

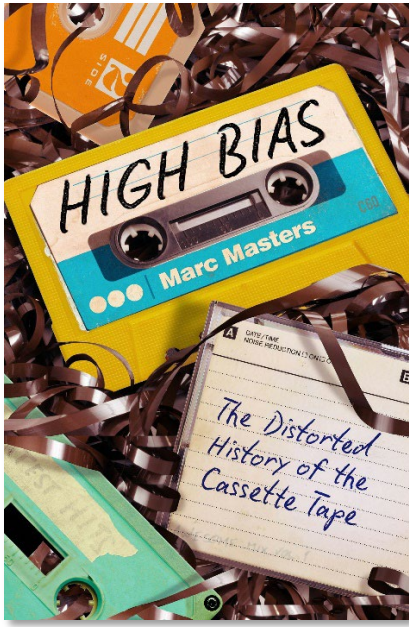
# Music Studies Rights Catalog

UNC Press has a long tradition of publishing about music history and culture. Here you will find books on genres including gospel, blues, country, folk, jazz, rock, and hip hop. We also have titles about Latin America and Caribbean music as part of our larger lists that explore those regions.

Our series American Music: New Roots, edited by David Menconi, features work by journalists, music critics, scholars, and musicians themselves. The series aims to expand and challenge the way we think about American roots music genres, traditions, scenes, performers, and their ever-expanding contributions. Books in the series not only bring new perspective on familiar roots traditions like jazz, the blues, country, and folk music but also offer new and more diverse ways to consider where the roots of today's American music lie, what stories are told about them, and who does the telling.

For more information about our music list and the American Music: New Roots series please visit [www.uncpress.org](http://www.uncpress.org).

If you are interested in reviewing a title contact John McLeod at [subrights@uncpress.org](mailto:subrights@uncpress.org). We work with agents in various territories and can connect you with them.



## High Bias

### *The Distorted History of the Cassette Tape*

by Marc Masters

Publication date: October 3, 2023

224 Pages, 6 × 9, 27 halftones, bibl., index

Popular music / history

#### Rights information

- Audio, Tantor Audio
- Russian, White Label

*A look beyond the mixtape*

The cassette tape was revolutionary. Cheap, portable, and reusable, this small plastic rectangle changed music history. Make your own tapes! Trade them with friends! Tape over the ones you don't like! The cassette tape upended pop culture, creating movements and uniting communities.

This entertaining book charts the journey of the cassette from its invention in the early 1960s to its Walkman-led domination in the 1980s to decline at the birth of compact discs to resurgence among independent music makers. Scorned by the record industry for “killing music,” the cassette tape rippled through scenes corporations couldn't control. For so many, tapes meant freedom—to create, to invent, to connect.

Marc Masters introduces readers to the tape artists who thrive underground; concert tapers who trade bootlegs; mixtape makers who send messages with cassettes; tape hunters who rescue forgotten sounds; and today's labels, which reject streaming and sell music on cassette. Their stories celebrate the cassette tape as dangerous, vital, and radical.

#### Praise & reviews

2024 Short-listed, Best Historical Research on Record Labels or General Recording Topics, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

“*High Bias* makes a persuasive case that ... cassette-based activity functions as a sort of understory in the forest of music, a substructure in the shadows that nurtures and fortifies the canopy of successful commercial artists above. ... An extended, paperbound mixtape of cassette-based music. ... Revelatory.”—*New Yorker*

“Not just for the Gen X-ers on your list, but for anyone curious about the history, cultural and otherwise, of the humble cassette tape ... This charmer of a book goes down fast and easy. ... He does it all with narrative economy, academic rigor, a personal touch, and genial good humor. A gem.”—*Esquire*

“A thoroughly enjoyable romp ... With energy, insight, and wit, Masters provides a welcome examination of an often overlooked cultural turning point.”—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

“This accessible primer unravels past and present uses and misuses of cassettes. ... Masters builds a generous lineage, where it is clear that as much as ‘sounds realign magnetic particles on a tape ... the tape realigns your brain.’”—*The Wire*

“Knowingly written from the perspective of an entangled enthusiast rather than a distanced observer, [*High Bias*] carries an awareness that an objective history of the impact of a piece of technology isn't possible, all we can do is collect the stories we tell through it... . *High Bias* is a material history, but it's also a folk history.”—*The Quietus*

“An energetic, expert tome ... Music's most overlooked format gets the celebration it deserves.”—*MOJO*



## **Kikā Kila**

### ***How the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Changed the Sound of Modern Music***

by **John W. Troutman**

Publication date: February 01, 2020

392 Pages, 7 × 9, 14 color plates., 51 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Popular music / history

#### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*The definitive history of the Hawaiian steel guitar and its far-reaching influence from Hawaii to mainland America and the world*

Since the nineteenth century, the distinct tones of kīkā kila, the Hawaiian steel guitar, have defined the island sound. Here historian and steel guitarist John W. Troutman offers the instrument's definitive history, from its discovery by a young Hawaiian royalist named Joseph Kekuku to its

revolutionary influence on American and world music. During the early twentieth century, Hawaiian musicians traveled the globe, from tent shows in the Mississippi Delta, where they shaped the new sounds of country and the blues, to regal theaters and vaudeville stages in New York, Berlin, Kolkata, and beyond. In the process, Hawaiian guitarists recast the role of the guitar in modern life. But as Troutman explains, by the 1970s the instrument's embrace and adoption overseas also worked to challenge its cultural legitimacy in the eyes of a new generation of Hawaiian musicians. As a consequence, the indigenous instrument nearly disappeared in its homeland.

