

Expanding a Dementia Care Network through Musicking

Sound Health Network Journal Club

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Roadmap

- Overview of article

Hara, M. Expanding a Care Network for People with Dementia and their Carers through Musicking: Participant Observation with “Singing for the Brain.” *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy*. 2011(2): online.

<https://doi.org/10.15845/voices.v11i2>

- Discussion with moderator Dr. Suzanne Hanser and author Dr. Mariko Hara

Key concepts

- **Methodology:** Grounded theory and ethnography, qualitative, foregrounding participant voices and understandings
- **Methods:** Participant observation, engaging in everyday life to identify information otherwise missed in interviews, surveys, experimental design
- **Musicking:** the totality of engagement in music, encompassing listening, performing, rehearsing, practicing

Introduction

- Music relatively preserved in context of dementia
- The act of musicking together is meaningful to participants and carers
- Music can be assessed as an ecological process; role of music in daily life

DeNora 2000, Cuddy 2005,
Aasgard 2002

Research question

- In quantitative research, we often test a hypothesis
- In qualitative research, we often ask a research question
- How does a weekly, local, music-making activity, “Singing for the Brain,” fit in to the larger context of everyday life for people living with dementia and their carers?

Underlying premises

- Longitudinal ethnographic studies as gentle and slow methods have value
- Music has the potential to be a permeable and sustainable resource for health and well-being in dementia care
- Interdisciplinary collaboration is essential to dementia care

Methods: Participant observation

- **Site:** Alzheimer's Society weekly program Singing for the Brain (SFTB) for dementia caregiving dyads
- **Researcher training:** Music sociology
- **Position in field:** Volunteer in both SFTB and a music project for young people with disabilities in the same town, living on site

Methods: Research activities

- SFTB weekly participation x 2 years
- Ethnographic interviews with key participants
- Musicking-use of SFTB songbook during interviews, humming, singing

Hara 2011

<https://www.musicandartsinaction.net/index.php/maia/article/view/musicanddementia/55>

Methods: Data analysis

- Grounded Theory
- Identification of emerging themes from interviews
- Close observation of weekly SFTB events
- Situating observed events within their local context

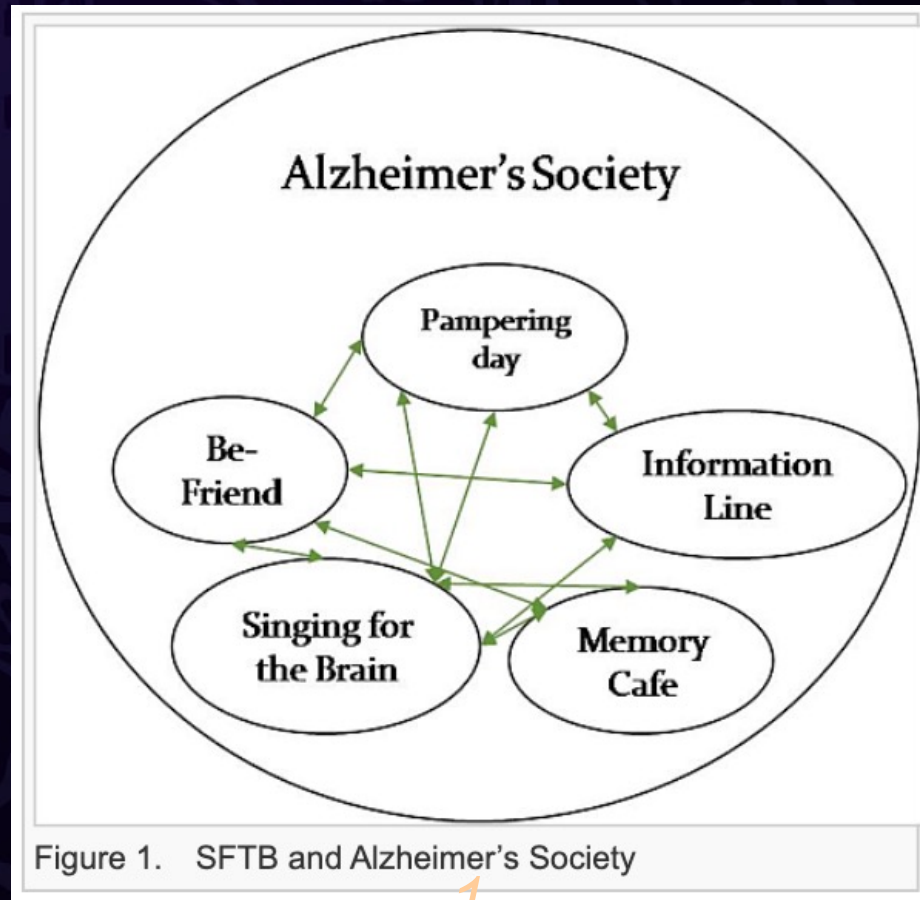
Batt-Rawden 2007, Glaser & Strauss 1997,
Orona 1997)

