

JULIE DRISCOLL'S VOICE IN THE BLUES: A MODEL FOR AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC PERFORMANCE RESEARCH

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Autoethnography, Researcher Positionality, and Reflexivity

This article considers singer Julie Driscoll and her role within British blues. This article aims to give Driscoll her own space and to study her vocals from a practice-led and autoethnographic perspective. Here I specifically analyse songs 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?', 'Tramp', and 'Road to Cairo' from her album *Open* (1975) with Brian Auger's band Trinity, as they

highlight her quintessential sound as a singer in this period of blues-influenced repertoire.

Through vocal analysis, I will consider my own performance and the insights that I have developed by singing her song 'Road to Cairo' (see 'Road to Cairo' Performance Video). From this autoethnographic performance perspective, I reflect upon how studying and recreating Driscoll's vocals have influenced my own practice.

As Manning and Adams (2015) note, autoethnography brings a number of strengths to popular culture research. These include the use of 'personal experience to write alongside popular culture theories and texts, especially to show how personal experiences resemble or are informed by popular culture', and to 'create accessible research texts that can be understood by a variety of audiences', which are both important concepts to this research (199-200). Regarding this work, I feel it important to highlight Driscoll's story, vocal style, and how it has impacted my own practice. I also believe in the importance of offering alternative ways to access her music, and have done so through performance, examples of which have been drawn into this article.

An awareness of researcher positionality and reflexivity is central to the autoethnographic element of this article. Holmes (2020: 1-2) explains that researcher positionality is 'where the researcher is coming from', which is influenced by factors including, but not limited to: culture, religion, social class, gender, and race. Reflexivity is the focus on an individual's beliefs, and practices, and how they can influence research, as stated by Soedirgo and Glas (2020: 528). As a woman and a fan of 1960-70s blues music, the persistent lack of known women in this genre and period in the UK originally inspired me to undertake this research. Equally, I am a scholar, performer, and singing teacher, and I wanted the opportunity to unpick vocal styles of women that I have explored, as well as observing the impact of this process on my own vocal style. In terms of my vocal training, I was at first classically trained, but later developed a love for singing popular styles (particularly R&B, soul, gospel, blues, and blues-rock), which positions me in relation to engaging



'Road to Cairo' Performance Video.

with Driscoll's blues repertoire. Because I am looking at blues repertoire in this research, it is also important to note that my own practice has been influenced by the genre. Therefore, before I examine how Driscoll's vocals have influenced my own vocal style, it is important to firstly understand my vocal traits and influences before this research.

In terms of my 'sound', I argue that any sound produced by one's voice is ultimately specific to themselves, as singing is merely an extension of speech. I therefore had a 'toolbox' of vocal traits that were already specific to me before I began this research. The most notable and obvious trait is the 'huskiness' and 'fry' in my voice, which is apparent even in my speaking voice. This is something that I have always included, particularly in my chest voice, and is something that I can turn on and off when I am teaching or singing repertoire that this sound is unsuitable for. Other traits that I developed before this research are a neutral American accent, and a low resonating chest voice, a generally round and rich tone, partially because of my musical influences such as soul and gospel, and small areas of distortion which lean into my rock influences.

The fact that I am a singing teacher with various musical influences has impacted this research. For ease of reading, the small amount of repertoire discussed has been chosen carefully as examples that encapsulate Driscoll's 'quintessential style' of singing within her blues repertoire. Of course, there are vocal traits that are not mentioned in this article, but I have identified the ones that make her voice unique and recognisable. This automatically impacts upon the angle of this work, as there are elements of her vocal style that are excluded from analysis. As a performance researcher, I wanted to explore what vocally made Driscoll's voice special, whilst recreating sounds in ways that were comfortable and sustainable, rather than vocally perilous. This has also affected the outcome, as I put my vocal health first in the recreation of vocal choices. Some of this work has been achieved with great success, and some not. I have come to find ways to recreate some sounds very easily, and other techniques have been problematic.

