How Does Ethnomusicology Matter? The Socio-Political Relevance of Ethnomusicology in the 21st Century

Music has been recognized as a potent force in many societies over the centuries. Sometimes it has been praised as good and sometimes reviled as leading to evil thoughts and deeds. Men and women have marched to war to the sounds of music and protested wars with music as well. But what about the study of music—does it matter? If so, in what ways does it matter? This paper discusses the socio-political relevance of ethnomusicology with an emphasis on the 21st century.