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Recorded Music: Performance, Culture and Technology edited by Amanda Bayley.

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This edited collection represents a valuable set of essays on the possible analyses of musical recordings. Its greatest strength lies in two areas: (1) the breadth of perspectives represented on the subject, from close examinations of individuals, cultural contexts and processes to wider theoretical considerations; and (2) the multiplicity of genres and disciplinary approaches included, the latter ranging from ethnomusicological fieldwork to music-technological analysis.

The book is split into four parts, framed by an introduction by the editor, offering a full and accessible synthesis of the central problems at which the collection is aimed, and an epilogue by Tony Gibbs that comments on the potential future for study in this area. Part 1 ('Recordings and their contexts') is aimed at understanding the complex relationships between musical recordings and their respective contexts, and offers reflections on disciplinarity (Cottrell, Ch. 1); the realist aesthetic in classical recordings (Johnson, Ch. 2); issues of ethics and musical/cultural ownership (Blake, Ch. 3); and design-theory based approaches to recordings (Krimms, Ch. 4). Part 2 ('The recording process') is bound by closer focus on the recording process itself, and includes an overview of the history of recording technology and the liminal role of the mediating producer (Barrett, Ch. 5); discussion of the issues facing ethnomusicologists in their creation of recordings (Baily, Ch. 6); an in-depth analysis of Simon Rattle's orchestral recording career (Patmore, Ch. 7) and the questioning of approaches to the study of jazz recordings

(Elsdon, Ch. 8). Part 3 ('Recordings as texts') offers a collection of perspectives on the reading of recordings as musical and cultural artefacts, with contributions covering the textual analysis of jazz recordings (Tackley, Ch. 9); the use of recordings in ethnomusicological fieldwork (Stock, Ch. 10); the examination of the creative processes through the reading of multiple recorded takes (Bayley, Ch. 11); close analysis of vocal quality in popular music recording (Lacasse, Ch. 12); and the 'track' as a conceptual entity beyond the 'song' (Moore, Ch. 13). Part 4 looks to examine the recording process as a fully creative artistic practice, with essays commenting on: the application of Schaeffer's 'reduced listening' approach (Dack, Ch. 14); appropriation and recreation in contemporary popular music (Moorefield, Ch. 15); and the influence of experimental sound-scape development on musical style (Zak, Ch. 16).

It is sometimes difficult to maintain a clear understanding of the collection's structure. For instance, Stephen Cottrell's exploration of the place of phonomusicology within its multidisciplinary context (Ch. 1), offers an excellent overview of key developments in the transition of the recording from periphery to central focus of scholarship such as is evidenced in the following chapters. In this way, Cottrell's offering might reasonably have been separated from the more case-study centred discussions of Chapters 2–4, and may have served equally well as a theoretically focused supplement to Bayley's excellent – but necessarily more functional – introduction to the book as whole. Likewise, it could be argued that Andrew Blake's succinct exploration of matters relating to the digital production, recreation and distribution of music (Ch. 3), interacts more clearly with the broader artistic and ontological issues raised by Virgil Moorefield (Ch. 15) and Albin Zak III (Ch. 16). Because

of the nature of the genre's key aesthetic and practical characteristics, the chapters dealing with jazz are difficult to prise apart on the thematic grounds suggested by the book's partitions. However, the recurring themes and fields that run across the boundaries of the sections can also be considered a strength of the book, which successfully collates multiple interpretations, approaches and conclusions relating to genres and theories, developing a sense of depth through their ongoing narratives, and mitigating the potential for a less coherent miscellany.