In the following section, I will analyse Julie Driscoll's vocal style, alongside the process of performing, my vocal style, and insights in relation to my performance of 'Road to Cairo', and how I have been influenced by her. Importantly, the instrumental section of this song was pre-recorded due to COVID-19 restrictions and my vocals sang over the top later. This has impacted the performance which may be different to how I might have performed the song had it been live. I will also refer to video footage (available through QR codes and links) to highlight changes in my voice that have come about due to my engagement in this research project.

Artist Biography

Julie Driscoll, also known as Tippetts (1947-present), was not commonly associated with blues music, but rather – as Webb explains (2013: 136) – with the psychedelic-pop scene, 'space-age hairstyle and vinyl-black eyeliner' in the 1960-70s era of her career. However, by listening to her repertoire it is clear that several of her songs demonstrate blues influence, pulling away from the psychedelic and positioning her vocal repertoire more into the blues genre. She is most well-known for her cover of Bob Dylan's 'This Wheel's on Fire' which featured on the BBC television programme *Absolutely Fabulous*. Driscoll was performing professionally as a teenager, recording her first single 'Take Me By The Hand' aged fifteen, as well as playing nightclubs with her father's band (Heining 2016). Myers (2007: 90), writes that Driscoll was influenced by Nina Simone and singers signed to Tamla Motown.

Webb (2013: 136) explains that whilst working for Giorgio Gomelsky (The Yardbirds manager), she met Brian Auger when he was called in to play on one of her records. He asked her to join his band, Steampacket, after being impressed with her ability. They only stayed together for a year (1965-66) but toured with artists such as The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, and Elkie Brooks who were all themselves influenced by blues music (Rees and Crampton 1996: 852). After the

demise of Steampacket, Auger, the bassist, the drummer, and Driscoll became the Trinity, with Driscoll being their frontwoman, and were signed by Polydor Records (Coryell and Friedman 2000: 179). The Trinity had minor success in 1968, reaching the UK singles chart for sixteen weeks, peaking at number five with a cover of Bob Dylan's 'This Wheel's on Fire' (1968), and their blues-influenced cover album *Open* made the album chart in the same year. Although as a band they had little chart success following this, Ankeny notes that by 1969, Driscoll had recorded with Centipede and released her debut album *1969* (2019), and toured across Britain, Europe, and America with artists such as Led Zeppelin (see also Heining 2016).

Vocal Analysis

Tessitura and Melody

Like all of Driscoll's blues repertoire, 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?' utilises traditional blues scales and conjunct melody. This song, along with much of Driscoll's other blues repertoire, also makes use of ascending slides in the melody, all of which are standard traits that can be heard throughout blues music to varying degrees. However, in this song in particular the ascending slides are exaggerated and are the foundation of the melody in the verses, rather than used as stylistic 'add-ons' like in much other blues music where it is used as an inflection. All her melodies sit in Driscoll's chest [2] and mixed voice [3] range, with the omission of the head voice [4]. This means that all her melodies utilise the lower to mid-range of her voice, whilst completely abandoning the highest extremes in vocal range.

'Tramp' highlights several examples of where she broke the typical conjunct melodies that construct many of her songs (which is also stereotypical of blues) in an improvisatory way. For example, 'I own three Cadillacs' shows the use of a large ascending leap from her chest voice into her upper mixed voice on the word 'Cadillacs'. This is a technique that she uses in other songs, and was virtuosic and passionate, similar to the vocals of her male contemporaries in the blues-rock scene, such as Robert Plant in 'Since I've Been Loving You' (1970) for example. What is interesting about Julie Driscoll's use of melody is the false sense of security that she created, with mellow sounding, conjunct melodies that were expected by the listener, combined with hard-hitting disjunct, high, climactic notes that showed her complex identity as a performer.

In terms of my performance of 'Road to Cairo', it was important for me to capture this contrast in melody. The arrangement of the end of the song was going to be like the original. However, after playing it in rehearsal, I felt completely underwhelmed by the feel of the vocals in this section, as it did not have the hard-hitting contrast that I wanted. From my first listen to this song, I noticed the contrast in volume and approach to vocal choices throughout the song, and this was missing from my performance which lacked the contrast in this section. Instead, I envisioned a small amount of silence before speaking the line 'they're better thinking', which would contrast with the loud, cutting, 'dead' concluding section. As a band, we tried variations of this section (Clips 1, 2, and 3), that allowed me a little space to bring the vocals down and back up again.



