Popular Music (2006) Volume 25/1. Copyright © 2006 Cambridge University Press, pp. 131–143
Printed in the United Kingdom

Reviews

***Rockin' Las Américas: The Global Politics of Rock in Latin/o America*. Edited by Deborah Pacini Hernandez, Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste and Eric Zolov. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004. xii+420 pp. ISBN 0 8229 5841 4 (paper)**
doi: 10.1017/S0261143006210778

The editors of this fine collection of essays should be commended for their decision to narrow the scope of the volume to 'rock'. Previous collections on popular music in Latin America, as much as they are illuminating, are mostly surveys of a wide range of styles, genres and related socio-cultural phenomena that do not have much social and cultural common ground to them, except for being created in that part of the world. This book concentrates on a sample of the music cultures that are sometimes referred to collectively as *rock en español* or *latin alternative.* These music cultures and genres, in other words, are connected by very specific thematic threads and theoretical issues.

One thing the editors rightly emphasise in their excellent lengthy introduction, is that for Latin Americans, as elsewhere in the world, 'rock' is often an umbrella term that includes 'all music that is mass-mediated, self-consciously ''contemporary'', makes at least some use of electric or electronic instrumentation, is associated primarily (but not exclusively) with youth, and whose aesthetics are hybrid, that is, reflecting multiple cultural sources' (p. 5). This assertion voices the fact that in many parts of the world – contrary to recent attempts to differentiate 'rock' from hip-hop and electronica within Anglo-American discourse – 'rock' is indeed a broad cultural formation (or template, as it is called here) whose meaning is derived from its complex and ambiguous relationship with traditional, dominant national culture. 'Rock', in other words, is all that 'new', late modern, electric and electronic music stigmatised and excluded because of its alleged embodiment of cultural imperialism (in the eyes of the left) or cultural deterioration (in the eyes of the right).

The essays collected here thus document moments, events, genres, periods and other phenomena of rock in different Latin American countries, and narrate them along issues of national identity. Namely, how does rock music and culture challenge existing notions of national music, the exclusion and marginalisation of certain forms of rock from national rock histories (like female rock in Mexico or Brazilian soul music), and how rock cultures, successfully or not, struggle for national legitimacy. About half the studies do this by examining historical cases. These include the chapters on rock in Cuba (by Deborah Pacini Hernandez and Reebee Garofalo), Brazilian soul (by Bryan McCann), Uruguayan rock (Abril Trigo), and the Guatemalan band Alux Nahual (by Paulo Alvarado). Others concentrate on recent phenomena, like Boricua rock (in Puerto Rico, by Jorge Arévalo Mateus), Los Angeles' latino female *punkeras* (by Michelle Habell-Pallán), Colombian rock and its reception in the US (by Héctor D. Fernández L'Hoeste), and Chilean rock (by Walesca Pino-Ojeda). With three historical studies (Eric Zolov about *La Onda Chicana*; Julia

Palacios and Tere Estrada on early women rockers; Héctor Castillo Berthier on youth *bandas*) and one dealing with the current scene of *nortec* in Tijuana (by Susana Asensio), I find Mexico to be over represented in this volume. Especially since rich and influential rock cultures like those of Argentina and Chile have only one chapter each.

At their core, all these essays are about recognition. As George Yúdice writes in the Afterward, all these essays

> seek recognition for musical expressions that were repressed and historically remain overlooked. . . . This will to provide recognition is also consistent with the premise that something about these expressions is or was transgressive, the very reason for their repression or exclusion. Transgression here is a contestation of normative national identities promoted by Latin American elites . . . (p. 347)

But the quest for recognition also means being accepted as legitimate expressions of national culture. For this end, national rock cultures have to assess their specificity and uniqueness *vis-à-vis* Anglo-American rock. Thus, while most essays document the struggle of specific genres to be heard and make a difference, few confront what seems to be one of the most difficult questions in this regard. Namely, what makes the rock music of a given country locally unique? In other words, what is Mexican about rock made in Mexico, or what is specifically Chilean about rock made in Chile? Two articles that confront this question are the one on Brazilian rock (aka *BRock*; by Martha Tupinambá De Ulhôa) and the one on the 1990s *rock chabón* phenomenon in Argentina (by Pablo Semán, Pablo Vila and Cecilia Benedetti). Ulhôa's approach is empirical. Her research combines semiotics and reception studies. She surveys fans of Brazilian rock, asking them what they see as 'Brazilian' in the locally made rock music. In addition, she analyses music and lyrics of salient songs. Her conclusion as to what is 'Brazilian' about *BRock* is not definitive, but her research does show a way of dealing with this intricate question.

