



University of Pittsburgh

Center for American Music
University Library System

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Dear Colleague,

Thank you for enquiring about our NEH Summer Institute *Voices Across Time: Teaching American History Through Song*, being held at the University of Pittsburgh, June 29–July 31, 2015. Songs are like time capsules, filled with messages from a moment in history. They're also fun to sing, making them an appealing and effective tool for the classroom.

We are glad to know of your interest in putting these resources to work in your own teaching. Textbook publishers have recognized the importance of including original source documents in art and literature that speak from the periods they represent, but music is almost absent. We created the *Voices Across Time* project to design classroom materials and select songs that will help students understand history and language within the framework of standards-based education. We are deeply grateful to the NEH for funding this Summer Institute based on our project, and for recognizing the potential of *Voices Across Time* to strengthen teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.

The following description should give you a comprehensive overview of the institute and the application process, as well as answer many questions you may have about where the institute is being held.

Overview

Voices Across Time is a five-week institute for 25 secondary-school teachers and three graduate students who intend to pursue K-12 teaching career, hosted by the Center for American Music at the University of Pittsburgh. Each week we will focus on a broad theme related to American history, utilizing popular songs as primary source documents. Lectures and discussions led by historians and musicologists will help you strengthen your knowledge of particular historical topics and develop insights into the dynamic interaction of popular music and society. Carefully selected field trips and performances will offer uniquely engaging evocations of an historical context. Throughout all five weeks, we will help you identify appropriate resources—books, articles, recordings, and performances—to engage your students.

The first week, "Moving Along," will introduce you to the major issues involved in approaching music as an artifact in talking about migration, transport, and expansion in American history. The first two days will be spent introducing everyone to the campus and the city, while we begin to understand how music works as an important factor in our lives and histories—not just shared histories, but also our personal histories. We will first focus on nineteenth-century European immigrant populations, particularly those represented in Pittsburgh; we will discuss their experiences with assimilation and how they translated those experiences into popular and folk songs. By way of example, we will visit local ethnic neighborhoods and participate in the lively rhythmic complexity of music at the Bulgarian-Macedonian Club, one of the oldest ethnic centers in Pittsburgh. This tour will acquaint you with the city where you will be spending the next five weeks; it will also provide first-hand evidence of different ethnicities, and how music defined and portrayed them. The week will also include a lecture on Latin American musical migrations by noted musicologist, John Koegel, and a workshop on Mexican corridos by

ethnomusicologist and performer Juan Dies. We will end the week with a pedagogical demonstration of one of the techniques for integrating music into the classroom, particularly incorporating technology, and a demonstration of a song activity, which all Summer Scholars will be asked to present during the Institute.

During the second week we will continue our exploration of immigration with a lecture on Asian-American music by ethnomusicologist Mina Yang and then shift our focus to “Work” by concentrating on American industrialism and the labor reform movement. Songs of work are perfect examples of music’s role in helping people at all economic levels cope with hard labor, inhumane conditions, and unjust practices. Cultural historian Scott Sandage (author of *Born Losers: A History of Failure in America*) will provide an engaging presentation on industrialization topics in song, while Timothy Lynch, author of *Strike Songs of the Depression*, will discuss how songs, such as “Solidarity Forever,” helped to rally workers and document the major events of the strikes of the 1920s and 1930s. We will also explore the dire situation of working mothers in nineteenth-century textile mills and the more recent songs of working men and women, particularly those which express the challenges of migrant and day workers.

The third week, “War and Peace,” will apply the insights of the previous weeks to the important military conflicts in America’s history. During wartime, songs become documents of patriotism, propaganda, and protest, inviting us to ask questions like: “What is peace?” “What is war?” “Why is the nation fighting?” “What am I fighting for?” and “How does it feel back home?” We will begin our discussion of songs of war at the Fort Pitt Museum, a geographic focal point of the French and Indian War. A live performance by David and Ginger Hildebrand will demonstrate how songs from this war, as well as the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, sounded. With its clarion call for freedom, the music of this era initiated a tradition of rebellious or protest songs, starting with John Dickinson’s “Liberty Song” and “Free Amerikay.” We will trace how songs have documented our major conflicts, including the two World Wars. The week will culminate with the Vietnam War, which resulted in a significant expression of social unrest and divisiveness as exemplified in contrasting songs like “Feel Like I’m Fixin’ to Die Rag” and “Ballad of the Green Berets.” We will end the week with a [distance learning presentation](#) from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum on the 1980s and how that era is reflected in popular song.

