Gender and Sexuality in Chilean Experimental Music
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Experimental music practices in Chile have not received much scholarly attention. Most of it has been limited to electroacoustic music aligned with the Western classical tradition. In fact, this subarea has at various historical moments attempted to colonize or dominate the experimental to the detriment of other forms of experimentalism, most notably, improvisatory practices. An early example of this form of conceptual colonialism is a 1965 article by the influential musicologist–then composer–Samuel Claro, titled "The Experimental Music Scene in Chile". Claro's use of the concept is not related to John Cage's seminal 1957 essay on experimental music, but rather to something more limited and specific. His starting point and main source is the 1957 article "What is Electronic Music" by Chilean composer Gustavo Becerra, which, notably, does not use the word experimental. Thus, Claro equates experimental music with musique concrète and electronic music. In the 21st century, Chilean electronic music boasts a canon of composers, anthological recordings of foundational pieces, and an important book that covers both, Federico Schumacher's 50 Years of Electroacoustic Music in Chile (2005). It is noteworthy that, from Becerra to Schumacher, electronic music is defined by its use of electroacoustic materials and media, rather than theorized within a broader framework of experimentalist musical practices.

Chilean improvisatory practices or real-time forms of musicality have received less scholarly consideration than electronic music. There are studies of jazz in Chile, but in them the role of improvisation is taken for granted as a stylistic trait, rather than scrutinized and debated (Menanteau 2003). Tomás Lefever (1926-2003), an idiosyncratic Chilean composer who evidences Cage's influence in his embrace of chance and indeterminacy, has been included in a recent attempt at developing a canon of 20th-century Chilean classical music (Díaz & González 2011), yet there is no monographic study of his life or works. The most important contribution in the study of improvisatory practices in Chile has come not from classical music studies, but popular musicology. In a recent article on the early years of rock band Los Jaivas, Juan Pablo González considers the band avant-garde and experimental because of their use of collective improvisation (2012). Los Jaivas's use of improvisation was not inspired by 1950s classical music experimentalists, but by the avant-garde experiments of the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix.

The studies of Chilean electroacoustic music and avant-garde rock, however limited and disparate, have one thing in common: the absence, or near absence, of women. Schumacher's book, for example, includes a massive 25-CD anthology of recordings. Only two women composers are included, Paola Lazo and Cecilia García-Gracia, adding up to barely 30 minutes of music. Where are the rest? I ask this question inspired by Sherrie Tucker's challenge to consider the striking absence of women in jazz historiography. "[A]sking 'Where are the women?'", Tucker posits, "is not only a useful question for uncovering 'lost' or 'hidden' histories of women's achievements, but it is a useful question for finding out how gender structures a field" (quoted in Piekut 2010, p. 314). This chapter picks up Tucker's challenge by asking, "Where are the women in Chilean experimental music?"

I seek, firstly, to address the vacuum that exists regarding women experimentalists, and, secondly, critically examine the masculinist networks that have
dominated several of these experimental music cultures. I will focus on two such cultures, the 1990s electroacoustic scene and the experimental popular music scene in the late dictatorship (1985-1990). I will examine historical documents and conduct interviews with participants. Among the questions I wish to answer are, what roles did gender and sexuality play in the self-definition of these networks? What forms of formal and informal mentoring exist in experimental music networks? And, perhaps most important, to what extent is the absence of women real, in the sense that women might have not participated in the creation of experimental music, or is it the result of historiographical oversight—what Dana Reason Myers has called "the myth of absence" of women experimentalists (2002)?

Bibliography
Schumacher, Federico. La Música Electroacústica En Chile (2005).