**After A Beating: Drummers’ Navigation of Playing-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders By: Jennie Seaborn**

***Background:*** As a professional drummer, I struggled with the playing-related musculoskeletal disorder (PRMD) De Quervain’s tenosynovitis of the wrist, which hindered my ability to play drum kit during my final year of Bachelor of Music study, and disrupted my career as a performer and drum kit instructor. I sought out professional medical care, which was helpful, but I knew that these professionals would have limited knowledge about the specifics of drumming and its career demands. Unfortunately, I struggled to locate information on the experiences of drummers affected by PRMDs; consequently, I lacked models on which to base my navigation of injury. Most research studies on PRMDs among musicians focus on statistics, medical perspectives, assessing injury risk, and anatomy-based prevention and treatment methods. By contrast, this ethnographic study aims to provide insight towards the lived experiences of drummers navigating PRMDs, and thus fill a gap in our understanding. My research asks: How do professional drummers approach PRMD recovery and prevention? What unique challenges do they face while navigating PRMDs, and do they have methods of overcoming such challenges? Are there recovery and prevention practices that they find practical and effective?

***Method:*** Data derives from semi-structured depth interviews with ten professional drum kit players with a current or past history of PRMDs. Participants display diversity through musical genre, age, and gender. Following the interview process, anonymized data was coded for common themes. In addition to a research paper, findings are discussed in a video available on YouTube.

***Findings:*** Most participants found that some form of stretching or exercise was an effective treatment when injured, and identified types of medicines/drugs as either ineffective, or something to be avoided. Noticeably, all participants made some form of changes related to drumming and/or drum equipment in order to prevent further injury, but hesitancy towards doing an instrumental warm-up and stretching prior to drumming is common. Results suggest that trial and error often occurs when seeking effective professional assistance for a PRMD. Participants found that seeking help from medical general practitioners was either not fully effective or ineffective. In fact, some participants equated the needs of drummers to those of athletes, asserting that drumming PRMD risks, resources, prevention, treatment, and care should be comparable to sports medicine. Drumming-related factors highlighted by more than one participant relate to: improper posture, fast speed, extreme volumes, increase in amount of playing, improper technique, repetitive motion/overuse, vibration, positioning of drum kit components, using heavy drumsticks, and sitting for long periods of time. Modifications include changes to drumming technique (including bodily changes), drum kits and drum sticks, drum kit transportation methods, as well as musical changes. The participants encountered various challenges while navigating PRMDs, resulting in emotional, psychological, cultural, and economic impacts. Feelings of anxiety and frustration were common, and detachment from drumming enabled some participants to combat these emotional challenges. Positive outcomes of PRMDs among participants include increased awareness towards the potential for injury while drumming, increased bodily awareness, and improved technique or facility playing drums. The theme of drumming education emerged. Drum kit instructors often face challenges when teaching drum lessons injured, but they can play a role in supporting injury prevention and navigation among their students. Professional drummers who have experienced a PRMD can also use their knowledge to educate other drummers about PRMD treatment and prevention. Ultimately, knowledge gained from this research can support successful PRMD management and prevention among drummers and other key figures in recovery and prevention. Through exploring lived experience, it produces valuable insights about drumming PRMDs that should be taken into account alongside medical perspectives.