Using rich musical and historical sources, including interviews with musicians and their descendants, Troutman provides the complete story of how this Native Hawaiian instrument transformed not only American music but the sounds of modern music throughout the world.

**John W. Troutman** is Curator of American Music at the National Museum of American History.

#### **Praise & reviews**

2017 Best History, Best Research in Recorded Popular Music, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

2017 Woody Guthrie Award, International Association for the Study of Popular Music, US Branch

2017 Lawrence W. Levine Award, Organization of American Historians

2017 Sally and Ken Owens Award, Western History Association

2017 Music in American Culture Award, American Musicological Society

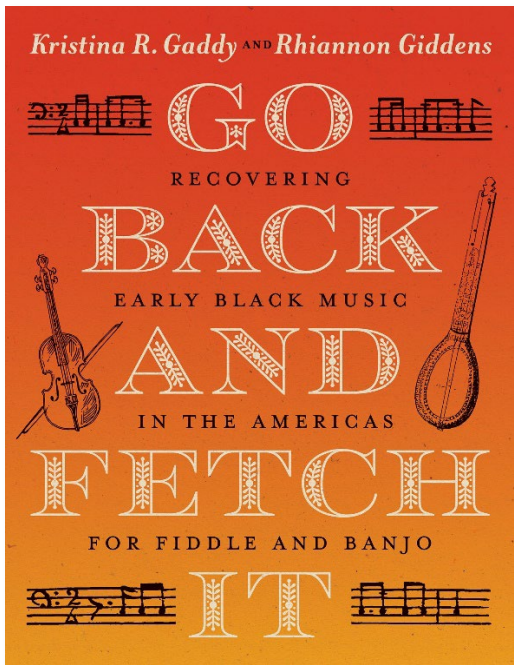
“Presents a stunning example of the nation’s cultural mélange.”—*Oxford American*

“Deeply researched... Essential for anyone who wants to know more about the tremendously fertile — and horribly imperialistic — world of 19th and early-20th century Hawaii, when new ideas poured in and amazing music poured out.”—*Ukulele*

“Expose[s] ... innovations and the rich, transnational context in which they occurred.”—*Journal of Social History*

“A rich and imaginative history, not only of a musical instrument and its sound world, but also of indigenous modernity, local innovation and the global sweep of Hawaiian musical impact.”—*Journal of Pacific History*

“A fascinating and foundational contribution to the history and development of the instrument”—*Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*



## Go Back and Fetch It

### *Recovering Early Black Music in the Americas for Fiddle and Banjo*

by Kristina R. Gaddy and Rhiannon Giddens

Publication date: September 16, 2025

120 Pages, 8.5 × 11, 29 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Popular music / history

#### Rights information

- All languages available
- Authors control film, dramatic, and audio

*The roots of African American music made accessible and playable for the first time in one place*

For the first time, this groundbreaking songbook collaboration by music writer Kristina R. Gaddy and Grammy Award winner Rhiannon Giddens makes nineteen examples of early Black Atlantic music accessible and playable for today's musicians, music enthusiasts, and historians.

Presenting music from 1687 through the 1860s in modern treble clef and banjo tablature, along with the rich stories behind each song, Gaddy and Giddens take readers on a journey from the Caribbean across the Americas.

Immensely readable for amateurs and professionals alike, *Go Back and Fetch It* explains the significance of early Black Atlantic music and how the patterns of tunings, melodic lines, and lyrics shed light on the impact that Black American music has had on nineteenth-century popular music, early country, old time, and bluegrass. Each tune pairs with an engaging essay on its historical background and how the tune transformed over time, as well as information about the collector. Deeply researched and carefully approached, this essential source restores the roots of Black music to the musical canon.

**Kristina R. Gaddy** is the author of *Well of Souls: Uncovering the Banjo's Hidden History*, among other books of nonfiction. **Rhiannon Giddens** is a Grammy Award-winning singer, instrumentalist, and composer, a MacArthur recipient, and a Pulitzer Prize winner.

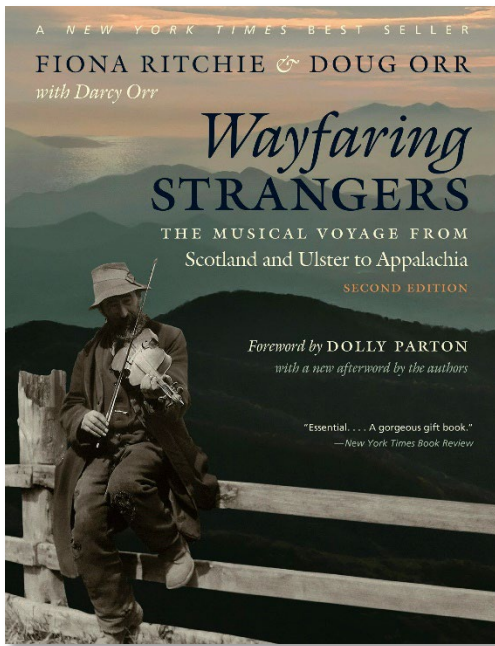
#### Praise & reviews

“Such a fresh notion, expertly brought to fruition ... *Go Back and Fetch It* is a notable feat of reclamation and illumination. Using scholarly tools and inspired insight, Gaddy and Giddens have expanded our understanding of early Black American music to a depth and breadth never previously reached.”—*Songlines*

