

10-19-2015

Wendy Wickwire - Interview with Mark Slobin

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Recommended Citation

Wickwire, Wendy. "Interview with Mark Slobin." Wesleyan Graduate Studies in Music - Oral History of International Graduate Students. (October 9, 2015) http://wescholar.wesleyan.edu/grad_oralhist/24

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Mark Slobin: Well, I'm pretty good. Oh, there, now I can see you, right.

Wendy Wickwire: I'm looking at my big screen but my laptop's over there so I'm probably looking the wrong way, right? [laughs]

MS: Well, I don't know. Hard to tell.

WW: So, wow!

MS: Great to see you, it's only been—how many years?

WW: I know! Close to—must have been '83, or '82.

MS: '82, oh well—well—

WW: You're still there?

MS: I'm still there, you're still there—

WW: So how does the place feel, however many years later?

MS: Hasn't changed very much.

WW: Really!

MS: I mean, a lot of the same people are still there, although we're starting to leave now. Adzenyah's leaving this semester. Alvin Lucier retired a while ago. Neely has pushed off his retirement, Neely Bruce. Actually a lot of people are still there, it's amazing.

WW: Do you have lots of, do you add people, new people?

MS: Well, not so many. After your time we got two ethnomusicology, Eric Charry and Su Zheng, but they've been there 20 years, they're not exactly new people any more.

WW: No. Well, it was sure a blast from the past to hear from you, that's for sure.

MS: Well, what is this, October 29—

WW: So how many people are you tracking down, have you tracked down?

MS: I think I've talked to about 10 people so far, in like South Africa and the UK and you know, various places. It's—the idea was to talk to graduate alums, but there's too many graduate alums, even just the Ph.D.s to talk to, so we decided to show the international scope of the program by just talking to people who came from abroad or who are working abroad, so that came to about 50 people right there.

WW: Yeah because when I went to Wesleyan, it was *the* place to go to. It was relatively new - ethnomusicology was kind of new, right?

MS: Right, right.

WW: Not to people at Wesleyan, but to everybody else. Graduate students were looking at Wesleyan as one of the few options. Now when I look around ethnomusicology programs (because our son and his girlfriend are thinking about it), I think it's become kind of a mainstay of most departments in the US.

MS: Well it's there, it's not exactly the mainstay, it's still— most places are regular music and then we add this thing—if they add two faculty, then it's like really something, and places that have three ethnomusicologists, those are the places we really are glad to see. But a lot of it is still token.

WW: But a lot of them, I'm quite surprised at how much they do have.

MS: Yeah, yeah, no, and really good places.

WW: Our kids are in in Boston and I was checking around Boston universities. They've got quite a crew there and there are quite a few graduate students.

MS: Yeah in Boston there are a lot of people.

WW: And Harvard.

MS: Oh, yeah, Harvard's got a decent program finally, and Brown nearby is very good—

WW: Yeah our son is looking at Brown, but I don't know—He and his girlfriend want to perform, too. That was the nice thing about Wesleyan. I wasn't a performer like other people around me. What I liked about Wesleyan was the emphasis on performance as academics.

MS: Yeah, well, let's start at the beginning. How did you hear about Wesleyan and decide to go there and things like that?

WW: Well, because of because of people like Jon Higgins. I was at York. I had done this degree at the University of Western Ontario in classical music. Piano was my major. I finished that after four years and thought, "Now what do I do?" I went to Europe because my piano teacher, who was European, told us "You all have to go to Europe." I was in London, England and I ended up taking a course with Lucy Duran. Do you know her? She's an ethnomusicologist.

MS: Oh yeah. I know Lucy. She came to Wesleyan not that long ago.

WW: I took a course with her. She was young and exciting.

MS: Oh, yeah, she was, in those days she really was, right.

WW: I had lunch with her. She was teaching a course in ethnomusicology in London and I was working at London at the time, loving it. She offered this course, "Introduction to Ethnomusicology" at Morley College. I thought it sounded interesting so I thought, "Well I'll just go meet her." Well I met her and found out that she was the editor of the folk music section

of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians. She brought along two colleagues who were working with her, one who was working in Yugoslavia and the other who was working on American black gospel music. I left that lunch with those three women, thinking, "This is for me!" Over lunch, Lucy talked about her work on Crete, instrumental folk music, Greek.

