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## Music Scholars and Open Access Publishing

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# MUSIC SCHOLARS AND OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

BY RACHEL E. SCOTT AND ANNE SHELLEY



Perspectives on Open Access (OA) publishing among music scholars vary considerably, ranging from those who identify as “an evangelist for open access” to those who are “totally against it.” This study seeks to understand not only the OA practices of music scholars as evidenced by their scholarly output, but also their motivations and concerns, and situate these aspects within the broader disciplinary contexts that establish expectations and values for scholarly communications.

Interviews with twenty-one music scholars in various subdisciplines explored experiences and motivations that led them to publish their work OA as well as factors that have discouraged them from doing so. Each participant discussed the availability of OA publishing opportunities that exist in their subdisciplines of music, how these are perceived, how they are evolving, and how they compare to opportunities in other disciplines. Participants also spoke to ways in which institutions support or value OA.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The benefits and hesitations around OA publishing are well-documented in an extensive literature and will not be considered here.<sup>1</sup> Several studies have noted differences in publishing patterns and expectations in the arts and humanities that have implications for OA publishing.<sup>2</sup> Bo-Christer Jörk and Timo Korkeamäki, for example, found that in

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The authors thank the twenty-one participants in this study who so generously shared their thoughts and experiences. The authors would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their time, questions, and feedback.

1. Two large-scale studies offer useful insight to those seeking context for OA publishing: Heather Piwowar, Jason Priem, Vincent Larivière, Juan Pablo Alperin, Lisa Matthias, Bree Norlander, Ashley Farley, Jevin West, and Stefanie Haustein, “The State of OA: A Large-Scale Analysis of the Prevalence and Impact of Open Access Articles,” *PeerJ* 6 (2018): e4375, <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.4375>; Jonathan P. Tennant, François Waldner, Damien C. Jacques, Paola Masuzzo, Lauren B. Collister, and Chris HJ Hartgerink, “The Academic, Economic and Societal Impacts of Open Access: An Evidence-Based Review,” *F1000Research* 5 (2016), <https://dx.doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.8460.3>.

2. Bo-Christer Jörk and Timo Korkeamäki, “Adoption of the Open Access Business Model in Scientific Journal Publishing: A Cross-Disciplinary Study,” *College & Research Libraries* 81, no. 7 (2020): 1080–94, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.81.7.1080>; Carol Tenopir, Elizabeth D. Dalton, Lisa Christian, Misty K. Jones, Mark McCabe, MacKenzie Smith, and Allison Fish, “Imagining a Gold Open Access

humanities “publishing of book chapters or monographs is popular, and the ‘shelf life’ of publications is often longer” compared to the sciences.<sup>3</sup> Other scholars have observed fewer humanities journals have adopted hybrid OA models that rely on article processing charges (APCs); Carol Tenopir et al. noted that arts and humanities scholars have less funding and are less willing to pay APCs from personal funds.<sup>4</sup> In 2010, the Center for Studies in Higher Education investigated faculty needs and practices related to in-progress scholarly communication in seven disciplines, one of which was music. Their findings revealed questions from music scholars regarding financial details of OA publishing, with one administrator interpreting the author-pays model as a form of vanity press: “whoever is able to pay or pay the most would have the best chance of publishing. How would you guard against that?”<sup>5</sup>

Other authors have explored existing OA publishing venues in music. In 2016, Matthew Testa noted a relative lack of OA music journals as well as challenges to their discoverability.<sup>6</sup> More recently, Matthew Franke compiled a list of OA Journals in music and published a discussion of the implications of OA for a truly open and equitable scholarly communications landscape in music.<sup>7</sup> Franke finds that “although the existing model has provided a global audience for this local discourse, it runs the risk of creating an echo chamber in which Western disciplinary approaches, perspectives, and topics are the main ones that matter.”<sup>8</sup> These studies do not, however, investigate music scholars’ publishing practices or the motivations and concerns music scholars have about OA publishing. Even as OA music venues are compiled and evaluated, new journals and platforms are created. Recent ventures, including *Open Access Musicology*, offer free-to-read and media-rich content that undergo peer-review processes and have the imprimatur of high-profile scholars on editorial and advisory boards.<sup>9</sup>

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Future: Attitudes, Behaviors, and Funding Scenarios among Authors of Academic Scholarship,” *College & Research Libraries* 78, no. 6 (2017): 824–43, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.78.6.824>.

3. Jörk and Korkeamäki, “Adoption of the Open Access Business Model in Scientific Journal Publishing,” 1089.

4. Tenopir et al., “Imagining a Gold Open Access Future.”

5. Diane Harley, Sophia Krzys Acord, Sarah Earl-Novell, Shannon Lawrence, and C. Judson King, “Assessing the Future of Landscape of Scholarly Communication: An Exploration of Faculty Values and Needs in Seven Disciplines,” (Berkeley, CA: The Center for Studies in Higher Education, 2010), 545, accessed 18 May 2022, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/15x7385g#>.

6. Matthew Testa, “Availability and Discoverability of Open-Access Journals in Music,” *Music Reference Services Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (2016): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10588167.2016.1130386>.

7. Matthew Franke, “List of Open Access Music Journals,” accessed 28 December 2021, <https://matthewfrankemusicology.wordpress.com/list-of-open-access-journals/>; Matthew Franke, “Open-Access Music Journals and the Possibility of Global Dialogue,” *College Music Symposium* 61, no. 2 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.18177/sym.2021.61.sr.11527>.

8. Franke, “Open-Access Music Journals and the Possibility of Global Dialogue.”

9. “Open Access Musicology,” accessed 7 March 2022, <https://openaccessmusicology.wordpress.com/>.

Open Access (OA) is defined differently depending on the context and aims. In this study, participants were asked to consider OA as “publishing or sharing your work in a venue that allows readers to access it free of charge by any legal means.” Gold OA, articles typically funded by an APC, and platinum OA, articles for which the author has not paid a fee but are nonetheless openly available to readers, are often understood as the default OA options. Green OA, or author-deposited OA, is intentionally included in this study because music scholars’ awareness of and motivations for self-archiving, especially outside of institutional repositories, have not been thoroughly explored. Recent studies have investigated how music- and fine arts-related materials are self-deposited in repositories, but these have been framed through perspectives and practices of library and information sciences.<sup>10</sup> Kate Lambaria conducted interviews with faculty across the fine arts to explore their obstacles and incentives to self-depositing their work in institutional repositories.<sup>11</sup> Anne Shelley shared the results of initiatives to incorporate more music- and fine arts-related content in the institutional repository at Illinois State University.<sup>12</sup> Rachel Scott compared the self-deposit rates of musicologists to those of music librarians to investigate whether librarians practice what they preach relative to their disciplinary peers.<sup>13</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

With this study, the authors set out to investigate music scholars’ perceptions of OA, both as it relates to their publishing and teaching. The findings are separated into two articles; this article focuses on OA publishing and the second, forthcoming in the March 2023 issue of *Notes*, focuses on the use of OA resources in teaching. The Illinois State University Institutional Review Board examined the study, including the survey and interview instruments, and granted it exempt status. The survey instrument appears in Appendix A and the complete interview instrument is provided as Appendix B. The authors were awarded a University Research Grant that funded participant incentives; participants were emailed a \$50 digital gift card after the interviews were completed. The interviews were conducted via Zoom in November and December 2021. The authors

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10. Kate Lambaria, “Considering Creative Activity in Institutional Repositories: An Exploration of Faculty Perceptions,” *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* 8, no. 1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.2312>; Anne Shelley, “It Takes a Village: Populating the Institutional Repository with Performing Arts Content,” *Music Reference Services Quarterly* 23, no. 3-4 (2020): 130–41, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10588167.2020.1786308>; Rachel E. Scott, “A Selected Comparison of Music Librarians’ and Musicologists’ Self-Archiving Practices,” *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 19, no. 4 (2019): 635–51, <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2019.0039>.

