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IASPM-Canada

The study of popular music is a recent addition to the curriculum of most university music departments in Canada. Pioneer popular music scholars working in Canadian universities include John Shepherd (Trent, later Carleton), Will Straw (Carleton, later McGill), Rob Bowman (York), and Gaston Rochon (UQAM). Much popular music scholarship is interdisciplinary in nature, and flourishes in Canada in communications studies, cultural studies, and other academic areas in addition to music departments. Bowman, for example, began offering popular music courses at York in 1979 in the humanities department; it was not until the late 1980s that he offered a course in the music department, and even then it was designed for students who were not majoring in music. Writing in 1997, he noted that there were 'only a handful of popular music courses taught within music departments for music majors.'¹

The first conference devoted to popular music issues in Canada was held at Trent University in 1983. It was titled 'The Sociology of Music: An Exploration of Issues'; selected conference proceedings appeared in the *Canadian University Music Review* 5 (1984). This conference was the first event to be sponsored by the newly formed Canadian branch of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM). A second conference, 'Popular Music in the University,' took place at Carleton University in 1985.

IASPM-Canada hosted the Second International Conference on Popular Music Studies (Montreal, 1985). IASPM was founded in 1981 and currently has about 700 members, with branches in 15 countries or regions around the world. IASPM holds a biennial conference (the 13th took place in Rome in July 2005) and issues a newsletter/journal, *RPM The Review of Popular Music*. IASPM-Canada co-sponsored 'Post-Colonial Distances: The Study of Popular Music in Canada and Australia,' a conference held in June 2005 at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland. It attracted 57 participants from Australia, Canada, and the United States.

The next *ICM Newsletter* appears in January 2006; the deadline for submissions is December 15th.

The Canadian composer Harry Freedman died on Sep. 16, 2005: an obituary will appear in the next issue.

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¹ Rob Bowman, 'The academic at the crossroads of commerce,' *Popular Music and Society* 21.1 (Spring 1997): 6.

Ray Jessel: Portrait of a Versatile Canadian Composer

Sandy Thorburn
University of Toronto

The Canadian music industry is a small community, and in order to function in it, it is often necessary to be versatile and work in various styles and media. The Welsh-born Canadian composer Raymond Jessel (b. 1929; naturalized Canadian 1954), is an excellent example of a composer who took advantage of elements within Canadian culture and exploited them effectively. Like so many before him, he found that his career path led him away from Canada.

Jessel's initial training was as a serious composer at the University of Wales, followed by study with Arthur Honegger in his Paris master class (where one of his classmates was the US composer Ned Rorem). Jessel's lessons with Honegger helped the young composer find his voice in works such as his oratorio *Ruth*, which the composer describes as in a style that would later be referred to as Minimalism.¹

Jessel immigrated to Canada in 1953 and began a career as a free-lance orchestrator and composer. Among his best-known early works is an *Overture for Orchestra* which was written for the CBC radio programme *Opportunity Knocks*, hosted by John Adaskin.² He was paid, he recalls, fifty dollars for the work. It was written in the style of 'Les Six' and shows remarkable technical ability as an orchestrator and composer. Versatility was vital to the success of the young composer. An important part of his early career was his collaboration with Marian Grudeff (b. 1927), who was the musical director of the popular Canadian satirical revue *Spring Thaw*. This revue was begun in 1948 by Canadian theatre pioneer Dora Mavor Moore and her son (James) Mavor Moore. Jessel writes:

I became friends with Marian Grudeff through mutual friends soon after my arrival in Toronto. I was struggling to survive as an arranger/orchestrator while trying to compose (sonatas, etc.). She was already musical director of *Spring Thaw* and suggested I could write better tunes than what she was then having to work with, and I might make a dollar or two as well as the show paid royalties for work used. At first she was an editor of my work; then we became collaborators, writing lyrics as well as music. I suppose we supplied songs for *Spring Thaw* for at least a half-dozen seasons. 'Rosedale' is certainly from that period. I also

wrote music to lyrics by Pierre Berton: 'Ode to Woodbine' – a quartet, comes to mind – and I occasionally collaborated with Stan Daniels.³ ... Marian and I also specialized in big music finales – like 'Manitoba', a take-off on *Oklahoma*; a potted (and potty) version of *Così Fan Tutte* which was 'Mozart on Rollerskates'; [and] a fake Wagnerian opera (on Canadian themes of course).⁴

Spring Thaw, probably the most significant musical revue in Canadian history, ran nearly every year from 1948 to 1971. Many of Canada's best musical comedy performers began their career on this show. Jessel's association with *Spring Thaw* began in 1955, writing satirical songs such as 'Rosedale,' which lampoons that up-scale Toronto neighborhood.⁵ He recalls Canadian performers such as Don Harron, Catherine McKinnon, Dave Broadfoot, and Robert Goulet working on this programme. Buffy Ste. Marie, Salome Bey, Dinah Christie, Jackie Richardson, Barbara Hamilton, and Rich Little were also featured at one time or another in its history, in addition to those who worked with Jessel.

Jessel's initiation into the world of popular songwriting and his successful association with Marian Grudeff⁶ led to a move in 1963 to New York City, where he wrote material for Julius Mond's *Upstairs at the Downstairs* revues.⁷ Jessel and Grudeff wrote some songs based on the life of P.T. Barnum and brought them to Broadway producer Alexander H. Cohen (1920-2000). Cohen optioned the proposed show, titled *Barnum*, and an opening was set for 1964; the project

¹ Email correspondence with the author, 31 July 2005.

² Symphony Nova Scotia under Howard Cable recorded Jessel's overture in 1992 on CBC SMCD 5112. Other works by Jessel from this period include *Suite of Israeli Dances* for orchestra (1955) and *Psalms 148* for baritone, choir, and piano, (1960).

³ Daniels began his career in the CBC as a composer and producer, but moved to the USA in the 1960s to produce a series of television shows with his company MTM, including *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *The Bob Newhart Show*, *The Cosby Show*, and *Taxi*. Daniels also contributed songs to the 1978 television musical *Cindy* and the 1976 Broadway musical *So Long 174th Street*.

⁴ Email correspondence with the author, 31 July 2005.

⁵ Jessel still performs this number in his revue.

⁶ Elaine Keillor has contributed a brief biography of Marian Grudeff in the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada* (online edition). Born in 1927 in Toronto, Grudeff first established herself as a concert pianist, performing with the New York Philharmonic in 1946 and at Town Hall in 1950. She taught 1948-52 at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. She studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris, and performed in Europe. Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, she was associated with *Spring Thaw*, first as a rehearsal pianist in 1950, continuing as an arranger, and then serving 1956-62 as music director. She collaborated 1957-63 with Ray Jessel on lyrics and music. As of this writing, she continues to teach piano from her home in Toronto.

⁷ This famed cabaret featured performers such as Barbara Streisand, Barry Manilow, Mabel Mercer, Joan Rivers, and Lily Tomlin.

never materialized, though. *Baker Street* was another musical in production by Cohen, but this show had no songwriters. The director Michael Langham asked the team to write 'a few songs' for *Baker Street*. Jessel described the process to Peter Filichia in this way:

The other songwriters hadn't written [an opening number] to our surprise. So we wrote a Prokofievian melody over which Holmes could sing his deductions. And when the people he was talking to joined in, we went for a Gilbert-and-Sullivan-like, Victorian melody.⁸

For Watson, Jessel wrote the song 'A Married Man.'

Several directors succeeded Langham, among them Harold Prince (who later directed the Toronto production of the show). Eventually Harold Hastings was chosen as the director. *Baker Street, A Musical Adventure of Sherlock Holmes* opened at the Shubert Theatre in Boston on 28 December 1964. It was then revised for Broadway and, after a two week run at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre, opened at the Broadway Theatre on 16 February 1965 and ran until 20 October, at which point it moved to the Martin Beck Theatre, playing there 3-14 November. There were a total of 311 performances on Broadway. The book was written by Jerome Coopersmith, and the music and lyrics were by Marian Grudeff and Raymond Jessel. Several songs by Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock, who had just collaborated on the very successful musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, were inserted into the show after the Toronto production closed.⁹ Described by the critic Emory Lewis as 'one of the best musicals in the 1960s,'¹⁰ the show was recorded with the original cast, and some songs were re-recorded for the album *Hit Songs from Baker Street and Other Broadway Musicals* (1965). Several of the songs went on to become successful after the show closed, including 'I'd Do it Again,' 'A Married Man' (recorded by Richard Burton), and 'It's so Simple.'

The team wrote another score for Alexander Cohen, a revival of the 1938 anarchic popular variety show and 1941 movie, *Hellzapoppin*.¹¹ The original production had been exceptionally successful, running for three years on Broadway, with a total of more than 1,400 shows, and so Cohen sought to capitalize on the success of its name. He secured television star Soupy Sales¹² and veteran director George Abbott, and

mounted the show at Montreal's Expo 67. Despite the popularity of *Hellzapoppin*, it never played on Broadway because of a disagreement between Cohen and British theatrical producer David Merrick. The title song, 'Hellzapoppin,' was recorded by Jimmy Durante and Louis Armstrong, and 'Montreal' was recorded later by Maurice Chevalier.