Clip 1



Clip 2



Clip 3

Phrasing and Lyrics

Lyrically, Driscoll's material is sung in two ways. Firstly, and most prominently, the lyrics are based around 'typical' blues themes such as love, loss, money, sex, and general anguish. 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?' and 'Tramp' both fall into this category. 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?' contains lyrics such as 'ask him why, he don't love me no more', and is typical of the song which is about lost love. 'Tramp' also follows this lyric pattern in terms of themes. These lyrics consider independence, money, and material possessions, giving the impression of female empowerment, independence, and the conviction of Driscoll as a vocalist.

Secondly, other material such as 'Road to Cairo' unravels a story but this is a far less common trait within her work. The song is about the journey travelling to Cairo to see loved ones that the singer has not seen for a long time. As they get to Cairo, they cannot continue the journey, with the song finishing with adlibs on the line 'They're better thinking I'm dead'. This story-teller style is similar to traditional Delta blues and 1950s male skiffle. This was a cover of the David Ackles song and Driscoll was clearly drawn to it to sing it. This form was also gendered, reflecting traditionalist female ideals of singers in the 1960s, particularly in folk music. In folk, storytelling was common, with good examples offered by Buffy Sainte-Marie's 'Cod'ine' (1964) or Joan Baez's 'Farewell, Angelina' (1965), where women often opted for what Riley (2004: 36) calls the 'story-teller' or 'daydreamer' role. However, because the storyline does not revolve around – or even involve – a love interest, it is unusual and an anomaly in relation to both Driscoll's style, and the normative 1960s female singer styles.

Also important to Driscoll's lyrics is her use of accent. She mainly uses a neutral American accent (bordering on transatlantic) and stays faithful to the practice of having less of an identity through a 'lack' of regional British accent. Transatlantic, or neutral accents gave the impression of respectability and middle, or upper class, as Queen states (2015: 241), which was more fitting for the contemporaneous expectations of respectable women and helped her sound more polished. However, in the section of 'Road to Cairo', she sings 'I can't, I can't, walk down this road to Cairo'. She very clearly uses an English accent on the repeated word 'can't'. This suggests that she experienced conflicts in identity as a British performer singing blues, negotiating American musical influences in her performance. In terms of my own performance of 'Road to Cairo' and the sound that I like to adopt, I also opted for a neutral American accent, as can be heard throughout my cover of the song (see Road to Cairo Performance Video). This is due to my musical influences and training, but also because I prefer the sound of brighter vowels, compared to the darker vowels that an English accent produces.

The phrasing of Driscoll's blues repertoire is standard for the genre in terms of the utilisation of offbeat entries and pulled rhythms, and varying uses are heard in 'Tramp' and 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?'. However, 'Road to Cairo' is particularly fascinating as it takes the form a story, the use of these phrasing techniques is exaggerated when compared to other repertoires. Offbeat and syncopated entries are utilised throughout, with an example included on the entry of 'Hey thanks for stopping' half a beat after the second beat of the bar. This is used in combination with entries that are on the first beat of the bar, like with the entry of 'me, I've travelled some'. It makes the entries within the song non-uniform and gives an improvised feel, but also produces an element of solidarity with the chorus which continues with entries solely on the first beat of the bar. This shows that as much as Driscoll was confined to the tempo of the band, she had the ability and virtuosity as a singer to push and pull entries and to reintroduce uniformity when it was needed.

Pulled phrasing and speech-like rhythms are also used throughout this song, with the latter being more prominent. However, these speech-like rhythms do not feature as heavily in her other blues repertoire in this article, with phrase pulling being the main way in which phrasing is altered in 'Tramp' and 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?'. An example of phrase pulling can be heard on the lines 'ask him why he don't love me no more' in 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?' where the 'why' in particular moves through a particularly lazy-feeling melisma, but still ensures that the phrase ends in the correct place, so the tempo of the song is not altered. Speech-like rhythms can be heard throughout 'Road to Cairo' with an example at the beginning of the song on the words 'a fella told me'. Again, the use of controlled and phrase pulling combined with speech-like rhythms used in this song show Driscoll's virtuosity, not only as a singer, but also a storyteller.