11. Lambaria, “Considering Creative Activity in Institutional Repositories.”

12. Shelley, “It Takes a Village.”

13. Scott, “A Selected Comparison of Music Librarians’ and Musicologists’ Self-Archiving Practices.”

analyzed responses by their frequency and intensity, referring to video recordings, transcripts, and notes taken during the live interviews. In order to promote validity of the findings, participants were invited to provide feedback on an early draft and their input was incorporated into the manuscript.<sup>14</sup> Direct quotations are integrated throughout the document to amplify the participants' experiences using their own words and to provide "thick, rich description . . . statements that produce for the readers the feeling that they have experienced, or could experience, the events being described."<sup>15</sup>

While participants represented a variety of music subdisciplines, such as Musicology, Theory, Librarianship, Performance, Education, Cognition, and even American Studies, musicologists were the largest single group by far. A few participants had multiple affiliations, holding appointments at more than one institution, or were primarily independent researchers who occasionally taught courses for a college or university. A couple participants held an academic position other than faculty. Participants' primary subdisciplines, institution type, and professional title are provided in Tables 1–3.

Although best practices for qualitative research suggest that twenty-one is an appropriate number for interview-based research, this number cannot be understood as representative and the findings are not generalizable.<sup>16</sup> The authors also acknowledge that separating data from a single set of interviews into two manuscripts creates redundancy in articulating the methodology and suggests rigid boundaries where there are none. One potential limitation did not materialize; there was initial concern that only OA advocates would choose to participate in the study, but the findings show a broad range of perspectives, including strong opposition to OA.<sup>17</sup> The authors acknowledge that the participants do not represent the diversity of music scholarship across subdisciplines; conversations with those who are active composers and performers, for example, focused predominately on published scholarship and not on their recordings or scores.

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14. John W. Creswell and Dana L. Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," *Theory into Practice* 39, no. 3 (2000): 124–30.

15. Creswell and Miller, "Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry," 128–29.

16. Lisa M. Given and Rebekah Willson interviewed twenty humanists on their digital research practices in "Information Technology and the Humanities Scholar: Documenting Digital Research Practices," *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 69, no. 6 (2018): 807–19; Peter Williams, Iain Stevenson, David Nicholas, Anthony Watkinson, and Ian Rowlands conducted seventeen interviews with academics in arts and humanities for "The Role and Future of the Monograph in Arts and Humanities Research," *Aslib Proceedings*, 61, no. 1 (2009): 67–82, <https://doi.org/10.1108/00012530910932294>.

17. The authors acknowledge, however, that participants may have felt pressure to provide responses that they thought they, as librarians and OA advocates, might want to hear.

Table 1. Subdiscipline

Subdiscipline
American Studies (1)
Musicology (12)
Music Cognition (1)
Music Education (1)
Music Librarianship (2)
Music Performance (1)
Music Theory (3)

Table 2. Institution Type

Institution Type – Carnegie
Baccalaureate Colleges (3)
Doctoral/Professional (4)
Doctoral: High research activity (3)
Doctoral: Very high research (8)
Special Focus Institutions (1)
No academic affiliation (2)

Table 3. Professional Title

Professional Title
Adjunct/Instructor/Lecturer (3)
Assistant Professor (2)
Associate Professor (6)
Librarian (2)
Postdoctoral Fellow (1)
Professor (1)
Non-Academic Affiliation (2)
Other Academic Position (2)

**RESULTS**

**What factors would lead you to publish your work OA?**

Participants noted a variety of incentives to publish their work OA, although for most participants, it is a perk (“an absolute bonus”) and not something that they have sought out (“I wasn’t thinking about OA”). A handful of participants said they do keep track of OA publications and prioritize them when submitting their work: “I actively seek out OA venues to publish in before traditional. I keep a running list of journals that are OA and refer to that when I’m submitting my next piece.” Participants indicated the publishing venue was the primary consideration, and perhaps also the venue’s audience, fit, and prestige.<sup>18</sup> Several participants noted that although OA had not been a factor in selecting publication venues, their OA publications are among their most read and engaged with: “My article that has been most read is the OA article. Maybe I should be seeking [OA] out more?” and “My OA works are the most highly engaged with. To me that speaks volumes.” One participant spoke to having recently published their work in a gated journal, but because the topic is

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18. Though they stop short of defining prestige, the 2010 report from the Center for Studies in Higher Education does reveal some scholars’ thoughts on the status of particular publishers, societies, and journals. Journals considered to be prestigious publish a small number of articles and issues each year compared to the number of scholars producing and submitting work; in sum, prestigious publication venues have a highly competitive acceptance rate.

related to remote learning during COVID, the publisher made the article OA. It became the top read article in that journal.

Related to higher levels of reading and engagement, tracking the impact of one's work is another potential benefit of publishing OA. One participant appreciated the global reach of OA publishing, even if it would not affect their future publication choices: "I do think OA is a great opportunity otherwise; a lot of the readership I have on OA articles is outside the US. This doesn't affect my likelihood for publishing OA in the future." Another said: "I Google myself periodically to see how much people are engaged with my work. I like to see that people are reading my stuff; with OA that is possible. It's a sense of accomplishment and there's a meaning behind that transmission; people might actually read what you write if you publish OA rather than in a prestigious journal."

Participants noted being led to OA publishing venues by specific opportunities. For example, one participant published in *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* after encountering a call for papers (CFP) that was pedagogy-related and of interest. Another participant recalled that the first article they published was OA: "my [undergraduate] advisor was eager for me to publish my research and I responded to a CFP that was a good fit." An invitation to submit or other personal contact by the editor was cited as another opportunity that led to OA publishing. A less positive way of framing OA publishing opportunities was presented by a scholar of music education, a field in which platinum OA journals are not considered as prestigious as gated journals: "If I choose to publish OA it's because I think it's appropriate for that venue and probably wouldn't be accepted elsewhere." The participant acknowledged that one of their OA publications had been submitted and rejected elsewhere.

Another enhancement afforded by OA publishing, or at least online publishing, is the integration of media. "In musicology, the first all-online journals were OA. The publications allowed so many things that print didn't—embedded audio and video. . . . Online publication offers a lot of flexibility; I know there are online publications that aren't OA but to me those things are intrinsically linked." Another participant who works on sound recordings stated: "The nature of my medium has lent itself to online which has lent itself to open." A more specific example from musicology was: "*Music and Politics* allowed film clips, and this was the only venue that would work. Print would not convey the point I wanted to make."

A perceived benefit of OA publishing is sharing one's work with the optimal audience in a well-respected society journal. Several participants noted that music theorists are ahead of most of their music peers in terms of excellent OA venues. Not only do music theorists have several OA journals in which media can easily be integrated, they also have

society platforms for vlog scholarship and multiple society journals that are OA. Participants noted the Society for Music Theory offers three OA titles (*Music Theory Online*, *SMT-V*, and *SMT-Pod*), while the American Musicology Society only offers one (*Journal of Music History Pedagogy*).

Several participants indicated the cost to readers is a consideration in where they publish their work. One noted, "I try and select journals based on how expensive they are [to readers], in addition to what the audience is. Two of my articles are in OA journals that are totally free: *Music Theory Online* and *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*." Another participant mentioned they had published their first two books the traditional way. They were prepared to work with a larger press on their third book, but when they learned how much the publisher planned to charge: "I thought no one would buy the book. Publishers are mostly thinking about libraries buying books but not thinking about affordability for individuals."

This consideration may be especially important when attempting to reach audiences outside of academia: "I wouldn't want to limit access to my work because someone doesn't have privileged affiliation." Concerns about potential readers who lack institutional access were frequently shared: "I'm very aware of socioeconomic situations of students, adjuncts, independent scholars. People who are disadvantaged economically should not be disadvantaged when trying to research." These concerns were sometimes tied to the participant's instructional responsibilities: "As a professor who has students doing research, I think it's really important for people to have access to scholarship." Sometimes, however, concerns about access were tied to convenience and ease: "When I do research and have to log in to my library system it takes more time. OA materials can be easier to access and use."