With the closing of *Hellzapoppin* in late 1967, Jessel moved to Hollywood to capitalize on the success he had enjoyed as a comedic songwriter. His first contribution to television, in 1968, was for the popular sketch comedy series *The Dean Martin Show* (1965-74). Initially he contributed musical material, but soon was writing comedy sketches for this and other programmes including *The Carol Burnett Show* (for which he won an Emmy award for outstanding writing in 1976) and various John Denver specials. His final collaboration with Marian Grudeff was a musical produced at the Charlottetown Festival in 1969 called *Life Can Be – Like Wow*. This appears to have been less successful than their earlier ventures. Throughout the early 1970s, Jessel remained in Hollywood, providing comedic material for television programmes. He had a singular opportunity to produce, write, and compose music for the popular television programme, *The Love Boat*.

Jessel returned to Broadway in 1979 when he was chosen by the composer Richard Rodgers to write additional lyrics for *I Remember Mama*, starring Liv Ullmann. He wrote the lyrics to four songs in the show, including 'A Little Bit More,' the last song Rodgers wrote for the musical stage. Curiously, he did not write any music for this show, which was based on a successful play by John van Druten (which in turn was based on short stories by Katherine Forbes.) With only 108 performances at the Majestic Theatre in 1979, this was one of Rodgers' least successful musicals.

Returning to Hollywood, Jessel continued his work on *The Love Boat*. He wrote the majority of the script and the entire score for the 1982 two-hour movie *Love Boat – The Musical* starring Ethel Merman, Carol Channing, Ann Miller, Van Johnson, Cab Calloway and Della Reese. While this double-episode is not comparable in quality to his earlier musical theatre efforts, it made for singularly good television in its time.¹³ The original material, including 'Let's Put the Show on Right Here' and 'I Wanna Sing a Show

⁸ 'Holmes is where the Heart is' at <http://www.broadwaymania.com/content/news.cfm/story/4379> (accessed 10 August 2005).

⁹ The Bock/Harnick songs are 'Buffalo Belle,' 'Cold Clear World of the Intellect,' and 'I Shall Miss You Holmes.'

¹⁰ Emory Lewis, 'Baker Street,' *Cue*, 23 Feb 1965.

¹¹ The original musical *Hellzapoppin* had music by Sammy Fain and Charles Tobias and ran from 1938 to 1941.

¹² Writer, actor, and TV personality Soupy Sales (Milton Supman, b. 1926) was best known for his *Lunch with Soupy Sales* children's

TV show (1953-64). His work was characterized by manic slapstick comedy that usually culminated in a pie in the face routine.

¹³ It should be noted that many television programmes, particularly dramas, fared poorly in reruns. This episode was one of the most popular as well as the most mocked. It was not Jessel's original music, but rather borrowed songs from other shows, that provoked the scorn of critics. The most vilified number was Ethel Merman's rendition of 'What I Did for Love' from *A Chorus Line*.

Tune,' are superior both in quality and in performance to the standard borrowed songs sung in this episode.

After *The Love Boat* was cancelled in 1986, Jessel moved on to another successful programme, *Head of the Class* (1986-91), for which he served as a producer, writer, and songwriter. This programme starred Robin Givens, Howard Hesseman and, (in its final season), the Scottish stand-up comedian Billy Connolly. Jessel wrote a number of songs for this show as well, including the humorous 'I'm a Genius.' He was also a writer on the short-lived spin-off program *Billy*, starring Billy Connolly.

Throughout these years, various musical theatre projects yielded songs but no complete shows. Jessel and his current partner Cynthia Thompson have several musicals in progress, including *Moll*, based on Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, (the ballad 'Please, Don't Let It Be Love' from this show was nominated for best song at the 1996 *International Musical of the Year Contest* and is available on the CD *Best Songs on Columbus Records*, with Al Jarreau), and *Dennis the Menace* (for which they wrote 'Whatever Happened to Melody'). In addition, they have written songs for Shari Lewis's children's programme, *Lamb Chop and Hush Puppy* as well as the new Shari Lewis PBS show *The Charlie Horse Music Pizza*.

Jessel's new career began when the US cabaret singer Michael Feinstein recorded 'I Wanna Sing a Show Tune,' written for *Love Boat – The Musical*. Feinstein began to favour humorous songs by Jessel, including 'Oxnard' and 'The Things You Do.' When the two met, Feinstein suggested that Jessel should perform these works himself. The result of this is that at age 72, Jessel embarked on a new career as a cabaret singer. Billing himself as 'the world's only sit-down comic,' Jessel made his debut as a cabaret performer at Hollywood's *Gardenia Room* in April 2002. He booked a tour, including performances at the *Jazz Bakery* in Los Angeles and *The Senator* in Toronto, and in New York's *Danny's Skylight Room* and *Don't Tell Mama*. He began writing more comic songs, including 'Life Sucks and Then You Die,' prompting Feinstein to dub him the 'Millennium Noel Coward.' In 2004, he released his first CD, entitled *The First Seventy Years*, featuring many of his own songs.

The versatility and willingness to try new styles is ultimately what allowed Jessel to become a successful and broadly accomplished composer. His story of early success in Canada is typical of many young musicians – not to mention other artists – who strove to change the Canadian cultural community but ended up moving to where they could earn a living. In fact, Jessel's chosen musical medium, musical comedy, is only now developing into a native art form. Young composers are workshopping their musicals in various

places, but a central focus for the Canadian musical theatre community is still lacking. Perhaps one day soon this focus will materialize, and young composers of musical comedy will no longer have to follow Ray Jessel's path south of the border.

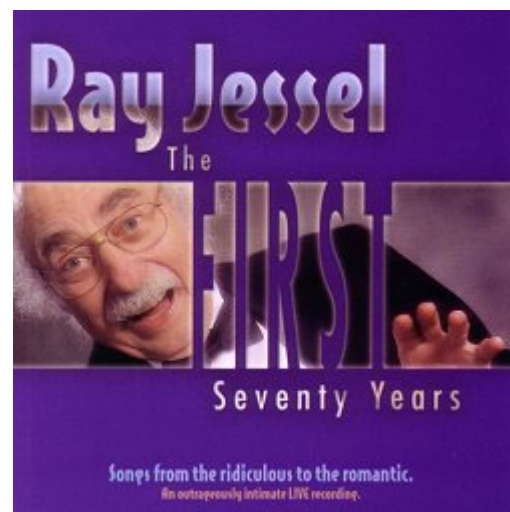
Discography

Baker Street. Original Broadway Cast Album. MGM E-7000 (1965).

Hit Songs from Baker Street and Other Broadway Musicals. Richard Burton, Jack Cassidy, Barbara Cook, Richard Hayman, Fran Jeffries, Susan Johnson, Felicia Sanders, Kai Winding; Danny Davis Orchestra. MGM S-4293 (1965, released 1967).

Opportunity Knocks. Symphony Nova Scotia, Howard Cable (conductor). CBC SMCD 5112 (1992).

Ray Jessel: The First Seventy Years. Ray Jessel. LML-CD 171 (2004).



Sandy Thorburn, whose article on Brian Cherney appeared in the *ICM Newsletter* 1.1 (Jan 2003): 3-7, is himself a remarkably versatile musician and scholar. He is completing a PhD degree in musicology at the University of Toronto with a thesis on seventeenth-century Venetian opera. For almost 20 years he has been the musical director and a composer for the Thousand Islands Playhouse in Gananoque, most recently having mounted a successful production of *Anne of Green Gables*, starring Ramona Gilmour-Darling, from 20 July to 3 September 2005. He has composed for film and television, is professionally active as a pianist, organist, harpsichordist, and choir director, and has been a faculty member at several universities in southern Ontario.

The Organization of Movement: Approaches to Dance Scholarship and the Study of Native American Dance

Mary Caldwell
Queen's University

Dance, like music, is both a cultural symbol and an artistic form, and plays an integral role in most world cultures. There are as many ways of dancing as there are of singing or playing instruments. Dance is an emergent field of study within the disciplines of anthropology and ethnomusicology. The purpose of dance scholarship is to study human movement, both analytically and as it reflects culture, in the same way that ethnomusicologists study music both theoretically and culturally.

In 1956 a dance department was formed in the Society for Ethnomusicology, headed by Gertrude Kurath. Most ethnomusicologists seemed to embrace the study of dance as a specialized field within ethnomusicology. But there are lingering reservations about how well equipped ethnomusicologists are to study dance, as Judith Lynne Hanna has noted: 'Ethnomusicologists often neutralize dance for fear of lacking interpretive knowledge, but dance is often central to what they study.'¹ In general, however, the central importance of dance was recognized and legitimized, and so dance made its way into the field of ethnomusicology.

The relationship between dance and music is intrinsic and ingrained in many cultures. Some cultural contexts even convey a symbiotic relationship between the two.² Nonetheless, not all scholars have been happy with the division of the study of dance between the two fields of ethnomusicology and anthropology. In the past, Hanna has taken issue with the assumed dependence of dance on music, and with the use of the prefix 'ethno-' which she feels implies an ethnocentric viewpoint.³ On the other hand, Kurath's background in both ethnomusicology and dance ethnology lead to personal biases that determined her categorization of the study of dance. Similarly, Hanna's earlier perspectives can be attributed to her own lack of a background in music.⁴ The separation of music and dance seems insupportable on some levels, and in the same way that dance text and dance context must be regarded as two complementary entities, dance and music must be regarded as being different yet connected, as Hanna has surmised:

It is not clear how motor patterns are linked to definitive features of musicality: some groups do not dance to music. Perhaps music is linked to the definitive features of dance! Or perhaps the human psychobiological bases of rhythm generate both.⁵

Music and dance provide a paired relationship to study, and dance research benefits from two mutually beneficial fields of study: anthropology and music scholarship.