MS: Right, before she went into the African thing.

WW: Whatever, anyway, I was convinced!

MS: Oh, nice.

WW: That lunch was was formative, I thought, this is where I'm going right now. And I took another class with A.L. Lloyd and he was just at the end of his life, but an amazing man.

MS: Oh, sure.

WW: And then I came back and started looking around Canada. "What do I do if I want to get on this track?" I found that York was the only place in Canada that would give me what I wanted. So I went there but they didn't have a grad program. They said, "Don't worry; we'll put one in place." But I had no anthropology or anything like it in my background. I enrolled for a year in anthropology, folklore, and music courses. Trichy Sankaran was there. He and I became close. I thought he was the most amazing musician. Jon Higgins was there too and he was, as you know, a man with an infectious enthusiasm for non-western music. He was part of this program and he had started this program. And Bob Witmer was there; he had studied with Bruno Nettl at the University of Illinois. Witmer was Canadian. When I finished that year, they still didn't have their grad program up and running, so they suggested that I undertake it through York's Interdisciplinary M.A. Programme, thing, so I combined music, folklore, and anthropology and carved out my own program and did a Master's there under Bob Witmer and others. At the same time, I began looking around for a thesis topic. By then I was seriously involved with my partner, Michael, who is still my partner [laughs], who was from British Columbia and lived by the motto that he would never spend a summer outside of British Columbia. So from 1976 on, I spent every summer in BC. It was before computers. In the summer of 1977, I met a couple of linguists who were working on indigenous languages who had some songs they wanted transcribed. "We don't know what to do with these songs," they said. Through them, I got jobs transcribing Indigenous songs. Can you believe that?

MS: Ok, ok, sounds like a good start.

WW: So it put me in touch with some amazing singers out here.

MS: Yeah.

WW: In this work, I found a topic for a master's thesis which I finished in the fall of 1978. So then I started thinking about what to do next next and began looking at grad programs in the USA. Of course, Jon Higgins, who was at York pushed me in the direction of Wesleyan. "You know," he said, "there's really only one place for you." So applied to Wesleyan and I managed to get on the waitlist.

MS: Oh really?

WW: It's a funny story because Michael, my partner, said, "You can't just be on the waitlist." He was busy working on a plan that would allow us to pursue doctoral degrees in the same city. He applied to the Yale Law School when I applied to Wesleyan. His idea was that we could actually live in Middletown because New Haven is only a half hour drive away. But I got on the wait list, and he got in to Yale, and he said, "You've gotta go down there." So I went down in a snow storm. [phone begins ringing]

MS: Oh my god.

WW: To Middletown, to Hartford.

MS: Uh, hold on, somebody, my phone is ringing, wait, I guess I'll ignore it, ok, right. I'll just ignore it, right. [phone continues to ring]

WW: So then I ended up going down in the snow storm -- like three feet of snow!

MS: Oh my gosh.

WW: But people were around. I went to see David McAllister, various others. I was on the waitlist, but while I was there, Jon Higgins telephoned to somebody in the department to say that I had won this big four-year doctoral fellowship with full funding.

MS: Yes, pretty nice, I remember that, everybody else is kind of jealous, like, "Oh, look at that," you know.

WW: They still have them but they've been cut back significantly in recent years by the Canadian Government. We've got a new Government now so it's going to be interesting to see how this changes. This was in the first years of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) program. On hearing that I had landed the fellowship, Wesleyan told me immediately, "You're in." So that's how I got into Wesleyan.

MS: Ok, ok.

WW: So then I came and, uh, Michael came too, and it was amazing. And this is a great story too. We were driving around Middletown and Michael had this vision of the beautiful New England town we were coming to. Well, Middletown didn't fulfill his image of this town—

MS: [laughs]

WW: —so he said, "This is terrible! This is not what I expected!" And we were driving around the campus and he continued to rail on. "There are not even any nice houses that I could see myself in." At that point, he looked up a hill above the street we were driving along, and he said, "Now there's a nice house, I could live in that house." We went to the housing office on campus and she said, "This is your address," and she pointed it out, and we drove around, and that was our house!

