fits comfortably into this category. Listeners interested in exploring Baron, Caine, Cohen, and Feldman's more adventuresome work will find it amply represented on their other Tzadik releases.

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The Great War: An American Musical Fantasy. Archeophone Records ARCH 2001, 2007.

The two-disc set *The Great War: An American Musical Fantasy* produced by Archeophone Records presents a varied history of American recordings made during and about the First World War. The producers of this disc set have included popular songs recorded by artists ranging from Enrico Caruso to vaudeville singers Nora Bayes and Arthur Fields. To bring the era to life, they have also inserted excerpts from important historical speeches by Woodrow Wilson and General John Pershing and stories told by lesser known performers, such as vaudevillian comic monologist Cal Stewart. The compilation is dedicated to the memory of a specific U.S. soldier, Clarence D. Johnson, whose grandson includes in the notes a "Reflection" about his family singing songs from the First World War. The extensive seventy-three-page booklet of liner notes describes the songs and traces the triumphs and travails of the nascent sound recording industry, using trade magazines and government documents as primary source material. However, the authors avoid positioning these recordings in relation to other common musical practices, for instance, ignoring sheet music sung at the piano and performances on the vaudeville stage. The fifty-six tracks of this collection are sonic traces of an era that tell the American story of the war through sound, but we should remember that they are only a part of the story of music making during the war.

Walter Spalding, then chair of the Harvard Music Department, who also served on the National Committee on Army and Navy Camp Music, wrote in the journal *The Outlook* in 1918, "Our Government . . . wisely holds that music should be just as much a part of the equipment [of war] as weapons, uniforms and rations."[1] Singing was included in army training, and the civilian population purchased large quantities of sheet music for home consumption. Frederick Vogel reports in his bibliography of U.S. sheet music from the First World War that over 35,000 songs were published as sheet music (far outnumbering sheet music publication in other combatant nations), with over 7,000 being directly war related; my own research indicates that the number of songs published in sheet music form is

[1] Walter Spalding, "Music as a Necessary Part of the Soldier's Equipment," *The Outlook* (5 June 1918), 223–25.

even higher.[2] Although the visual material for the booklet includes photographs of stage performers, numerous colorful sheet music covers, and a picture of an army songbook, the notes do not mention the role of the vaudeville performances by these same pictured performers, the massive sheet music sales, and the military musical practices that shaped the experience of these songs. As Craig Roell writes in *The Piano in America, 1890–1940,* "By 1914 more than 500,000 phonographs were being produced each year," but in 1914, he informs us, "323,000 pianos were also produced."[3] The piano was already common in U.S. households, and thus many people still enjoyed these war songs as sheet music, despite the widespread novelty of the phonograph. Army records indicate that official song leaders were hired to lead soldiers in song, illustrating that group singing was widespread in military training. Photographs from the time show soldiers setting up phonographs in trenches; records also indicate that phonographs were used to entertain troops in YMCA huts. The cover image of the CD gives an indication of the mixed nature of soldiers' musical practices, showing soldiers lined up for an informal photo, holding a banjo and a violin in addition to rifles. More often than not, people made their own music.

The collection's subtitle, "An American Musical Fantasy," appears simplistic given the extreme devastation and suffering of the First World War. Nevertheless, it accurately portrays the aims of major sheet music publishers, as well as those of the major recording companies of the day such as Victor and Columbia, who sought to capture musically the public's imagination of victory on the far-off front. As the notes recount, in 1914 the recording industry responded to the war by, for example, selling the marching songs and anthems of all the warring nations and producing educational material as well, such as foreign language instruction and the speeches of U.S. presidents from Lincoln to Wilson. The notes also detail the history of the government taxation of "mechanical musical devices" as luxury items in 1915, and the attempts of the industry to fight this taxation as a suppression of "musical ammunition" (as one advertisement from Columbia puts it).

The Great War presents the standard patriotic songs of the era, such as "Over There" and "Lafayette," which celebrated the historic relationship between the United States and France. The anthology also contains tracks that the recording companies designed to represent different segments of U.S. society at the time, which can be divided into two categories: those made as "race records" (recordings aimed at a specific market) and those made as racist entertainment. A few tracks present German songs recorded in 1914 and 1915 that speak to the nonpartisanship of the neutrality years and the large number of recent German immigrants, including (despite their militaristic overtones) the German song "Die Wacht am Rhein" (The Guard on the Rhein) and the Austrian song "Schwertlied" (Sword Song). As the

[2] Frederick G. Vogel, *World War I Songs: A History and Dictionary of Popular American Patriotic Tunes with over 300 Complete Lyrics* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 1995); Christina Gier, "Gender, Politics, and the Fighting Soldier's Song in America during World War I," *Music and Politics* 2/1 (2008): online.

[3] Craig H. Roell, *The Piano in America, 1890–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 48.

notes tell us, an ad in *The Talking Machine World* from 1915 states that "music means ten times more to foreigners" (15). Early in the conflict, the industry realized that the war in Europe could spur sales to immigrant groups, especially recordings made in the mother tongues of combatant nations.

On the other hand, "When Tony Goes over the Top," a song with a hyper-characterization of Italian Americans performed in an "Italian" accent, was not necessarily marketed for sale in Italian communities, but rather as entertainment about Italians. Likewise, the song "Indianola" displays the worst stereotypes of Native Americans, and the racism of the Jim Crow South raises its head in the song "They'll Be Mighty Proud in Dixie of Their Old Black Joe." These types of songs constituted racist entertainment, which the notes acknowledge to some extent by labeling them "stereotypes." In addition, the notes unfortunately seem to echo the sexist attitudes of the time when they state, "There are hints that the women's suffrage movement may be behind [the song] 'Oh! What a Time for the Girlies When the Boys Come Home!' which suggests that a bumper of returning soldiers allows them [the women] to take their pick and satisfy their war-repressed desires" (68)—a ludicrous linkage between romance and suffrage. Furthermore, the notes refer to some tracks as "news" reports, when in fact they are best called "descriptive sketches." An example of such a track is "Arrival of American Troops in France," which, though reporting a fact, was highly dramatized in the studio with musical accompaniment and sound effects. Today's news programs continue to use music in highly choreographed ways, as James Deaville's work shows, and a critical lens is needed for historical practices as well.[4] Clearly the notes have serious drawbacks, but it is the recordings themselves that stand as the most valuable contributions of this set.

Christina Gier

[4] James Deaville, "Selling War: Television News Music and the Shaping of American Public Opinion," *Echo: Music and the Public Sphere, An Echo Roundtable* 8/1 (2006) on line.

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