Another angle on national uniqueness is offered in the chapter on Argentina's *rock chabón.* This wave within Argentinean rock of the 1990s expresses, according to the authors, both departure from and continuity within the long tradition of *rock nacional* in this country. Keeping the oppositional heritage of earlier rockers, *rock chabón* nevertheless transforms it from a middle-class individualised form of critique into a lower-sector, collective and nationalistic opposition against current conditions in Argentina. It is thus made clear that the 'Argentineaness' of local rock resides in its own logic of development, in the specificity of its stylistic genealogy, which by the 1990s has decoupled itself from the stylistic dictates of Anglo-American rock.

In the end, the importance of this book resides not only in its revealing documentation and analysis of *rock en español*, but in its implicit call for a rewriting of rock history as a global phenomenon from the outset; that is, no more an understanding of 'rock' as a cultural form that has been first Anglo-American and then spread to the rest of the world, but a consideration of 'rock' as a hierarchical global cultural form, whose centres of power are of course Anglo-American, but whose presence has been experienced in many parts of the world practically from its very early moments.

Motti Regev

The Open University of Israel

***Musical Theater and American Culture*. By David Walsh and Len Platt. Westport, CT & London: Praeger, 2003. 200 pp. ISBN 0 275 98057 X (hardcover)**
doi:10.1017/S0261143006220774

Over the past two decades, *Popular Music* has published few articles on the musical. There is Charles Hamm on Irving Berlin in 13/2 (1994) and Jonathan Burston's piece on the 'megamusical' from 17/2 in 1998. But as David Horn noted in his own piece on Porgy and Bess, also in 13/2, 'the musical theatre has been almost entirely ignored by popular music scholarship' (p. 165). It is for this reason that we should welcome David Walsh and Len Platt's study, *Musical Theater and American Culture*.

Their book is an interesting attempt to link the history of the musical to its wider social, political and occasionally economic context. And if the authors' argument is not always persuasive, they do raise intriguing questions. Should we, for example, write the history of the musical in the same way that we might write the history of other musical forms or genres? More generally, how should we connect the textual and contextual elements of the story; how should macro-economic change be linked to micro-cultural patterns and processes?

Walsh and Platt offer an answer to both questions in their section on 'How to Study the Musical' (pp. 10–12). For them, the musical, 'like all popular texts and works of art', is inextricably and reflexively bound up with 'the cultural and social structures of society' (pp. 10–11). They see the musical as part of the articulation of changing American identities, as a vehicle for the 'American Dream' and the ideologies that lurk within it. They do not, though, offer a systematic theory or model for making these connections. Instead, they present their work as an interpretation of history, rather than a detailed and annotated version of it.

They begin by tracing the emergence of the musical by identifying the cultural forms that, they say, combined to create or influence it. These progenitors include the ballad opera and burlesque, the minstrel show and operetta, the revue and vaudeville. In tracing these antecedents, Walsh and Platt are able to highlight the stylistic patterns and inheritances of the modern musical. Their history looks – you might say – at the internal processes of replication and mutation. It does not, for the most part, look to external environmental factors, and it does not offer a broader theory of the changes that would connect the different musical formations.

If the story of the emergence of the musical concentrates on the local connections, then its subsequent story is painted onto a much broader canvas. The music becomes the product of national and global trends and experiences. So, for example, an extended political history of McCarthyism and the Cold War (and the rhetoric of the 'end of ideology' that accompanied it) ends with the claim that musicals like *Oklahoma* were, 'in a whole series of ways, a complex and reflexive engagement with this end-of-ideology Americanism in a mainly celebratory fashion, reconciling the liberal version of social engineering with the conservatism quietist manifestation of this ideology' (p. 100). This is quite a weight of historical significance to lay upon 'Oh, What a Beautiful Morning' and 'The Surrey with the Fringe on Top'. Or rather, it begs questions about which musicals are singled out to bear this history and about how political experience (and the interpretation given of it) is articulated in song and dance.

This is not to deny the importance of context, but to ask about how text and context connect. My complaint is that the broad sweep of political and social change is presented as a prelude to the particular musicals, rather than as part of them. And

when the musicals are themselves discussed, they are treated almost as works of political theory. '*Oklahoma*, for instance', write Walsh and Platt, 'is wedded to and celebrates the ideology and politics of liberal democracy, where differences of political interest can be reconciled through cooperation and coexistence rather than resolved through conflict' (p. 104). This might be said of the political science of Nelson Polsby and Robert Dahl, but is it true for the words and music of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein? Walsh and Platt write of *West Side Story* as a manifesto for American liberalism, or of *Chicago* as 'exposing the ideology and myth of the American Dream' (p. 129), the latter being deconstructed subsequently in the musicals of Stephen Sondheim.