In addition to facilitating free reading of their work, some authors were passionate about OA venues that did not charge fees to authors. On the other hand, a participant in music cognition noted they initially had no access to funding for publication fees, but now that they do have funding as a postdoc, they prioritize OA. One participant revealed they were initially drawn to OA because their library did not subscribe to certain journals and they had to get access to journals from peers. As they hit paywalls, they realized authors are not getting a cut of the work that they write, review, and edit. "If the publisher were sharing profits with the author, then I wouldn't mind traditional publishing. Why would we give our research away for a corporation's bottom line? I don't think it's a great moral issue, but I think people should be treated fairly. I see the publishers profiting off unpaid labor." Another participant spoke to connections between disciplinary values and OA publishing: "traditional publishing is valued for tenure and promotion. Because I'm an independent scholar



it's part of my responsibility to further scholarship in the discipline. Success in academia is never guaranteed, if your work is behind a paywall then how is that value?"

A few participants noted changes in their publishing behavior after being tenured. One participant tied this decision to prestige: "[after tenure] I decided to only publish in OA journals. Some [of my pre-tenure articles] were OA, there are prestigious journals in my field. Now I don't care about prestige." This participant indicated that prior to receiving tenure, "I didn't think about it much. I was only thinking about the prestige; hanging out with [a librarian friend] who doesn't shut up about OA and [he] got me thinking about it critically and from a social justice perspective."

One participant noted OA empowers authors: "OA has been used by authors who feel like they don't have power to reach readers." Another potential benefit of OA is its capacity to build community and create more equitable, scholar-led initiatives. One participant initially had concerns that "If I publish OA to start with, what would people's perceptions be of the quality/rigor of review?" For their first OA book they used CommentsPress from WordPress to facilitate open peer review. The participant was pleased with the process and noted: "people who are engaged in this process are motivated by the content and want to make scholarship open and high quality, [even with] no tangible incentive."

A few participants noted that publishing their work OA is related to finding open materials for their teaching responsibilities: "I hadn't thought about seeking an OA publication on purpose but since I have to do a lot of this work for teaching I might as well." Another shared: "at heart, anything pedagogical is about OA, so they embrace it. There's a proliferation of blogs and podcasts that are perfect for teaching and for my own consumption." Several participants drew connections between OA and pedagogy or resources for teaching.

Some participants highlighted advantages to depositing their work in repositories. Many reported using Academia.edu, a few mentioned Humanities Commons or their institutional repository, and only one participant (from music education) noted that they use ResearchGate. As one participant shared, "I always post my copies on Academia.edu which I know is frowned upon, but it seems like nobody cares. Part of this is spite: I don't get paid for my intellectual property, if you're not going to pay me then I'm not going to respect your copyright." Another noted "[Academia.edu] makes things OA that weren't OA originally. I put my copies on there and no one seems very upset about it; this is my way of getting around OA restrictions."

There is arguably some hypocrisy to publishing articles about equity, public scholarship, and related topics behind a paywall. A few participants

noted it made sense to publish particular articles OA given their content. As an example, one participant said “the article topic was about how people interact with each other in online discussions, so OA made sense.” Several participants shared concerns around scholarly ethics as an incentive to publish OA, as well as a desire to bring “academic scholarship to the broader public, to people who might not consider themselves scholars. Also writing in a style that could connect with a broader audience outside academia. In certain branches in musicology people are talking about this. It seems more of a trend in popular music, but not so much in my area of more European art music.”

One participant emphasized the importance of OA to scholarly ethics and public humanities: “People outside of academia have trouble accessing scholarly resources and OA scholarship is more discoverable through public pathways. A lot of the work I do is participating in conversations in my field, but I also want to engage the public, I want the public to see this work if they are interested.” One participant noted that a consequence of writing for publication in an OA venue might be a more accessible style: “If I were writing OA, I would probably change my writing style [and write] for a broader audience.”

One participant who had published in the OA journal *Current Research in Jazz* stated it is important for that journal to reach a wide audience because there are “lots of people involved who don’t have institutional subscription access” and followed up by suggesting OA helps to “bridge the divide between academic and independent researchers.” One participant noted that “interdisciplinary areas really lend themselves to OA because there isn’t such a sense of boundaries within fields. It might be easier for OA to occupy the middle ground between the disciplines.”

Participants also drew connections to work in digital humanities. Digital publishing, if not OA specifically, holds much possibility for music scholarship. One noted, “I’ve thought of doing a critical edition of the opera I did my dissertation on—maybe there’s an opportunity for building a website instead of publishing a traditional print score.” Another shared that the availability of digitized scores in the public domain is helping scholars write about nineteenth-century composers who are women and people of color. Several participants noted drawing on digital humanities in their teaching and scholarship, for example an “Open Access database of Star Wars motifs online—useful for teaching film music.” For one participant, a musicologist with an appointment in a center for digital scholarship, OA and digital humanities are closely related. They have published humanities research data, a mobile app, an A/V integrated text, thematic collections of digitized books, custom metadata, a digital collection of vernacular music—all OA.

**What factors would make you reluctant to share your work OA?**

Having established that OA is not a priority for most participants (“[I’ve] no hesitations about OA publishing, but it’s not prioritized”), it is possible to discuss other factors that do take precedence as well as participants’ concerns about OA. Several participants noted that “the only reason I haven’t published more in Open Access journals is that the primary venues aren’t Open Access.” This seemed to be true across music sub-disciplines, with the exception of music theory. A music education scholar noted: “There are no top tier Open Access journals in my field. I want to publish in journals that have the best reputation, status, and impact. Academics are [the] ones reading my stuff and they have access through libraries.” A musicologist shared: “When I’ve published in closed journals, it’s been because they’re key journals in my field. . . . There aren’t many journals in the field of American music [and I have to] balance the need to reach scholarly audiences with reaching the public through Open Access scholarship. I would prefer for field journals to be Open Access but [I’m] totally open to publishing in them as closed.”

Most participants indicated that fit and audience were more important to them than OA. “I wouldn’t choose a venue because it was Open Access, I would choose it more because of how the work fits with the publication/publisher.” Some have co-authored papers and revealed that fit is not entirely up to them: “this was the venue of choice for the project PI and it was her decision.” Another noted the broadest audience is not necessarily the right fit: “the main factor is identifying the right journal/venue rather than reaching a broad audience. If that was my priority I would probably reach out to *New York Times* or *Washington Post*—I just haven’t.” One participant whose work crosses disciplines asks, “where is my work going to take me?” They then choose the venue, OA or not, because “venues impact how I write.” One medievalist noted, “there aren’t many OA journals that care about the fourteenth century. I couldn’t find a good venue for research article, so I shelved it and then turned it into a book.”

A participant who is committed to OA confessed “I will still publish in gated journals to reach my ideal audience” and explained that they recently submitted to a gated journal because of their desire for the topic to reach an international readership. Similarly, a researcher who identified as early career indicated they chose not to pursue a publication because it would likely not reach the intended audience: “I was interested this past summer in submitting to *Religions*. It has less name recognition and is less established. . . . This publication would have flown under the radar of musicologists; hymnology and historical musicology journals would be a better fit.” A pre-tenure author noted that “I would want to match my submission to the readership of the publication because I would want

them to actually read it.” Audience seems to be of particular interest to pre-tenure and early career music scholars who need to establish themselves as experts.

Many participants noted that institutions value certain publishing venues and kinds of work over others. “I would publish OA, but in order to get tenure I have to publish in particular journals and they aren’t OA. Tenure and promotion requires the best.” Another said journal prestige matters in tenure and promotion (T&P) processes and they “would want [their publications] to help with promotion.” One participant noted their institution is not research-focused: “I don’t feel pressured by my institution to publish in top tier journals; this could be a drawback if I go on the job market, but at some point, I just can’t care about that.” Another commented that commitment to OA may work against scholars in T&P processes: “I know a colleague who refuses to publish in gated journals, and I think it’s slowed his career a bit.” Participants noted some change in the perception of OA titles in T&P processes over time: “*Music Theory Online* has enough status now that it counts more for T&P than it used to. In initial conversations with colleagues, they were concerned that it’s Open Access, but not so much now.”