Results

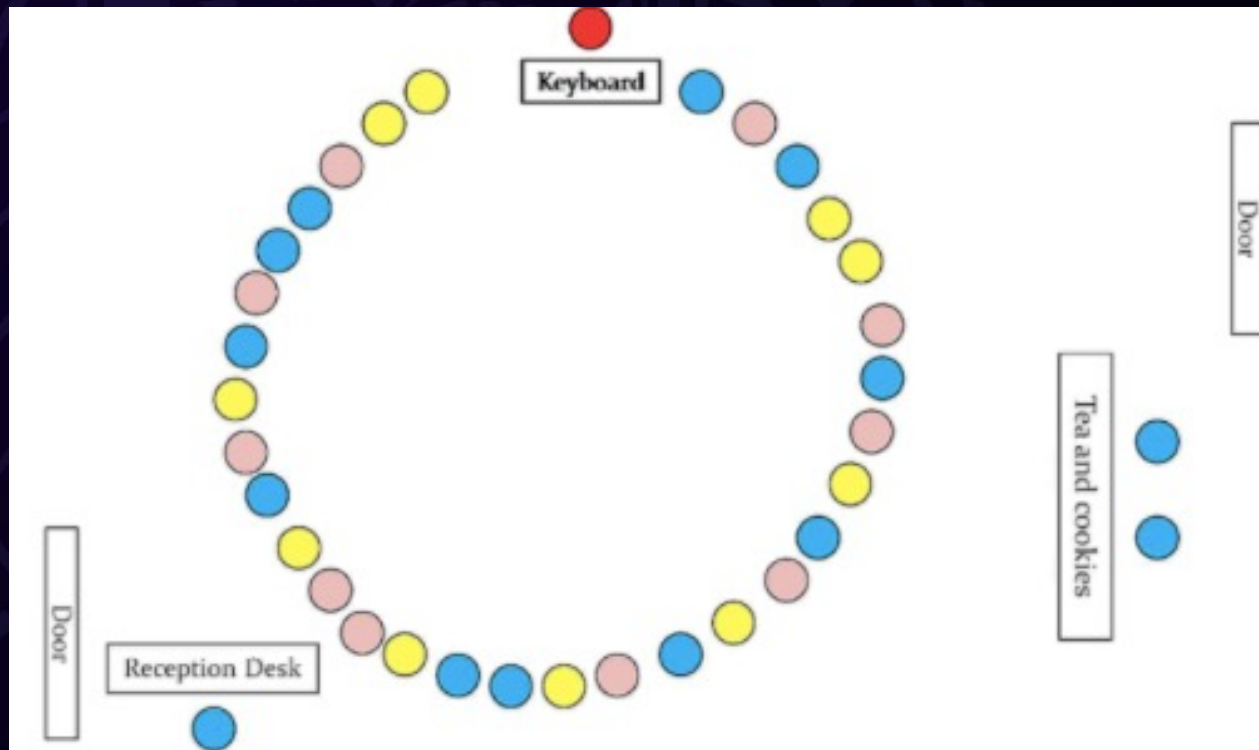
1. SFTB (the weekly group activity) can be understood as an ecological practice
2. SFTB creates effects in everyday life beyond of the weekly event
3. SFTB, together with other local music events and other Alzheimer's association programs, constitute a music and care world for people living with dementia and carers

Note the artificial distinction between methods, results, discussion when applied to qualitative research

1. SFTB as ecological practice



1. SFTB as ecological practice



- | | |
|---|--|
|  = facilitator |  = carers |
|  = volunteers |  = care-receivers |

Figure 2. Physical layout of a typical SFTB session. [8]

1. SFTB as ecological practice

1. Notices and birthdays
2. Physical warm-up
3. Hello song
4. Familiar waltz tunes
5. Part song
6. Call and response song
7. New song with percussion and harmony
8. Quiz
9. Familiar song with percussion
10. Song with movement
11. "Shalom" (good-bye song)