The fourth week, “United/Divided,” includes the sub-themes of politics, civil rights, and diversity. This theme explores the many consequences of being a nation of diverse people with varying backgrounds and opinions. Music has allowed even the most disenfranchised to speak up and be heard—that peaceful dissension at the heart of the democratic process. The week will begin with an examination by musicologist Josephine Wright of how songs played an important role in American slavery. The following day, noted scholar Barbara Tischler will join us to examine how songs like “We Shall Overcome,” most of them appropriated from spirituals, were utilized to unite and inspire the most emotionally-charged social movement of the twentieth-century: the Civil Rights movement. We will introduce the struggle for equal rights for women, a movement that is sung about as early as 1795 in the song “Rights of Woman,” with musicologist Susan Cook who will lead a discussion on how early ballads documented women’s struggles. One way to engage students’ attention in the “old” music is to relate it to music they are already familiar with, thus providing a connection that can help students understand the correlation between current and historic events. With this in mind the week will conclude with a distance learning course (again from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum) on what most students are listening to on their iPods: hip hop. Perhaps as controversial as the introduction of rock and roll, hip hop embodies the rebellious spirit of youth as it serves as a conduit for social and political statements. It is a potentially effective teaching tool but requires an informed, sensitive approach. Andrew Flory will follow the learning course with further discussion and an activity that will model how rap might be incorporated in the classroom.

The fifth week will turn everyone's thoughts towards "Home," as we examine how everyday life has had a musical soundtrack from the days of singing away long winter evenings around the hearth to today's world of the iPod. Not just for entertainment alone, songs can reveal much about relationships and values in the home and the drudgery of keeping them, as well as providing a means to teach children moral and academic lessons. The week will begin with a consideration of the impact of technological advances on popular song. Developments in musical dissemination, from tin foil to wax to vinyl to compact discs and the Internet, have affected how we create, acquire, and listen to music, stimulating wider changes in our social and cultural interactions. The week's discourse will continue with a performance by Alan Jabbour, who will demonstrate and overview "homemade" American music. Musicologist Dale Cockrell will talk about how early settlers filled their few leisure hours by making music at home and what this music tells us about their lives, a topic he will illustrate through the music documented in Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* books. Songs like "The Blue Juniata" and "The Gum Tree Canoe" echo the experiences of the early settlers as they paint a picture of what they saw on the prairie.

Faculty

The *Voices Across Time* institute will feature a diverse roster of important historians and subject experts, performers, master teachers, and educators to establish the historical foundation for discussion of related musical topics. The institute will be co-directed by Deane Root and Mariana Whitmer, musicologists with research interests in American music. Drs. Root and Whitmer have been actively involved in the creation of *Voices Across Time* for several years and have worked together on conference presentations and teaching workshops. They are strong advocates of the importance of keeping alive traditional American music and the notion that music, as an important mirror of American culture, can be used to invigorate the teaching of history. While visiting faculty will be primarily responsible for expanding our knowledge on particular musical or historical topics, the core faculty will serve as facilitators during subsequent discussions concerning specific songs. There will be ample opportunities for listening to and singing a wide variety of songs, as you are invited to expand your knowledge of history and American music. Background information on the directors, faculty, and visiting lecturers may be found at the [Voices Across Time](#) website.

Applicant Qualifications

While a practical knowledge of music is not required for *Voices Across Time*, the enjoyment of music is absolutely necessary. You will not be asked to read music or play an instrument, but we will be singing (and possibly dancing). We encourage participation especially from middle- and high-school teachers of social studies, language arts, or related disciplines including history, geography, and English; other grade levels and disciplines will also be considered, and music teachers are welcome.

The Work of the Institute

Voices Across Time: Teaching American History Through Song will take place five days per week from 9:00 am to 4:30pm, except for the days when we are on field trips. Weekends, evenings, and Friday, July 3rd (when the University is closed for Independence Day) will be free. Related activities with optional attendance may be scheduled during the course of the Institute. For instance, you might be interested in participating in casual music-making, or visiting other museums and historical sites.

During the Institute, you will study songs and share in the discussions. We will provide you with recordings along with lyrics and background information of all the songs for this purpose. Short readings, such as research articles on music in popular culture, will be assigned before the Institute and throughout its five weeks to facilitate and reinforce the connection between music and history. You will be expected to read selected non-technical articles and chapters that deal with popular songs as they relate to cultural and social history. Additional

readings may be assigned by visiting lecturers; these will be provided prior to or at the Institute but with sufficient time to complete them.