This discussion of music and dance will focus on Native American dance culture. The relationship between dance and music is exemplified in the expressive arts of Native Americans. Research into Native American dance will also be tied to the history of dance research in general.

Dance notation

The scholarly study of dance had, until the 1950s, been a relatively neglected area, with the exception of the work of a few scholars (e.g. Paul Netti) on the one hand, and the development of dance notation on the other. Two notable dance notation schemes were developed: the Benesh system and the Laban system (which is called Labanotation in North America). The Laban system has been in use since the 1920s and provides purely kinetic notation. Developed by Rudolph Laban, the system is 'a guide to the performance of definite movements depicted in a series of graphic symbols.'⁶ The graphs use symbols to represent movement in all parts of the body. In addition, it indicates the quality of movement and weight placement. For example, the system uses symbols to represent slashing motions versus dabbing motions, as well as stressed versus preparatory movements. The system and its terminology do not immediately identify it with any particular dance form, which potentially lends it flexibility and could make it useful in an ethnographic context.

The Benesh system, on the other hand, was developed to record classical dance forms such as ballet. Its relevance to dance ethnography is slender, simply because of its grounding in classical European dance styles. In contrast to the graphs of Labanotation, the Benesh system is based on a matrix that resembles a musical staff. The matrix divides the body into sections and uses symbols placed either on or between the lines to indicate movement, much like musical notes on lines and spaces. Despite the possible limitations inherent in its Western conception, Julia McGuinness-Scott suggests it may have anthropological applications.⁷ In a case study of a Maiali tribe dance from Australia, the movements are analyzed using notational 'staves'. The anthropological information gleaned from this particular movement study is minimal. The primary conclusion was that among a group of dancers, each dancer would add slight variants.⁸ From an anthropological perspective, Benesh notation lacks a sense of the quality of movement, context, interpretations, and possible dance narratives.

¹ Judith Lynne Hanna, 'Dance,' *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction*, ed. Helen Myers (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992): 324.

² Hanna (as n.1): 319.

³ Judith Lynne Hanna, 'Movements towards understanding humans through the anthropological study of dance,' *Current Anthropology* 20 (1979): 316. The prefix 'ethno-' could also be problematized in *ethno*-choreology and dance *ethno*-graphy, not to mention *ethno*-musicology.

⁴ However, Hanna had revised her opinion by 1992 (see n. 1).

⁵ Judith Lynne Hanna, *To Dance is Human: A Theory of Nonverbal Communication* (Austin: U of Texas P, 1979): 22-23.

⁶ Rudolf Laban, *Principles of Dance and Movement Notation* (London: MacDonald and Evans, 1956): 21.

⁷ Julia McGuinness-Scott, *Movement Study and Benesh Movement Notation: An Introduction to Applications in Dance, Medicine, Anthropology, and Other Studies* (London: Oxford UP, 1983).

⁸ McGuinness-Scott (as n. 7): 61-64.

The work of European-based or -influenced dance scholars has been described by Adrienne L. Kaeppler as 'classification, [the] definition of local and regional styles, historical layers and intercultural influences – similar to the aims of musical folklorists.'⁹ Kaeppler has criticized the comparative angle that is often assumed in the early studies of dance, as in much early ethnomusicology work. She has dismissed the work of Curt Sachs, for instance, because of its ties to *Kulturkreislehre* and evolutionary ideas which are now discredited.¹⁰ This European influence, however, is felt strongly in the work of Kurath, who was a colleague of Sachs and of Frank Speck. She was 'a pioneer of empirical, product-orientated studies'¹¹ and incorporated numerous European elements into her work. She developed her own dance notation while working with various Native American groups in North America and incorporated some elements of Labanotation into her work. Kurath tended towards overly descriptive research, which sometimes marked her as a collector. This research characteristic will be assessed later in an examination of her Six Nations research.

Anthropology and dance scholarship

The German-born founder of US anthropology, Franz Boas, is someone whose dance research complemented Kurath: his approach was neither the opposite nor identical. His work was rooted in anthropological ideas; indeed, his was the first truly anthropological work done on dance in North America. Boas and those who followed in his footsteps used an approach similar to some current trends in ethnomusicology. He emphasized cultural context rather than the recording and categorization of physical movement:

Unfortunately, it is only too often that, when collecting dances, one picks up just one or several 'folk-dances' which, after being taken out of their natural context, do not tell us anything about their status in comparison with other dances. In this way, whole collections of dances lose their value to anyone wanting to know more about the dancer's role in the life of a human group. Without knowing their place in the cultural context, we miss the most important element of information: what did these particular dances mean to the people using them? How have they been utilized?¹²

The anthropology of dance, as opposed to dance ethnography, strives to look at the entire context surrounding dance – the rituals, social elements, costumes, cultural relevance and meaning, and the social, political and societal structure:

The study of living dance forms in their own cultural context is the only way to acquire the knowledge of dance ... It will be seen that dance is deeply bound up with human society. Its features are determined by a particular type of culture and,

like a living organism, dance is always changing. The dance culture of any society forms a specific complex, and only against this background can it be properly understood.¹³

The anthropology of dance holds that dances have a specific function in a society and thus inform culture. Functionalist studies such as these are driven by context, and often lack discussion of the physical/'textual' or choreographical elements of dance.¹⁴

Dance is thought by anthropologists to be socially produced, and as a result, to reflect values and norms of society in the same way that music does. The ways in which anthropologists discover correspondences between dance and society vary. Hanna presents a two-part methodology. The first part involves ethnography and is related to dance ethnography and dance notation: essentially, it involves fieldwork and a method of recording in order to facilitate study. Her second part outlines devices that may occur in the dance that convey meaning: concretization, icon, stylization, metonym, metaphor, and actualization. Besides these six devices, Hanna outlines eight 'spheres' in which this activity takes place. These details serve to derive meaning from dance:

Because the body is the instrument of dance, anthropologists look at attitudes toward the lived-in, ubiquitous, sentient body in a people's cultural system. People's experience with the first form of power, their bodies, tap potent, dramatic, and easy-to-recall sources of images that influence their responses to dance as a participant or observer ... dance resonates universal instincts and particular concerns. The medium is part of the dance message.¹⁵

Hanna's approach is largely grounded in the ideas of cultural communication and the physiobiological basis of movement. From her studies, she is able to glean social identities, roles and power relations.

Kaeppler has similar goals in her research but her approach differs from Hanna's because it includes the study of specific movement systems. While Hanna's methodology mentions movement systems in the collection portion, it focuses more on what the movements communicate rather than the movements themselves. Kaeppler's approach aims to 'not simply understand dance in its cultural context, but rather to understand society through analyzing movement systems.'¹⁶ The difference is slight but important: the etic approach of Hanna versus the emic approach of Kaeppler.

In order to continue to approach the study of dance, specific examples from the field are useful. Two scholars and their respective studies stand out as paradigmatic models of two approaches to Native American dance. The research of Franz Boas and Gertrude Kurath is based on work with two geographically disparate Native groups, the Kwakiutl in British Columbia and the Six Nations in Ontario. Their scholarship will be discussed in some detail here in order to determine its relevance to dance research and the study of Native American dance.

⁹ Adrienne L. Kaeppler, 'American approaches to the study of dance,' *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 23 (1991): 11.

¹⁰ Adrienne L. Kaeppler, 'Dance in anthropological perspective,' *Annual Review of Anthropology* 7 (1978): 33.

¹¹ Adrienne L. Kaeppler, 'Ethnochoreology,' *Grove Music Online*

¹² See Rudolf Lange, *The Nature of Dance: An Anthropological Perspective* (New York: International Publications Service, 1976): 108.

¹³ Lange (as n. 12): 108, 112.

¹⁴ See Hanna (as n. 1): 317-18.

¹⁵ Hanna (as n.3): 323.

¹⁶ Kaeppler (as n. 9): 16.

Franz Boas and dance scholarship

Boas conducted research on Kwakiutl dance and music in the west coast of Canada beginning in the 1880s. His research, pertaining specifically to the dance and music of the Kwakiutl Natives, was presented in an article in 1888,¹⁷ and as a portion of a published seminar mediated in 1942 by his daughter, the dancer and researcher Franziska Boas (see n.23). The 1888 article describes specific dances and dance narratives that Boas collected 1886-87. The later article, Boas' last published work, also describes specific dances, but examines more closely the role of dance within culture.

The later article is based on research completed during Boas' last round of fieldwork in the 1930s. A notable aspect of this fieldwork was the use of film to record dance movement. The anthropologist Jay Ruby points out that:

Boas [may] be one of the first anthropologists, and perhaps the first social scientist anywhere, to use the motion picture camera to generate data in natural settings (as opposed to a laboratory) in order to study gesture, motor habits, and dance as manifestations of culture.¹⁸

In 1930, Boas commented about his research with the Kwakiutl: 'The dance problem is difficult. I hope that the films will give us adequate material for making a real study.'¹⁹ The films from the 1930s were later analyzed by Franziska Boas for use in an article in 1942. Franziska Boas suggested that, had Boas had more time, he would have used the films as a basis of Labanotation analysis, an intriguing connection with European dance research pursuits as well as the later work of Gertrude Kurath in the 1950s and 1960s.²⁰ It is apparent from his visual recording of movement and dance that Boas might have considered more extensive physiological study beneficial to his research.

