



## Samantha Dieckmann

### Abstract

Using ethnographic and grounded theory methods, the project from which this paper was drawn explores the musical lives of South Sudanese Australians, Filipino Australians and White Australians in Blacktown, New South Wales. This study aims to elucidate the relationship between various factors underlying individual and collective musical acculturation processes. Significant factors include the reasons for and attitudes towards cross-cultural contact, the sociohistorical and situational factors determining the context in which cross-cultural contact takes place, and the role of power and dominance in shaping cross-cultural interactions. Other determinants include the various ways community is experienced, the maintenance and loss of heritage and homeland cultures, and the musical activities that generate and reflect participants understandings and experiences of the preceding. The interplay between these areas of inquiry positions this study at the nexus of music education, sociomusicology, ethnomusicology, acculturation studies and cultural studies. This paper reports on one case from this multiple case study, namely, the White Australian community that is considered to embody mainstream Australian normativity. Unlike the other ethnocultural communities that were examined in this thesis, the participants in the case study examined here were migrants, or descendants of migrants, from several countries of origin. Because of this complexity, this paper begins with a discussion of how this case study was bounded, conceptualized and classified in relation to the problematic identity category discursively referred to as White White subjectivity within the context of Australia will be addressed, towards developing an understanding of White Australians as the perceived dominant, receiving community in the country. This discussion will provide a framework for the findings that follow, wherein the role of music in Black town's White Australian community will be considered. The conference theme, 'the politics of what we do in intercultural and interdisciplinary spaces' in terms of the entanglements of power, privilege and people will particularly be addressed in relation to how voluntariness and mobility affects intercultural understandings of multiculturalism and tolerance, and how these understandings are manifested in musical performances. The presentation of these various entanglements illustrates how increased cultural diversity affects those who identify with the normative majority culture, how in the context of Black town musical acculturation is bidirectional, and how, in the face of difference, White subjectivity is self-perpetuating.

## **Bio**

Samantha Dieckmann teaches in the Music Education Unit at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The University of Sydney, where she is a PhD candidate. As a first generation Australian, Samantha's regard for newly arrived migrants and developing communities has driven the direction of her teaching practice as well as her research interests. She received her Bachelor of Music Education with First Class Honours for her thesis on refugee and asylum seeker community music programs in Sydney, and continues to work as a research assistant on a subsequent research project in this field. Samantha's doctoral research considers the multicultural climate of Blacktown, addressing the role of music in identity formation, community development and intercultural exchange. Beyond her personal academic interests she contributes to the study and practice of music education in her capacity as the assistant editor of the international, peer-reviewed journal *Research Studies in Music Education*.