A goal of the Institute is for each teacher to create and carry home new curricular material that they can apply immediately in their classroom teaching. You will also complete an institute project to synthesize the content and strategies you have learned throughout the Institute. You will choose a topic from an era that personally interests you but has not been specifically addressed by our lecturers; for that topic, you will select one or two songs and develop learning activities that you can use to incorporate the song(s) into your curriculum at your grade level in a lesson plan. You will research the songs, write a summary of the song's history (i.e., its development and context), and generate discussion questions that will guide students toward an understanding of the intended concept. Your work must address the academic standards and diverse learning styles, make effective use of songs as primary sources, and provide assessment strategies. To ensure that your work attains a level of scholarship and educational effectiveness, you will work either individually or in groups with the Institute faculty, and will have ample time for research and consultation with scholars, advisors, and peers. Successful projects will facilitate the application of the Institute's theories and activities into the classroom. You will present your finished project to the Institute in the final week, and we will post it on the *Voices Across Time* website so other teachers can access it and make further comments and suggestions. **Please include a sentence or two in your application essay about a potential historic topic that interests you.**

Housing

Our Summer Scholars will have the opportunity to stay in the University's apartment-style accommodations, Bouquet Gardens. Although we will not have confirmed pricing available until the beginning of 2015, the estimated costs are \$31.00 per person/per night for 3 or 4 persons in an apartment (approx.. \$1,023 for the duration of the Institute); \$54.00 per person/per night for 2 persons in an apartment (approx. total \$1,782); and \$104.00 per person/per night for one person in an apartment (approx.. total \$3,432). Located a few blocks from campus, each air-conditioned unit is furnished and includes four single bedrooms and two bathrooms. Each apartment includes a kitchen with a refrigerator, stove and microwave, a living room and dining area. As a resident at Bouquet Gardens you will have access to the fitness center and bike storage, as well as Ethernet connection to the University network and Wireless Internet connectivity. In order to facilitate a scholarly community when we're not in the classroom, we strongly encourage you to stay at Bouquet Gardens. You will likely want to share these wonderful accommodations to help keep your costs down, and we will be happy to assist with these arrangements. Meal plans are also available.

Stipend

You will receive a \$3,900 stipend to cover expenses associated with travel, housing, and meals (half will be given to you upon arrival, the other half, halfway through the institute). If you select to live in Bouquet Gardens during your stay, we will be deducting the cost from your stipend. All reading items (bibliographic material) will be included in the Institute. The Institute will not provide writing materials (pens, paper).

Cultural and Recreational Resources

The University of Pittsburgh is situated in the Oakland section of the city, where there is a readily available assortment of cultural and recreational opportunities in an attractive urban environment. Across the street from the campus, The Carnegie complex contains the region's main public library, a music hall, a fine arts museum, and a natural history museum (which contains the world's largest dinosaur collection). Also nearby is the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. An assortment of restaurants offers an ethnically varied menu for those with adventurous tastes, although there are many offering traditional fare as well. There are also three Starbucks within walking distance, as well as other coffee establishments. Retail shops, including

new and used bookstores, banks, and a post office are all conveniently located within easy walking distance. Abundant running or walking trails are found within close proximity at Schenley Park. Religious services are held at various sites near campus. Visit [Cool Pittsburgh](#) for more information about Oakland and the City of Pittsburgh. We also recommend the [online tour](#) of the campus and surroundings.

Application Information

Application information may be found at:

<http://voices.pitt.edu/Institutes/2015InstituteApplication.htm>.

Please be sure to fill out the online application cover sheet completely, according to the instructions. Your completed application should be postmarked no later than March 2, 2015, and addressed to the Center for American Music, Stephen Foster Memorial, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15260. The most important part of the application is your essay, which should include any personal and academic information that is relevant; reasons for applying to *Voices Across Time*; your interest, both intellectual and personal, in the topic; qualifications to do the work of the project and make a contribution to it; what you hope to accomplish by participation; and the relation of the study to your teaching. **Please include a sentence or two describing a possible topic for your institute project and how you anticipate using what you learn at the Institute in the classroom.** We would also appreciate a letter of recommendation from your direct supervisor or principal in support of your application. While not required, this endorsement will further the collaborative activities you may want to promote when you return.

Don't hesitate to contact us at amerimus@pitt.edu (please put *NEH Summer Institute* in the subject line) with any questions.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Mariana Whitmer, Ph.D.
Co-Director

Deane Root, Ph.D.
Co-Director