Boas' approach to dance defines him as 'an early proponent of the study of dance and body movement as culture.'²¹ In many ways, he is the forerunner of numerous anthropological studies of dance in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. His work views dance as a culture signature and the 'social identity of [dance] as an expression of culture,'²² a definition of the function of dance that truly develops in the work of scholars such as Royce, and even more strikingly, Williams. Boas in 1942 intimately ties together ethnological analysis and interpretation. His work appears in a seminar that addresses the question of the role of dance in human life from an unbiased anthropological perspective. In her introductory comments, the mediator Franziska Boas states:

We must start again, humbly, at the bottom of the ladder. We must be willing to study and judge and – if necessary – destroy our own gods, particularly those of style, if we are to find contact with the life of the people today. Dance must be thought of as

an expression of communal activity, and its constructive social influence on the individual must be realized and promoted.²³

The seminar has contributions from both anthropologists and ethnomusicologists and ranges from Boas' Native American dance and music research to research conducted in Africa, Haiti, and Bali. The studies all focus on the function and form of dance in each culture.

Due to the structure of the seminar, Boas' study is separated into two sections. The first section describes in detail the dances, context, and music of the Kwakiutl nation. Boas describes the dances in terms of general movements and motions. He uses terms and descriptors such as 'turning,' 'swinging,' 'running,' 'stepping,' and 'dancing.' The adverbs modifying the movement descriptors are 'rapid,' 'short,' 'slow,' and 'rhythmically.' Beyond the purely physical descriptions, Boas includes interpretations of particular movements. The interpretations are based both on the social, ceremonial and physical context of the dance, and on the correlation between the dance and the story that the dance depicts. The war dance is an example where the ceremonial and physical context and the story depiction are evident in Boas' descriptions:

One of the most complicated dances is the so-called war dance which is always performed by a woman. The dancer ... enters the room with very short steps, resting on one foot and then making a short step forward with the other foot. She holds her arms with the elbows close to her body, the forearms stretched forward with the palms upward. This movement indicates that she is trying to conjure up supernatural power from underground.²⁴

Boas continues with a description of the various parts of the dramatic dance, continually referring back to the symbology of the dancer's movements with respect to the supernatural elements of the dance.

Boas concludes his overview of a collection of more than half a dozen different categories of dances, including specific examples, with an extrapolation about the significance of the dances which he viewed:

It will be seen from the foregoing that song and dance accompany all the events of Kwakiutl life, and that they are an essential part in the culture of the people. Song and dance are inseparable here ... The separation between performer and audience that we find in our modern society does not occur in more primitive society such as that represented by the Kwakiutl Indians.²⁵

The obvious problem in the preceding extract is the reference to a 'primitive society' and the comparison to 'modern society'. It is interesting to discover a problem such as this in a collection of writings headed by a manifesto that states the abandonment of judgment and the destruction of

¹⁷ Franz Boas, 'On certain songs and dances of the Kwakiutl of British Columbia,' *The Journal of American Folklore* 1 (1888): 49-64.

¹⁸ Jay Ruby, 'Franz Boas and Early Camera Study of Behavior,' *Kinesics Reports* 3.1 (1980): 7 (<http://astro.temple.edu/%7Eruby/ruby/boas.html>)

¹⁹ Ruby (as n.18): 9.

²⁰ Ruby (as n.18): 9.

²¹ Ruby (as n.18): 9.

²² Ruby (as n.18): 10.

²³ Franziska Boas, 'Introductory note,' *The Function of Dance in Human Society* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1944): 2.

²⁴ Franz Boas, 'Dance and music in the life of the Northwest Coast Indians of North America,' in *The Function of Dance in Human Society: A Seminar Directed by Franziska Boas* (New York: Dance Horizons, 1944): 8.

²⁵ Boas (as n.24): 10.

the so-called ‘gods’ of Western-oriented style. Gleaned from this problem is the realization that, despite good intentions, it is impossible to separate one’s own cultural biases from the perceptions of other cultures.

If the issue of comparative attitudes is disregarded for the moment, it is apparent from this excerpt that certain conclusions can be drawn from an observation-based study of dance. Firstly, dance and music operate within Kwakiutl society as symbiotic forms of expressions. Secondly, there are no apparent barriers for dancers based on age, gender and participation, primarily because of the absence of an audience/participant relationship.

The second section, which in many ways is the more significant part of Boas’ study, is presented as a discussion between the seminar mediator, Franziska Boas, and her father, Franz Boas. The questions concentrate, interestingly, on details of purely physiological elements such as weight centres and gravity, general characteristics of the dance movements, and the relations between dance and everyday life (including movements such as walking). An important question is whether ‘dance [expresses] the life of people as a whole in all cultures.’²⁶ In particular, Franziska Boas refers to the war dance and the act of gathering supernatural powers. She compares this Kwakiutl dance with a Pueblo dance that emphasizes formality and repetition. The comparison between these two geographically disparate groups implies an innate cultural difference that is evident in the style of communication and expression as presented through dance. The formality and repetition, espoused as cultural traits of the Pueblo, are contrasted with a culture that Franziska Boas portrays as ‘full of drama and magic [and] as we have seen, closely bound up with the life of the people. We find here community participation with emphasis on the individual achievement.’²⁷

Gertrude P. Kurath and dance scholarship

Boas’ study of dance and music in Kwakiutl life is a 14-page article, whereas Kurath’s *Dance and Song Rituals of Six Nations Reserve, Ontario* (1968) is a monograph. Kurath includes dance notation, musical transcriptions, costume information, and numerous photographs in her study. As a result of the different eras in which they were working, Boas (1858-1942) and Kurath (1903-1992) do not provide a completely accurate or fair comparison, but examining the work of these two scholars informs and enlightens the study of approaches to dance within a specific cultural environment: Native America.

Adrienne L. Kaepler notes a pivotal difference between two approaches to the study of dance that also reflects the contrast between Boas and Kurath:

I would characterize the focus of European dance researchers to be on the dance product and its authenticity, while the focus of American researchers is on what dance can tell us about society – or to simplify even further, choreological approaches vs. contextual approaches.²⁸

Kurath’s approach is choreological, as shown by her use of dance notation. In her introduction she writes:

The following chapters will recreate the dances and songs of the ceremonies by means of choreographic and musical symbols. The descriptions start with the first Longhouse activity during Midwinter season.²⁹

What follows is a collection of songs and dances that includes short written descriptions, musical transcriptions, and dance transcriptions using dance notation, costume descriptions, instrument information, and contextual information regarding the function of the dance. Like many dance ethnographers, Kurath categorizes dances according to their social or ceremonial usage. In short, Kurath’s study focuses largely on what scholars such as Kaepler have referred to as the ‘dance product.’

An essential feature of Kurath’s study resulting from her fieldwork on the Six Nations reserve is the development of her own system of dance notation. In her introduction to the notation portion of her study, she notes that ‘choreography is defined as the writing down of dances. Verbal descriptions are not adequate, although they may supplement written symbols.’³⁰ Kurath’s notation, like Labanotation, includes both musical transcriptions and dance symbols. The visual appearance of the notation is similar to that of Benesh notation, but Kurath uses a three-line stave, as opposed to the five-line stave of Benesh. Moreover, the symbols that Kurath uses are specific to the dances that she recorded. The symbols are arranged in categories, such as personal symbols, the position of limbs, and the movement of specific appendages.

Figure 1: Kurath, *Dance and Song Rituals of Six Nations Reserve, Ontario*, Personal Symbols.³¹

- ⊕ Female Patient
- ♀ Singer with Rattle
- ♂ Singer with Drum
- Female Leader
- ♂ Male Leader
- ♀ Woman of Moiety 2
- ♀ Woman of Moiety 1
- ♂ Man of Moiety 2
- ♂ Man of Moiety 1
- Woman Facing to Right
- ⊥ Man Facing Forwards, along Dance Line

²⁶ Boas (as n.24): 16.

²⁷ Boas (as n.24): 16.

²⁸ Kaepler (as n.9): 11.

²⁹ Gertrude Kurath, *Dance and Song Rituals of Six Nations Reserve, Ontario* (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada Bulletin No. 220, 1968): 45.

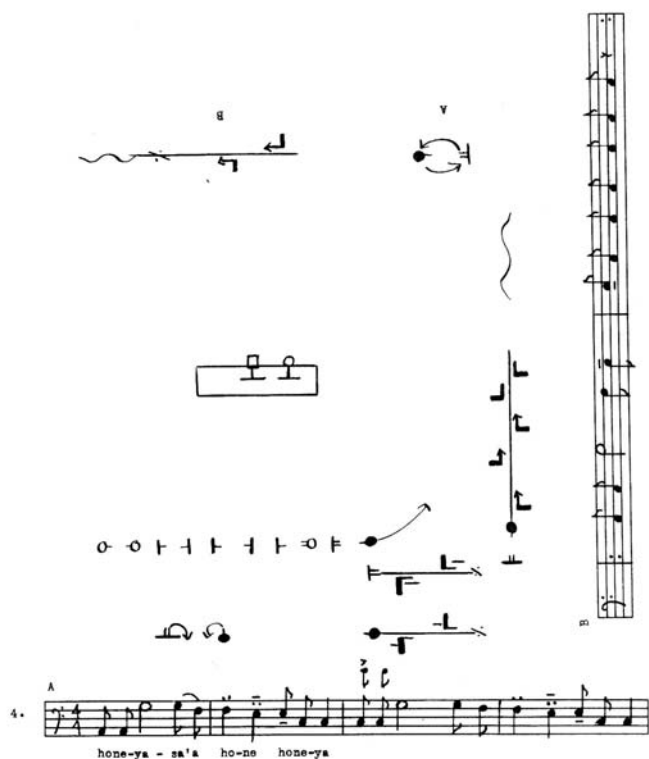
³⁰ Kurath (as n.29): 19.