“A captivating book overall with plenty of interesting facts about the instruments, the people and essentially the tunes. Gaddy [and] Giddens ... have done a fantastic job tracking down as much information as possible. Included in the book are plenty of drawings and early artwork, giving a feel for the times. Now that it has been fetched, we can all read about it, and those talented ones among us can play it.”—*Americana UK*

“Giddens and Gaddy make a perfect team for this book, with Rhiannon's knowledge of the music and how to play it, and Kristina's of the history of the instrument. It's certain to be a welcome and valuable contribution to the library of any banjo enthusiast. ... May there be many more such volumes.”—*Bluegrass Today*

“An impressive two-pronged reclamation project that shines a light on early Black music from the Americas. ... *Go Back and Fetch It* stands in stark contrast to the brazen attempts to erase African American history and culture that are taking place in the United States today.”—*Living Blues*



## Wayfaring Strangers

### *The Musical Voyage from Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia*

Second Edition, with a new afterword by the authors  
by Fiona Ritchie, Doug Orr and Darcy Orr  
Foreword by Dolly Parton

Publication date: August 01, 2021

384 Pages, 8.5 × 11, 64 color plates, 60 halftones, 7 maps, appends., notes  
Popular music / history

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*A 400-year story of musical migration*

From the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, a steady stream of Scots migrated to Ulster and eventually onward across the Atlantic to resettle in the United States. Many of these Scots-Irish immigrants made

their way into the mountains of the southern Appalachian region. They brought with them a wealth of traditional ballads and tunes from the British Isles and Ireland, a carrying stream that merged with sounds and songs of English, German, Welsh, African American, French, and Cherokee origin. Their enduring legacy of music flows today from Appalachia back to Ireland and Scotland and around the globe. Ritchie and Orr guide readers on a musical voyage across oceans, linking people and songs through centuries of adaptation and change.

**Fiona Ritchie MBE** is the founder, producer, and host of National Public Radio's *The Thistle & Shamrock*. In 2018 she was inducted into the Folk DJ Hall of Fame. Douglas Orr is President Emeritus of Warren Wilson College, where he founded the Swannanoa Gathering music workshops.

#### Praise & reviews

2015 Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award, Western North Carolina Historical Association

“Songs can take us on extraordinary journeys. They respect neither border nor time, and by following them, we can chart the movement of generations of people. In *Wayfaring Strangers*, Fiona Ritchie and Doug Orr take a long look at this story using Scottish songs as their compass. It’s a fascinating and often surprising ride.”

—Cerys Matthews MBE, Welsh folksinger, author, and broadcaster

“Except for my family, there is nothing I love more than being a part of the ‘living tradition’ captured in this book.”

—Rosanne Cash, singer-songwriter and author

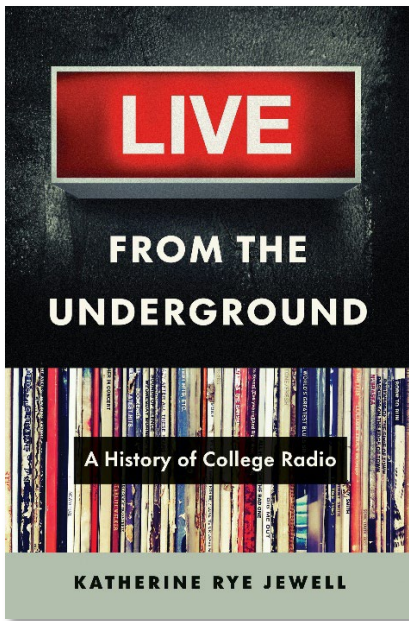
“Essential ... A gorgeous gift book.”—*New York Times Book Review*

“Ritchie and Orr strike all the right chords in this pleasantly tuneful survey.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A story remarkable for its breadth and depth, conveying the drama of Scottish emigration via Ulster to Appalachia, by a people who clung to the music and song they held dear, and bequeathed it to America. It is for us to keep our eyes and ears open to see how this river carries on.”—*Scottish Life Magazine*

“If you love Appalachian music; if you’re Scots-Irish and wonder about your roots; if you’re curious about the words and traditions of the music and how many miles and years the songs have traveled to get here, this handsome book is your most trusted servant, your indispensable encyclopedia and your entertaining Bible.”

—*Charlotte Observer*



## Live from the Underground

### *A History of College Radio*

by Katherine Rye Jewell

Publication date: December 5, 2023

480 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 12 halftones, 2 tables

Popular music / history

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Life left of the dial—from those who lived it*

Bands like R.E.M., U2, Public Enemy, and Nirvana found success as darlings of college radio, but the extraordinary influence of these stations and their DJs on musical culture since the 1970s was anything but inevitable. As media deregulation and political conflict over obscenity and censorship transformed the business and politics of culture, students and community DJs turned to college radio to defy the mainstream—and they ended up disrupting popular music and commercial radio in

the process. In this first history of US college radio, Katherine Rye Jewell reveals that these eclectic stations in major cities and college towns across the United States owed their collective cultural power to the politics of higher education as much as they did to upstart bohemian music scenes coast to coast.

Jewell uncovers how battles to control college radio were about more than music—they were an influential, if unexpected, front in the nation’s culture wars. These battles created unintended consequences and overlooked contributions to popular culture that students, DJs, and listeners never anticipated. More than an ode to beloved stations, this book will resonate with both music fans and observers of the politics of culture.