Other participants spoke to T&P expectations around book publishing. One mentioned they were considering writing a monograph but paused to ask why: “Compared to an OA [journal] publication, which can be immediately available and would be read by way more people. It seems like writing articles is the better way to reach a lot of people. [Musicology] expects a published monograph for tenure and promotion, I am in a non-tenure track position which doesn’t expect publishing.” They have concluded that publishing OA articles is a better use of their time due to their status. Several pre-tenure and early career scholars similarly stated that a change in status might make them feel differently about their publishing options.

Participants raised questions and concerns around the variety of OA publishing models and the large profits of some scholarly publishers. Participants who otherwise supported OA noted their “problem is with the business model.” Some cited concerns about APCs and other publishing fees. “I don’t know why it has to cost \$1,200 to publish an article Open Access. The labor for SAGE journals is free—editors, reviewers, authors.” Another stated “It’s confusing how the cost is calculated, though I know journals need revenue to exist. If I didn’t have funding available to pay an APC then I would worry if I can’t publish my work.” Concerns about APCs were echoed by an independent scholar (“it seems unfair for authors who do not have institutional funding”) and by a tenured professor (“I can’t pay and don’t want to pay APCs and my institution doesn’t pay either”).

Several others conveyed their disinterest in paying to publish their work OA. “I’m skeptical of hybrid Open Access journals” and “I will not publish in a journal that charges an APC; I am not a fan of the pay-to-publish model.” Others were not aware of APCs for music journals, and it was not an issue for them. “I don’t know of any music education folks who are paying for OA in hybrid access. . . . For gold, I’m still skeptical even if funding was available from my institution for an APC.” Some questioned where funding for APCs comes from: “This probably exists in the sciences but not in music, but I think they pay APCs out of pocket or with research funds.” One participant indicated they are currently the PI on a grant and neglected to build APC funding into the grant budget because “it’s a humanities grant and I thought it would look weird.” They have since found an ideal venue in which to publish humanities datasets and research and plan to incorporate APC funding in their next budget.

Two participants who serve in different musicology societies noted recent discussions around making their society newsletter OA. Both indicated that some of their colleagues wanted to promote the newsletter as a tangible benefit to membership and were concerned about a potential loss of subscribers if the newsletter were freely available online. Others wondered why, if no print volume is issued, publishing costs are so high. There were also questions about OA book publishing: “OA monograph publishing is confusing, how are they getting their money?”

There were more questions than concerns about the quality of OA music journals. Most of the questions related to peer-review processes and peer-review status: “I’m not clear on the peer review process for Open Access journals, I would need to have a better handle on that before advising graduate students in my area to publish Open Access.” Several participants, however, confirmed that the quality of peer review for OA journals is “not an issue to me.” So-called predatory publishers were evoked, but not understood to be a major concern in music. “I’ve been at conferences where academics were soliciting submissions for what looks like predatory journals to me. There is a gray area where journals are serving valid functions but may not be the right place for what scholars are hoping will fulfill the goals of scholarship.” Another participant exclaimed: “How are conglomerates like Elsevier not predatory? How is Elsevier charging \$3,000 not predatory?” One participant harkened back to their experience as an undergraduate at which time they “thought that only the stuff you pay for was good.” They wondered about evolving perspectives on the trustworthiness of free resources and integrate this into their instruction: “we talk about evaluating sources on aspects other than the venue . . . we want students to find quality resources no matter where they are coming from.”

A more fundamental concern with OA is that some music scholars want to get paid. “I run a second business and need to make money on some things. I have been creating textbooks as solo author and contributor and am trying to make money off those. . . . I can’t get paid for articles, so I publish textbooks for which I can get paid.” Another shared: “I’m mindful of my own time since I’m running a business as well as teaching in higher education.” This participant, who has published pedagogical materials with a well-known music publisher and self-published on Amazon and Etsy, shared: “I have to license graphic art—it costs me money to make the resources I create. . . . As I get better at this, I think I deserve to be paid for it. Musicians should be paid and be paid well, so I have no problem charging for what I do. I try to create stuff in music theory and music education that isn’t available elsewhere.” They continued to describe some of the challenges in presenting their work on the marketplace: “It was hard to publish with [commercial publisher], they want to make a profit, so they want to see something unusual and attract buyers. I have pitched projects to them and been rejected. How you present and package material is important; it’s not just about content.”

Some participants also spoke to paying for permissions for notated music they include in their publications. “If you want to include music in the publication, you have to pay for it, particularly popular music.” Another participant noted fears about OA publishing due to the complexities of copyright law for music: “I think people are scared to use Open Access because of copyright law because copyright law for music is tedious, it is difficult, it is painful.” The concern seemed to be that traditional publishers have mechanisms in place to support securing permissions, where OA venues may not. In addition to the complexities surrounding copyright, there is understandably some confusion around OA, especially for content that is not clearly designated as fully OA. Some participants considered whether society newsletters, as an example, are OA: “The newsletter might be considered Open Access. It’s available on the website, [you] don’t need to pay to read [it]. But it’s not advertised as Open Access; society members know and that’s it.”

Green OA is also something that provoked questions: “I’m mostly just not sure how it works.” Sharing published content, even one’s own work can be challenging: “I have not published my work Open Access, but I have shared it with students through Blackboard. On Humanities Commons I shared a draft of the paper but not the published version because I wasn’t sure of legalities.” Another participant noted they may not be comfortable sharing anything other than the publisher’s final version: “I’m not really sure how it works. I have work on Academia.edu, but I only link to my materials that are already online, I wasn’t sure because

of copyright issues. I've noticed colleagues posting their proofs, but I haven't. I'm most comfortable with people accessing the publisher's PDF and would rather people not see other versions."

One participant articulated a specific concern about Academia.edu: "my colleagues upload their work and I download it. I just don't want to post my work there; I don't like how they're monetizing [my data]." Although several participants conceded that Humanities Commons is a more ethical option than sites like Academia.edu, they observed "I don't see people using it." They reported finding the Humanities Commons challenging to navigate or struggling to understand the policies. Some participants had not thought about self-archiving as a form of OA: "the journals don't talk about this like Open Access." Although no participants indicated that they actively deposit all published work in the institutional repository, some did share that their institution has an IR and that some of their previously published work has been posted to it. One noted they do plan to self-archive their publications but that working out which version can be posted and finding it has proven time consuming. The question of which version can be shared was raised by a few, including a music education scholar, who noted, "I have some materials on ResearchGate; I probably have things on there that I shouldn't [i.e., publisher's version instead of accepted version]."

Others said OA is not a primary consideration because publishing is a mechanism to support a colleague or to be part of a project. One tenured participant indicated "my promotional career is done, and I don't have a longer-term plan. When people ask me to write things now, I don't really consider the Open Access aspect, I support colleagues." Another commented: "I get a lot of invitations to write book chapters and often those venues are not Open Access. If I have an opportunity to contribute to an Open Access volume, that is my preference." One person shared that publishing in prestigious journals is important to establishing and maintaining credibility. Another participant indicated they push back when invited to contribute to a publication that is not OA and have convinced editors to allow them gold or green OA options.