³¹ Kurath (as n.29): 22.

Figure 1 presents what Kurath labelled ‘personal symbols’ which represent the details of gender, social organization (moiety), and instrumentation. They demonstrate the need for a notation specific to Native American dance styles.

In addition to symbols for physical movements, Kurath expands the notation to a macro level by including ground plans on which the symbols are placed, in addition to the staves. Figure 2 shows an example of the three elements that Kurath combines in her study of specific dances. With the notation, Kurath also includes short written descriptions that clarify the notated dance.

Figure 2: Kurath, *Dance and Song Rituals of Six Nations Reserve, Ontario, Buffalo Dance, Part IV, transcription, ground plan and dance notation.*³²



An earlier work by Kurath, *Iroquois Music and Dance: Ceremonial Arts of Two Seneca Longhouses*, covers dance in a similar way to her 1968 work, with musical and choreographical descriptions and analyses of a collection of Iroquois dances and songs.³³ The notation is virtually identical to that of the later publication, though she uses more stick figures to illustrate movement. The principal – indeed the only – interpretive statements are presented as the ‘Physiology and Psychology of Performance’. Even in this section, though, Kurath’s interpretations and observations do not extend beyond more elaborate and verbose descriptions of the dances and the spectators’ reactions.

Kurath’s methodology has been outlined by Kaeppler in order to demonstrate the orientation of Kurath’s approach toward the scientific study of movement or choreology. Her methodology incorporates fieldwork,

³² Kurath (as n.29): 61.

³³ Gertrude Kurath, *Iroquois Music and Dance: Ceremonial Arts of Two Seneca Longhouses* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1964), pp. 63-65.

laboratory study, analysis of style, graphic presentation, analysis of movements, complete representation of dances, and conclusions and theories.³⁴ Kurath’s approach differs from Boas’ in two important details: firstly, and this is not surprising given the vast scope of Boas’ research, Kurath has a more specific and intentional approach towards dance. Secondly, there is the addition of what Kaeppler refers to as a ‘laboratory study,’ the step at which Kurath’s ethnography becomes a choreographic versus anthropological analysis.

Despite her own good intentions, Kurath’s work has a tendency towards data collection rather than ethnographic research. One issue here was Kurath’s influences in the field of dance ethnology. Initiated into the field by anthropologists William Fenton and Frank Speck, Kurath’s task was:

To assist them in amassing the empirical data they were after – descriptions of choreographic groundplans, generalized descriptions of body movements, and statements about cultural symbolism as reflected in choreographic patterns.³⁵

Kurath’s work was thus highly driven by data collection. In spite of her statement that dance ethnology is ‘an approach toward, and method of, eliciting the place of dance in human life – in a word, as a branch of anthropology,’³⁶ her writings tended to focus on detailed descriptions and choreographic analysis. The dichotomy between her opinions concerning dance ethnology (see the article cited in n.35) and what she produced on Native American dance and music, specifically in the 1960s, makes her a pivotal and complex figure in the history of both dance ethnology and the anthropology of dance. She was a bridge between two stages in the evolution of dance research.

Despite her highly respected position in the history of dance research, Kurath has faced criticism in light of her highly choreographical approach to studying dance:

Gertrude Kurath, a dancer, with degrees in art history, music, and drama, has been hailed as the parent of dance ethnology. Yet there is really very little that one can point to in her work that is anthropological from a theoretical point of view.³⁷

At the same time, her approach to dance lays the groundwork for further ethnological analysis, the kind of groundwork that was lacking in Boas’ study of Kwakiutl dance. It is precisely this kind of technical choreographic information that Boas was likely interested in pursuing that persuaded William Fenton and Franck Speck to encourage Kurath’s data collection.³⁸

It is only through the study of early dance ethnographers and anthropologists that more current research can be understood and contextualized in the learning

³⁴ Kaeppler (as n.10): 36.

³⁵ Kaeppler (as n.9): 12.

³⁶ Gertrude P. Kurath, ‘Panorama of dance ethnology,’ *Current Anthropology* 1 (1960): 250.

³⁷ Kaeppler (as n.10): 35.

³⁸ Franck Speck was a student of Boas at Columbia University. The connection that this creates between Boas and Kurath is one that is rarely studied, but perhaps would help to establish a sense of lineage in the field of dance ethnology. Speck published, with Leonard Broom, *Cherokee Dance and Drama*, which was, essentially, a collection of dance repertoires. In fact, the central portion of his publication is entitled ‘The Repertory of Dances.’

processes of an emerging field of study. It is also through the writings and analyses of scholars such as Boas and Kurath that approaches to and perceptions of Native American dance can begin to be understood and that methodologies can be formed for future studies. Boas' Kwakiutl dance research lacks the choreographic and ethnographic details that would contribute to a fully formed anthropological study. On the other hand, Kurath's study focuses perhaps too much on choreology. It is in the works of anthropologists in the 1970s, such as Kaepler and Hanna, that another level of research is added to the already multifaceted study of dance.

Critical issues in recent dance scholarship

Current approaches to dance, and more specifically Native American dance, during the 1990s and into the 21st century, are characterized by emphasis on reciprocal fieldwork, the study of dance in modern contexts such as the powwow, and the increased emphasis on social, political and cultural signifiers evident in dance. Joan D. Frosch, who is a dance ethnographer, outlines some possible methodologies and approaches in the study of dance in an essay published in *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry* (see n.39). This collection of essays was intended as an introduction to dance research and as such is a useful indicator of the state of current dance research. Frosch's approach differs from most dance researchers before the 1990s. Her work is informed and educated by the vast well of dance knowledge available. The work of Boas and Kurath, Royce and Hanna, Williams and Kealiinohomoku all contribute to the conclusions that Frosch reaches in regards to dance research.

What is important to note about Frosch's approach is the way in which it integrates, or weaves, the threads of research methodologies and systems in order to provide a clearer focus on dance ethnography. She recognizes the need to contextualize dance socially and culturally from an anthropological standpoint, and points out the importance of analytical tools such as dance notation and the use of film or video in the study of dance. She also stresses the need to respect and have reciprocal relationships with the culture being studied. This movement reflects the general trend in both anthropological and ethnomusicological research towards a new kind of fieldwork and more reciprocal relationships with informants:

Early research on dance in culture emerged from [colonialism] and is tainted with notions of subjugation, otherness, exotica, and cultural superiority....As a practice, ethnography can shift the emphasis in the research from the sole needs of the researcher and his or her cultural system (most often, the academy), to serving a broader set of purposes.³⁹

In the dance entry in the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, Kealiinohomoku further acknowledges this new state of dance research:

³⁹ Frosch, 'Dance ethnography: tracing the weave of dance in the fabric of culture,' *Researching Dance: Evolving Modes of Inquiry*, ed. Sondra Fraleigh and Penelope Hanstein (Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1999): 249-80 (citation: 269).

The dance mosaic of North America has become evident and its many parts acknowledged and honored in the twentieth to the twenty-first century ... New methods have been developed to honor, research, and preserve dance materials.⁴⁰

The new methods that Kealiinohomoku refers to are the ones that recognize dance, specifically in a Native context, as inseparable from other elements of society, in the same way that music is intrinsically tied to Native culture. In contrast to Boas and Kurath, who hold that dance contributes to the value of culture, more recent interpretations of Native American dance view it as 'inherent to the proper function of the culture.'⁴¹ In other words, although it is still necessary and beneficial to study Native American dance, it cannot be isolated to the same degree that it was from the 1930s to the 1970s. The ethnomusicologist Nicole Beaudry comments:

Among other things, I came to understand that no expressive behavior exists in isolation from its cultural context and therefore that the shortest route toward real understanding is still the long way around – that I needed to see the forest as well as the tress.⁴²

Although Beaudry's specific fieldwork is focused on music rather than dance, her insights concerning the nature of fieldwork involved in ethnography, anthropology and ethnomusicology are also beneficial for the study of dance.

Bi-choreology

An intriguing element in research relevant to current trends in ethnomusicology and dance research surfaced in the late 1950s with Mantle Hood's concept of 'bi-musicality,' the training in a non-Western musical tradition to the point of fluency and comprehension.⁴³ Although this term is a musical one, derived from an earlier linguistic use, it can be extended further to refer to competency in more than one cultural style of dance. A suitable term that could be coined is 'bi-choreology,' defined as training in dance forms other than Western forms, or training in multiple dance forms originating in different cultures. An example of someone who is bi-choreological would be a dancer who was trained in both classical European ballet and the dances of a Native American group or groups. This dancer would be fluent in the physical vocabulary of these disparate dance forms, and would be functionally fluent in the performance of the dances. For example, a dancer could be proficient in both classical ballet, following the methods of the Royal Academy of Dance or the Cecchetti school, and in Native

⁴⁰ See Kealiinohomoku, 'Dance,' *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, ed. Bruno Nettl and Ruth M. Stone, 206-26 (citation: 221).

⁴¹ See Kealiinohomoku, 'Dance,' *Native America in the Twentieth Century: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Mary B. Davis, 164-69 (citation: 165).

⁴² Nicole Beaudry, 'The challenges of human relations in ethnographic enquiry,' *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, ed. Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (New York: Oxford UP, 1997): 63-83 (citation: 68).