It would be wrong to undervalue the task that Walsh and Platt set themselves. Connecting text and context is immensely difficult. There are the questions of which text (which musical) and which context (what national and local events, interpreted how)? While Walsh and Platt defend their answer as just one interpretation, it would have been interesting to see them identifying musicals and events that did not fit their account, that stood as anomalies or irregularities to their narrative. Nonetheless, this remains a valuable contribution to a rarely tended field.

John Street

University of East Anglia

***Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly: Country Music's Struggle for Respectability, 1939–1954.* By Jeffrey J. Lange. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004. 336 pp. ISBN 0-8203-2622-4 (cloth), ISBN 0-8203-2623-2 (paper)**
doi:10.1017/S0261143006230770

Country music, like most musical genres, is simultaneously cultural form and commercial product. But country music's chronic discomfort with its commercial underpinnings makes it an especially interesting musical genre for popular music scholars. When country music struggles with generic change for commercial purposes, it foregrounds, for fans, listeners and scholars, why those struggles matter.

Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly considers, in admirable and extensive detail, the various performers and genres that dominated American country music from 1939 until 1954. It offers outsiders to country music a clear description of six subcategories of country music, as well as documentation of the traits and fortunes of each of these categories. It gives biographical details of key performers, and stylistic descriptions of their most characteristic songs. Overall, Jeffrey J. Lange's book recounts a history of recorded songs, contextualised in changing patterns of performance, against a loosely sketched historical background, during a fascinating period of development in the music industry as a whole, as well as the country music business in particular.

Lange discusses the life and times of significant performers in each subcategory, with a total of over fifty performers analysed. In his account of the progressive genre, he describes the careers and key songs of such figures as Roy Acuff, Bill Monroe, and the Shelton Brothers; for Western swing performers like Spade Cooley, Hank Thompson, and Bob Wills; for the postwar traditional genre he includes, among others, Flatt and Scruggs, Bill Monroe, and Molly O'Day; in the honky-tonk genre performers like Lefty Frizzell,, Ernest Tubb, and Hank Williams; for country pop

figures like Eddy Arnold, Red Foley, and Hank Snow; and for country blues the Delmore Brothers, Moon Mullican, and Elvis Presley.

The book originated as a dissertation; it is an impressive compilation of biographical and stylistic details, organised into a period of what he calls nationalisation (before WWII) and then modernisation (after WWII until the rise of rock 'n' roll). Lange says in his preface that he listened to thousands of records, read fifteen years worth of trade magazines, and unearthed countless primary and secondary sources. He had the benefit of tutelage by an extraordinary group of country music scholar-aficionados that were at the Country Music Foundation in the mid 1990s: Ronnie Pugh, John Rumble, Alan Stoker, and Bob Pinson. Guided by this generous group, the excellent CMF collection, and his own apparent indefatigability, he has written an account that gives readers concrete and specific access to a fascinating period of performers, styles, and generic shifts. For country music fans, this book will offer an especially useful overview of often unacknowledged precursors to alt-country.

But for popular music scholars, Lange's book unintentionally offers a cautionary tale about the challenges we encounter when trying to connect social, historical and cultural processes. Lange argues as a historian, but says that country music 'represented more than just a historical document of the times; it represented a vehicle for survival, both on the individual and collective scale'. He describes how he came to see the book as being about 'people turning to their families, their friends, and their faith as a means to persevering in the face of adversity'. In this way, he wants his historical description of generic music to somehow explain country music's meaning for people. He wants to use biography and history to explain how and why country music meant so much to its audiences during the period. Historical descriptive analysis goes a long way toward understanding country music's characteristics as a commodity, but doesn't go very far in understanding country music's meanings as a cultural form. Understanding country as a 'vehicle for survival', as well as acknowledging the realities of a 'struggle for respectability' described in his book title, requires analyses of lyrics and audiences, both of which are crucial absences in his account.

The strength and value of this book is its weaving together of historical and geographical details to frame the biographies of performers and the descriptions of songs. Lange effectively traces key figures and moments as country music moved from a regionally identified novelty genre to a nationally recognised and established musical form. He connects this emergence to demographic changes, and describes such developments as the rise of package tours, various radio barn dances, the Hollywood western, recording industry challenges, as well as forces like urbanisation, industrialisation, migration and modernisation. But Lange ends up ascribing fluctuations in the generic mix of country music to changes in audience taste, somehow linked to changes in society. This assumes that mass-mediated genres like country music represent what people actually like and want, filtered through various production processes. It leads to a *post hoc* ascription of cultural change reflecting social change. But society and culture are produced by people, just as people are produced by culture and society.