2. Effects of SFTB outside of program

- SFTB as key social activity in everyday life
- Music presented in SFTB is recalled and performed in everyday life
- “Touching,” “important” moments for participants with dementia and carers
- Deeply missed when participant can no longer join

3. Music and care world

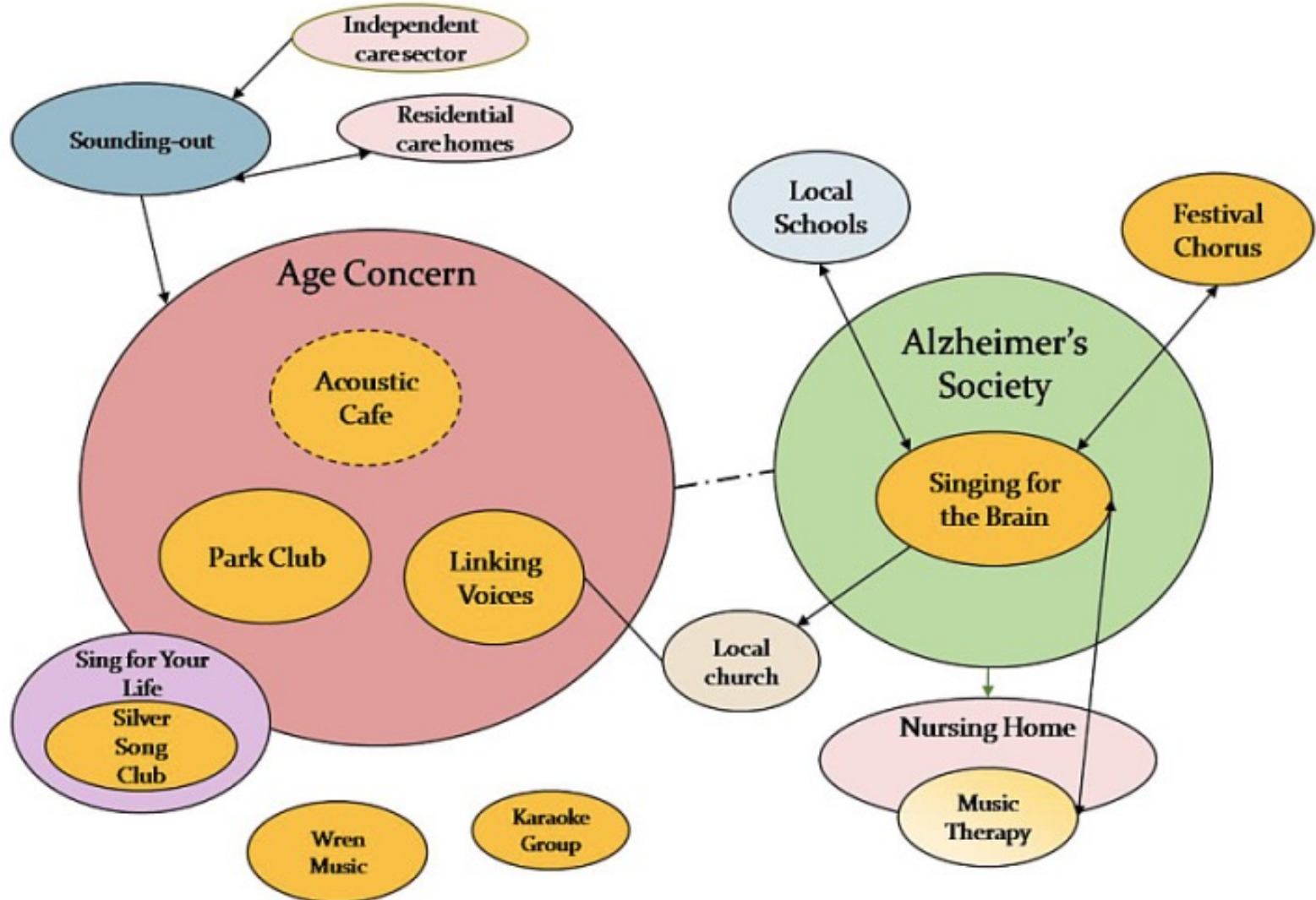


Figure 3. Music and care world for older people in Watertown

Discussion/Implications

- Detailed longitudinal ethnographic (micro level) studies are essential to understanding everyday life for people living with dementia and their carers
- Music has an important role to play in a meaningful dementia care support network



Thank you!