⁴³ Mantle Hood, 'The challenge of bi-musicality,' *Ethnomusicology: Ethnomusicological Theory and Method*, ed. Kay Kaufman Shelemay (New York: Garland, 1990): 111-15. Helen Myers in 'Ethnomusicology,' *Ethnomusicology: An Introduction* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992): 9 points out that the idea of bi-musicality exists in other ethnomusicological writings of generally the same time, notably in the work of Charles Seeger, who drew on the comparison between music and language.

dance, such as the Jingle dress dance of the contemporary powwow.⁴⁴

The benefits of bi-choreology in dance research would be numerous, and would correspond to those of bi-musicality. A better understanding of theoretical systems, of the methodologies of learning, and of the function of performance are all derived from the physical, emotional and psychological involvement manifest in bi-musicality. Bi-choreology would enable dance researchers to fully involve themselves in the physical realm of dance, rather than simply observing, discussing or recording dance movements. Presumably, the result would be a greater and deeper understanding of how dance exists within a culture.

A short time after Mantle Hood introduced the term 'bi-musicality,' Kurath discussed the training of dance ethnologists. A dancer herself, Kurath recognized the importance of dance training for dance ethnologists:

An adequate course of training – which should include courses not only in anthropology but also in kinesiology or 'modern' dance (not ballet), folk dancing, dance notation, and music, preferably by the Dalcroze system of kinetic rhythmic analysis – does not exist.⁴⁵

Obviously, this sort of training is demanding academically and physically, and is time-consuming. As Kurath points out, it is not a viable option for most schools that offer degrees in the anthropology of dance or dance ethnography. However, previous dance training seems to be, especially in recent years, a virtual requirement for dance researchers. Kurath, Kealiinohomoku, Eleanor King, and even Royce had dance training in some form.⁴⁶ Previous dance training might even provide the impetus for the study of dance. While researchers such as Kurath had dance training, the question is whether the training was applied to the learning of new dance forms. Early researchers of Native music and dance, such as Marius Barbeau on the Nass River, displayed some element of physical involvement by learning dances and songs, but later scholars have left that area of their research vague.⁴⁷

A basic understanding of dance based on dance training is considered by some to be a pivotal requirement in dance research:

Research that is sound must be done by dancers who have achieved the insight and point of view of the ethnologist, or by musicians and ethnologists with dance training. It is difficult for an anthropology graduate without previous dance training to learn dance theory and notation in a few spare hours.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Tara Browner, *Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Pow-wow* (Chicago: U of Illinois P, 2002): 53.

⁴⁵ Gertrude P. Kurath, 'Panorama of dance ethnology,' *Current Anthropology* 1 (1960): 233-54 (citation: 247).

⁴⁶ As a point of interest and reference, the author of this paper has had 16 years of dance experience in a variety of Western and European dance forms such as ballet, modern, jazz, and tap.

⁴⁷ It is interesting to note the connections between Boas and Speck, Speck and Kurath, and Barbeau and Kurath in the early 20th century. Communications, teaching and research guidance all connect Kurath, one of the central figures in dance ethnography, to three pivotal figures in Native American music, and to a smaller degree, with all of them, Native dance.

⁴⁸ See Kurath (as n.45): 247.

Like ethnomusicologists, or even musicologists in general, a dance researcher must pursue a variety of specific fields of study in order to produce informed and well-rounded research and studies. Dance training, in the same strain as practical music training for a musicologist, is important for the researcher delving into dance in an analytically and culturally informative way. There is even a strong correlation between dance and music in the learning of dance: 'In many cultures movement reveals the structure and performance of sound; through embodying a people's dance in one's own physicality, one can gain an understanding of their music.'⁴⁹ It should be added that one can also gain a better understanding of the dance itself by instilling the movements into one's own physiological consciousness.⁵⁰

Bi-choreology in a Native American research context has not yet been fully explored. Although scholars such as Kurath and Kealiinohomoku are dancers in their own right, physical literacy in Native dance forms is not stressed in current dance research or in the limited research that focuses on the specifics of dance. Native American dance literacy is more accessible, however, with the advent of groups such as the American Indian Dance Theatre, and the Great American Indian Dance Company. These professional troupes resemble Western performance groups such as the Toronto Dance Theatre and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The increased accessibility of Native American dance, as well as the rise of competitive dance in powwows, has resulted in increased opportunities for dance researchers not only to become literate in dance forms, but also to explore the evolving role of dance in modern Native culture.

Bi-choreology in dance research is yet more proof of the multidisciplinary nature of dance studies, although bi-choreology is not the only potential addition to dance research. The absorption of political studies, cultural change and ethnomusicology is manifested in writings that explore the role of the powwow in current Native culture and in writings that incorporate the discussion of gender, music, rituals and the stereotyping of Native dance and music. The work of ethnographer and historian Clyde Ellis exemplifies some of the recent trends in powwow research. He utilizes his own observations on powwow culture, and subsequently dance, but he also recorded the words of Native consultants, such as the following from a Kiowa elder:

We're a dancing people, always have been ... God gave us these ways ... He gave us lots of ways to express ourselves. One of them is these dances. Wherever I go to them, whatever they are – powwow, gourd dance, Black Legs, whatever – I'm right where those old people were. Singing those songs, dancing where they danced ... It's good, it's powerful.⁵¹

⁴⁹ See Hanna (as n.1): 324.

⁵⁰ A case in point is Joan D. Frosch's research in Cuba. She maintains that with an understanding of the actual movements through participation, and 'dancing [so] that one can fully understand dance,' she was able to verify, and in a sense legitimize, the research that she had completed using an anthropological approach. Frosch (as n.39): 264.

⁵¹ Clyde Ellis, *A Dancing People: Powwow Culture on the Southern Plains* (Lawrence: UP of Kansas, 2003): 7-8.

This excerpt demonstrates the value inherent in a method of fieldwork that encourages consultants to take a larger and more vocal role in the processes of research, study, and sometimes writing.

Collaborative approaches in dance scholarship

An interesting aspect of Ellis's book is his brief explanation concerning methodology and approach:

Trained as a historian, I make no claims as an ethnographer or cultural anthropologist ... But after two decades of reading the work of the anthropologists noted above [W. David Baird and L.G. Moses], and of others who have led the way to what used to be called the 'New Indian History' (a movement now on the verge of venerable middle-age), it is clear that a collaborative approach is the best way to do this work.⁵²

Collaborative approaches are characteristic of much research in the late 20th century. The reciprocity that is typical of a collaborative approach lends an element of cultural respect to dance research that shows a clear departure from the age of dance collection and from movement analysis removed from the Native context. There is an evident embracing of the role of actual Native people in dance, whereas earlier work was predisposed to content-based investigations.

More recent studies, such as those by Ellis and Kealiinohomoku, rely heavily on the words of Native consultants for the role and meaning of dance. As such, the studies communicate Native dance using terminology and explanations provided by these consultants. An example of this is seen in a collection of essays on Native music in Washington State.⁵³ The introduction to the book is written by Vi Hilbert, a Native elder who comments on maintaining culture and the sacredness of tradition, music and stories.⁵⁴

The current trends in dance ethnography and the anthropology of dance are also reflected in the increased acceptance at universities of the study of dance as a field of study and degree topic. York University, Indiana University, and the University of Illinois all offer classes and degrees in the anthropology of dance. As Kaeppler comments: 'Dance is essential to human life, worthy of support, valuable in school curricula, important for research, and part of the measure of culture's identity.'⁵⁵

Drid Williams, Joan D. Frosch and Nina de Shane are among some of the recent researchers in the field who are continuing the work begun by Boas, Kurath, Royce, Kaeppler, and Hanna. The current direction is decidedly anthropological, although it still remains largely an arm of ethnomusicology, especially in regards to Native American dance, and is certainly following the trends in both ethnomusicology and anthropology towards new kinds of fieldwork and new perspectives on dance that are far removed from the thoughts of the 1960s and 1970s:

The coalescence of dance studies across a series of academic disciplines is not a deconstructed post-modern fad, but echoes the reflexive fragmentation of the discipline of anthropology, while adopting its basic tenants.⁵⁶

A general tendency can be seen in the study of dance ethnology and anthropology. Although the descriptive works of Kurath and others provide collections which may provide an entrance into the study of Native dance, a greater amount of cultural and anthropological meaning can be gleaned from an approach that honors both cultural context and collaboration and consultation with Native communities. In the words of Buckland, an ideal approach would see both the forest and the trees:

The anthropology of dance, though, is an academic discourse which seeks to understand, through empirical and conceptual inquiry, all dance and movement systems and necessitates the sustained practice of ethnography in order to understand emic perceptions.⁵⁷

In other words, an approach is needed that integrates a Kurath-inspired ethnographic and choreographic approach with an anthropological approach fathered by Boas and matured in the twentieth century by Royce, Kaeppler and Williams. Perhaps the only other addition to this already extensive base of approaches is a stress on bi-choreology, which, along with collaborative research, represents another level of integrated dance research in the 21st century.

Notwithstanding controversies over the study of dance and the realities of dance research in a Native context, Kealiinohomoku concludes that 'No description of Native Americans is complete without full attention on dance and its context.'⁵⁸ It is not this paper's intention to suggest that no description of Native dance is complete without attention paid to the growth and history of the study of dance. But due to the inevitable impact of the state of dance research on the interpretation of dance, it is both necessary and relevant to review current directions of dance research in order to better understand which paths future research may follow. As for the dance itself, Native or otherwise:

We must set our sights as high (or as deep) in order to eventually attain philosophical understanding, from diverse cultural points of view, of the various activities and cultural forms that manipulate human bodies in time and space.⁵⁹

Mary Caldwell is a fourth-year student in the B.Mus. degree programme at Queen's University. She is also continuing her own dance education, specifically in modern and ballet.