One participant who is an active Wikipedia contributor noted they are opposed to OA scholarly publishing: "The idea of my work being out there with no protective shield makes me uncomfortable." One of their primary concerns is that their work would be claimed or reused by others if not published in a paywalled venue: "I want to prevent people from grabbing [my] ideas and publishing them." Another participant noted "concerns about plagiarism. [It's] easy to copy." Although one was squeamish about posting their work to Academia.edu, they did not have concerns about publishing in an OA journal. To them, "*Music and Politics*



seems more legit; Academia.edu is for profit.” Research has confirmed that digital availability may contribute to plagiarism, but there does not seem to be evidence that scholarly content published in OA journals is any more or less susceptible to plagiarism or misuse. In fact, scholars have argued that unrestricted access to OA publications facilitates their discovery in automated plagiarism detection.<sup>19</sup>

A few participants indicated that publishing is costly, and readers should pay. “I’m not aware of my work being published OA, [and I’m] totally against it. Journals have expenses, it’s a costly endeavor to publish. I don’t have the benefits of grants like my colleagues do. I want people to have to pay for the work that I put in and that the publisher has put in.” Although others were not entirely opposed to OA publishing, a few similarly acknowledged that publishers need to make a living. The participant who is most opposed to OA shared an example of a publisher that is struggling and recently laid off staff. Some of their concern is that the path forward with OA remains unclear: “if Open Access is the way of the future, then finances need to be rethought. I understand library concerns with budget issues but I’m not sure if Open Access is the answer. . . . How does this preserve the working cycle of those producing the content?” Related to the value added by commercial publishers is the question of discoverability: “Besides cost and library access, there’s so much information floating around that’s hard to find unless you know where to look. [I’ve] talked to colleagues who say that Open Access work is hard to find.” Another noted “a need in Open Access publishing is awareness of the venues.”

**What kind of OA publishing opportunities exist in your specific discipline of music, how are they perceived, how are they evolving, and how do they compare to those in other disciplines?**

#### *Music Cognition*

The music cognition scholar had previously made a spreadsheet of all relevant journals in their area and was surprised by how many are hybrid and accept APCs. “[It] makes me think there’s potential for journals to move this direction in the future.” The participant discussed potentially negative aspects of OA, including APC models that may promote inequity of opportunity and concerns about “the perception that of course you’re getting published because you’re paying them money.” The participant shared that some journals focus more on cognition and some more on humanities and music. They noted the humanities journals have

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19. Jens Brandt, Martin Gutbrod, Oliver Wellnitz, and Lars Wolf, “Plagiarism Detection in Open Access Publications,” in *Proceedings of the 4th International Plagiarism Conference*, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, June 2010, <https://www.ibr.cs.tu-bs.de/bib/xml/BGWW10.html>.



fewer OA options and, when they are available, they are very expensive. Although they would prefer to publish in humanities journals for the sake of securing a humanities-based position in the future, the cognitive science journals have higher impact factors and better support OA. They have accordingly published their work on the cognitive science side and hope “people will recognize the [inter]disciplinarity in what I do.”

When asked how perspectives on OA in music cognition compare to other disciplines and how these perspectives have evolved over time, they shared that musicology and music theory scholars are relatively unaware of APCs and OA publishing. One of their colleagues needed an explanation of APC and they were surprised because this colleague’s work is interdisciplinary. Perceptions about OA continue to evolve and show a tension between this “great, inclusive, and wonderful thing” and “is this actually helping inequity, or are we propagating it (with APCs)?” They provided an example of having tried to negotiate an APC waiver with a publisher who only offered a 10 percent discount. The participant indicated that the complexities and ramifications of OA are becoming clearer the more it is discussed.

### *Music Education*

The music education participant stated there are not many OA opportunities in their field. They shared “These [OA] journals come and go. They’re easy to start but harder to sustain; there are two or three active ones right now that are Open Access. A journal should be around forever. I want to submit my work to stable journals.” When asked how music education compares to other disciplines and how perspectives have evolved over time, they stated “I suspect Open Access is better embraced in the sciences. There are reputable pay-to-publish Open Access journals in the sciences, I think, and models where institutions pay instead of the author.” They indicated they are not having many conversations about OA: “[there are] so few opportunities in our field so we don’t think about it. I have a couple colleagues who are paying to publish—if you’re paying to publish your research, it probably isn’t good enough to be published.”

### *Music Librarianship*

Two music librarians, both of whom have advanced degrees in music and teach credit-bearing music research courses, offered different perspectives on the OA opportunities in music librarianship and how they are perceived. One shared “I feel like there are so many more options in librarianship than in musicology, but it might just be my level of awareness.” The other reiterated that none of the three primary journals—*Notes*, *Fontes Artis Musicae*, and *Music Reference Services Quarterly*—are OA

and noted “I think it would be hard for an Open Access music journal to get a foothold unless something happens with Humanities Commons.”<sup>20</sup> They continued: “I think everyone is in favor of Open Access, we just don’t know how to implement.” This participant gave an example of the Music Library Association still figuring out how their monographic series editors and OA Editor positions co-exist.

When asked how music librarianship compares to other disciplines and how perspectives have evolved over time, one noted: “as with so many things in research, we’re always on the coattails of what the hard sciences and social sciences are doing; it’s hard to have a structure of our own making.” The other shared: “It seems like librarianship and sciences in general would have more options. I haven’t seen as much in the humanities. Social science disciplines seem to have more of a culture of Open Access. Seems like music education and therapy might better embrace open than humanities, which are more gate-kept.” They confirmed that having a humanities background (PhD, musicology) they “don’t feel like I have the same understanding of Open Access as my peers who work with science researchers.”

### *Music Performance*

One participant who is active in performance, particularly church music, described their activity in self-publishing scores: “I have written children’s music and musicals. It is hard to [be successful in] the publishing sphere without a connection to a patron or publisher. [When I did submit my work], the publisher recommended giving it away [to build my reputation], so I posted it online and shared widely.” Their goal was not to profit from formally publishing their work, but to contribute to the genre. They seemed satisfied with this strategy, in that churches have asked to perform their work. This participant expressed concerns with Open Access and copyright law: “You can’t, you know, just take a snip of a piece of music and show it, even under fair use. . . . I learned that the hard way when I was writing my dissertation.”

### *Music Theory*

Music theorists take pride in having embraced OA early and often: “I’ve been excited because it’s been growing in the past ten years. [There’s a] new pedagogy journal that’s Open Access, new types of Open Access journals being made available through the larger disciplinary society (*SMT-V*:

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20. *Notes*, *Fontes Artis Musicae*, and *Music Reference Services Quarterly* (*MRSQ*) do allow for self-depositing, and *MRSQ* offers gold OA options, but none of these venues are platinum OA journals. This highlights, perhaps, the extent to which OA is an all or nothing proposition for many scholars.

*The Society for Music Theory Videocast Journal* and *SMT-Pod: The Society for Music Theory Podcast*), plus two preexisting OA journals. [That's] five Open Access journals now, which, for a small field, is pretty good." One participant noted that the SMT journal *Music Theory Online* has been OA since 1993 and that SMT funds it through membership dues. *Music Theory Online* facilitates reader engagement by publishing more issues per year than print journals and as much content as can be supported by editorial coverage: "this regular publishing helps people stay engaged." The OA platform also allows for the incorporation of media, which makes articles more engaging.

When asked how perspectives on OA in music theory compare to those in other disciplines and how perspectives are evolving over time, theorists offered a few ideas. One participant shared that "musicology has been much slower to pick up Open Access than music theory; as a discipline it's older and more historically entrenched." They allowed that some musicological research has barriers, such as archival and field research, that music theory does not, but also noted that music theory has embraced popular music analysis in an unparalleled way and suggested that the "match between pop music and online format is stronger than classical music. The latter folks want to reserve music for a darkened concert hall. Since 2017, pop music has been fundamentally an audiovisual format with 51 percent of pop music accessed through YouTube. The dominant pop music medium is video [and it's] easy to embed these videos in an online journal."

Another noted the potential impact of public music theory: "Because music is critically evaluated in newspapers and magazines (*pitchfork*, *Rolling Stone*), having editorial-type publications is more common." They reported the impact of music theorists publishing in the *New York Times* and well-read blogs or using Twitter to explain how music theory is overlapping with music criticism in public venues. They indicated "there has been a big uptick in the focus on public music theory as a sort of way of performing our field." They harkened back to Leonard Bernstein's televised lectures, noting that theorists invoke him when talking about public music theory. They find it interesting that people bring up Bernstein on this topic when Gen X and younger theorists are currently engaged in this work, emphasizing the generational split.