In my performance of 'Road to Cairo', I felt that the storyteller aspect was crucial to the song. Because of this, I used Driscoll's ideas of pulled and speech-like rhythms throughout to keep the melody relaxed in places such as the entry of '*hey* could I *try* your cigar', where I linger on the italicised words. This allowed for space to approach other sections – such as the choruses – in a contrasting way. However, I wanted to push this idea slightly further than Driscoll with a more relaxed version of pitched speech in conversational sections of the song such as 'Hey, thanks for stopping'. This technique is like some musical theatre repertoire, where particular words are 'acted' rather than sang which helps to emote the music and bring it to life (as musical theatre is based upon storytelling).

Tone

Julie Driscoll uses a wide range of tone colours throughout her blues repertoire, which are often used in quick succession. There are two ways in which she changes her tone, firstly through vocal placement, and secondly the alteration of sound colour, which is discussed in more depth in *Decoration and Vocal Effects*. In terms of standard vocal placement, Driscoll uses her chest, mixed, and belt areas of her voice, with different songs containing different combinations of the three. Firstly, examples of her using her chest voice are included in 'Tramp'. The use of her chest voice in this song is stereotypical of the rest of her repertoire. It does not hold a particularly low resonance and sits very naturally with what appears to be a neutral larynx [5] for the most part. Her vocals in this area of her voice are not rich and exaggerated like other women that sang blues, such as Ella Fitzgerald, but seem more natural and understated, particularly when not singing climactic sections of repertoire. Her use of pitched speech, also encompassing her chest voice, can be heard in 'Road to Cairo' on the line 'hey, thanks for stopping'.

Other areas of her voice that she uses are her mixed voice, as in 'Why Am I Treated So Bad?', which is bright and can cut through an electrified band. Lastly, the use of her belt [6] and pharyngeal placement [7] are included in 'Road to Cairo' in quick succession at the end of the song. The line 'dead, they're better thinking that I'm dead' shows her belting until the word 'I'm' where she moves

to a pharyngeal placement. The sound turns from weighted and powerful, to tinny and cutting, which drives this climactic moment in the song forwards. The fact that all her voice apart from her head voice is used shows that her singing style in her blues influenced songs was virtuosic and impressive sounding. This can be heard particularly towards the end in 'Road to Cairo' where she commands and drives the band, cutting through the instruments with the use of twang in her high belt voice.

The use of the lower registers can be viewed as intimate, especially because of the incorporation of pitched speech. It draws the audience in and aids the storytelling aspect of the music, similar to Rings' (2019: 40-41) analysis and conclusions of pitched speech in Hank Williams' 'Luke the Drifter' (1954). The quick changes in tone qualities suggests a singer who knows their voice well and how to play with it in a virtuosic way. It is interesting that her tone matches that of contemporaneous men artists, such as Robert Plant, with the use of high powerful notes used to develop a raw, sexual approach to singing. Yet on the other hand, Driscoll also incorporated this 'expected' sound with light, 'pretty' sounding parts of her voice, developing a vocal style that drew upon both typical masculine and feminine styles of the time.

Decoration and Vocal Effects

One of the most striking and distinguishable factors about Driscoll's tone is her ever-changing creation of lighter and darker tones using an altered larynx position. 'Road to Cairo' illustrates the various changes in the tone of her voice that can be heard throughout her work in different combinations. Firstly, Driscoll begins the first verse in Sadolin's 'neutral mode' which is particularly prominent on the higher notes. This helps to ease the audience into the song, and leaves space for the more climactic material later. Secondly, she uses 'curbing mode', this again is used in combination with 'neutral mode' in the first verse but displays a much less breathy tone quality. Thirdly, she uses 'overdrive mode' at the most climactic part of the song, and particularly in the improvised-style outro. Throughout her repertoire, with 'Road to Cairo' possibly being the most intricate example of sound colour alteration, the changes between Sadolin's modes are quick and seamless which shows her virtuosity as a singer. Importantly, all Sadolin's modes can be used in conjunction with the chest, mixed, or head voice.