**Katherine Rye Jewell** is professor of history at Fitchburg State University.

#### Praise & reviews

2024 Best Historical Research on Record Labels or General Recording Topics, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

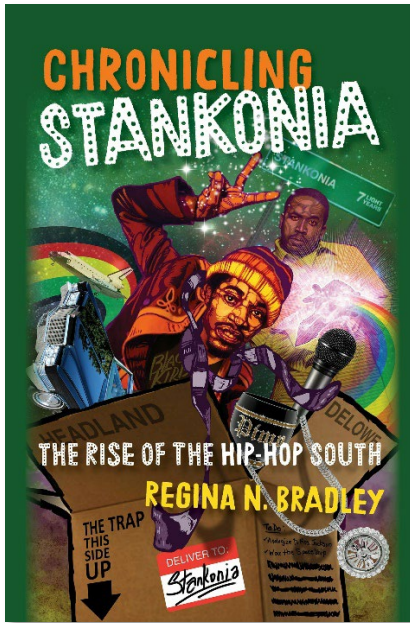
“Jewell chronicles the rise, fall, and legacy of college radio in this sprawling and richly detailed account. ... [*Live from the Underground*] offers both an animated homage to college radio as a microcosm of American culture and reassurance for readers that the medium isn’t dead. It’s a fascinating deep dive.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“Deeply researched ... Jewell tells some wonderfully obscure tales ... A pleasure for fans of alt-rock and its dissemination in the face of corporate and academic resistance.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“A meticulously researched book.”—*Boston Globe*

“Jewell masterfully presents college radio as a battleground for debates about free speech and censorship, which audiences should be served by public airwaves and how, and the very role of higher education in American society.”—*American Studies*

“In writing *Live from the Underground*, Jewell accomplished an enviable feat—she produced a cultural and political history of college radio that has mass appeal. There is something for historians, music fans, and former radio DJs in *Live from the Underground*.”—*Society for U.S. Intellectual History*



## Chronicling Stankonia

### *The Rise of the Hip-Hop South*

by Regina Bradley

Publication date: February 22, 2021  
136 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, notes, index  
Popular music / Hip Hop

#### Rights information

- Audio, UNC Press Audio

*From OutKast to a new vision of contemporary southern culture*

This vibrant book pulses with the beats of a new American South, probing the ways music, literature, and film have remixed southern identities for a post-civil rights generation. For scholar and critic Regina N. Bradley, Outkast's work is the touchstone, a blend of funk, gospel, and hip-hop developed in conjunction with the work of other culture creators—including T.I., Kiese Laymon, and Jesmyn Ward. This work, Bradley argues, helps define new cultural possibilities for black

southerners who came of age in the 1980s and 1990s and have used hip-hop culture to buffer themselves from the historical narratives and expectations of the civil rights era. André 3000, Big Boi, and a wider community of creators emerge as founding theoreticians of the hip-hop South, framing a larger question of how the region fits into not only hip-hop culture but also contemporary American society as a whole.

*Chronicling Stankonia* reflects the ways that culture, race, and southernness intersect in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Although part of southern hip-hop culture remains attached to the past, Bradley demonstrates how younger southerners use the music to embrace the possibility of multiple Souths, multiple narratives, and multiple points of entry to contemporary southern black identity.

**Regina N. Bradley** is an alumna Nasir Jones Hip Hop Fellow at Harvard University and an assistant professor of English and African diaspora studies at Kennesaw State University.

#### Praise & reviews

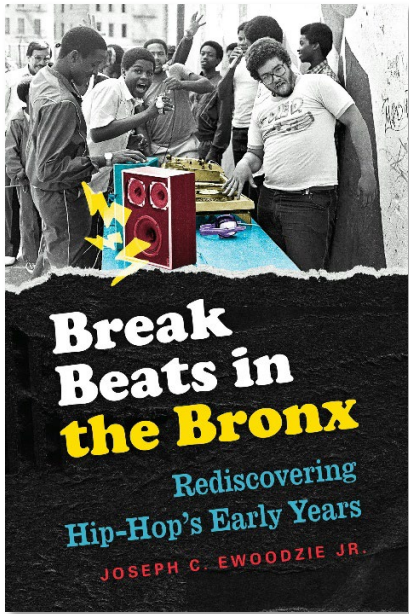
2022 Georgia Author of the Year Awards (Essays)  
2021 Best of Atlanta, Atlanta Magazine  
2021 Best Music Book, Rolling Stone

“This treatise from leading Southern hip-hop scholar Regina N. Bradley is a revelatory collection of essays—part literary criticism, part sonic analysis, part personal memoir—that serves as an overdue and thrilling intervention on the NYC/L.A.-centric canon of hip-hop criticism. ... A masterful work of criticism.”—*Rolling Stone*

“With vivid narrative and critical analysis, Bradley presents an innovative examination of the profound legacy and influence of Southern hip hop music and culture.”—*Ms. Magazine*

“Using OutKast’s discography as a reference of sorts, Dr. Bradley’s latest book helps define new cultural pathways for Black Southerners who came of age in the 1980s and 1990s and have used hip-hop culture to buffer themselves from the historical narratives and sometimes crushing expectations of the civil rights era.”—*Atlanta Magazine*

“*Chronicling Stankonia* is the book that Regina N. Bradley was meant to write. She has emerged in recent years as one of the best scholars of Southern hip hop, and she is able to create discussion in really accessible ways that are fun to read without sacrificing any challenging concepts. It all comes through in a really impactful book that I’m sure we’ll be referencing for years to come.”—Chi Chi Thalken, *Scratched Vinyl*