MS: You're kidding!

WW: No! We were on the top floor of that yellow farmhouse that was right on the edge of the campus. Gorgeous farmhouse. And Ed Herbst and Beth Skinner were in the main floor. So we had our little community right there.

MS: Oh, that's nice.

WW: Yeah, and we loved our house, and yeah, so that's how I got to Wesleyan! It was because of Jon Higgins, Trichy Sankaran, Bob Witmer, and Steve Blum. They were all at York and they all, in different ways, paved the way to Wesleyan.

MS: Right.

WW: York was an interesting little hub but really the only place in Canada that offered anything close to ethnomusicology.

MS: Right, right. Yeah, now it's much—there's more of it now. It's still not enormous, but there's a good center now in Alberta, Newfoundland with Bev Diamond and—

WW: Yeah, and, they have—

MS: And UBC.

WW: Even here at UVic they've hired Patrick Boyle, a Newfoundlander who got his PhD in ethnomusicology at U of T but his dissertation is on improvisation and he's playing with all the musicians in town. So he's a performer as well as an ethnomusicologist. There are many members of the Uvic Music Department who will be retiring soon. My guess is that Boyle will probably build the ethnomusicology niche as time goes on. The Cuban music specialist, Andy Schloss is also in that Department.

MS: Oh ok.

MS: But that's good, it's expanding in Canada, yeah, that's—so but you, so, when you first got in to this program, what sort of was your response to it? Were you surprised by things?

WW: Well I, as they say, I think it was really foreign. I think I really, really loved it. I loved the people I met, the courses. David McAllister had lots of experience in Indigenous music and at the peak of his career. He was exactly what I was looking for.

MS: Right.

WW: But then I had Henry Orlov.

MS: Oh, right, poor old Henry, right.

WW: I'm not gonna ask what happened to him. But you just sort of parachuted him in while I was there, and he came from a very different place.

MS: Yeah, for sure.

WW: And I found him, he was quite an intellectual, a Russian Jew who was suddenly parachuted into North America and experiencing something that felt so foreign and so vulnerable and so weird. He offered us a perspective on North American culture that turned the latter inside out.

MS: That's good. Well it's nice you're bringing him up because he's like a totally forgotten figure because he didn't stay long. We just—he didn't get continued because he just didn't fit the bill, he didn't fit the mold, and he was so deeply crushed.

WW: Oh, was he?

MS: He thought he'd find a home there and then, you know, he didn't. And he went on to Voice of America in DC eventually.

WW: Oh.

MS: So he finally found a place to work. But you know, it wasn't his *métier*, really. He was this kind of thinker—but he was such a deep *Russian* Russian, you know—

WW: Yes!

MS: His kind of approach. You know, it didn't work with Wesleyan kids. What can you say.

WW: No, it kind of worked with me. I took a fair bit from him.

MS: That's good.

WW: And then my third committee member was Bill Walker who was kind of in the same boat as David McAllester, an old style North American Indianist of the old school. The most influential figure for me was Johannes Fabian. He was really heady. And he was really turning the social sciences inside out. He was really on the cusp of the postmodernist turn.

MS: Absolutely.

WW: He was doing the kind of Foucault post-structural, post-colonial post-modern *thing* before anyone else.

MS: No, it was amazing.

WW: I would emerge from his classes with incredible notes. In fact, I haven't even trashed those notes because they were so cutting-edge. They were from a book manuscript that he was working on at the time. He published it in 1983.

MS: Yeah.

WW: The title of the book was *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. He started our course with Thomas Kuhn's *Structure Science Revolution* and really it was just the most amazing experience I've ever had. And so I still think that what I do, in a way, is informed

by what I took from him.

MS: Sure, sure.

WW: So I had Jon Higgins on my committee (he moved from York to Wesleyan the same year I moved to Wesleyan), and Bill Walker, David McAllestar, and Henry Orlov and I was doing fieldwork with Indigenous folks out here in BC while trying to figure out what to do with the amazing songs that people were singing for me. I didn't want to just transcribe songs and analyze them! I wanted to do something more with them.

