friends of Old Time Music*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Folkways.

Slobin, Mark. 1983. "Rethinking 'Revival' of American Ethnic Music." *New York Folklore* 9 (3–4):37–44.

————————. *Fiddler on the Move: Exploring the Klezmer World*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

————————. ed. 2002. *American Klezmer: Its Roots and Offshoots*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Small, Christopher. 1998. *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

Smith, Barbara Ellen. 2004. "De-Gradations of Whiteness: Appalachia and the Complexities of Race." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 10 (1/2):38–57.

Smith, C. Alphonso. 1916. "Ballads Surviving in the United States." *The Musical Quarterly* 2 (1):109–129.

Smith, Harry E. 1997, 1952. In *Anthology of American Folk Music* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Folkways.

Smith Maguire, Jennifer, and Julian Matthews, eds. 2014. *The Cultural Intermediaries Reader*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Smith, Reed. 1914. "The Traditional Ballad in the South during 1914." *The Journal of American Folklore* 28 (108):199–203.

————————. 1915. "The Traditional Ballad in the South." *The Journal of American Folklore* 27 (103):55–66.

————————. 1934. "The Traditional Ballad in America, 1933." *The Journal of American Folklore* 47 (183):64-75.

Smithsonian Institution: National Museum of American History, n.d. "Tommy Jarrell's Violin." Accessed May 10, 2020. https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_606731.

Smulyan, Susan. 2008. "Early Broadcasting and Radio Audiences." In *The Hayloft Gang: The Story of the National Barn Dance*, edited by Chad Berry, 119–129. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Snyder, Amy. 2009. "Thomas ("Tommy") Jefferson Jarrell." *Conversations: A Publication of the North Carolina Humanities Council* 2 (2):37.

Sore Fingers Summer Schools, n.d. "History." Accessed September 16, 2019. http://sorefingers.co.uk/history.php.

Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill. 2016. "The Wayne Martin and Nancy Kalow Collection." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/20047/.

Southwest Virginia Cultural Center and Marketplace. 2019. "About." Accessed August 13, 2019. https://swvaculturalcenter.com/about/.

Stokes, Martin, and Philip Vilias Bohlman, eds. 2003. *Celtic Modern: Music at the Global Fringe*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Straw, W. 1991. "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music." *Cultural Studies* 5 (3):368–388.

Strother, Logan, Spencer Piston, and Thomas Ogorzalek. 2017. "Pride or Prejudice? Racial Prejudice, Southern Heritage, and White Support for the Confederate Battle Flag." *Du Bois Review: The Empire Strikes Back (special issue edited by Lawrence D. Bobo)* 14 (1):295–323.

Stuever, Hank. September 12, 2019. Ken Burns's 'Country Music' is full of high praise and heartbreak, but short on analysis. *The Washington Post*. Accessed September 12.

Sullivan, John Jeremiah. May 20, 2019. Rhiannon Giddens And What Folk Music Means. *The New Yorker*. Accessed May 14, 2020.

Surry Arts Council. n.d–a. "Who We Are." Accessed August 14, 2019. http://www.surryarts.org/aboutus/whoweare.html.

————————. n.d–b. "Mount Airy Old-Time ". Accessed August 20, 2019 http://www.surryarts.org/mountairyoldtime/index.html.

Sweers, Britta. 2005. *Electric Folk: The Changing Face of English Traditional Music*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sylvan, Robin. 2002. *Traces of the Spirit: The Religious Dimensions of Popular Music*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Szwed, John F. 2010. *Alan Lomax: The Man Who Recorded the World*. New York, NY: Viking Penguin.

Taruskin, Richard. 1995. *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Tessler, Holly 2006. "Roses and Rotten Tomatoes: A Case Study of Liverpool's Mathew Street Festival and the Contested Spaces of Cultural Redevelopment " In *Access All Eras: Tribute Bands and Global Pop Culture*, edited by Shane Homan, 52–66. Maidenhead, Berkshire, England: Open University Press.

Thompson Chapman, Iris. DVD. 2004. *The Life and Times of Joe Thompson*.

Tick, Judith. 1999. "Ruth Crawford, Charles Seeger, and "The Music of American Folk Songs"." In *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*, 109–130. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Timothy, Dallen J., and Stephen W. Boyd. 2015. *Tourism and Trails: Cultural, Ecological and Management Issues*. Bristol, UK and Buffalo, NY: Channel View Publications.

Titon, Jeff Todd. 2001. *Old-Time Kentucky Fiddle Tunes*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky

Tucker, Abigail. 2011. "A Musical Tour Along The Crooked Road." *Smithsonian Magazine*, September. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/a-musical-tour-along-the-crooked-road-49549719/.