Explaining cultural change, in popular music as well as other cultural forms, is, alas, much more complicated than connecting content with social forces. So is explaining changing audience tastes. The book's weakest sections are when Lange tries to move from the 'how' to the 'why' of generic changes. He has made the

surprising choice to avoid analysing lyrics, even while acknowledging in his introduction the centrality of lyrics to country music's perceived authenticity, as well as meaning to the audience. He makes sweeping claims about the ways that country music (anthropomorphised) and country music's audiences (unanalysed) were struggling to 'adapt to cultural developments while retaining . . . authenticity'. Both the music and the music's fans sought respectability and acceptance, he says again and again, without showing us how or why the struggle for legitimacy explains changes in country music, or why those changes mattered to country music fans.

These are questions I have long struggled over, too. It is very difficult, but fascinating, to find ways to explain generic boundaries and generic changes, as well as the meanings of those changes to fans of particular styles. The key for all popular music scholars may be for us to acknowledge the limits of what we can explain, from what we've studied. In cultural analysis, study of the constraints of production, or the traits of content, or the biographies of performers, or the sales of records, or the demographics of the audience, can't really explain why genres change, or why genre changes matter.

Lange's book is premised on country music's long (and still-continuing) struggle for legitimacy. This is an important premise, because the contradictory desire to shed and valorise the hayseed stigma is key to understanding why country music retains generic coherence. In spite of the variety and flux that Lange analyses in such detail, somehow country stays country. Why? And why do subgenres continue to develop and shift? *Smile When You Call Me A Hillbilly* offers an excellent descriptive account of subgeneric variety, one that can inform subsequent explorations of generic change that (I hope) will continue to interest music scholars for years to come.

Joli Jensen

University of Tulsa, USA

***Madonna's Drowned Worlds: New Approaches to her Cultural Transformations, 1983–2003.* Edited by Santiago Fouz-Hernández and Freya Jarman-Ivens. Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2004. 223 pp. ISBN 0754633713 (hardback), ISBN 0754633721 (paperback)**

doi: 10.1017/S0261143006240777

Academic and media interest in Madonna, as highlighted in the introductory chapter to this book, appear to have come together within three major resurgences over the past decade; the post-*Sex* and *Erotica* 'backlash' of 1993/4, the cleaned-up 'earth mother' period of *Evita* and *Ray of Light* and, most recently, the post-2000 transformation into 'Veronica Electronica', when two new albums and sell-out world tours again returned her to our attention. Now twenty years into her career, any analysis of her work is going to be a substantial undertaking, with the task of just reading everything written about her described in one 1993 text as 'mapping the vastness of the cosmos'. The backgrounds of the contributors to this book serve to confirm this, including those working in popular culture, musicology, media studies, marketing and Spanish cinema. The editors have, however, managed to filter this vastness into themes which have been consistent throughout her career; gender, sexuality and ethnicity, and have brought analysis in these areas up to date, unpacking the layers of her work from composition, instrumentation, lyrics and vocals to video images, stage production

and marketing. The questions which are perhaps those most often posed at the Madonna enthusiast, academic and fan alike, are returned to often; is she 'real' or 'fake'? Is there depth and meaning in her work? Does her changing of collaborators and influences necessarily make her a 'sub-cultural tourist'?

The first section of the book, entitled 'The Girlie Show', looks into gender identities, an area recognised by the editors as the most covered in previous academic writings on Madonna. What sets this apart, however (and this applies to the whole of the book), is the emphasis on her music. Stan Hawkins' opening chapter, for example, looks in detail at her musical production and how it contributes to her 'camp pop', focusing on a thorough analysis of the song *Music.* A following chapter then discusses the imagery contained in her music videos, exploring aspects such as girlhood, femininity and androgyny.

Section two, 'Post-Virgin', then examines sexual identities in her work, with Keith E. Clifton's discussion of her vocal 'metamorphosis' one of the most accessible chapters of the book. With a background of her status as gay icon, Clifton charts the development over her career of what Simon Frith has called a 'thin instrument', concluding that, in answer to the 'depth' question, she is 'anything but one-dimensional' (p. 56).

The most substantial section of the book is 'Drowned Worlds', looking into ethnic identities and their influence on her work and image, covering the India-inspired *Ray of Light*, the Japanese-themed *Drowned World* tour and her relationship with Hispanic culture, perhaps the most consistent influence throughout her career. A particularly enjoyable chapter here is Sean Albiez's 'The day the music died laughing: Madonna and country', which explores Madonna's own ethnicity through her relationship with American, Italian and, most recently, British culture. The highlights of this chapter include an analysis of the cowboy imagery used in the *Music* period and an interesting discussion of her version of *American Pie*, widely acknowledged as a strange choice of song for her because of its 'golden age of America' theme, and further complicated by a video containing what appear to be mixed messages. The confusingly titled most recent album *American Life* is also examined, Albiez's view that it 'promised a critique of contemporary America but merely pronounced her misgivings with her (celebrity) life' (p. 123) echoing that of many of her followers.