MS: Right, right! [both laugh]

WW: So I tried to do what I did, which was a comparative analysis. I put Western Europe in one box and the Indigenous music in another box and tried to turn the two boxes into a dissertation. I remember when I waltzed into my defense, they all said, "You know, this really doesn't look like a dissertation in ethnomusicology. It looks more like a work of social philosophy." Well in my mind I thought, "That's kind of more where I am." So yeah, that's what I did.

MS: Interesting.

WW: I remember my courses with Vishwa, you know, I took some of his courses, and really learned a lot. It was a great opportunity to pursue what I needed to pursue in a nice quiet, very creative, very flexible program. I liked that students were allowed to do what they wanted to. You didn't jam us into any boxes.

MS: Right.

WW: So yeah I came out with something that served me quite well I would say!

MS: Who were your fellow students?

WW: Ed Herbst, whom we've kept in touch with.

MS: He did a dissertation and published a book that is wonderful.

WW: Bob Labaree and Jim Cowdery and Alan Thrasher, and his partner was there too

MS: Mary Reamer.

WW: Alan got a job at UBC, Alan did. That would have been a good job for Ed.

WW: They had a gamelan and they wanted to get someone all involved in that. That wasn't really Alan Thrasher's specialty at the time—

MS: No, not exactly. I went out there and visited, he brought me out once, God, a thousand years ago or something. And I gave a couple talks there and it was very nice. He was just going to be retiring, but we had a lovely time and Vancouver is so beautiful. I had been out there when the SEM was there once and then we went back for that little trip— but we didn't get out to the island.

WW: Oh, well, you gotta come! I thought of you on Saturday night because I went to the concert that was in honor of Michelle's retirement. She picked the music, it was mostly a Beethoven program, but she picked the best musicians in the faculty to perform. And then part of the program was her husband's, one of his compositions. So that was Saturday night!

MS: Ok! Sounds very—

WW: You should come and visit us!

MS: Yeah, no, I will some time! It will be nice to. Now that I'm retiring I can think of various nice places to go.

WW: Are you retiring this year?

MS: Yeah, yeah.

WW: Because Michael and I are both retiring this year too.

MS: And you're so much younger. I stuck it out longer than I thought I would but I am going to, yeah, call it a day.

WW: You look very youthful! You don't look old.

MS: Right, well it will be 45 years this June, so.

WW: Wow.

MS: Yeah, it seems like long enough.

WW: And the interesting thing too is your connection to Hankus [Netsky], Hankus was Patrick's absolute idol at NEC.

MS: I'm delighted to hear that. He's such a wonderful person.

WW: He loved him. He talked on and on and on in his phone calls to us about Hankus. Patrick just thought that he was the smartest, most creative, most wonderful, most supportive, most everything he could have absolutely had in a mentor.

MS: He's been doing that a really long time, and yes, I told you, he ended up being a Wesleyan graduate and that was really rewarding. I learned so much from him. I mean, he learned from us and he never had a college degree, just did music, and so he wanted to know methodology and how to right and things like that which he, you know, and he was really good at that. And his book is out now that was based on his dissertation, and he's always doing—

WW: You and he have lots of overlap.

MS: Yeah.

WW: Like you were in the same area.

MS: Yeah, I say I learned a lot from him and he learned from us and it was a really nice period, yeah.

WW: Wow.

MS: Yeah.

WW: Anyway, are you going to continue working and writing and stuff?

MS: Oh, sure, you know, why not—

WW: We are too, yeah. Are you going to continue living at Wesleyan?

MS: No, no, I've moved to New York.

WW: Oh, so you're in New York!

MS: Yeah

MS: Wow

MS: Well, my wife and I bought a pied-a-terre 15 years ago when it was reasonable and so it's possible for me to move into it so—it's small but it's right behind Lincoln Center so it's pretty nice.

WW: Oh my gosh.

MS: So I can go to everything, and you know.

WW: Oh!

MS: So yeah I've moved on. I'm on sabbatical this semester. And I'm just going up for one final semester.