Perhaps the collection's most significant message is located in an underlying emphasis on the degree to which the proliferation of recordings has meant a growth in their significance – as commercial product, cultural symbol and documentary artefact – beyond that of the live performance (a claim made most explicit by the chapters of Moore and Johnson). It could be suggested that the problem with this – extremely valuable – revelation, is that it is only a partial one: Cottrell offers thought-provoking commentary on the issues relating to the positioning of disciplines concerned with the 'study of recordings', which he rightly asserts must include 'its contexts of production and patterns of consumption' (15), but an alternative approach could perhaps see the 'study of recordings' subsumed within a broader discipline concerned with the study of *recording* (verb). The ubiquity of recordings as artefacts is fervently acknowledged here, but the – now widespread – vernacularisation of recording as a cultural behaviour is not really foregrounded. Greater examination of the non-professional individual, who makes recordings on solid state digital recorders for purposes other than public art, might have opened the discussion yet further. What of the mix tape (now CD) made for a loved one? The iTunes playlist

carefully constructed for the walk to school? The recording of the amateur choir's rehearsals made by a member to aid in his/her private practice (and as a memento for the future)? The capturing of a specifically relevant musical phrase for deployment as a ringtone to herald a phone call from a friend?

Democratisation of artistic musical recording endeavours are discussed by Gibbs, Barrett and others in the collection, but overall it can be argued that everyday activities of the sort listed above remain largely peripheral. Lysloff and Gay (2003) set out the theoretical stall for a study of the technological tailoring of music through vernacular recording, manipulation and contextualisation. In this volume, however, focus appears to remain on those recordings that make it to the shelves of HMV or the web pages of Amazon.com, rather than on those recordings that (in many cases) were never meant to do so, or on the motivations of their amateur creators. Such an anthology as this should be considered a valuable milestone, but it may highlight the need for a new era in which prominence is given over to consideration of why people (all people, not simply those whose recordings will be mass-produced and sold) press the button with the red circle; what cultural decisions they make when they do so; what identities they build (possibly not always articulated through labels such as 'consumer', 'composer', 'performer' or 'producer'); and what relatively small cultural impacts they have.

As regards the significance of this collection for the readers of BJME, relatively little material in the book deals explicitly with the educational uses of recorded music, although strong connections can be made in this respect. For instance, much can be drawn from Stock's chapter on the use of recordings as a tool in fieldwork, and the respective chapters of Elsdon and Tackley remind us of the jazz canon and (usually self-administered) pedagogy fuelled by the

recordings of John Coltrane, Miles Davis and others. Of course, commentary on the use of professional recordings as a learning tool by amateur musicians can be found elsewhere (e.g. Green, 2002) and there is interesting work being carried out on self-recording as an educational practice (e.g. Nielsen, 2001; Zimmerman, 2005; Char, 2009; Klickstein, 2009, pp. 16–18;), but absent from the pages of this book (arguably beyond its scope). It is possible of course that one of the most widely used educational resources available for learning musicians today – Youtube – makes more complex the situation (at least for the purposes of Bayley's collection) by virtue of its audio-visual nature. Perhaps as digital self-recording opportunities and behaviours develop and are internalised further within the fabric of everyday musical activity, no doubt we will see more in this field.

The above concerns notwithstanding, the collection remains an impressive collation of multiple methodologies and perspectives in the study of recorded music, and it is to be recommended to any scholar working in this or any related field. The polyphony of perspectives presented here is likely to generate a good deal of interesting discussion among graduate students, whilst the accessibility and concise nature of the chapters as individual accounts makes this a very useful tool for teachers of undergraduate courses.

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The World in Six Songs by Daniel Levitin.
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Daniel Levitin's preceding book, *This is Your Brain on Music* (2006), has attracted considerable attention and provides a fascinating, readable exploration of how the brain engages with music. In *The World in Six Songs* Levitin takes his findings a step further in order to explore, as the book's subtitle puts it, 'how the musical brain *created* human nature' (my italics). Any book making such an assertion on its front cover must surely warrant further investigation by those of us working in music education.

In some senses the book has many companions, such as Anthony Storr's *Music and the Mind* (1992), Steven Mithen's *The Singing Neanderthals* (2005) and *Musicophilia* (2007) by Oliver Sacks, as well as the work of many music psychologists and ethnomusicologists. However, part of what