REGIONAL MUSIC COLLECTION PRACTICES IN LIBRARIES: A QUALITATIVE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE LITERATURE

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NYSO/MLA CHAPTER MEETING
OUTLINE

1. Objectives
2. Methodology
3. Literature Review
4. Content analysis
5. Next Steps
OBJECTIVES

• Capture the "big picture" of regional music collections work in Canada, which will help to inform the work of music collection managers in national and international contexts.

• Provide insight into the complexity of strategies related to managing local music collections.

• The review question is: “to determine the professional practices implemented and challenges faced in managing, preserving and providing access to local music collections in libraries and archives.”
RELEVANCE

• Gain a better understanding of where regional music collections are held
• Establish best practices and guidelines for maintaining these collections
• Identifying potential areas for growth and innovation
• This comprehensive summary of trends and themes has relevance to practitioners in libraries, museums, and archives with the planning, management, and implementation of similar regional music collection projects
METHODOLOGY: QUALITATIVE SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

• Purpose: broadening understanding of a particular phenomenon
• Results: may lead to the development of a new theory, an overarching narrative, a wider generalization or an interpretative translation (Booth, 2006)
• **systematic** in both the identification and evaluation of materials
• **objective** in its interpretation
• **reproducible** in its conclusions
• thematic analysis, may include conceptual models
SEARCH STRATEGY

Sources searched:
• News databases
• Journals in databases
• Conference abstracts (conference programs/websites)
• Listserv archives
• Monographs (library catalogue / hand searching)
SEARCH STRATEGY

(local OR region* OR provinc* OR state OR city)
AND
(music OR song OR album OR choir OR band OR symphony OR orchestra)
AND
(collection OR archive)
SCREENING CRITERIA

- English & French language publications
- Collections in libraries, archives, or cultural institutions
- Collections with a regional scope – i.e. excluding national collections
- Content that speaks to aspects of collection management
- Collections managed by institutions NOT private collectors
SEARCH RESULTS

- 398 items retrieved
- 59 after screening
- Years of publication: 1940 – 2016

Formats

- website post: 1
- conference abstracts: 8
- newspaper articles: 8
- listserv conversations: 4
- book chapters: 7
- journal articles: 31
CONTENT ANALYSIS - WORKFLOW

• NVivo data analysis software
• Works well with unstructured qualitative data
• Brings together literature from many different types
• Group the literature according relevant categories
CONTENT ANALYSIS - WORKFLOW

• Establish questions
• Develop themes (nodes) based on questions
• A theme description: label, definition of what the theme concerns, description of how to know when the theme occurs, description of any qualifications or exclusions to the identification of the theme, examples.
• Code the data sources
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Bender Saving the Jamaican</td>
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<td>Moyer Music for the masses</td>
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ON COLLECTING MATERIALS FOR LOCAL MUSIC HISTORIES

By Dena J. Epstein

Anyone who has tried to gather information on the development of American music knows how greatly the resources of our public libraries vary. While in theory everyone agrees on the need for preserving local history materials in some, in practice the collections range from excellent to virtually nothing. The technical problems involved need not daunt the librarian, for workable inexpensive solutions have been devised. All that is needed is the conviction that this material should be preserved, and that the local library is the logical place to do it.

There is a long tradition of special collections in public libraries, leading the public to regard them as prime sources of information on their localities. So generally is this true that such collections were specifically excluded from Lee Ash's Subject Collections (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1963), as being all too universal. Even where local historical societies exist, access to their files is not as easy as to the public library's. To a good librarian, being able to answer questions about the community and its citizens is a matter of self-respect.

The local history of music, however, has more than a regional interest, since definitive treatments of music in the United States cannot written until local studies provide the groundwork. For many parts of the country, this work is still to be done. We need to know what music was composed and performed when, by whom, under what circumstances, and with what relationship to the whole social life of the people (Dunnell J. Grinn, “The Music Library and Musicianship,” Notes, Ist ser., vol. 11, August, 1941, p. 9). The types of material on the collection were measured over many years ago by Harold Stetter in his “The Collection of Musical Material of Local Interest” (ibid., vol. 8, August, 1938, pp. 56–54).
QUESTIONS

• How do collection managers describe their work?
  • What are the theoretical frameworks being used?
  • How do they define local music?
  • How do they approach collection development?
  • How do they approach collection management?
  • How are local music collections being presented?
  • What digital tools are being used with local music collections?
  • How is access provided?
  • What is the audience for the collection?
  • What challenges do they face?
  • What do they hope to achieve in the future?
NODE PROPERTIES: NVIVO
About twelve years ago, when I was working in the local studies department of Leicestershire County Council, I was asked to catalogue a collection of sheet music, which was a project of regional interest. As the collection had been stored in metal filing cabinets for many years, it was necessary to clean it up and make it accessible for public use. The collection consisted of sheet music in various languages, including English, French, Italian, and German, and covered a wide range of musical genres, from classical music to folk music.