WW: So you're in the center of the universe.

MS: Yeah, kind of. Right. I'm holding this retirement event for me, actually, in April.

WW: Well we're on the same plan.

MS: Yeah

WW: Yeah, no, that's good, and it sounds like you've maintained the culture that I really appreciated at Wesleyan, which was a family-oriented, very supportive environment with lots of concerts, lots of performance opportunities, while maintaining academic rigor. I have really, really positive memories of my time there- and I think even being located in this little town of Middletown, away from everything, in the beautiful architectural setting that housed the Music Department. That's what I remember. It just felt quiet and serene and supportive and totally great.

MS: That's what we like to hear! [laughs]

WW: Are other people telling you that?

MS: Yeah, basically, yeah! This is what you get from people. Nobody has anything to complain about, essentially.

WW: Yeah!

MS: And they always say it was formative, you know, so formative.

WW: And you know Jon Higgins was there while I was there. He died shortly after that. It was shortly after he had taken up his position there. We came together to Wesleyan.

MS: Oh yeah, right.

WW: That was his first year year, so there was such a sense of optimism and excitement about his coming home. We were very excited to get him. He was such a personality, wasn't he?

MS: He definitely was, it was so tragic, I mean, he really had his life together after a lot of internal conflict, and knew what he wanted to do and he was 45 years old, and this drunk guy ran him over. It was just so tragic.

WW: And he was an institution-builder in the nicest way. He created that program at York. He was the one who brought Sankaran from South India, which was a big move for a Canadian institution to take in this young drummer. It's interesting to see the effect. Sankaran's daughter, Suba is a musical force in Canada.

MS: Really, I didn't know that.

WW: She studied Western classical music as a child but she grew up with this amazing musician father which made her extremely versatile. So she's become a force. And I was interested to see that Ed Herbst's daughter has really absorbed what he and Beth were doing in the Indonesian world -- the world music and performance and dance. It's interesting to see what people's kids have gone on to do. I find it interesting now that our son and his partner are both looking around at ethnomusicology programs. That's what got me scrolling around to see where they might go.

MS: Yeah, there are more choices, but they're very distinctive, those programs all have their own particular flavor so yeah, I mean, he should go around and visit, basically.

WW: That's what I'm seeing too.

MS: If he's thinking of applying, he should really go turn up, see how people talk, and see what the other grad students say, that's the only way you really learn about anything.

WW: I know, that's what I've been saying too. Patrick's girlfriend, Allison is a clawhammer banjo player who performs regularly with Bruce Molsky. I don't know where they will end up.

S: Well I remember those one year somebody was, we admitted somebody who was then

admitted and visited some other places—and she said, well I’m going to come here because it’s the only place I’ve visited where the grad students are happy.

WW: That’s interesting

MS: Everywhere she went they seemed to be down and not, you know, this and that, and said, “People here seem to be really kind of happy, I think I want to come here.”

WW: No, no, I don’t remember any disgruntled students! I don’t, in my program. Everyone was quite happy—quite thrilled to be there, really.

MS: Yeah it’s a nice crowd you had there.

WW: It was such a happening place, and the concerts were amazing. Yeah. And the mix of students, and their backgrounds. Remember Jim Cowdrey, remember his group

MS: “How to change a flat tire,” right.

WW: They were very special, doing really unusual stuff.

MS: They were very good. Well, I see him some times, he’s in NY.

WW: What’s he up to?

MS: Well, he didn’t work out in academia for various reasons, not his fault I would say, but he has this nice job at what’s called RILM, they do the bibliography of music internationally and keep track of it, it’s this little unit that’s at the CUNY graduate center. He’s kind of a senior person there. He really likes that work. He’s a detail guy, and a bibliography guy, and he really likes doing that. And that supports a number of ethnomusicologists, that outfit.

WW: Oh, that’s good.

MS: Yeah.

WW: Excellent.

MS: So he’s in good form.

WW: And I find with Patrick’s crowd, what they’re doing is going into the old Alan Lomax recordings and stuff.

MS: Oh Right, right.