## **Break Beats in the Bronx** ***Rediscovering Hip-Hop's Early Years*** by Joseph C. Ewoodzie Jr.

Publication date: September 5, 2017  
256 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 20 halftones, 8 figs., 1 map, 1 table, appends., notes, index  
Popular music / Hip Hop

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*A new examination of the birth of an art form*

The origin story of hip-hop—one that involves Kool Herc DJing a house party on Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx—has become received wisdom. But Joseph C. Ewoodzie Jr. argues that the full story remains to be told. In vibrant prose, he combines never-before-used archival material with searching questions about the symbolic boundaries that have divided our understanding of the music. In *Break Beats in the Bronx*, Ewoodzie portrays the creative process that brought about what

we now know as hip-hop and shows that the art form was a result of serendipitous events, accidents, calculated successes, and failures that, almost magically, came together. In doing so, he questions the unexamined assumptions about hip-hop's beginnings, including why there are just four traditional elements—DJing, MCing, breaking, and graffiti writing—and not others, why the South Bronx and not any other borough or city is considered the cradle of the form, and which artists besides Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash founded the genre. Ewoodzie answers these and many other questions about hip-hop's beginnings. Unearthing new evidence, he shows what occurred during the crucial but surprisingly underexamined years between 1975 and 1979 and argues that it was during this period that the internal logic and conventions of the scene were formed.

**Joseph C. Ewoodzie Jr.** is Malcolm O. Partin Assistant Professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at Davidson College.

### **Praise & reviews**

“*Break Beats in the Bronx* promises to be an important contribution to the social and cultural history of hip-hop. With zeal, rigor, and no small amount of style, Joseph Ewoodzie illuminates the defining moments and key personalities of hip-hop's early years before they recede into shadow.”—Adam Bradley, author of *Book of Rhymes* and coeditor of *The Anthology of Rap*

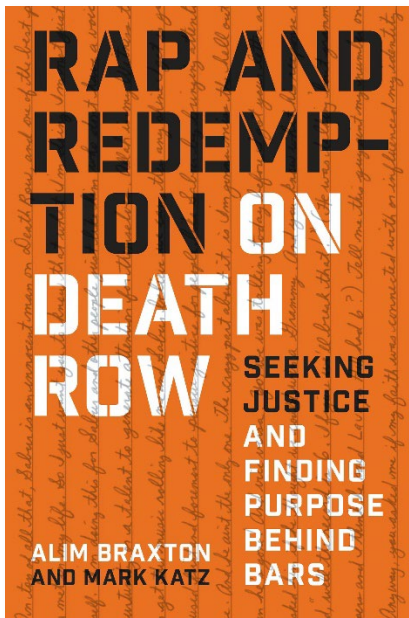
“*Break Beats in the Bronx* will make a significant mark on how we think about the history of race, urban space, and popular culture in New York and, more broadly, on hip-hop studies.”

—Gaye Theresa Johnson, author of *Spaces of Conflict, Sounds of Solidarity*

“An excellent balancing act of writing an academic text and still making the book accessible to the lay hip hop fan as well. Anyone can read and enjoy and learn from this book.”—*Scratched Vinyl*

“Ewoodzie uses new data, evidence, and collected interviews in combination with a fresh pair of eyes to distill and analyze. He then blends it with forthright prose, clear explanations, and vivacious photographs to create a history that may present as academic, but doesn't read that way.”—*IndiePicks Magazine*

“*Break Beats in the Bronx* ... strives to tell a ‘people's history of hip-hop’ that emphasizes how teenagers in the South Bronx formulated creative approaches in the domain of culture, criss-crossing social and aesthetic boundaries, and eventually establishing new ones around the genre of hip-hop. ... This is a book in dialogue both with the history of hip-hop itself as well as with sociological theories of how new cultural forms come into being. Ewoodzie does an exquisite job combining the two.”—*Society for U.S. Intellectual History*



## Rap and Redemption on Death Row

### *Seeking Justice and Finding Purpose behind Bars*

by Alim Braxton and Mark Katz

Publication date: April 9, 2024  
248 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 19 halftones  
Popular music / Hip Hop

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Saved by Hip Hop*

Imprisoned since age nineteen, Alim Braxton has spent more than a quarter century on North Carolina's death row. During that time, he converted to Islam and dedicated his life to redemption. Braxton, a rapper since the age of thirteen, uses his rhymes as a form of therapy and to advocate for prison reform, particularly by calling attention to the plight of the wrongfully incarcerated. This book, a hip-hop-rich prison memoir, chronicles Braxton's struggles and triumphs as he attempts to

record an album while on death row, something no one has done before.

Braxton's world is complex: full of reflections on guilt, condemnation, incarceration, religious awakening, and the redemptive power of art. Ultimately, Braxton shows us that even amid the brutality of our prison system there are moments of joy, and on death row joy may be the most powerful form of resistance.

**Alim Braxton (a.k.a. RRome Alone)** is a writer, rapper, and activist living on North Carolina's death row in Raleigh. **Mark Katz** is the John P. Barker Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of several books, including *Build: The Power of Hip Hop Diplomacy in a Divided World*.