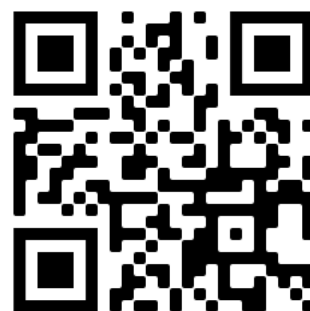
In terms of my own performance of 'Road to Cairo', I sang this song in the original key, due to where the verses sat in my voice and the final section being at the top of the mixed voice for a sustained period. This allowed me to challenge myself and learn how to correct any vocal placement issues. At first, I had difficulty with sustaining 'neutral mode' (Clip 4) in my mixed voice and not tiring my voice out in the end section of the song, with both problems affecting the tuning. This breathy sound in my mixed voice always tended to not sit forwards and cause slight tension when sustained for a long period of time, as can be heard in an old performance of 'Hard Time Killing Floor Blues' (Clip 5 00:21-00:33), as well as this excerpt of a rehearsal of 'Road to Cairo' (Clip 3). It is a combination that I did not have much experience of, other than in short excerpts, and this was always an abandoned area in my practice, partially because I did not sing much material that required it. I spent a lot of my personal practice doing exercises to strengthen this area, alongside watching and imitating artists such as Billie Eilish (Clip 6), who has essentially based a career upon this sound. I found that opening my mouth vertically, dropping my jaw, and visualising a forward placement encouraged the sound forwards and released tension, particularly on 'a/i' vowels, which are what I found especially problematic.



Clip 4



Clip 5



Clip 6

The fluidity in tone altering was specific to me before this research and is a large factor in what makes Driscoll's sound unique and recognisable. In terms of my own authenticity, this means that combining many sounds and techniques throughout my vocals is important to my style also. I have always been drawn to a rich sound, particularly in the chest voice (unlike Driscoll's which is neutrally placed), but it is not always practical from a vocal health or a sonic perspective. This is because this weighted chest-dominant sound can create tension if the larynx is too heavily weighted as the pitch ascends, pulling the chest voice up. Also, sonically, this way of singing is not as effective in cutting through the sound of electrified instruments as the resonance remains low. A brighter, tinnier sound is more effective in this scenario. As a vocalist I have the ability, through different techniques and choices, to match the tone of an instrument and melt into the sound or cut through it. An example of tone altering can be heard in the performance of *Road to Cairo* where I wanted to blend into the verses slightly, so used very breathy 'neutral mode' at a quiet volume, which contrasts with the last section of pharyngeal placement that cuts through the band ('Road to Cairo' Performance Video 03:38-04:17).

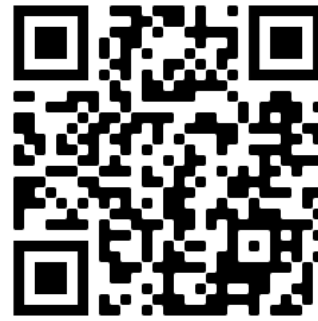
Driscoll's vocals also contain sparse elements of distortion that come in two forms: vocal tightening [8] and the use of grit. Importantly, these qualities are only included in repertoire that do not play with sound colour to the same extent as 'Road to Cairo' but contain a generally more powerful sound throughout (more 'overdrive' and 'curbing'), such as 'Tramp', which I use to discuss these choices. The lyrics '*Stetson hats*' are vocally tightened in verse one, as well as in the choruses on the words '*Mama was papa too*', and '*loving is all I know how to do*', with the italicised words highlighting which are tightened. Driscoll uses this to lean into particular words, with the italicised words being the ones tightened. Secondly, she uses grit and gritty onsets to notes in the second verse onwards when the brass section is added into the instrumentation. Vocal tightening alludes to the impression of difficulty in the vocal lines, whereas Driscoll's use of this effect contrasts this as she demonstrates so much skill with her voice. Due to Driscoll's ease throughout the registers, the vocal tightening comes across purely as a stylistic blues characteristic that she adds to make her tone sound a little rougher at times, which is in line with traditional masculine vocal traits in the blues-rock scene at the time.