One of the main goals of the project was to create a comprehensive local music archive, which would be a valuable resource for researchers and music lovers alike. To achieve this goal, we had to make sure that the music was properly catalogued and organized, and that it was available in a format that could be easily accessed. We also had to ensure that the collection was safe and secure, and that it was stored in a way that would prevent damage or loss.

To achieve these goals, we used a variety of strategies, including creating a detailed inventory of the music, and organizing it into categories such as composers, genres, and historical periods. We also used technology to promote and present the collection, including websites and social media platforms, to make it accessible to a wider audience. In the end, the project was a success, and we were able to create a valuable resource that would be enjoyed by music lovers for years to come.
CodiNG PROCESS

• Think critically
• Develop nodes along the way
• Subjective process – often requires two people
• Budget time appropriately
CODING THEMES

Context & Background
• Theoretical frameworks (29)
• Definitions of local (50)
• Goals (97)

Collection Development (265)
• Significance of local music (123)
• Scope / contents of collections (135)
• Uniqueness (25)

Collection Management (30)
• Cataloguing (9)
• Circulation & access (73)

• Preservation (17)
• Funding (44)

Presentation & Access
• Digital environment (16)
• Storage – physical collections (29)
• Displays (17)
• Promotion (170)
• Critical response (22)

Future directions (37)

Challenges (217)
Number of references sorted by themes

- Cataloging: 9
- Defining Local: 16
- Displays: 17
- Safeguarding: 17
- Identification: 19
- Criticisms and Response: 22
- Uniqueness: 25
- Storage: 29
- Theoretical frameworks: 29
- Managing Local Music Collections: 30
- Future of local music collecting: 34
- Defining Local: 37
- Funding: 44
- Circulation and Access: 73
- Digital environment: 79
- Goals: 97
- Significance: 123
- Composition of local music collections: 135
- Promoting local music collections: 170
- Challenges: 217
- Collection development: 265
THEME ANALYSIS: WHO IS CONSIDERED LOCAL?

• “People are commonly identified with their place of birth, and the local music archivist should take this fact into account. It would probably be unwise, however, to amass an extensive collection of materials relating to a musician merely because the individual was born locally; involvement in and influence on local musical life should always be the first consideration.”

THEME ANALYSIS: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Attract support from donors
- Collect unique materials
- Describe the collection
- Foster new creations
- Provide infrastructure to store and preserve the collection
- Promote the work of libraries within the wider community
- Digitize the collection
- Increase profile of local musicians
- Build and support community
- Use technology to promote and present the collection
- Promote and develop a sense of place
- Document local culture comprehensively
- Expose materials to a wider audience
- Support research and education
- Preserve a distinct musical culture

Number of coding references:

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<td>Increase profile of local musicians</td>
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<td>Build and support community</td>
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<td>Preserve a distinct musical culture</td>
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GOALS: PRESERVE A DISTINCT MUSICAL CULTURE

“In 50 years time maybe someone will want to listen to her grandma singing as she used to in her youth when she was a member of a heavy metal rock band! Will that be possible? The Music Library in Gävle, Sweden has in cooperation with the Municipal Archives recently started a project in hope that this will be so.”

GOALS: PRESERVE A DISTINCT MUSICAL CULTURE

“The Louisville Underground Music Archives (LUMA) project was born of the need to document this particular, and important, slice of Louisville’s musical culture. ...from a diverse community of bands and musicians, venue and store owners, recording studios and label managers, and fans to maintain the entire story from a broad range of perspectives.”

GOAL: SUPPORT RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

“What’s important for us is to be a contact between music life in Gävle and the audience. We would also want to preserve the local music on demos and CDs and make it available for the public and for future studies.”

DISCUSSION

• The literature provides a systematic view of the activities surrounding collections of local music.

• Within the literature – the majority of publications feature case studies mentioning a specific project.

• Takeaways from specific themes can help librarians to make decisions on how to manage local music, provide insight into where to look for other examples, and advice on how to frame these collections.
believe, however, that if a library is to function properly as the cultural center of any given community, it must do more than render those services specifically requested by its patrons. I believe also that the library has an obligation to the community as a whole which is not completely fulfilled by making books or reference services available — important as these functions are. This obligation is historical in nature. It is to collect, preserve and make available a record of the past and present life of the community it serves. This I believe to be the broader definition of "local interest" and the one which should determine the types of special archival matter to be collected.

It would be foolhardy for me to attempt, in a short talk, to describe or even enumerate all the different types of material which make up the record of the musical life of a typical

vitaly interested in what the people at the other end are doing. And this applies to music just as much as to politics. So when one collects musical material of only seeming local interest, it should never be forgotten that not only is a service being rendered to a given community but that, at the same time, the librarian so engaged, is preserving for all the country, the documentary evidence of one of the most important elements of our nation's culture.
NEXT STEPS

1. Write up the findings of the review – November 2016
2. Draft survey and interview questions – Fall 2016
3. Test the survey – Winter 2016/17
4. Administer the survey – Beginning summer 2017


THANK YOU!

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