

Recollections

By former PRE editor Wanda Bryant - Pasadena City College, California Institute of the Arts

Twenty-two years ago, I joined a small group of UCLA students in the Ethnomusicology Archive to begin work on the fourth volume of *Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology*. We had no clue what we were doing. (I was still trying to figure out what ethnomusicology was!) Only two members of the previous editorial were still around and the rest of us were still wet behind the ears, in only our second year of graduate school. I remember thinking how fun it was to join my colleagues and classmates in discussion of the significant issues in the field, to find and polish important articles, to put our imprint on the journal, to somehow impact the field of ethnomusicology. What an exciting time it was!

Our big challenge in those days was the new computer technology that would present both a great education and our biggest headache. Looking back at the editors' note from Volume Four, I am amused to see that we referred to "micro-computers" and laser printers as cutting edge technology we utilized. I remember sitting with Edith Johnson and Tammy Gutnik in a tiny room in the basement of Schoenberg Hall, with an original Macintosh computer and a few—maybe three or four at the most—400k floppy disks which contained the entire operating system, Microsoft Word, and all our files. Talk about trial by fire! We were in way over our heads initially, and I think I learned much more about the workings of the Mac in that first year than I did about ethnomusicology. One of my most distinct memories of working on that first issue was sitting in front of the computer for what seemed like hours, swapping disks in and out, in and out, in and out, as it wrote information with its dimly inadequate 128k brain.

Once the actual editorial work began, I discovered that being on the PRE Board was a great way to hone my editorial skills while making friends and learning about areas of study outside my own interests. Liz Tolbert and I spent many hours talking about her research and her article "On Beyond Zebra," sometimes continuing our discussions over dinner at her home in the Hollywood hills. In Volume Five, I was tasked with editing "Form as Cosmology" by Paul Humphreys, a cherished friend to this day. Anne Rasmussen and I had a great time editing her article on "The Music of Arab Americans." And through it all, I was learning.

The note from the editors-in-chief of Volume Five in 1989 (Edith Johnson and me) again made special mention of the computer technology we used. We were right in the heart of the personal computer revolution, using a minimally more powerful Mac, Deluxe Music Construction Set, SuperPaint, MacDraw II, and Microsoft Word 4.0. We modified Word with a macro program that allowed us to include the correct diacritical marks for the English transliteration of Arabic. I even figured out how to create non-Western notation to represent the music of Java, the Arab world, and the North American Pueblos, and made some (still) pretty cool graphics to supplement those great articles.

In thinking back on those years, I remember fondly and must acknowledge those who served on *PRE*'s editorial boards with me. Volume Four's board consisted of myself, Tammy Gutnik, David Harnish, Edith Johnson, Wayne Randall, Anne Rasmussen, and Brenda Romero. Although he was not on the board, I must also acknowledge Mark Forry, editor from Volume Three, who was still on campus and was an invaluable source of information for us newbies. Volume Five was produced by Edith Johnson and me (as editors-in-chief) with assistance from David Harnish, Luis Hernandez-Mergal, Meilu Ho, and John O'Connell. An amazing group of people, and almost all of us still involved in some fashion in the fields of ethnomusicology and education!

The role of *PRE* editor-in-chief was a challenge that I am glad I accepted. It was alternately time-consuming, fun, frustrating, enlightening, and headache-inducing—but what a great and worthwhile learning experience. The actual editing process taught me, first and foremost, the skill to clarify one's thinking and writing (my own and others). Other facets of journal publication taught me about the foibles of new technology, the necessity for diplomacy and cooperation, even the ins and outs of institutional finance. These skills have served me well as I have passed my knowledge and love of ethnomusicology on to my students. Congratulations to *PRE* on 25 inspiring years!

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