The final section of 'Road to Cairo' contains 'overdrive mode' combined with mixed voice in Driscoll's recording. This was challenging to get right in my own performance of the song, particularly towards the end where I also incorporated vocal tightening; a combination that I wanted to learn. When trying to emulate it with the band in rehearsals, I found myself burnt out quickly which suggested that I was not executing the technique in a healthy manner. Studying past performances of various repertoire highlighted that it was an area of my voice that I thought I had mastered at the time. However, upon reflection this was something that I needed to adjust so that

it was sustainable, as it was not for prolonged periods of time. I always approached this technique by compressing air, which I have achieved successfully for really short periods of time, like in an old cover of 'I Want You' by The Beatles ('I Want You' MA Video 03:37-03:40). However, when an extended period of this technique was required, I noticed that I was singing with too much vocal cord tension as heard in a previous performance of 'Fool For My Stockings' by ZZ Top ('Fool For My Stockings' MA Video 03:05-03:09).



'I Want You' MA Video



'Fool For Your Stockings' MA Video

The way to healthily create vocal compression is to close the glottic valve, constricting the air flow, which creates a distorted sound and can be altered to create varying levels of distortion. It essentially forces you to increase your air pressure (not to be confused with air flow). This can be likened to the sound that you make if you were to pick something heavy up and make a '*huu!*' sound. With this technique, it was important to sing the phrase clean before trying to distort, with the distortion being a gradual process and slowly pushed further and further. In the clip of 'Oh Darling!' by The Beatles ('Oh Darling!' Clip), I show an example of sustainable vocal compression. Other methods of distortion were also useful for this project, such as vocal fry [9]. A common misconception is that vocal fry, which is a creaky sound created by relaxed vocal cords and small amount of airflow, is the 'lowest register of the voice', when in fact you can fry throughout your voice (Clip 7). By elongating the fry sound through the mixed voice territory, you can physically feel the distortion in the mask area. This is not a technique heard commonly in Driscoll's repertoire; however, this is something that was important to me and my vocal style.



'Oh Darling!' Clip



: Clip 7

Influence on My Practice

In terms of looking at how Driscoll's vocal choices have influenced my performance of 'Road to Cairo' and my practice away from this research, it is important to remember the vocal traits that were already specific to my singing style before, such as the American accent, slight huskiness, or light distortion, and a low resonating chest voice. I have certainly found new elements of my voice that I now think are authentic to my style, such as 'neutral mode' in the mixed voice since studying Driscoll's vocal choices as a singer. Techniques such as this have allowed me to push the idea of contrast in my voice further, which I now realise is a fundamental trait to my singing style. It is particularly evident when singing repertoire with a full band, which can be heard in the performance video of 'Road to Cairo', but also away from this research in this cover of 'Oh Darling!'. With stripped-back material, it feels more natural to have less contrast and a more mellow vocal style, which can be heard in a cover of 'Call Out My Name' by The Weeknd. In the case of stripped back material, it does not seem authentic for me to utilise extremes of distortion. However, I still use vocal fry onsets to keep elements of the rough texture to my voice.



'Call Out My Name' Video



'Penicillin Blues' MA Video

Comparing an old performance video of Maggie Bell's 'Penicillin Blues' (2016, see 'Penicillin Blues' MA Video), and this performance of 'Road to Cairo' from this research project ('Road to Cairo' Performance Video), I notice many differences in my voice. Firstly, I have much more control of my voice generally, and there are clearly more thought-out choices. My 'neutral mode' in the mixed voice is much better placed, and the changes between this technique and others is more seamless. My gritty and vocal fry onsets are still there, but I also use sustained moments of vocal compression. I also have much rounder, lower resonance to my voice throughout when I choose it, which contrasts with the 'twangy' pharyngeal placement, and utilise far more contrasting tones in quick succession now as a singer. When thinking about my authenticity as a singer, I speak with an English accent, so I would also like to further explore the use of pharyngeal placement combined with an English accent in the future. I think that the option of pharyngeal placement is important to my sound but would like to see whether it is possible to achieve the same bright tone – that is achieved with an American or transatlantic accent – when using an English accent.