⁵² Ellis (as n.51): 9-10.

⁵³ Willi Smyth and Esmé Ryan, ed. *Spirit of the First People: Native American Music Traditions of Washington State* (Seattle: U of Washington P, 1999).

⁵⁴ See Smyth and Ryan, *Spirit of the First People: Native American Music Traditions of Washington State*, pp. 3-5.

⁵⁵ Kealiinohomoku (as n.40): 222.

⁵⁶ Kaeppler (as n.9): 18.

⁵⁷ Theresa Buckland, 'All Dances are Ethnic, but Some are More Ethnic Than Others,' *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 17, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Kealiinohomoku (as n.41): 169.

⁵⁹ Kaeppler (as n.10): 48.

Reviews

Carol J. Oja. *Colin McPhee: Composer in Two Worlds*. Music in American Life series. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004 (originally publ. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1990). xxvi, 354 pp., ill., music. ISBN 0-252-07180-8. US\$25.00 (paper).

This book is based on the author's PhD thesis (CUNY 1985) and is a reprint of the original 1990 publication, with a new preface and an added list of recent CD recordings of McPhee's music.¹ References in the text to 'today' (e.g. 129) refer to the period of Oja's thesis research in the early to mid-1980s, and were already out of date when the book was first published; they are positively antiquarian now. Various shortcomings, discrepancies, and errors in the book that were pointed out by earlier reviewers have not been corrected.²

After completing her doctorate, Oja taught at Brooklyn College and the College of William and Mary. She succeeded her mentor, H. Wiley Hitchcock, as the director of the Institute for Studies in American Music, later served as the President of the Society for American Music, and is currently the William Powell Mason Professor of Music at Harvard University. It is somewhat ironic, perhaps, that she has made a better career out of telling McPhee's life story than McPhee himself ever did in living it.³ But McPhee must be given full credit as the agent of his own misfortunes. He seems to have been a nasty piece of work, with a foul temper that became abusive after he had had too much to drink (which happened rather frequently, to judge by his early death from cirrhosis of the liver). He was brilliant but undisciplined, and a hedonist who worked only when not diverted by sensual pleasures. Add into this mix regular bouts of suicidal depression, and one is left to wonder how he attracted the devoted friendship of the likes of Henry and Sidney Cowell, Aaron Copland, Carlos Chávez, and Mantle Hood.

McPhee's name is indelibly linked with the music and culture of Bali, where he lived for seven years in the 1930s. He wrote two books on the subject, *A House in Bali* (1946) and *Music in Bali* (published posthumously in 1966), in addition to numerous articles. The music of Bali also influenced his best known composition, *Tabuh-Tabuhan* for orchestra (1936), and many of his other musical works as well.

¹ Endnotes for the *original* version of the Preface have not been deleted (288-89), evidence of slapdash editorial work for this reprint.

² See, for example, the laudatory review by John Beckwith in *American Music* 10.4 (Winter 1992): 487-90 which points out an error in Oja's reference to Lester Pearson, and the much more critical review by Larry Polansky in *Ethnomusicology* 37.3 (Autumn 1993): 437-41.

³ Oja has published widely on topics other than McPhee, including the award-winning book *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Tabuh-Tabuhan has recently been canonized as part of the curriculum of the introductory music history survey course at my university, so I was surprised to read in Polansky's review of Oja's book that this work 'has often been thought of ... as an example of how not to incorporate non-Western elements into Western art music.'⁴ Oja would disagree, as would Alex Pauk, who conducted the work for CBC Records in 1997.⁵

McPhee was born in 1900 in Montreal, but was raised in Toronto and lived there until 1924, apart from a three year stint in Baltimore studying at the Peabody Conservatory. In 1924 he was soloist in a performance by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra under Luigi von Kunitz of a piano concerto that he had written; the score is lost, but to judge by the reviews, the concerto seems to have been shockingly modern, at least by the local standards of the day. McPhee went on to study in Paris and then settled in New York, before moving to Bali in 1931 with his wife, the anthropologist Jane Belo.

Bali today brings to mind images of beach resorts, surfing, and terrorism. The island has been transformed since the opening of its international airport in 1969, which has had almost as great an impact on music there as did the dissolution of the kingdoms and courts when the Dutch took over the administration of the island in 1908. But to McPhee in the 1930s, Bali was a remote and unspoiled paradise (though he did complain about increasing numbers of Western tourists). In the 1930s the search for an antidote to Western civilization with its crowded cities, dehumanizing technology, and the inexorable march to war led many anthropologists to do research among more 'primitive' cultures. Margaret Mead was the best known of this lot, and she created a sensation when her *Coming of Age in Samoa*, with its tales of uninhibited casual sex, was published in 1928. Her findings have been questioned more recently, and it has been claimed that she was either projecting her own fantasies or else being duped by her informants (or perhaps both). Mead and her husband went to Bali in 1936, inspired by the example of their friends McPhee and Belo (309 n15). There is ample evidence that McPhee, too, was equally guilty of projecting fantasies: 'I feel I am going out for good [he was travelling to Bali, for his second stay, late in 1936]. Nothing matters to me except to shut out the

⁴ Polansky (as in n.2), 439.

⁵ *Tabuh-Tabuhan: Music of Colin McPhee*, Esprit Orchestra (cond. Alex Pauk), CBC SMCD 5181 (see illustration at end of article).

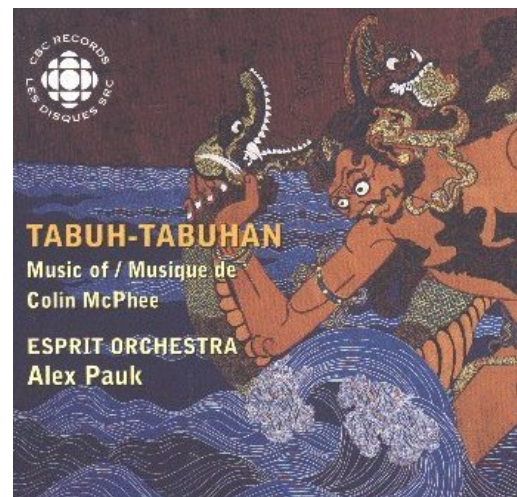
hideous nightmare which is called civilization' (118; from a letter to Chávez). This attitude carried over into his engagement with the music of Bali: 'This, I thought, is the way music was meant to be, blithe, transparent, rejoicing the soul with its eager rhythm and lovely sound' (114, from *A House in Bali* 38); and 'Here there was no conductor's stick to beat time, no overeloquent hands to urge or subdue ... [the music] was something free and purely physical, like swimming or running' (87, from *A House in Bali* 181). But the lure was not just the wonderful music: Oja adds that 'Several of his friends have suggested that one of the appeals of Bali was its openness to homosexuality' (142).⁶

For McPhee, the fantasy life came to an end in December 1938. Earlier that year he had divorced his wife, whose money had supported their existence in Bali, and so he was forced to return to New York to eke out a living. In 1941 he wrote to Carlos Chávez that 'Life has been incredibly dull and empty since I returned [from Bali], and now I must add to all that financial problems' (169). He managed to earn some money from journalism, for which he had quite a flare – he memorably described the Andrews Sisters, for instance, as 'those Rhine maidens of the jukebox' (166). There were also a few commissions, especially after the New York premiere of *Tabuh-Tabuhan* as part of a concert of music by Canadian composers conducted by Leopold Stokowski in 1953 ('I re-emerged as an exotic Canadian and *Tabuh* had terrific success,' he wrote to Chávez). But in general, it was a 20-year slide into the depths, proving the veracity of Vergil's axiom 'Facilis descensus Averno.' A belated rescue came in 1960 with an offer from Mantle Hood to teach at UCLA, but by then the decline was irreversible; McPhee had to resign his position at the end of 1963 due to ill health, and he died in January 1964.

Oja's research has done much to resuscitate McPhee's reputation.⁷ There have been new recordings of his music, his own books have been reissued, and some of his music has been reprinted in the Canadian Musical Heritage series.⁸ But it is perhaps germane to remember that there is a reason why McPhee fell into obscurity already during his lifetime. The current widespread popularity of gamelan ensembles in North America (there are seven in Toronto, for instance,

according to the web site of the Indonesian Consulate General⁹) stems not from McPhee's example, but rather from that of Mantle Hood. Hood's idea of bimusicality (performing ability in two different musical traditions) stressed that students should have playing experience on gamelan instruments; McPhee preferred to make transcriptions of Balinese gamelan music for Western instruments (especially two pianos). Oddly enough McPhee seems to have had little, if any, practical experience in playing the instruments of the gamelan. His own compositions are not numerous and are of uneven quality; even the best of them have experienced a varied reception. Polansky's characterization – 'he appears as a rather whining, somewhat self-absorbed, and relatively unproductive composer'¹⁰ – seems, in fact, a rather generous assessment to me. McPhee turned his back decisively on Canada, but did not find widespread acceptance or success in the United States. In short, he was neither a successful composer nor a good ethnomusicologist. Oja argues in her new Preface on behalf of McPhee's pioneering efforts in making Balinese music better known in the West. He has also been given credit by ethnomusicologists for helping to revive the moribund tradition of the *gamelan angklung* (a gamelan ensemble that includes a pitched bamboo instrument called the *angklung*) in Bali; McPhee tells this story in his children's book *A Club of Small Men* (1948). But all of his accomplishments have been overshadowed by other composer/ethnomusicologists, such as Evan Ziporyn at MIT and Michael Tenzer at UBC.

