About the Contributors

LISA ANSELL is Associate Director of the Casden Institute for the Study of the Jewish Role in American Life at the University of Southern California. She received her BA in French and Near East Studies from UCLA and her MA in Middle East Studies from Harvard University. She was the Chair of the World Language Department of New Community Jewish High School for five years before coming to USC in August, 2007.

JEFF JANECZKO holds a BA in music from the Metropolitan State College of Denver, and an MA and PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Los Angeles. His essay “A Tale of Four Diasporas: Case Studies on the Relevance of ‘Diaspora’ in Contemporary American Jewish Music” appears in Perspectives on Jewish Music: Sacred and Secular, edited by Jonathan L. Friedmann (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009). He is currently Curator for the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, a non-profit, “living archive” dedicated to expanding the awareness and appreciation of Jewish music.


JOSH KUN is Associate Professor in the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism and the Department of American Studies & Ethnicity at USC, where he also directs The Popular Music Project of the Norman Lear Center. Kun’s research focuses on the arts and politics of cultural connection, with an emphasis on popular music, the cultures of globalization, the US-Mexico border, and Jewish-American musical history. He is co-editor of the book series “Refiguring American Music” for Duke University Press and is a founding member of The Idelsohn Society for Musical Preservation.

PETER LA CHAPELLE is an Associate Professor of History at Nevada State College. A former journalist and Smithsonian Postdoctoral Fellow, he is author of Proud to Be an Okie: Cultural Politics, Country Music, and Migration to Southern California (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). When not listening to old records or trying to keep up with his sons, he is working on a new book about the connections between country music and political campaigns.
JONATHAN Z. S. POLLACK is Instructor in History and Chair of the Humanities Department at Madison Area Technical College. From 2008–2011, he has also held the MATC Fellowship at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has recorded two CDs with Madison-based klezmer band Yid Vicious. His next project will examine Jewish scrap, second-hand, and surplus dealers in the industrial Midwest.

JODY ROSEN is a journalist and author. He is the music critic for the online magazine Slate, and the author of White Christmas: The Story of an American Song (New York: Scribner, 2002). In 2006, Rosen compiled Jewface, an anthology of early twentieth-century novelty songs about Jewish characters (Idelsohn Society). On March 27, 2008 Rosen’s front page New York Times article reported the discovery by American audio historians of French inventor Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville’s 1860 phonautograph recording, the earliest known recording of the human voice to be played back.

GAYLE WALD is Professor and Chair of English at George Washington University. She is the author of “‘Shout, Sister, Shout!’: The Untold Story of Rock-and-Roll Trailblazer Sister Rosetta Tharpe” (Boston: Beacon, 2007). Her current book project explores the TV show “Soul!,” a PBS production that brought black power sensibilities to a national audience between 1968 and 1973. In addition to her academic work, she works with Reboot, an organization devoted to the vitality of twenty-first century American Jewish culture.

BRUCE ZUCKERMAN is the Myron and Marian Casden Director of the Casden Institute and a Professor of Religion at USC, where he teaches courses in the Hebrew Bible, the Bible in western literature, the ancient Near East, and archaeology. A specialist in photographing and reconstructing ancient texts, he is involved in numerous projects related to the Dead Sea Scrolls. On ancient topics, his major publications are Job the Silent: A Study in Biblical Counterpoint and The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition, for which he and his brother Kenneth did the principal photography. Zuckerman also has a continuing interest in modern Jewish thought, often looking at modern issues from an ancient perspective. He most recently co-authored Double Takes: Thinking and Rethinking Issues of Modern Judaism in Ancient Contexts with Zev Garber and contributed a chapter to Garber’s book, Mel Gibson’s Passion: The Film, the Controversy, and Its Implications.