The final section, 'Blond Ambition', focuses on the role of Madonna as a celebrity in consumer culture, beginning with David Gauntlett's 'Madonna's Daughters', which examines her influence on the following generation of female artists with particular reference to popular feminism, sexuality and changing identities. The final chapter 'Consuming Madonna Then and Now' gives an especially interesting case analysis of how consumers have responded to Madonna. Based upon survey responses of attitudes towards her videos and various website and conference discussions, Lisa Peñaloza reveals what Madonna means to her consumers and how the messages and themes of her work are used in their lives.

I have concentrated here on the chapters which, as a music psychologist, were of most interest to myself. However, I would agree with the preface to the book that the variety of issues discussed in the text should make it a valuable and up-to-date resource with quite a wide audience.

Laura Mitchell

Glasgow Caledonian University

https://doi.org/10.1017/S026114300626077X Published online by Cambridge University Press

***Making Beats: the Art of Sample-Based Hip-Hop*. By Joseph G. Schloss. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004. 226 pp. ISBN 0819566950 (cloth), ISBN 0819566969 (paperback)**
doi: 10.1017/S0261143006250773

Joseph Schloss's *Making Beats* is the first scholarly study to explain, in great detail, how the beats that make up the sonic backdrops for hip-hop music are conceived and put together. It is not the scope of his book to explain the lyrics, sung or rapped, that so often accompany these beats. Instead, he focuses on 'beats' as 'musical collages composed of brief segments of recorded sound' (p. 2). Based on ten years of work in the field, *Making Beats* is a strong contribution to the field of hip-hop scholarship.

Making Beats is, first and foremost, an ethnography. It is largely based on interviews the author conducted with deejays, emcees, and producers of hip-hop beats between 1998 and 2003, as well as on his own personal experiences moving within the hip-hop community. In the Introduction, Schloss lists the benefits of the ethnographic aspects of his work, among which is exploiting the vast scholarly developments in the field of anthropology over the past thirty years. He says: 'Critiques of reflexivity, the abstraction of human activity, and the idea of a discrete and bounded ''field'' are largely absent from writings on popular music because they are simply not relevant to the theoretical approach of most popular music scholars. Ethnography can bring these issues into the discourse' (p. 7). He also details potential shortcomings in his research: on the one hand he is observing the hip-hop community in the field, collecting data for an academic study, while on the other he is an active participant within that same hip-hop community. For example, he once found himself in a club at which members of his dissertation committee, interviewees, and DJs were all in attendance, blurring the line between academia and the field. Insofar as these two worlds often occupied one and the same space in this study, Schloss rightly points out that this is problematic in trying to maintain a separation between the two. He mentions how, because the distinction is obfuscated, the separation can only be described as an 'ideological' one, clearly creating problems of objectivity.

Schloss also discusses his own ethnicity (Jewish) in relation to the all-pervasive African-American element of this music. Though one cannot help but be sympathetic to his situation as a non-African-American researching an African-American music, one also wonders if much of this material justifying this position could perhaps have been left out altogether. In all likelihood, nothing would have been lost in doing so. The following simple point sums up succinctly his prolix discussion on the ethnic aspect of making beats: '[T]he rules of hip-hop are African American, but one need not be African American to understand or follow them' (p. 10). Nevertheless, one cannot help but admire the academic rigour and perseverance that are at the foundation of his work.

There are no musical transcriptions in *Making Beats.* Schloss defends this by emphasising the ethnographic as opposed to the musicological purpose of the book. In addition he cites the three major works in rap scholarship that deal with this latter aspect and adds that his audience is different, that is, not one trained in Western musicology.[1]

Aside from the level of specificity of musical transcriptions, the general value of these transcriptions, and the specific deficiencies therein, he discusses ethical implications for musical transcriptions of hip-hop. This touches on one of the larger

issues for Schloss in *Making Beats*: ethics within the hip-hop community. The theme of ethics is ubiquitous in this book, and it is clear that there is an unwritten code of ethics by which all hip-hop practitioners live that is binding and of paramount significance.

The bulk of this book is about the producers of hip-hop soundtracks, that is, the studio artists who compile the beats. But before Schloss deals with them in depth (in chapters 4–6), he attends to a few other matters, namely, the history of making beats (chapter 2) and 'live instruments versus samples' (chapter 3). These two themes are closely related in that the history of hip-hop sampling grew out of a tradition of funk that was based in performances on live instruments. The early songs of the Sugar Hill Gang exemplify such performances. However, Schloss argues that there was a crucial moment when sampling became the norm and the producers who made the beats at the studio began to shun live instruments. Of course, what is more important to the history of sampling is the emergence of the deejay or turntablist. Schloss shows a logical and exhaustive chronology of how early deejays became the first producers. He makes the important point that all producers are deejays, but not all deejays are producers.