Conclusion

There are many answers as to 'what made Julie Driscoll's voice unique'. Her vocals encompassed blues-influenced melodies in the chest and mixed voice, but in the extremes of the upper mixed she utilised a pharyngeal placement, which helped to cut through the sound of that band. She

utilised Sadolin's 'neutral', 'curbing', and 'overdrive' modes, all of which offered varying levels of metallic qualities to her tone, as well as vocal tightening. Overall, I deem her lyrics less important compared to other factors in what made her voice unique, as some of her songs were covers. However, the way that she utilised lyrics was interesting. Pitched speech, alongside pulled phrasing particularly in story-telling pieces helped to draw the listener in and guide the audience through the song.

Driscoll's individual techniques that she used in her voice (when isolated) were common to hear throughout many vocals of the time in the blues genre. However, the autoethnographic element to this research has highlighted the ways in which she combined them, and the idea of quick succession between vocal extremes. This is what I argue as fundamentally the most important and defining feature of her style, and the most influential factor of her style in my own practice. Because of this method of research, it has made me reflect on my own vocal choices both before and after this research, as well as understanding my own authenticity as a singer.

Chloë Fenech is a current PhD student at The University of Huddersfield, singing teacher and working musician. Her research includes: the influence of the Delta blues on 1960-70s blues rock vocals, and currently, the vocal styles of the unknown female British blues singers of the 1950-70s. She is one of the only people doing practice-led and auto-ethnographic work in blues music currently, with her focus being on women. She received a first in her undergraduate degree and was a scholarship student for both her MA and PhD at the University of Huddersfield. She is vocally trained both classically and in popular styles but is always looking to learn new weird and wonderful ways of using her voice.

Endnotes

1. Sadolin's modes of the voice (2000):

Importantly, Sadolin's 'neutral', 'curbing', 'overdrive' and 'edge' modes are vocal effects that can be used in conjunction with registers of the voice.

1. Neutral mode is low in volume and with a soft, airy tone, non-metallic (p.88).

2. Curbing mode is medium volume and half metallic (p.96-99).

3. Overdrive mode is loud, shouty and fully metallic (p.106-107).

4. Edge mode is loud, scream-like and fully metallic, and contains a lot of 'twang' to achieve the sound healthily (see 'belting') (p.116-117).

2. Chest voice It is the richest and warmest tonally and the sound resonates in the chest or mouth cavity. Vocal cords become shorter and thicker.

3. Mixed voice is a blend of chest voice and head voice and resonates in the 'mask' area of the voice, which is around the cheeks, nose and under the eyes; it creates a more 'whiney' tone because of the placement. Vocal cords begin to elongate and thin.

4. Head voice is one of the parts of the voice that sits in the head resonator. It is bright, round and 'pingy' and had a much more piercing tone than the mixed or chest voice. It is produced with fully connected vocal cords. The vocal cords become even longer and thinner here than in mixed voice (this is like falsetto which is 'airier' in sound and only utilises partial cord closure).

5. The larynx is the part of the vocal apparatus that is partially responsible for tone. It moves up and down in response to pitch. In contemporary singing, it is common practice to adopt a 'low larynx' position to create a full, round tone; this is commonly thought of as the 'healthiest approach' to singing.

6. Belting is a loud sound that utilises the short, thick vocal cords, decreased breath pressure, a narrowed epiglottic funnel, and a slightly raised and tilted larynx, and increased intercostal pressure.
7. Pharyngeal placement involves the creation of wide pharynx position (the pharynx is at the back of the throat near where the back of the tongue lies and behind the nasal cavity). This is achieved by placing the back of the tongue close to the pharyngeal wall, by lifting of the cheeks and zygomatic muscles. The resulting sound is nasal and bright.
8. Vocal tightening is a vocal effect that is generally avoided in current vocal tuition, and involves a tightening of the throat muscles, giving a strained sound. However, this is something that can be done safely by trained singers.
9. Vocal fry has crackly, or creaky qualities, and can be achieved throughout the vocal range. It is caused through loosening and relaxation of the vocal cords whilst a steady flow of air moves through them, creating irregular cord vibrations.

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