Turino, Thomas. 2008. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Valluzzo, Chris, and Sean Kotz. 2009. DVD. *"Why Old-Time?.* Horse Archer Productions.

Verna, Paul. 1998. "Review: Hell Among the Yearlings." *Billboard–The International Newsweekly of Music, Video and Home Entertainment*, 15 August, 16.

Von Eschen, Penny M. 2004. *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Wade, Stephen. 2012. *The Beautiful Music All Around Us: Field Recordings and the American Experience*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Wallach, Jeremy. 2011. "Unleashed in the East: Metal Music, Masculinity, and 'Malayness' in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore." In *Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music Around the World*, edited by Jeremy Wallach, Harris M. Berger and Paul D. Greene, 86–105. Durham: Duke University Press.

Wallach, Jeremy, Harris M. Berger, and Paul D. Greene, eds. 2011. *Metal Rules the Globe: Heavy Metal Music Around the World*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Welch, Gillian. 1996. CD. *Revival*. Los Angeles, CA: Alamo Sounds, CD.

————————. 1998. CD. *Hell Among the Yearlings*. Los Angeles, CA: Alamo Sounds.

Wells, Paul F. Spring/Autumn 2003. "Fiddling on an Avenue of Black-White Interchange." *Black Music Research Journal* 23:135–147.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History. 2019. "Appalachian String Band Music Festival: Contest Rules." Accessed September 27, 2019. http://www.wvculture.org/stringband/stringrules.html.

Whisnant, Anne Mitchell 2006. *Super-Scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Whisnant, David E. 1979–80. "Finding the Way Between the Old and the New: The Mountain Dance and Folk Festival and Bascom Lamar Lunsford's Work as a Citizen." *Appalachian Journal* 7 (1/2 Process, Policy, and Context: Perspectives on Appalachian Culture):135–154.

————————. 2009, 1983. *All That is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Wiggins, Gene. 1987. *Fiddlin' Georgia Crazy: Fiddlin' John Carson, His Real World, and the World of His Songs*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Wilkes Heritage Museum. 2011. "Blue Ridge Music Hall of Fame." Accessed August 14, 2019. https://www.wilkesheritagemuseum.com/BRMHOF/about.html.

Williams, Raymond. 1977. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, Joe. 2006. *A Guide to the Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair Publisher.

Wilson, Joe, and Fred Bartenstein. 2017. *Roots Music in America: Collected Writings of Joe Wilson*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press

Winans, Robert. 1979. "Black Banjo Playing in Virginia and West Virginia." *Folklore and Folklife in Virginia and West Virginia: Journal of Virginia Folklore Society* 1:7–30.

————————. ed. 2018. *Banjo Roots and Branches*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

————————.1976. "The Folk, the Stage, and the Five-String Banjo in the Nineteenth Century." *Journal of American Folklore* 89:407–437.

————————. 2018. "Defining a Regional Banjo Style: “Old Country Style” Banjo or Piedmont Two-Finger Picking." In *Banjo Roots and Branches*, edited by Robert B. Winans, 289–205. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Winter, Trish, and Simon Keegan-Phipps. 2016. *Performing Englishness: Identity and Politics in a Contemporary Folk Resurgence*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Wishnevsky, Stephan T. 2007. *How the Hippies Ruin't Hillbilly Music: A Historical Memoir 1960–2000*. New York: iUniverse, Inc.

Wolfe, Charles. 1997. *The Devil's Box: Masters of Southern Fiddling*. Nashville, TN and London The Country Music Foundation Press & Vanderbilt University Press.

————————. 1999. *A Good-Natured Riot: The Birth of the Grand Ole Opry*. Nashville: Country Music Foundation Press and Vanderbilt University Press.

Wolfe, Charles K., and Ted Olson, eds. 2005. *The Bristol Sessions: Writings About the Big Bang of Country Music* Jefferson, North Carolina and London: McFarland and Company, Inc. Publishers.

Wood, David Henderson Wood. 2015. "A Mixed-Methods Study of Affective Difference in the Old-Time Music Revival in Appalachian Virginia and North Carolina." PhD diss., Brown University

Wooley, Amy Suzanne. 2003. "Conjuring Utopia: The Appalachian String Band Revival." Ph.D diss., University of California, Los Angeles.

Yarnell, Susan L. 1998. *The Southern Appalachians: A History of the Landscape*. Asheville, NC: USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station.

Young, Rob. 2010. *Electric Eden: Unearthing Britain's Visionary Music*. London: Faber and Faber.