All good producers must have material from which to sample their beats. This material is obtained from old LPs, that is, vinyl records. The process of obtaining these records is called 'digging in the crates' (since so many of these old LPs are literally contained in crates). Schloss claims that this is a rite of passage for all producers, and that in many ways it defines what kind of musician they will be. Again, his treatment of this topic is thorough, incorporating many quotations from interviews on this theme. He defines four reasons for digging: 'to feel or display a commitment to hip-hop tradition through the conscious or unconscious reinscription of the value of deejaying . . .; ''paying dues'' in a general sense; to educate oneself about different forms of music, . . .; and as a form of socialisation' (p. 92).

One gets a true sense of Schloss's sensitive writing style from his discussion of sampling ethics (chapter 5). This is, of course, a completely uncodified subject, and he is able to convey to the reader how this unwritten code of ethics is of the utmost importance to the hip-hop producer, while revealing the underlying reasons with clarity and precision. One feels, after reading this, that hip-hop producers are part of a sacred society, and by virtue of the ineffability of their art they are bound by this unwritten code of ethics. It is only through the author's intimate knowledge and keen writing that this aspect of producing samples comes to light. Among the rules he sets forth are: no biting (i.e. no stealing of others' samples); no CD sampling; and no sampling from other hip-hop records (which would be exploiting the producer who originally dug in the crates for the sound).

In chapter 6, on the aesthetic element of making beats, Schloss identifies four levels at which beauty manifests itself in the sounds of hip-hop: 'the underlying structure of hip-hop beat; the internal characteristics of individual samples; the relationships that samples take on when juxtaposed; and shared assumptions and contextual cues that imbue any given choice with significance' (p. 136). A most crucial issue in his discussion of the aesthetic in sampling is looping, which takes what was once a linear instance of sound and makes it cyclic. He further connects looping to African-American culture and the concept of 'signifying': by allowing producers to use other people's music to express their own feelings, looping is an ideal form of signifying. Lastly, he makes the point that by taking away the inevitability of an end, looping creates a sort of managed unpredictability. A sampled loop is a 'controlling of the unpredictability of random musical gestures' (p. 139), that is, the loop replaces the

beginning, middle, and end that is inherent in much of Western art music with a continuous flow of sounds that, in turn, is overseen by the producer. In chapter 7, the last chapter of the body of the work, Schloss broadens the focus of those who make these beats to include the influences of others, namely, emcees and legal representatives (who are necessary to deal with the numerous copyright issues inherent in hip-hop). He ends this chapter with the four elements that influence a deejay's choice of music to play at clubs: tempo, rhythmic flow, segue opportunities, and the physical quality of the record.

The best thing about *Making Beats* is its assiduous in-depth coverage of the topic. The breadth of Schloss's work is remarkable. He has consulted numerous works in cultural anthropology, literary theory, and ethnomusicology, among other fields, to buttress his arguments. He has also compiled a huge amount of data from the field, of which the bulk of his writing consists. Most important, he is able to lucidly state his objectives and follow them through with compelling arguments.

If there is a problem with this book, it lies in the overabundance of detail. Schloss's arguments, at times, become difficult to follow, and even abstruse. Sometimes I wondered whether the 'less is more' strategy might have served him better. Furthermore, there is much about hip-hop sampling that Schloss expects his readers to know. For example, he does not discuss the process of getting a certain sound from a procured vinyl record onto a soundtrack, and therefore how one makes the beat itself remains something of a mystery for the uninitiated. A detailed explanation of the process of sampling would have added much to the broader understanding of this book. These limitations aside, Schloss is to be commended not only for his attention to detail, but also for his research integrity. *Making Beats* is a wonderful addition to the ever-growing literature on hip-hop music and, in the field of sampling, it is undoubtedly the most significant contribution available to date.

Philip Ewell

The University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Endnote

1. These three works are: Kyra D. Gaunt, 'The veneration of James Brown and George Clinton in hip-hop music: Is it live! Or is it re-memory?', in *Popular Music: Style and Identity* (Montreal, Quebec, Centre for Research on Canadian Cultural Industries and Institutions, 1995); Adam Krims, *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Robert Walser, 'Rhythm, rhyme, and rhetoric in the music of Public Enemy', *Ethnomusicology*, 39/2, pp. 193–218.