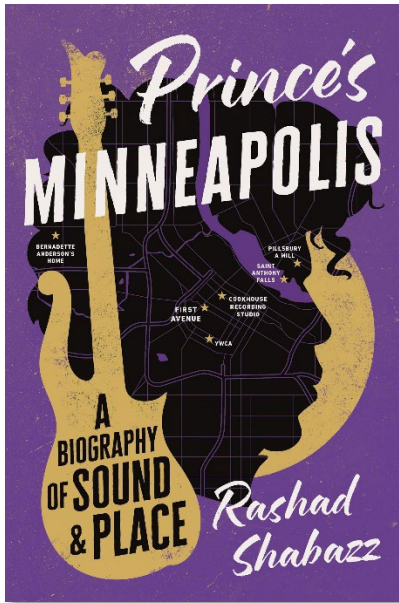
#### Praise & reviews

"A raw, contemplative account of a death-row inmate's journey toward redemption through faith, family, and rap. ... An unvarnished look at a life reclaimed deep within the edifice of mass incarceration."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"The tenacity and meticulousness with which Braxton creates his music indicate the stakes he attached to it—namely, hip-hop as advocacy through self-expression. ... *Rap and Redemption on Death Row* is an extension of Braxton's hip-hop activism and a manifestation of his contention that imprisonment, even without hope for release, does not negate humanity or the search for purpose."—*Journal of African American History*

"Unless the world be utterly remade, Michael J. 'Alim' Braxton and Dr. Mark Katz were not likely to have ever met. Yet you hold in your hands, despite the machinations of fate and their former slave state, the undeniable proof they did. This means, most of all, *Rap and Redemption on Death Row* testifies to *will of mind*, the power before which even molybdenum bars must bend."—Harry Allen, hip-hop activist and media assassin

"Alim Braxton's story is a harrowing one—far too common, yet rarely heard from the vantage of the person living it. This book lets readers hear the words directly, in his voice, and humanizes the men on death row with whom he is serving time. Braxton's book draws us into his worlds and takes us through his transformations. Like *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, it reads like a testament to a life of reinvention."—A. D. Carson, University of Virginia



## Prince's Minneapolis

### *A Biography of Sound and Place*

by Rashad Shabazz

Publication date: February 17, 2026  
272 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 7 halftones, notes, bibl., index  
Popular music / rock

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*The rise of Prince told through the musical geography of Minneapolis*

When nineteen-year-old Prince took the stage to perform “I Wanna Be Your Lover” on *American Bandstand*, those who watched couldn’t reconcile how Prince’s funky disco-pop sounds had hailed from a place like Minneapolis. But the Minneapolis Sound, Prince’s signature pop-musical fusion of funk, R & B, rock, punk, and new wave, did not emerge from a vacuum. The place and space of Minneapolis shaped

the musical ecosystem that made Prince famous. And in turn, a complex array of social forces shaped the city’s soundscape.

An expert on place, race, and culture, geographer Rashad Shabazz reveals the hidden history of the Minneapolis Sound, Prince, and his beloved city. More than a biography of Prince, this is a biography of the city and the world of sound from which Prince emerged. Shabazz traces the history of the Minneapolis Sound alongside the city’s history, from colonial contact and through periods of Indigenous removal, white settlement, mass migration, industrialization, music education, suburbanization, and systemic racism. This complex history, combined with the exceptional talent cultivated in Minneapolis’s small Black communities, gave rise to a groundbreaking genre, the otherworldly legend that was Prince, and music that captivated the world.

**Rashad Shabazz** is associate professor of geography and African and African American studies at Arizona State University and author of *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement and Black Masculinity in Chicago*.

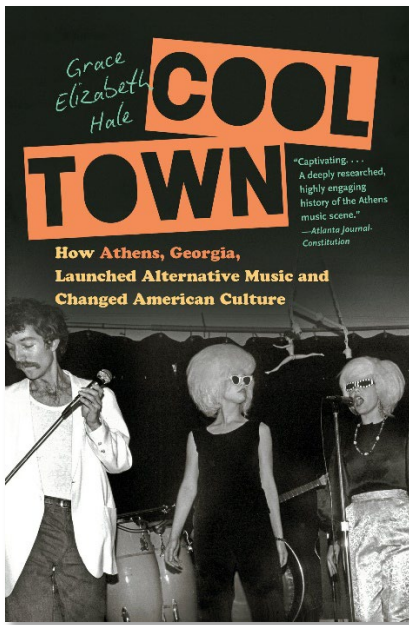
#### Praise & reviews

“A revelatory exploration of early Minneapolis history and music education in the city’s public schools. This is the first biography of Prince to trace the origins of his music so far back in time in so much detail.”

—Andrea Swensson, author of *Got to Be Something Here: The Rise of the Minneapolis Sound*

“Prince is often rightly hailed as an individual virtuoso and genius, but he was also an artist whose tastes and abilities were shaped by long histories of racialized space and arts education, and legacies of cultural coalescence and conflict. In this innovative blend of cultural geography and musicology, Rashad Shabazz presents an engaging, compelling, and persuasive analysis of the poetics and politics of place in the music worlds of Minneapolis and their impact on Prince.”