It is good to have Oja's book back in print. It is a pity, though, that she did not take (or perhaps was not given) the opportunity to revise and improve upon it, in order to give us a more rounded, accurate, and up-to-date assessment of McPhee's life and work. *R.E.*



⁶ Later she states this as a fact, rather than an opinion: 'He also found comfort in the island's acceptance of homosexuality' (181). This is one example of the many discrepancies in the book.

⁷ Oja has donated her McPhee-related interview tapes (45 cassettes in all) to the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive, which also holds the Colin McPhee Collection; see <http://catalogeth.library.ucla.edu> (accessed 14 July 2005).

⁸ *Four Piano Sketches, Op. 1* is in *CMH 6* (263-7); *Tabuh-Tabuhan* is in *CMH 16* (6-62); and the *Concerto for Piano with Wind Octette Accompaniment* is in *CMH 24* (1-50).

⁹ http://www.indonesiatoronto.org/default.asp?page=information&act=gamelan_group (accessed 14 July 2005).

¹⁰ Polansky (as in n.2), 439-40.

There has been a generous production of biographies of Canadian musicians of every stripe in recent years. To confine the discussion to musicians in the art music tradition, book-length studies of Louis Applebaum, Harry Freedman, Niki Goldschmidt, and Glenn Gould have been reviewed in this newsletter since it began publication in January 2003. The book under review here is, somewhat surprisingly, the first biography of the late Vancouver-based composer Jean Coulthard (1908-2000). Both authors have published substantial works on Coulthard previously. Duke completed a PhD thesis at the University of Victoria on Coulthard's orchestral music in 1993, and Bruneau has written three articles about her. The authors were also able to draw upon the work of other scholars, including Glenn Colton and five others who have done a doctoral degree on some aspect of Coulthard's music.

During her long lifetime Coulthard was often grouped together with Barbara Pentland and Violet Archer. These three were the leading Canadian women composers of their generation, and were born within five years of each other. All three reached their most productive years as composers comparatively late in their careers, and all three worked for much or all of their life in Western Canada. By an ironic twist of fate, the three were also linked by their deaths, which took place within a six-week period early in 2000.¹

But as the authors point out, the differences were at least as notable as the similarities, especially between Pentland and Coulthard. Both were recruited by Harry Adaskin to join the Music Department at the University of British Columbia: Coulthard joined it in 1947 and Pentland in 1949. They even shared an office for many years, but 'by style and temperament, [the two] were destined to misunderstanding. Pentland's quest for originality drew her to an increasingly radical idiom, and an aggressively confrontational stance that challenged conventional taste. Coulthard knew her Vancouver audience and wished to charm them into understanding her brand of modernism. There was to be no common ground for the next five decades. She and Pentland would agree to disagree' (75). Further strains must have been placed on the relationship between the two when Adaskin tried (unsuccessfully) to fire Coulthard: the authors speculate (91) that he was hoping to secure Pentland's position at the expense of Coulthard.

In some ways Coulthard seems not to have been very well suited to a life in academia. She lasted only one term herself as a student at UBC in the B.A. degree programme, and never obtained a university degree until she was awarded an honorary doctorate from UBC 15 years after she retired (a second from Concordia followed a few years later). She did not have the taste or talent for university politics, and as a result she never rose above the rank of Senior Lecturer. Scholarship for its own sake held no interest for her, and her compositional style was widely regarded as old fashioned. As a Canadian in a department dominated by Americans (*plus ça change*)² and a woman in a male academic milieu, she was marginalized twice over. The wonder of it is that she managed to hang on to her job under these conditions, and to serve as a valued mentor to a number of very talented young composers.

What drove her on under these circumstances was an enduring love of composing music. Though not university trained, she studied with some of the most famous names in 20th-century music, including Bartók, Boulanger, and Schoenberg. In 1944, at the height of the Second World War and with her one-year-old daughter in tow, she moved to New York to study with Bernard Wagenaar. If that is not determination, I don't know what is. The lessons and the resolve paid off in the end: Coulthard enjoyed a long and productive career as a composer, and her music has been popular with performers and audiences, if not with academics and critics. A list of CD recordings of her music (185-92) includes nearly 50 different works, of which about 30 were commercially published (181-84). She enjoyed the greatest success with her instrumental music, and some of her songs and choral pieces have also found their way into the repertoire. Opera, as is so often the case for women composers, proved to be her undoing. *The Return of the Native* (with a libretto by herself and Edna Baxter, based on the novel by Hardy) was her one effort in this genre: it took 25 years to complete and was performed just once (with piano accompaniment), 15 years after it was finished.

It is high time that Coulthard's life story has been told. A biography of Pentland appeared in 1983, and a bio-bibliography of Archer was published in 1991. With this brief but worthy book, Coulthard has at last deservedly joined the ranks of canonized Canadian women composers. R.E.

¹ See James Deaville, ed. 'Colloquy/débat: Violet Archer, Jean Coulthard, and Barbara Pentland remembered,' *Canadian University Music Review* 20.2 (2000): 1-15.

² See my 'Music academia in the news,' *ICM Newsletter* 2.2 (May 2004): 2 for an update on this issue.

Briefly Noted

Dave Bidini. *For Those About to Rock: A Road Map to Being in a Band*. Toronto: Tundra, 2004. 138 pp. ISBN 0-88776-653-6. \$12.99 (paper).

This is an autobiographical volume by the 40-year old rhythm guitarist of the Toronto band the Rheostatics, masquerading as a 'how to' book about being in a rock band. The author states in the Introduction that the book is intended for readers under 40, but most of the anecdotes are about rock music in Canada in the old days, and will appeal to those who are 40 or over. Some chapters might prove mildly useful to aspiring rock musicians, such as those on what to wear, how to name a band, and what it is like to work in a recording studio. Other chapters are of purely personal interest,

such as the one about a dismal tour of Ireland by the Rheostatics, or the gushing tribute to Rush ('The Men Who Hold High Places: Bands We Love and Why,' 67-76). There is a chapter on what it is like to tour as a rock musician in Canada, territory that Bidini covered better and in more detail in his earlier book *On a Cold Road* (1998). Bidini is a deft prose stylist, but not a terribly literate writer. He has been a musician for nearly 30 years, but this slender little book is just an entertaining set of tales rather than an insider's guide to the music business. *R.E.*

David Bedford and Harvey Sawler. *On the Road with Dutch Mason*. Halifax: Nimbus, 2005. vi, 200 pp, ill. ISBN 1-55109-510-6. \$19.95 (paper).

The Nova Scotia blues musician Norman Mason was born in 1938 in Lunenburg and was raised in Kentville. He acquired the nickname 'Dutch' from his distinctive Lunenburg accent. He has been married three times and has two sons, one of whom, Garrett, is an aspiring and talented bluesman himself. Mason's own inspiration is B.B. King, who also (according to legend) suggested that Mason be called the 'king of the blues in Canada.' One of Mason's band members, perhaps out of innate Canadian modesty, suggested instead the title 'Prime Minister of the Blues,' and it stuck.

This quirky book is an affectionate and at times moving and insightful tribute to Mason. It is structured as an account of an (imaginary) tour across Eastern Canada by Dutch Mason and his band in 2003. Mason, his body wracked by arthritis and years of substance abuse, is now confined to a wheelchair and can only sing (he has played a variety of instruments over the years, notably drums and guitar). David Bedford, a political scientist at the University of New Brunswick

by day and a blues harp (harmonica) player by night, imagines himself into the band for the trip, and he interviews his fellow musicians along the way. The book reproduces Mason's colorful way of speaking (the f-word appears in nearly every sentence) and it details his heavy drinking, long suffering, under-achieving life on the margins of society. One of Mason's band members declares that Mason plays a distinctively Eastern Canadian blues style, which he terms the 'Lunenburg boogie' (82): it incorporates the Chicago blues style, with a synthesis of other traditions as well. The style, and Mason's career, never caught on with US audiences. Nevertheless, Mason found fame and fortune briefly in Canada in the early 1980s, and he claims to have made \$15,000 a week at his height (130). The effort of sustaining a career at that level proved to be too much for Mason, though, so he settled for a regional rather than an international profile as prime minister, rather than king or emperor, of the blues. *R.E.*

William Echard. *Neil Young and the Poetics of Energy*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005. x, 260 pp, music. ISBN 0-253-21768-7 (paper) / 0-253-34581-2 (cloth). US\$19.95 (paper) / US\$50.00 (cloth).

This book is a detailed exploration of the reception and interpretation of Neil Young's music, rather than a biographical study. The author draws upon the work of Bakhtin, Kristeva, and Peirce, among others, and the book is full of cultural theory terms such as dialogism, idiolects, and indexicality. Echard also references fan responses, drawn primarily from the Internet "Rust List" discussion group for fans, which has drawn up to

100 comments a day. As a self-proclaimed '*scholar-fan*' (the term is Richard Middleton's), Echard attempts to embrace an intermediate position between two types of discourse, scholarly and casual (3). But aside from the first chapter, which is a chronological survey of the reception of Young's music, most of the book will likely prove to be too academically oriented for Neil Young fans who are not also cultural theorists. *R.E.*