

Initiating the Review

By PRE founding editor Gordon R. Thompson - Skidmore College

First, congratulations on the twenty-fifth anniversary of *The Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology*. Those of us who founded the publication have taken pride in seeing its subsequent manifestations.

The first issue of *The Review* took shape over kitchen tables in student apartments in 1983 and 1984 with Jane Sugarman, Susan Clark, and myself serving as the cooks. The details remain fuzzy in my mind, but I recall that we drafted and submitted a proposal to establish *The Review* in the spring or fall of 1983. As the Ethnomusicology Program's student representative, I attended a student government meeting where someone asked me to present and to defend our proposition. Among my arguments, I remember proffering that music offered a much better way of learning about the peoples of the world than by invading their nations. Despite that subtle approach, they still accepted the idea and *The Review* began to take shape.

I think we convened our first meeting in Susan Clark's Westwood apartment where we drafted up the call for papers and began establishing the mechanics of putting the publication together. Susan took on the task of designing the sunset logo. After that first gathering, almost all of the gatherings and work took place on my kitchen table in Family Student Housing on Sepulveda. This arrangement came as a necessity. Besides trying to write my dissertation and beginning to teach part time at California State University, Long Beach, the arrival of my daughter complicated matters. At least once a week (and sometimes more often) we would sit around the kitchen table, noshing and talking about the articles, each of us taking turns carrying my daughter, cutting and pasting music examples, and hand assembling *The Review*. The first editorial board was very much a family.

The memories of working on *The Review* remain positive for me. In all of our graduate seminars, we had never read articles as closely as we did for the *PRE*. First, we discussed submissions as a group and ranked them for inclusion, modification, or rejection. We had extended discussions of the materials for both their content and their language. What was the structure of the article? Did the author have a clear thesis? What difference did a colon or semi colon make in a sentence? We had the temerity to make recommendations to the authors for improvements and the authors were gracious enough to listen to us and modify their contributions.

My wife Jane gamely participated, making her own recommendations, typing up the manuscript on our first computer (an eight-bit Epson QX10 with no internal memory), and producing it on a daisy wheel printer. We did everything by hand. Manuscripts came typed on paper and needed to be re-entered as word-processing documents (novel for the time). We hand-drew music examples and literally pasted them onto the master copy. We thought we were pretty high-tech, but in reality our major expenditures came from buying a special print wheel for the small font and applying the raised footnotes by hand from transfer sheets. We were very proud of what we had produced, and maybe thought we were challenging the publication establishment.

So again, congratulations on twenty-five years. The idea that graduate students can produce a publication and make significant contributions to ethnomusicological discourse lives on in the *PRE*.

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