***Bob Dylan, Performing Artist, 1986–1990 and beyond, Mind Out of Time*. By Paul Williams. London: Omnibus Press, 2004. 384 pp. ISBN: 184449831X**
doi: 10.1017/S026114300626077X

This is the third instalment in Paul Williams' fascinating never-ending quest to follow the tracks of Bob Dylan as a performing artist. The Dylan tracks that interest Williams are not found on official studio recordings, but for the most part in the performances surreptitiously recorded and acquired by the collectors and connoisseurs who follow Dylan from gig to gig. Williams's assumption and guiding principle, as argued in his previous book, is that Dylan's 'finest work has been done . . . outside of the confines of the recording studio' (Williams 1992, p. xiv; see also Williams 1990). Of course, an

immediate response might be that Greil Marcus's (2005) recent study of 'Like A Rolling Stone' would tend to refute such a claim – Marcus' argument being that this lone, officially available, studio recorded take on a classic song resonates with a legacy and influence as profound as any song that Dylan or any one else has performed, in or out of the studio, in the last fifty years.

Whether or not you agree with Marcus, while it is easy to get hold of a recording of 'Like a Rolling Stone', there is no way most of us can verify Williams' bold claim as it is unlikely that we have access to the material he is dealing with. His argument rests therefore on the persuasiveness of his prose. Williams is an avowed Dylan fan and this book, conversational in tone, is written for fellow Dylan followers in a characteristically direct and chatty style. It's as if Williams is addressing an assembly of aficionados, gathered together before or after a concert. This style makes it highly readable so that even if you don't like Dylan's music you can eavesdrop on what one imagines are the sort of passionate verging on the obsessive conversations that take place in bars close to the venues where Dylan performs. Refreshingly, there is none of the anally retentive, sublimated fandom that represses much academic writing. As a fan, Williams is both enthralled and overwhelmed: the term genius litters page after page, this quality detected in the most mundane and ordinary musical gesture or verbal phrase. Not only is Williams a fan, he is a collector, a cataloguer, a classifier and a critic grading Dylan's work. In an appendix he lists the 148 Dylan performances that he's attended. Much of the book is based on descriptions of these shows, supplemented with summary accounts and impressions of songs performed at concerts that Williams has gained access to via bootleg recordings.

By now it's something of a commonplace that Dylan treats his songs as open to change and re-interpretation in concert performance, just as many musicians have done and still do. There are various officially released albums that illustrate this, for example, the transition of a 'Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall' from a swinging 6/8 apocalyptic, acoustic lament to a defiant, galloping 4/4 boogie driven by Mick Ronson's barely disguised glam-rock riffing' (on recordings of the Rolling Thunder Tour in the mid-1970s). Such changes provide all manner of clues about the way Dylan is responding to musical trends and social changes when re-interpreting his own repertoire. But this book takes things much further in its fascination with variations in lyrics, fluctuations in song arrangements and modifications to set lists. Williams gets excited by the set list itself and questions such as what songs have been included this time? When was the last time that song was performed in concert? What does the running order mean? What appear to me to be trivial and minor changes in a song's performance (sometimes comparing two consecutive nights) are subject to excited scrutiny. As Williams trawls through his tape collection, listening intently, making copious notes for the reader, the welter of detail often threatens to submerge the entire exercise. I am someone who has seen quite a few Dylan shows over recent years and I too have been inspired by new, unanticipated song arrangements and have listened intrigued to a few bootleg recordings. But, on many occasions when reading this book I found myself retorting 'yes, but, come on, the performances are not *that* different'. Like certain types of formal musicological analysis, attention to the variable detailed minutiae sometimes seems to obscure the more enduring aspects of song structures and musical forms, and the social dynamics that are informing this branch of pop hermeneutics.

Yet, this intense immersion also provides some fascinating insights. Unlike many writers (Dylan critics Christopher Ricks and Michael Gray spring to mind),

Williams is not mainly concerned with the meaning of lyrics as poetry. He is far more interested in the way words work sonically in performance. Perhaps it helps that some of the lyrics he's trying to hear are almost unintelligible on the audience-produced recordings that he's been listening to. This means that he picks up on aspects that the semantic lyric sifters ignore when scrutinising the stanzas on the page.

Williams listens to the riff (that short melodic, rhythmic, repeated phrase that is a staple of popular music practice), and hears this as the key to how Dylan's music works in performance. He writes: 'It's all in the riff. That's the secret of Bob Dylan's music . . . the riff calls forth the great vocal performances'. Of concert performances he writes: 'when . . . the band is directed to vamp on the riff for long non-vocal passages, the riff itself starts speaking to the song's listeners as though these were whole new verses of evocative, mind-blowing, Bob-Dylan-in-his-prime lyrics' (Williams 2004, p. xiii). Acknowledging how Dylan has been able to achieve a similar effect through the distinct voices that he gives to harmonica solos, Williams stresses how, on good nights, Dylan is able to achieve this through the riff.

Now, I'm sure that those of us who have seen Dylan over the years are aware that the instrumental doodling and riffing is sometimes about as inspiring as an average bar band jamming on basic blues sequences for hours on end, at least to me. Indeed, this is a characteristic that Williams himself acknowledges in places. But, I think Williams has heard something significant here: it's a sound that refutes the assumption (pervasive in much lit-crit Dylanology) that the music is subordinate to the words.

