

The central question raised in this book is simple but radical: as the boundaries of jazz are fluid and the definition of the term is constantly changing, why not consider any music called jazz to be a legitimate topic for academic inquiry? At first, this prospect may seem daunting, but ultimately the approach can be liberating. How many of us grew up listening to and admiring music that we considered jazz, but was missing from standard jazz histories due to conventions of authenticity centered on race, gender, or style? How can new jazz scholarship do more than provide lists of people someone else should have mentioned? The authors sometimes focus too much on gaps in coverage and rely on cumbersome “post-everything” jargon in place of giving substantive discussion of specific musical examples. On balance, however, *Jazz/Not Jazz* promotes an honest assessment of artists and communities once thought to lie beyond the boundaries of jazz. By focusing on how musicians from overlapping scenes borrow from and respond to one another through inter-textual reference this collection exposes readers to untold perspectives, encouraging them to reconsider what they think jazz is and what it is not.

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Dance All Night: Those Other Southwestern Swing Bands, Past and Present. By Jean A. Boyd. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2012.

Much of the scholarly writing on western swing since the 1970s has centered on general histories; biographies of such seminal bands and musicians as the Light Crust Doughboys, Milton Brown, and Bob Wills; authoritative liner notes to reissues of old recordings; and a few reference works.¹ In *Dance All Night: Those Other Southwestern Swing Bands, Past and Present*, musicologist Jean Boyd responds to the need for a scholarly treatment of lesser-known western swing bands. In that endeavor, she has intended her book for two groups of readers: “devoted fans of western swing [and] musicologists . . . especially jazz scholars” (xiv).

¹ General histories: Cary Ginell, “The Development of Western Swing,” *JEMF Quarterly* 20 (1984): 58–67; Charles R. Townsend, “A Brief History of Western Swing,” *Southern Quarterly* 22/3 (1984): 30–51; Tom Dunbar, *From Bob Wills to Ray Benson: A History of Western Swing* (Austin, TX: Term Publications, 1988); and Jean A. Boyd, *The Jazz of the Southwest: An Oral History of Western Swing* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998). Biographies: Jean A. Boyd, “We’re the Light Crust Doughboys from Burrus Mill”: *The Story of the Light Crust Doughboys* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003); Cary Ginell, *Milton Brown and the Founding of Western Swing* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Charles Townsend, *San Antonio Rose: The Life and Music of Bob Wills* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976). Liner notes: Rich Kienzle, Cary Ginell, Tony Russell, Chris Strachwitz, and Charles Townsend are just a few of the authorities on western swing who have written informed liner notes for reissues of older recordings. Reference work: Cary Ginell and Kevin Coffey, *Discography of Western Swing and Hot String Bands, 1928–1942* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001).

The first and second parts of the book cover southwestern swing bands from their emergence in the late 1920s to the flourishing of repertory and crossover bands performing today. The third part includes analysis and transcriptions of selected songs covered in the preceding chapters. Boyd arranged the book “so that readers interested in the history of the bands, but not in the analysis, could skip the analysis portions,” acknowledging that “it is a fine line I have attempted to walk, but I hope I have provided something of interest for everyone” (230). Such broad appeal makes for a fitting contribution to Texas Tech University Press’s Grover E. Murray Studies in the American Southwest, and western swing performers will appreciate her musical transcriptions.

In parts 1 and 2, Boyd presents an overview of bands selected from available reissues. After a general statement on the historical significance of the groups she profiles, she provides brief biographical information on the leaders and sidemen, including place of birth, early musical influences, musical style, recording history, and overall significance. Interspersed throughout her book are quotes drawn from the large body of interviews conducted by Boyd herself from the 1990s to the present, which arguably represents her most significant contribution to western swing studies. Boyd follows these “history” sections with some general recording history, much of which is drawn from liner notes and/or Ginell and Coffey’s *Discography of Western Swing*, and highlights in detail some representative examples.