### **Musicology**

"Open Access is more valuable than it is valued" in musicology. Participants agreed that musicologists have been more hesitant to embrace OA, yet it is "happening slowly but surely." Explanations for the sluggish progress include: "traditional policing," "the old guard is hard

to convince,” “that’s how things have always been done [mentality],” and “music fields have been historically behind on everything.” Several participants noted some smaller societies have made their journals OA, such as the *Journal of Seventeenth Century Music*. They also mentioned topical OA musicological journals like *Music and Politics* (“a good experience, good people on their board, major names in my field publish there, a good venue for me”), *Yale Journal of Music and Religion* (“has prestige because of its tie to a sacred music institute”), and *OA Musicology* (“thoughtfully tailored to the values of Open Access publishing; good to see scholars creating opportunities in Open Access publishing”). Most participants find progress towards OA “exciting and encouraging,” but one was “not looking for Open Access or consuming it.” Several pointed out that scholarship is the OA holdout: “there’s a lot of pedagogical stuff online and free, it’s the traditional scholarship that isn’t available.”

Participants noted that OA interest “depends on the field. People doing non-canonic music seem drawn toward Open Access—jazz, world music, popular music. People in the European canon seem slower to embrace Open Access.” One participant highlighted OA interest in hymnology: “it is a field that historically has involved a lot of active collaboration between academics and hobbyists.” They observed the *Hymn Tune Index* and *Dictionary of North American Hymnology* are two OA resources prepared by scholars but meant to serve church musicians and concluded that hymnology, unlike much of historical musicology, perceives the formation and usage of Open Access resources favorably. Another participant shared “the Open Access journals I’ve published in are not music [but rather] Southern studies, dance, and song,” but acknowledged they still feel the need to prove themselves by publishing in prestigious journals.

The metaphorical elephant in the room was the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* (*JAMS*), which is “very much a gatekeeper” and the “least likely” musicology journal to go OA. One participant called out this concern: “More broadly, what I haven’t seen is established journals in the field going Open Access. That would be welcome. Journals that are connected to scholarly societies have more leverage than they realize to make that move [and it] would almost automatically change the culture of publishing in the discipline.” Another participant recalled that when they entered the field, *JAMS* was almost exclusively focused on Renaissance and medieval music and that the journal now embraces scholarship on race and gender. They also compared the format of the AMS blog “Musicology Now” to *JAMS* articles—[which are] “really long and how many people are reading these articles, to be honest”—to assert that “the spectrum of scholarship” has slowly changed.

Several participants mentioned questions or concerns about OA monograph publishing opportunities. One asked: “Open Access does increase audience numbers but are you getting the audience you need to get your book reviewed in places where experts will read it?” Another shared that “Open Access is still viewed as fairly experimental for monographs” and raised concerns about getting permissions for score excerpts and questions about rigor of peer review. One mentioned that senior scholars with considerable monograph publishing experience may be more comfortable than early career musicologists in pursuing an OA monograph.

When prompted to discuss how perspectives on OA in musicology compare to those in other disciplines and how are they evolving over time, several musicologists mentioned music theory: “music theorists embraced Open Access much sooner than musicology, which is a conservative scholarly discipline, the one in which everyone else breaks away from.” One did qualify this difference by noting that music theorists tend to publish articles more than monographs. One tied the *SMT-V* format to accessibility and audience engagement, saying it “makes their scholarship easier to understand for audiences outside music theory.” One participant who works in a variety of areas indicated that game studies is more open to OA than medieval studies and attributes this to the novelty of game studies, in which the journals all started OA: “[the discipline] was new and had no constraints.” They indicated that although scholars in medieval studies are interested, the reality of “wanting people to notice your work means that you need to publish it in *JAMS*, *Early Music History*, *Music Theory Spectrum*.” They also shared that medieval studies is expensive with its “big, heavy, out-of-print books, travel to archives, and mentality where ‘I paid to do this work so now you have to pay to read it.’ ”

One participant noted that although there is less skepticism toward OA than previously, factors that have advanced OA in the sciences, such as research deposit requirements for grant-funded research and support for APCs, “just [don’t] work well for humanities.” Another admitted “I have a privileged view because I also work in literature and film studies. Music librarianship, musicology, other music studies are behind literature, who have a lot of Open Access journals. [In literature studies], Open Access is a non-issue—if you start a new journal, it’s going to be Open Access.” They noted that Shakespeare scholarship in particular benefits from more diverse content, more OA journals and books, more publishers supporting different funding models, including grant funding to make books OA. Another participant observed the Modern Language Association makes more extensive use of Humanities Commons than does AMS. Quite a few participants recognized OA musicology in Europe seems much further ahead: “more advanced in Open Access than in the

US. British and European research is collaborative and they're creating digital humanities resources."

Perceptions around OA are evolving in musicology: "Open Access is starting to be looked at as just another publishing opportunity rather than a lesser publishing opportunity." But also, "people think that Open Access is great, but if you're only doing Open Access then something is wrong. [You] can do Open Access in addition to prestigious journal publications." A few participants shared a perceived need to be cautious of OA from a career development standpoint and indicated that that concern has lessened considerably over the past decade, for example: "Even publishing in *Music and Politics*, advisors and mentors warned it might not be perceived well because it's Open Access."

Some participants indicated the slow changes might be indicative of the "need [for] a generational change to become the norm," asserting "a new generation of scholars wants things online for ourselves and for students who are struggling with cost of college. COVID probably helped us understand the importance of digital access." One stated: "other scholars in my generation were excited at the beginning about Open Access and became more conservative—tenure and promotion relates to this." Another noted how T&P publishing requirements perpetuate gated publishing: "colleagues would love to publish Open Access, but they're not allowed, [they're] stuck with a list of particular journals. [It's a] cycle since those scholars don't encourage their students to publish Open Access."

With respect to public musicology, participants noted changes underway similar to those in music theory. One participant highlighted recent changes to research processes and foci, saying musicology "used to be archival work on dead white European composers." These changes have implications, perhaps, for how research is shared and with whom: "Scholars who have wanted to take their work more public have found non-academic venues (their own blogs, newspapers, etc.). I would think people in pop music studies, wanting to decolonize the curriculum, would be interested in Open Access [and] making materials more accessible rather than exclusive." These changes are quite recent and slow moving however, "For the past 5+ years we've been more supportive of public musicology [noted activity on Twitter as an example]. I think it will happen over time and as younger people enter the field." Several musicologists welcome such changes, noting: "I'm just excited when someone wants to read my work."

**In what ways, if any, does your institution support Open Access publishing?**

Participants indicated there was little support for OA publishing at their institutions. For some, this can be explained, in part, by the nature

of their institution as non-research intensive (“while research is encouraged and supported in music, we are more focused on music education and performance”), or by their position, which may not require them to publish or present their scholarship (“because I am an adjunct, I am not pressured to publish”). Many who are required to publish their work, however, could not identify meaningful support for OA publishing offered by their institution, or did not feel that it was relevant to them.

A few participants noted institutional statements of support for OA: “[my institution] is very much in favor of Open Access and has done a lot to encourage [it]; we are fortunate at [my institution] to have this kind of buy in; we are encouraged to publish in Open Access journals.” Another participant whose institution is part of a Mellon-funded digital monograph initiative that is incentivizing OA monograph publishing noted that support from a college administrator has made OA publishing more visible: “[our institutional] PI is dean of the college, so that increases buy-in.”

Few participants had specific examples of university funding to support OA publishing. Some noted that although there might be funding, they have not needed it or applied for it. One participant recognized the privilege in having such funding available, but also articulated the need for education around OA funding models and options: “My institution does support APC costs, but I know a lot of institutions don’t. I wish there was a way to learn about all these types of models. I wish my organization did more for early career people to help us understand.” Another participant shared there was no guaranteed annual funding for anything related to research, including travel, publishing charges, or conference registrations: “there are funds I can apply for, but no guarantee I would get them. I would apply if I felt strongly that an article only fit in an Open Access venue that charged an APC, but I would rather not to have to spend that money.”