—George Lipsitz, author of *The Danger Zone Is Everywhere*



## Cool Town

### *How Athens, Georgia, Launched Alternative Music and Changed American Culture*

by Grace Elizabeth Hale

Publication date: February 1, 2021

384 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 37 halftones, notes, index

A Ferris and Ferris Book

Popular music / rock

#### Rights information

- Audio, Audible

*Athens, Georgia, and the promise of alternative culture in Reagan's America*

In the summer of 1978, the B-52's conquered the New York underground. A year later, the band's self-titled debut album burst onto the *Billboard* charts, capturing the imagination of fans and music critics worldwide. The fact that the group had formed in the sleepy southern college town of Athens, Georgia, only increased the fascination. Soon, more Athens bands followed the B-52's into the vanguard of the new American music that would come to be known as "alternative," including R.E.M., who catapulted over the course of the 1980s to the top of the musical mainstream. As acts like the B-52's, R.E.M., and Pylon drew the eyes of New York tastemakers southward, they discovered in Athens an unexpected mecca of music, experimental art, DIY spirit, and progressive politics — a creative underground as vibrant as any to be found in the country's major cities.

In Athens in the eighties, if you were young and willing to live without much money, anything seemed possible. *Cool Town* reveals the passion, vitality, and enduring significance of a bohemian scene that became a model for others to follow. Grace Elizabeth Hale experienced the Athens scene as a student, small-business owner, and band member. Blending personal recollection with a historian's eye, she reconstructs the networks of bands, artists, and friends that drew on the things at hand to make a new art of the possible, transforming American culture along the way. In a story full of music and brimming with hope, Hale shows how an unlikely cast of characters in an unlikely place made a surprising and beautiful new world.

**Grace Elizabeth Hale** is the Commonwealth Professor of American Studies and History at the University of Virginia. Her previous books include *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion in Postwar America* and *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940*.

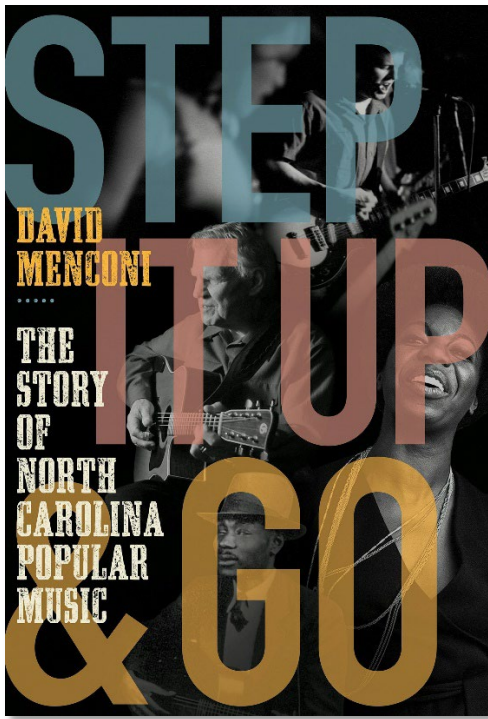
#### Praise & reviews

2021 Malcom Bell, Jr. and Muriel Barrow Bell Award, Georgia Historical Society

"Delivers more than a love song to the music. *Cool Town* also serves up a textured portrait of a generation caught between baby and tech booms, wriggling under the thumb of the mainstream—in the pre-internet days when 'mainstream' was a discernible thing—and rummaging through thrift-store bins both literal and figurative in an effort to create something new."—*New York Times Book Review*

"The Athens Effect propagated a thrift-store, sexually fluid, avant-pop aesthetic that seemed more accessible than the extremes of punk or of successors such as goth. The fun of *Cool Town* is to hear where those elements came from, illuminated by Hale's theories about why, and, most poignantly, what it means today."—*Bookforum*

"A carefully constructed history of how Athens, Georgia became a cultural hot spot. ... A welcome history of an overlooked milieu, one that provides ample inspiration for art makers today."—*Kirkus Reviews*



## Step It Up and Go

*The Story of North Carolina Popular Music, from Blind Boy Fuller and Doc Watson to Nina Simone and Superchunk*

by David Menconi

Publication date: March 01, 2023

328 Pages, 7 × 10 in, 56 halftones, bibl., index

Popular music / history

### Rights information

- All rights available

*Artists shaping a century of music in North Carolina*

This book is a love letter to the artists, scenes, and sounds defining North Carolina's extraordinary contributions to American popular music. David Menconi spent three decades immersed in the state's music, where traditions run deep but the energy expands in countless directions. Menconi shows how working-class roots and rebellion tie North Carolina's Piedmont blues, jazz, and bluegrass to beach music, rock, hip-hop, and more. From mill

towns and mountain coves to college-town clubs and the stage of *American Idol*, Blind Boy Fuller and Doc Watson to Nina Simone and Superchunk, *Step It Up and Go* celebrates homegrown music just as essential to the state as barbecue and basketball.

Spanning a century of history from the dawn of recorded music to the present, and with sidebars and photos that help reveal the many-splendored glory of North Carolina's sonic landscape, this is a must-read for every music lover.

Music critic and journalist **David Menconi** spent twenty-eight years as staff writer at the *Raleigh News and Observer*. His most recent book (with Ray Benson) is *Comin' Right at Ya: How a Jewish Yankee Hippie Went Country, or the Often Outrageous History of Asleep at the Wheel*.