WW: We’ve got masses of those in Canada, different types. So many early collectors, there’s lots of opportunities to do that kind of work here.

MS: I think I mentioned we have our first ever indigenous graduate student except for the couple of Navajos that David brought, this is the first time in decades we’ve had anybody. And certainly the first Inupiaq, we’ve never had anybody from the Arctic.

WW: Is she bringing an interesting line of music or anything?

MS: She's very good, she's excellent. She's a professional violinist and came to graduate school very late just out of curiosity because she kept bumping into these kind of funny issues about her heritage and she said, "I've gotta know more about this." So she was already sort of a professional and slowly, it's just been wonderful watching her unfold and kind of open up as a scholar and she's a really good scholar now. She's teaching a course in Anchorage and writing a dissertation now, and she's sort of invited to all these nice conferences.

WW: Wow.

MS: Heidi Senungetuk. And there are so few Inupiaqs, it's just amazing that she's becoming an ethnomusicologist in that group, there are like 15 thousand of them or something.

WW: And I would say in Canada she might have a good opportunity of a job, because there's this whole initiative to get this indigenous component into the university in all departments, which is good.

MS: Of course, she's an American.

WW: Making room and encouraging indigenous people to go to school and come back.

MS: Well, of course she's an American but I don't know if that would count against her.

WW: Well, these days it doesn't seem to be an issue.

MS: That's good.

WW: Cross border stuff seems to be working.

MS: Maybe you should get in touch with her sometime, because she's really nice. Maybe you could bring her for a talk or something.

WW: Yeah, yeah that sounds good. Very good.

MS: I'll send you her stuff.

WW: Yeah. So tell me the more interesting person you've found internationally! Graduate.

MS: Oh, I'm just getting started. I talked to Neil Sorrell who was at Wesleyan in the 60s and he's still at York and teaching in England.

WW: Really!

MS: Yeah, he isn't quite retiring yet. I talked to Sylvia Bruinders in South Africa, she's very good, a very good career, she's a professor in South Africa. I mean, these people, people went out from this place and found their places in the world. And there are people everywhere. Indonesia, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, we have these grads in India, we have graduates everywhere who are working in the field.

WW: I think that speaks so well of the program, great.

MS: In more recent times we have more East Asian people, particularly women, because of Su Zheng, who is, you know, kind of attracts them and finds the right people. A number of people more from Taiwan, Mainland China, who have come through.

WW: Wow

MS: We had our first ever Bahamian graduate student last year, she was excellent actually. She did an MA. It just goes on and on.

WW: Well I found when I was there in the late '70s, '80s, the stories of the '60s were still circulating. So when Jon Higgins was a student there, it just sounds like it was an amazing place, at a time when the program was formed.

MS: Yeah, that's the '60s, that's even before my time.

WW: Musicians were coming from everywhere, so there was such a mix. That was still there when I was there, but Jon Higgins would often talk about it as being just totally off the wall in many ways.

MS: It was, it was off the wall - there was not much academic rigor in the 60s.

WW: But there was something else, that was also important.

MS: Well, yeah

WW: The coming together of such musical talent

MS: Absolutely

WW: Infusing itself into, when you think that everybody, people were resisting the world at that stage.

MS: Exactly

WW: It seemed that the music department played right into that hand. I think I got it at a good time, since it was sort of calming down a bit, but still very creative and quite a force. So you know, I think it is good to go back and reflect on how it has gone. I would say I had this weird degree in ethnomusicology, which in Canada was unusual.

MS: Right!

WW: I mean, I'm teaching in a history department and I don't have a degree in history, but because of the interdisciplinary focus of my Wesleyan Ph.D., it has all worked for me.

MS: Yeah, it worked for you.

WW: I've just been able to tailor the degree to fit my interest in indigenous history, oral history,

etc. I haven't done as much with music as I perhaps would have liked, but, it always comes up in some way.

MS: Well I did write a little book called *Music At Wesleyan: From Glee Club to Gamelan*, which could you could pick up.

WW: Yeah!

MS: It's lots of pictures and anecdotes going back to the foundations in the 1830s

WW: What's the title?