Tenure and promotion came up in most interviews and no participants indicated that OA is currently a factor in T&P decisions. Most participants reported something along the lines of “Open Access is not a factor in tenure and promotion; publications are either major or minor. My Open Access publications have been treated identically” or “There’s no policy on Open Access, quality is defined at the department level, and I haven’t encountered any administrators being hostile toward [it]. I’m going up for tenure this year and have never been discouraged from publishing Open Access. I think Open Access scholarship is evaluated equally to traditional publications.” One participant did note concerns that OA and open peer-review would be recognized favorably in T&P processes.



Another noted OA and digital publishing are not as stigmatized and no longer seen as inherently suspect or unworthy in T&P processes. They attributed this in part to the work of societies in increasing understanding of digital publishing for T&P committees; the Modern Languages Association and the American Historical Association have developed criteria for evaluating digital scholarship.<sup>21</sup> Another saw an opportunity for OA to be integrated given its ties to equity: “Promotional requirements in the conservatory are vague because of the variety of work. [There’s] no direct language about Open Access but there are implications that reaching beyond the ivory tower is good; public scholarship is not considered to be on a lower level. One change we do want to make in the conservatory requirements is [to incorporate] EDI [equity, diversity, and inclusion]. [We] could make the argument that Open Access is more equitable.” This need for vagueness in conservatories and schools of music was commented on by others: “Performers have such a hard time convincing others that they’re worthy of tenure and promotion. Music faculty are more willing to reconsider what counts for tenure.” One participant mentioned their institutional T&P guidelines are “mired in 1960s thinking” and was pleased that these are up for revision to be more inclusive and recognize public scholarship and scholarship in a variety of formats.

Another participant noted their institution values a consistent pattern of publishing in peer-reviewed journals in the T&P process and is seemingly uninterested in impact: “Some people have done blogging that’s had a huge impact but that hasn’t been recognized as peer reviewed work. External reviewers can speak to impact of non-peer-reviewed work.” This participant asserted that the traditional academic career trajectory, from graduate school, into a postdoc, and finally a tenure-track position, “forces a self-focused attitude toward advancement and putting lines on your resume is more product-oriented than impact-oriented.” They argue this system makes scholars “desperate to publish to maintain job security and it’s hard for people to get out of this mentality.” The summary of this portion of the interview was that “Open Access won’t stick until it becomes a requirement in the tenure and promotion process” and it does seem that many music scholars feel significant pressure to meet the guidelines, which have hitherto focused on prestige and productivity.

Several participants noted ways in which their institutional library or library consortia support OA publishing. One participant who had served

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21. Modern Languages Association, “Report of the MLA Task Force on Evaluating Scholarship for Tenure and Promotion, 2006,” [http://www.mla.org/tenure\\_promotion](http://www.mla.org/tenure_promotion); American Historical Association, “Guidelines for the Professional Evaluation of Digital Scholarship by Historians,” <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/digital-history-resources/evaluation-of-digital-scholarship-in-history/guidelines-for-the-professional-evaluation-of-digital-scholarship-by-historians>.



on a library committee knew the library encourages faculty to publish OA and develop Open Educational Resources, offers editing and publication support, maintains a database of OERs, can connect faculty with OA/OER publishers, and offers APC funding. A few others noted the library funds APCs for affiliated scholars, and one said the funds are “only available to scholars who aren’t working on grant-funded research.” One participant noted library support for publishing services, including OER, digital projects, and OA journals. A few participants brought up the library to suggest OA was not relevant (“libraries pay for database access so Open Access literature hasn’t come up”) or that OA may help resolve library budget cuts (“lots of subscription cuts, including core journals like *Journal of Music Theory*. From a librarian perspective, Open Access is probably great because we don’t need to cut as many things”). Two participants mentioned transformative OA agreements, with one benefitting from such an agreement and the other not (“I knew about the Cambridge [University Press] agreement, which is great; those are legitimate journals, though there aren’t many music education journals”). One mentioned their library’s recognition of OA authors including programming for OA Week.

Institutional repositories, digital scholarship centers, and disciplinary societies were all mentioned for their OA publishing support. A few participants highlighted their institutional repository, that submitting to it is encouraged, not required, and not something that was done consistently by participants. Another participant noted publishing support via digital scholarship centers, particularly in publishing OA materials. An independent scholar mentioned some societies may support OA through publication subventions or research grants, even if they are more frequently used to pay for permissions, travel, or other research-related expenses. They also noted the OA support provided by the disciplinary repository Humanities Commons Core, which can be used to archive pre-prints and post-prints, share teaching materials, and host OER and scholarly monographs.

## DISCUSSION

### Green Open Access

Green OA does not seem to count as OA publishing to many participants. Within musicology, music theory, and music librarianship, a journal is either platinum OA or it is not OA. Music librarians did not register green OA or hybrid options for journals mentioned, where music education and music cognition participants expressed awareness of hybrid and gold options. Few participants mentioned institutional repositories, while several mentioned Academia.edu. One person said sites like

Academia.edu are a way to “go behind the journal’s back and make it available Open Access.” Participants noted many concerns about Academia.edu, most notably the legality of uploading content: “Academia.edu is a strange space, you can put anything up there, [I’m] not sure if it’s legal.” Participants reiterated concerns about Humanities Commons being un-intuitive and underutilized. One asserted “AMS doesn’t have strategy for promoting green Open Access.”

### Peer Review

Several participants brought up peer review, how it is conducted, and how it is incentivized or rewarded. One cited uncompensated labor as one of the reasons the “current peer review system is unsustainable.” They shared “I feel like we should be compensating reviewers but don’t know where that money might come from.” They were exploring other ways to recognize reviewers, such as asking authors and reviewers to do collaborative reviewing. “This is a cool step forward; reviewers are getting third-author credit on these articles. If your name as a reviewer is broadcast, you’re probably going to do a better job, [because you] don’t want to miss something.” Another participant was happy to have received free access to journals after they conducted peer-review but said: “I think it’s problematic if reviewers and authors get paid [and] could compromise the integrity of the process.”

### Pedagogy vs. “Serious” Scholarship

Several participants highlighted the intersection of OA and pedagogy, making statements such as “musicology pedagogy circles are where Open Access conversations are happening.” Despite pedagogy’s embrace of OA, this relationship is not without issues. Participants noted tensions in how pedagogy-focused publications are perceived: “I wonder if [*Journal of Music History Pedagogy*] is Open Access because AMS thought that was the only way it would succeed?” or “There is within higher education, especially at so-called research one universities and especially within tenure committees looking at people who are going up for tenure, . . . a condescension towards anything that hints of pedagogy.” One participant theorized *OA Musicology* may have encountered challenges because of its pedagogical focus or its OA publishing format. Another participant attributed this tension to the conservative nature of musicology: “Even adding a focus on teaching has only been around ten years in AMS. Moving beyond old-fashioned positivist model of scholarship has been very slow in musicology.” They contrasted this with music theory, which has seemingly embraced OA and pedagogy since the 1990s.

### **Digital Humanities and Open Access**

Another recurring theme was the intersection of OA and digital humanities. Musicologists noted AMS sessions on digital humanities (DH) and pertinent NEH grants. One participant who was curious, but not involved in DH, noted interesting projects that create network maps of musicians and depict musical soundscapes in chronological or spatial contexts. They indicated they currently use these in courses but the projects are “in beginning stages and not entirely useful.” Several participants noted the importance of digitized materials in archives. Another noted “Open Access archives being available online have made a big difference in my scholarship.” Such work has allowed music scholars with limited funding to conduct international research without traveling. One person also credited this surplus of resources available outside of traditional databases for changing the existing narratives in scholarship.

Participants noted that, because DH and OA have been around for a while now, they are less scary. One participant stated DH is almost entirely a subset of OA and that OA and open sources are core values in DH. This participant sees distinctions in the more revolutionary approach to format in DH: “In the end Open Access publishing doesn’t have to look any different than traditional publishing. Digital humanities is pushing the boundaries of publishing; it can be open and incorporate multimedia, journals, and monographs. [It’s] about reimagining traditional genres.” Participants suggested DH facilitates genre and format-spanning works of scholarship, often bringing together data and content across formats, such as Emory University’s “SlaveVoyages” website, which is underpinned by a large database and includes 3D models of slave trade, critical essays, and data visualization.<sup>22</sup> A participant observed “Open Access is the least challenging aspect of these projects.”

