

Graduate Student Profile

Glenn Patterson, PhD Candidate in Ethnomusicology
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Figure 1: Glenn Patterson.

Before I was an ethnomusicologist, I studied and worked as telecommunications engineer. I did this for just over a decade – an era which saw a BSc, an MEng, as well as a stint at a Montreal start-up – before my “quarter life crisis” (this assuming I’ll live until 120, give or take a few). However, music has been primary passion since I heard Eddie Van Halen’s 1991 guitar solo in the song “Right Now” as a 12-year-old listening to MuchMusic after school. From hair bands, to Zeppelin, Clapton, and Hendrix, I quickly became more interested in early blues, jazz, and eventually country and bluegrass music. Hearing Doc Watson flatpick “Billy in the Lowground” on the guitar during my BSc was my entry into bluegrass and old-time stringband music, and consequently, my

first experience with the worlds of social music-making. I transitioned from a solitary bedroom guitar nerd to someone camping out in fields and forests – from Kingston, Ontario to southeastern Kentucky – meeting people and staying up late playing music with them. In my musical travels, I became most interested in old-time Appalachian and mid-Western fiddle and banjo styles and took up these two instruments, which eventually figured in my involvement in Montreal’s old-time and bluegrass scenes between 2005 and 2012. There I co-hosted the weekly jam at Grumpy’s Bar, played in a few bands (Little Brown Jug, The Bogghoppers, The Royal Mountain Ramblers), and helped organize square dances between Montreal, the Laurentians to the north, and the Cha-

teaguay Valley to the south. Through my musical tourism, I met and learned from several musicians who were also prominent collectors of regional fiddle and banjo music, and who had been making field recordings since the 1960s: John Harrod, Ken Perlman, Alan Jabbour, Ray Alden, among others. These encounters gave me an appreciation for the role of fieldwork – especially field recordings – and archives in supporting musical culture. As a musician and scene member, their archivally available recordings were critical in my own development and social integration.

In 2010, after meeting musicians and fans of fiddle music from the English-speaking communities of Quebec's Gaspé Coast living in the Montreal area, I began a hobby project with a fellow musician from the Montreal bluegrass and old-time scene, Brian Morris. Based on the home recordings of his late father Erskine Morris, a fiddler from Gaspé with a locally distinctive style and repertoire, we started a blog about his father's music. Brian digitized the tapes and I wrote about the music. We also met musicians from Gaspé living in the Montreal area, and I recorded and wrote about these visits. I was still working as an engineer and this was my vocation on weekends and vacations. But it was clear that my career priorities and values had shifted considerably; starting the PhD program in ethnomusicology at Memorial in 2012 was my (ongoing) response.

Since then, my appreciation of the potential long-term value of field recordings and archives has been a cornerstone of my research. I'm interested in amateur "tape" and home recording culture based on my experiences on the eastern Gaspé Coast. I've been working with a health and social services group servicing the anglophone minority in this region to establish a digital sound archive. The Gaspesian Community Sound Archives is built mostly upon home recordings community members made of themselves or neighbours between the late 1950s and the mid-2000s with my own field recordings made since 2010 figuring less extensively. A substantial portion of the home recordings were digitized as part of a local CD and ethnography project, *Douglstown: Music and Song from the Gaspé Coast* (2014), which Laura Risk and I were involved in as co-producers. Along with the Douglstown Community Centre, we were awarded the 2014 *Prix Mnémo* for a production that contributes to the documentation of cultural heritage in Quebec. My work, it seems, falls into a form of applied scholarship that is being described as "proactive archiving" or ethnomusicology's "archival turn." This "turn" re-evaluates the uses and stakeholders of archival and field recordings, away from simply raw materials researchers use to write academic monographs, towards ways of connecting with and possi-

bly shaping communities of practice. My theoretical interests are in the mediation and politics of memory through these now-archival home recordings and how these construct senses of community and family within this aging linguistic minority. I'm currently writing my dissertation about this work.

Publications

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———. 2014. La vie culturelle des Anglo-Gaspésiens à Montréal et ses environs depuis la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. *Bulletin Mnémo* 15 (1): 1-6.

Patterson, Glenn, and Laura Risk. 2014. Digitization, Recirculation and Reciprocity: Proactive Archiving for Community and Memory on the Gaspé Coast and Beyond. *MUSICultures* 41 (2): 102-132.

Patterson, Glenn. 2013. The Gaspé Sound: Fiddle Music from Two Anglo-Gaspesian Villages. *Canadian Folk Music* 47 (4):14-24.

Discography, Websites, and Multimedia

Douglas Community Center, Laura Risk, and Glenn Patterson. 2014. Douglstown: Music and Song from the Gaspé Coast. Douglstown, Gaspé, QC: Douglas Community Centre. Audio CD.

Patterson, Glenn. 2013. Six Hundred Miles of Music: Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network. Audio Documentary/Oral History Project.

Glenn Patterson, and Brian Morris. Erskine Morris: Old-Time Fiddle Music From the Gaspé Coast [Blog] 2010. Available from <http://gaspefiddle.blogspot.ca/>.

Glenn Patterson, Vision Gaspé-Percé Now, and Gaspesian Community Sound Archives. Gaspesian Community Sound [Blog] 2015. Available from <https://gaspesiancommunitysound.com/>.