The main strength of *Dance All Night* is in Boyd’s broad survey of lesser-known western swing bands active throughout Texas and in Oklahoma. This geographic coverage allowed her to demonstrate intriguing regional stylistic distinctions. For example, western swing emerged first in the North Texas area, in Fort Worth and Dallas, where the bands promoted by radio programmers tended to sound more rehearsed and polished than those performing in other areas of Texas and the Southwest. In contrast, western swing bands in central Texas, which featured a “straightforward simplicity of style” (64), generally made their reputations in dance halls rather than on the radio or in the recording studio. Due in no small part to the contributions of Cliff Bruner (fiddle) and Bob Dunn (steel guitar), bands in San Antonio tended to preserve western swing performance traditions more than South Texas swing bands from the Houston, Beaumont, and Port Arthur areas, which were “more experimental and oriented to hot-jazz improvisation” (103). West Texas swing bands tended to remain even more traditional according to Boyd. Audiences there were most interested in being able to dance to the music and were less concerned about the makeup and performance style of these bands (132).

Whereas western swing enthusiasts will appreciate Boyd’s broad coverage, and will be interested in reading about the fascinating interconnections between bands and band members, musicologists likely will be disappointed with her analyses. Aside from the transcriptions, part 3 provides little additional analysis, although Boyd considers transcription “a means to delve deeply into the music and understand it fully” (233). Readers wishing to compare a melody with the improvised solo choruses will appreciate Boyd’s overlay format, “with the main melody (usually a vocal line) and chord symbols on the top, and subsequent solo choruses layered underneath.” However, those readers looking for deeper analysis and a fuller understanding of the music will be disappointed. Boyd’s analyses are predominantly

descriptive rather than truly analytical, and they often examine little more than structural aspects. For example, her complete analysis of The Tune Wranglers' recording of "Black-Eyed Susan Brown" reads:

"Black-Eyed Susan Brown" begins with a fiddle introduction, played by Ben McKay, that states the entire thirty-two-bar a-a'-b-a tune. After this introduction, Buster Coward sings the song backed by a fiddle countermelody. Pianist Eddie Whitley takes the first instrumental chorus, and later bassist Charlie Gregg performs an intricate, driving banjo solo. This is an impressive, swinging performance by the entire band, which was obviously having a very good time (269).

A final section of photographs is a welcome addition, and Boyd's bibliography includes a discography listing original LPs, several anthologies of reissues, and numerous more recent compact disc releases of individual western swing and crossover bands. Despite the limitations in her analyses, devoted western swing enthusiasts will welcome Boyd's broad coverage of lesser-known musicians and bands, and performers may find value in her transcriptions, thus preserving in one volume a welcome addition to western swing scholarship.

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Cajun and Zydeco Dance Music in Northern California: Modern Pleasures in a Postmodern World. By Mark F. DeWitt. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008.

Bayou squeezebox in the Bay Area is the main theme of Mark F. DeWitt's ethnographic study *Cajun and Zydeco Dance Music in Northern California: Modern Pleasures in a Postmodern World*. With this publication, DeWitt adds to a growing body of academic writing featuring the accordion and the moves it inspires on the dance floor.¹ Most closely aligned with historiographical music ethnographies such as those by Susan Gedutis and Peter Manuel, DeWitt's study focuses on the relationship among music, movement, and identity.² Participatory art forms such as social dance may be the ideal laboratory for such experiments, and DeWitt gives us a valuable perspective on a unique and fascinating scene.

The ethnographic interviews that constitute the core of this study were all conducted with musicians and dancers who either migrated from "Cajun country" as children or adults, were born in California to Louisiana migrant families, or

¹ See Marion Jacobson, *Squeeze This!: A Cultural History of the Accordion in America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012); and Helena Simonett, ed., *The Accordion in the Americas* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

² Susan Gedutis, *See You at the Hall: Boston's Golden Era of Irish Music and Dance* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2004); and Peter Manuel, ed., *Creolizing Contradance in the Caribbean* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).