### **Prestige Publishing, Precarious Employment, and Privileged Positions**

Several participants made connections between changes in higher education and expectations for or participation in scholarly communications: “I haven’t continued academic writing since my dissertation: there’s no money in it. I’m looking for ways to support myself and being a lecturer isn’t enough. Focusing on putting my work online doesn’t align with surviving.” Participants noted privileged positions in higher education afford opportunities to publish generally and to prefer OA specifically. “I think it’s a privilege to be able to produce scholarly writing, people who do this are usually in tenure-track positions and they need to achieve tenure;

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22. “SlaveVoyages,” accessed 9 March 2022, <https://www.slavevoyages.org/>.

when you're trying to pay rent and your writing doesn't bring in royalties, that's not practical for a lot of us." T&P was often evoked as an antagonist to OA publishing: "some institutions have a really strict dictation of where people publish. . . . If the whole point of publishing is being able to disseminate information and to promote yourself as a scholar, wouldn't you want to make sure your work is being made available as widely as possible?"

"I see a change in the academy. I can be categorized in various ways: independent scholar, adjunct, lecturer. Old career trajectories have diversified . . . there are many more adjuncts and non-tenure-track faculty members than before." Precarious employment has implications for various aspects of scholarly research, including funding for conducting archival research, OA publishing, travel to present one's work, access to library resources, the availability of sabbaticals, and the need for an additional job. As one participant noted, "so many people don't have access to library resources like I do. However, I don't think that Open Access is a solution. The call for Open Access is based in inclusivity so everyone can have access to sources, not only a few." Such statements highlight the intersections of privilege, OA, and institutional affiliation. Current OA models do not solve all scholarly communication problems; in fact, several studies have shown how they introduce disparities in who can publish OA.<sup>23</sup> A different participant made a connection between the pandemic and acceptance of OA, citing unstable employment and the physical closure of libraries as contributing factors. Another participant who is employed as an adjunct and freelance author shared: "I'm glad you are doing this work. I feel seen, and I haven't felt very seen in my discipline."

## CONCLUSION

Although OA is "an absolute bonus," it is not something many music scholars seek out. They more commonly select venues based on audience, fit, and prestige, and do so with career goals and T&P considerations weighing heavily in their decisions. When music scholars do publish their work OA, they acknowledge a variety of benefits, including increased reader engagement and impact, sharing their work with readers who might otherwise have no access, and participating in public scholarship. These benefits, however, do not outweigh disciplinary expectations for music scholars on the tenure track. Once tenured, scholars feel some

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23. Audrey C. Smith, Leandra Merz, Jesse B. Borden, Chris K. Gulick, Akhil R. Kshirsagar, and Emilio M. Bruna, "Assessing the Effect of Article Processing Charges on the Geographic Diversity of Authors using Elsevier's 'Mirror Journal' System," *Quantitative Science Studies* 2, no. 4 (2021): 1123–43, [https://doi.org/10.1162/qss\\_a\\_00157](https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00157).

freedom to publish in different venues, for different audiences, and with different aims. Conversations about OA publishing, however, highlight the precarity of academic employment in the twenty-first century and emphasize that OA publishing is a privilege for many music scholars who do not rely on royalties from their publications. OA publishing is in a liminal space, inhabiting both the idealism of open and participatory discourse and the realities of commercial publishing, precarious employment, and legacy practices.

Several participants suggested that generational change and the passage of time will be required for OA to be embraced in their subdiscipline of music. A participant drew parallels between OA and publishing in game studies—a relatively new field in which scholars may feel the need to legitimize their work. There is an uphill battle for new fields and approaches to be recognized, but there is also opportunity: “we can do things differently.” Although there are challenges in convincing an established discipline that OA is worthy of serious consideration, there is no single path to recognition. Noting that some video game music scholars are hoping for an article in *JAMS*, the participant shared that scholars need not go through traditional paths: “There is new and exciting scholarship but it’s just not showing up in traditional journals.” Open Access may have already achieved legitimacy, but for it to be sustainable, it will need infrastructure and systems that reward reviewers, editors, and authors for their labor. The authors hope this paper will foster conversations within music about the desirability of such changes.

#### ABSTRACT

Interviews with twenty-one music scholars in various subdisciplines explored experiences and motivations that led them to publish their work OA as well as factors that have discouraged them from doing so. Each participant discussed the availability of OA publishing opportunities in their subdisciplines of music, how these are perceived, how they are evolving, and how they compare to opportunities in other disciplines. Participants also spoke to ways in which institutions support or value OA. The authors found that perspectives on OA publishing among music scholars vary considerably, ranging from those who identify as “an evangelist for open access” to those who are “totally against it.” Several issues stand out for their interactions with OA publishing: green OA, peer review, pedagogy vs. “serious” scholarship, digital humanities, prestige publishing, tenure and promotion, and employment status. For OA to be sustainable, it will need infrastructure and systems that reward reviewers, editors, and authors for their labor. The authors hope that this paper will foster conversations within the community of music scholars about the desirability of such changes.

**APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS**

1. When did you / do you plan to complete your terminal degree?
2. What is your current college, university, or other educational institution affiliation?
  - a. What is your professional title/role?
  - b. How long have you been in this position/role?
  - c. What basic Carnegie classification best describes your institution?
    - i. Doctoral: Very high research activity
    - ii. Doctoral: High research activity
    - iii. Doctoral/Professional
    - iv. Master's
    - v. Baccalaureate
    - vi. Associate's/Two-year
3. What age range do you fall in?
  - a. 20-30
  - b. 31-40
  - c. 41-50
  - d. 51-60
  - e. 61-70
  - f. 71+
4. What is your current gender identity? (Check all that apply)
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Trans male/trans man
  - d. Trans female/trans woman
  - e. Genderqueer/gender non-conforming
  - f. Different identity (please state): \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS****Publishing Experience**

1. In which venues have you published your work? (Check all that apply)
  - a. Peer-reviewed journal
  - b. Encyclopedia
  - c. Monographs
  - d. Critical or scholarly editions of music
  - e. Newspaper/magazine/trade journal
  - f. Blogs/other online fora
  - g. Liner notes or program notes
  - h. Repository/website for Open Educational Resources
  - i. Other, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you have published your own work Open Access, which we define as publishing/sharing your work in a venue that allows readers to access it free of charge by any legal means?
  - a. If so, please share the factors that led you to do so.
  - b. If not, please discuss why.
3. What are your impressions of Open Access publishing opportunities in your specific discipline of music?
4. How do perspectives on Open Access in your discipline compare to those in other disciplines?
5. How have these perspectives evolved, if they have, over time?
6. In what ways, if any, does your institution support Open Access publishing?

### Teaching Experience

1. Who selects textbooks and other course materials that you use in your music courses?
2. What kinds of materials do you assign in your (music) courses?
  - a. Traditional (print) textbooks
  - b. eTextbooks with access codes
  - c. Open Educational Resources (textbooks that are online and free to students)
  - d. Scholarly or trade monographs
  - e. Readings, for example book chapters, journal articles, essays, etc.
  - f. Music albums (physical)
  - g. Selections from audio recordings – library database
  - h. Selections from audio recordings – freely available
  - i. Other, please describe \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you assign resources that your students can access free of charge?
  - a. Yes, these comprise the majority of assigned readings.
  - b. Yes, I occasionally include these.
  - c. No, this is not a consideration.
    - i. If so, please share the factors that led you to do so.
    - ii. If not, please share why Open Access is not necessarily something you have sought out.
4. What concerns do you have about incorporating Open Access, or freely available resources in your courses?
5. What conversations have you had in your institution or among disciplinary peers regarding textbook affordability?
6. In what ways, if any, does your institution recognize or reward instructors for creating or integrating Open Educational Resources into their teaching (in the tenure and promotion process, by providing funding, or otherwise)?