MS: *Music at Wesleyan*. It came out in 2010 I guess. Wesleyan University Press.

WW: How do I get it?

MS: Just Amazon, you know. There are a few pictures of David and the Navajos—

WW: You came in what year?

MS: '71.

WW: Yeah, wow.

MS: Yeah, right.

WW: Great year to come.

MS: It was the high water mark in terms of the number of grad students and the number of various kinds of artists, and then it got cut back through the '70s rather seriously. There were too many people there, actually, in '71, nobody was keeping track of it. We did lose—we lost Japan, we lost North India in the '70s, you know it got trimmed. But it was so big, that what was left was still really massive.

WW: What was left was still pretty neat. Also I remember thinking that the cultural, the social management of all these people from all parts of the world was quite challenging, just adapting to this new place.

MS: Right.

WW: And Vishwa was a great guy, I was sorry to hear that he died.

MS: Oh, he was extraordinary.

WW: And his wife, Jody.

MS: Jody's still around, she works at the Wesleyan Library

WW: Oh does she?

MS: She works at the music library and she's still around.

WW: She was a student, I think, when I was there.

MS: Oh right, Jody would have been.

WW: And what's happened to Jon Higgins' wife?

MS: Rhea? Oh, she eventually started teaching art history, she got a degree at some point, and she's been teaching art history at a little college in Hartford for a very long time.

WW: So she's still around there

MS: Yeah, and their little boy Nico became an ethnomusicologist.

WW: See, it's interesting to see what the kids do!

MS: Yeah, Nico ended up with a Ph.D. from Columbia, I don't know where he is now, he's been looking for jobs. He's a total sweetheart, and very good at the work. Luke, I'm not sure where Luke is now. He was getting a Ph.D. in divinity and philosophy I think at Princeton or somewhere, last I heard, but I don't know where his is now.

WW: Oh!

MS: So those kids, she really brought them up and they did very well.

WW: Oh, wow, yeah, because they lost him so early. That was one of the tragic things, I can still remember hearing that and not believing it.

MS: It was so shocking. Yeah.

WW: Yeah, so that was a big loss.

MS: But you know, we kind of carried on and regrouped, this is what we do.

WW: Yeah, yeah. So do you think you'll miss it?

MS: Well it's not so far away, I can still go up. And sure, at some level, of course, one is used to such a structure and such a format. But I found last June, I turned 72 and said, "You know, I'm getting pretty tired doing this same level of work in the institution, maybe there's other things to do in your last years." So it began to feel somehow natural at a certain point to move away.

WW: And being in NYC, you're going to feel like you're just constantly stimulated.

MS: Right, right.

WW: Where did you do your ethnomusicology stuff?

MS: In Michigan. I was the first ethnomusicology student in Ann Arbor.

WW: Really!

MS: Yeah.

WW: So who was there?

MS: Well there was just one person, Bill Malm who specialized in Japan. He was the only person, he'd only been there a couple years, and I was the first graduate student.

WW: That's pretty neat.

MS: I mean, I still had to do all of musicology, and my degree is in musicology.

WW: What was your topic?

MS: Afghanistan, you know.

WW: Oh wow yeah. So that's pretty interesting.

MS: It certainly was. So it was great to talk! And it's such a pleasure to be back in touch.

WW: You really got me feeling nostalgic and old and all those things!

MS: Well, I hope it's good! [laughs]

WW: You have to come out now for a visit, we've got an extra room here, so come!

MS: Ok! Thanks a lot Wendy. Take care. Let me know where Patrick goes!

WW: Well, you never know, they could end up at Wesleyan!

MS: That would be very nice

WW: Anyway, well, lovely to talk, and I'll be interested to see what else you turn up in all this.

MS: Well I'm just sort of leaving this in the archives for the future comprehensive history of the Wesleyan program, which I hope somebody does someday, because the impact of the impact of the place in composition as well as ethnomusicology. So I hope somebody does the real book. This would give people some source material, a little bit.

WW: It's been a major institution for so many reasons, for me.

MS: Right.

WW: I look back fondly as you can see, and I look forward to our next chat!

MS: Ok Wendy!

WW: Ok, Mark! Bye.