



Cross-Disciplinary Interplay
between the Humanities,
Technology and Musical Practice

**Thursday,
December 15, 2011.
2:15-4 p.m. in U73.**

Guest lecture in the seminar
series

**Topics in the Aesthetics
of Music and Sound,**

<http://soundmusicresearch.org/seminarsfall2011.html>.

Bach in Everyday Life: 'Choral Capital' As Well-Being and the Socio-Musical Identities of Amateur Choristers Who Perform Art Music

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Presentation via Skype.



Abstract: This paper presents socio-musical research that was carried out with an amateur Bach choir as its focus, where the main purpose has been to study the experiences of amateur choristers as they rehearse and perform large-scale choral music.

This study is based on an interdisciplinary approach, utilizing concepts and ideas from a variety of fields of study – primarily sociology and music sociology but also music psychology, music history (especially Bach scholarship), music education, and interdisciplinary studies on music, health and well-being.

The methodological approach consists of a grounded theory-based, single case study where the case was the Croydon Bach Choir in London performing J.S. Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, using participant observation (I sang with the choir

for one semester) and qualitative interviews as main research methods, while demographic background data on choral members was collected via a paper-based survey. Whereas much research on music performances has been conducted, I am unacquainted with any choral research is where the direct participation of the researcher as a member of the choir is used as one of the main research methods.

The results of this study indicate that participants develop a certain socio-musical identity through their choral participation in general by relating to and reconstructing J.S. Bach and by facing the challenge of performing a large scale choral work. Their choral activities form a valuable addition to their social and cultural capital ('choral capital') which they use as a source of well-being in everyday life.

ALL ARE WELCOME!