Not all Dylan's songs are riff-based by any means. But many are, and it is in these that the riff drives the selection of words. It's that cyclical, non-goal directed, repetition of musical and verbal sounds that draws us into a very particular sonic experience, allowing us to enter the song. The riff becomes the song, and words and vocal melody are held in tension to the riff, implied by and implicated in the riff. In many of Bob Dylan's performances, the riff-based character of the song has become ever more emphasised in live performance (this would include 'Subterranean Home Sick Blues', 'Maggie's Farm', 'All Along The Watchtower', 'Solid Rock', 'Everything is Broken', 'Cold Irons Bound' and 'Tweedle Dee & Tweedle Dum', to cite just a few).

Williams' observations here reminded me of Simon Frith's thought in *Performing Rites* where he remarks that 'a song does not exist to convey the meaning of the words – rather, words exist to convey the meaning of the song' (Frith 1996, p. 166). The riff shapes the song, and the words are chosen to convey the meaning of the song as it arises from the interplay between vocal and riff – which is why Williams hears patterns of unformed words in the riffs. Elsewhere Williams is sensitively attuned to those moments when 'the vocals are a rhythm instrument' and when the 'vocalist seems to take a solo, just as the guitarists do' (p. 287).

With its passion and flashes of insight, this book swept me along with it. I also have to say that parts of it nearly bored the pants off me, with its repetitive details and pedantic descriptions of gigs that I've never been to, nor wish that I ever attended. Then suddenly, near the end of 1990 (about page 300), as if aware that the reader has less stamina than the author, Williams stops listening to the live performances, a full fourteen years before this book was to be published. There's a huge sense of an anticlimax as if Bob Dylan has left the building early. As an encore there are two tagged-on chapters that are essay reviews: one focuses on *Time Out of Mind* (1997) and the other deals with *Love and Theft* (2001). Perhaps the picture of the smiling young son who sits with Williams, his Dylanologist dad, on the book's back sleeve is a clue to

why the gig ends so abruptly: if it is, then Williams has indeed followed Dylan in taking time out from the road to be with his family. Yet, there are a lot of later gigs listed in the 'appendix' of concerts attended, and as Dylan's tours continue to roll on, there may be another book or two in there somewhere.

Although Williams refers to himself as a Professor, in a self-deprecating way and only with a modicum of defensiveness, this is not a conventionally scholarly book. Yet, its contribution to popular music scholarship is clear and comes from the energy of the passionate *and* judgemental fan that the scholar so routinely represses (even when studying fans). The book has some obvious flaws but the author knows about these anyway. For example, he's well aware of a strand of connoisseurship and elitism that pervades such a project. He is part of a select group who have access to the performances, who have the time to listen to all these recordings and who possess the cultural capital or faith to recognise those profound moments. Or, as Williams himself confesses '. . . for connoisseurs of Bob Dylan's ''accidental'' art, good entertainment is not satisfying. We prefer moments of transcendent awakeness . . .' (p. 152). Williams is also well aware of some of the other criticisms that might be directed at his approach, such as the problem of interpreting and analysing the performance from an audio recording. He knows that we are not seeing the performance or feeling the vibe at the event and the book refers to the different impressions that can be gained from the 'same' concert recorded at different locations within the same hall (with no obvious way to resolve this limitation).

Ultimately, Williams is prepared to be wrong and exposes his doubts: 'I'm uncomfortable with the role of judge, especially when honesty and sincerity require me to be negative about certain works of the artist whom I came here to praise. I could be wrong, of course. Or I could change my view at some future time of re-listening, as I've changed my view years later about certain excellent Dylan albums and songs that I failed to appreciate on first encounter' (p. 161). So, in the end, Williams ain't the judge, you don't have to be nice to him. But, there *is* something refreshing in this openness. His doubts are exposed, not concealed behind disciplinary jargon or the veneer of academic certainty. Critical fans and critics as fans have much to contribute to the study of popular music. This book is a great resource for anyone wishing to study Bob Dylan's music – or for anyone who might wish to study Bob Dylan's audience.

References

Frith, S. 1996. *Performing Rites, On the Value of Popular Music* (Oxford, Oxford University Press)
Marcus, G. 2005. *Like a Rolling Stone, Bob Dylan at the Crossroads* (New York, Public Affairs)
Williams, P. 1990. *Bob Dylan, Performing Artist 1960–1973* (London, Xanadu Publications)
1992. *Bob Dylan, Performing Artist 1974–1986, The Middle Years* (London, Omnibus Press)

Keith Negus

Goldsmiths College, University of London

https://doi.org/10.1017/S026114300626077X Published online by Cambridge University Press