

[More From This Issue](#)[Current Issue](#)[Back Issues](#)[Guidelines](#)

Vol 2(2), July 1, 2002
Voices2(2)editorial_kenny

Voices - The Gathering

By Carolyn Kenny | [Author bio & contact info](#)



Soon music therapists will be gathering again for another World Congress of Music Therapy, this time in Oxford, UK. Each time these gatherings become more and more exciting. It is good that the numbers of music therapists around the world keep increasing. But the exciting aspect of these International gatherings, for me, is the opportunity to experience the tremendous diversity, which is also growing each year. More and more countries are learning about music therapy and setting up training programs for music therapists. And the organizers of the Oxford conference are creating an event that is very respectful of this diversity and one that will provide many opportunities for cross-cultural exchanges.

Of course with diversity come the ever-present questions about cross-cultural communication -- communicating across different languages, understanding approaches that might be different than our own comfortable and familiar ones. So it is also time to take pause to reflect on how we can come to terms with some of the tougher issues in the cross-cultural exchanges we encounter.

For example, what ever happened to the idea of setting up funding mechanisms within the World Federation of Music Therapy for translations of articles and texts? If we truly believe that something essential gets lost when language is lost, where is our commitment to ensuring that these losses do not occur? Though I am very comfortable in my English language, I wish we could hear and read more languages in our Music Therapy worlds. And I truly wish that critical texts and articles were more available to new Music Therapy programs in countries where English is not so easy to hear or read.

Let's think about more cross-cultural research projects, especially ones that challenge our values and beliefs. We could take some measurements of the world map and invite pairs of researchers who live in completely different sides of the world to work together in a shared research project.

How about inviting traditional music therapists from Indigenous societies to be Visiting Scholars in our Music Therapy programs instead of always inviting the more renowned Music Therapists from the Western world?

Maybe we could offer pre-conference institutes to learn to play in a Gamelan orchestra or even a seminar on World Musics.

Why stay in our comfort zones when there is such a rich territory to explore?

At Voices, we can be travelers in the mind. And that is certainly a great joy, and often a challenge. But we grow. In Oxford, those of you who are lucky enough to attend, will be able to travel in the mind, but also in rich person-to-person experiences with new colleagues and relationships, new sounds, sites, new Music Therapy possibilities, and hopefully, new joys and challenges too.

We hope that you will also kick some dust off the comfort zones and add your own challenges

to the events and encourage our associations and programs to stretch themselves out a bit beyond the borderland where we dwell so securely into the vastness that is the World.

To cite this page:

Kenny, Carolyn (2002). Voices - The Gathering. [online] *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. Retrieved from [http://www.voices.no/mainissues/Voices2\(2\)editorial_kenny.html](http://www.voices.no/mainissues/Voices2(2)editorial_kenny.html)

Moderated discussion

*Add your comments and responses to this essay in our Moderated Discussions. Contributions should be e-mailed to either **Barabara Wheeler** or **Thomas Wosch Guidelines for discussions***

View contributions on this essay: [yet no contribution]

©2005. VOICES. All rights reserved