### Praise & reviews

2020 Winner, North Caroliniana Society Book Award, North Caroliniana Society

"100 years of sound. From *American Idol* to Nina Simone, NC's rich musical legacy thrives. ... Not every state can merit a hefty book about its music history, or fill an index with so many well-known names."—*Raleigh News and Observer*

"Menconi [has] a deep and widespread insight into how music and business intersect, and an encyclopedic knowledge of the North Carolina scene."—John Lawless, *Bluegrass Today*

"An absorbing love letter to the artists, scenes, and sounds of North Carolina's contributions to America's popular music. ... Thoroughly researched and endlessly enjoyable."—*PopMatters*

"Captures the rich diversity of North Carolina's music through colorful stories, poignant photos, and humorous anecdotes. Menconi's a masterful storyteller and a delightful guide to the music of the Tar Heel state, and every chapter in the book deserves to be lingered over and treasured for its loving attention to the details of the lives and music dwelling in the state."—*No Depression*

"Menconi delivers a series of profiles of musicians and movers and shakers, from the famous to the obscure, from North Carolina. He details each artist's origin, work ethic, good and bad luck, and ultimate contribution to the state's musical past."—*Journal of Southern History*



## Stone Free

*Jimi Hendrix in London, September 1966–June 1967*

by Jas Obrecht

Publication date: February 1, 2022

256 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 12 halftones, notes, index

Popular music / rock

### Rights information

- Audio, Tantor Audio
- French, Le Castor Astral
- Spanish, Planeta

*Nine months that changed rock music*

A compelling portrait of rock’s greatest guitarist at the moment of his ascendance, *Stone Free* is the first book to focus exclusively on the happiest and most productive period of Jimi Hendrix’s life. As it begins in the fall of 1966, he’s an under-sung, under-accomplished sideman struggling to survive in New York

City. Nine months later, he’s the toast of Swinging London, a fashion icon, and the brightest star to step off the stage at the Monterey International Pop Festival. This momentum-building, day-by-day account of this extraordinary transformation offers new details into Jimi’s personality, relationships, songwriting, guitar innovations, studio sessions, and record releases. It explores the social changes sweeping the U.K., Hendrix’s role in the dawning of “flower power,” and the prejudice he faced while fronting the Jimi Hendrix Experience. In addition to featuring the voices of Jimi, his bandmates, and other eyewitnesses, *Stone Free* draws extensively from contemporary accounts published in English- and foreign-language newspapers and music magazines. This celebratory account is a must-read for Hendrix fans.

**Jas Obrecht** is an award-winning music journalist and former editor of *Guitar Player* magazine. He has written for *Rolling Stone*, *Living Blues*, and many other publications. His many books include *Talking Guitar: Conversations with Musicians Who Shaped Twentieth-Century American Music*. He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

### Praise & reviews

“This is the book on Jimi Hendrix I’ve been waiting for. Jas Obrecht captures the frenzy and the excitement of the most extraordinary moment in rock guitar’s history, when Jimi Hendrix reinvents the electric guitar, becomes an international superstar, and stuns his contemporaries into humble self-reevaluation. Each chapter is full of wonderful stories, details, and revelations about Jimi’s surprising yet inevitable journey to stardom. I know I’ll be re-reading this book for years.”

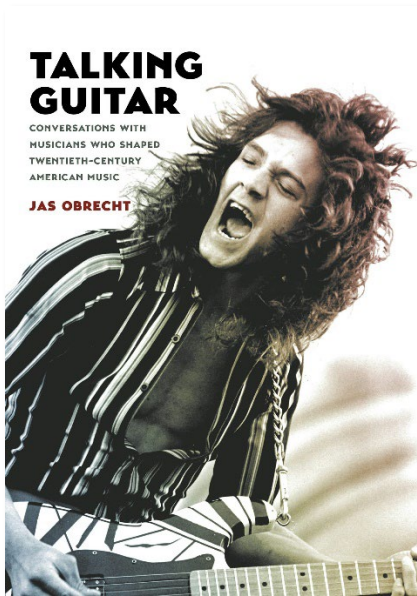
—Joe Satriani

“There’s a glowing feeling to reading a book you don’t want to put down. *Stone Free* is just that kind of book, narrating the most focused, foretelling, and excitingly magical time of Jimi Hendrix’s life. Jas Obrecht brings the reader face to face with Jimi’s meteoric rise, breathing the moments. When we look back at that history, we realize it was huge, earthshaking, and one of a kind. You are holding that history now.”—Eric Johnson

“Obrecht deftly focuses on Jimi’s transformation from caterpillar to butterfly. He tracks Hendrix’s movement on virtually a day-to-day basis over ten months when a little-known, uncertain young New York guitarist emerged as the brightest, most powerful new voice in the exploding world of rock music. His research is breathtaking and the fine-point details remarkable.”—Joel Selvin, author of *Summer of Love*

“The story is woven seamlessly from ... many disparate strands and is a very enjoyable read.”

—*Jimpres: Jimi Hendrix Magazine*



## Talking Guitar

### *Conversations with Musicians Who Shaped Twentieth-Century American Music*

by Jas Obrecht

Publication date: February 1, 2022

320 Pages, 7 × 10, 28 halftones, notes, index

Popular music / rock

#### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*The guitarists who shaped American music in their own words*

In this lively collection of interviews, storied music writer Jas Obrecht presents a celebration of the world's most popular instrument as seen through the words, lives, and artistry of some of its most beloved players. Readers will read—and hear—accounts of the first guitarists on record, pioneering bluesmen, gospel greats, jazz innovators, country pickers, rocking rebels, psychedelic shape-shifters, singer-songwriters, and other movers and shakers. In their own words, these guitar players reveal how they found their inspirations, mastered their instruments, crafted classic songs, and created enduring solos.

Highlights include Nick Lucas's recollections of waxing the first noteworthy guitar records; Ry Cooder's exploration of prewar blues musicians; Carole Kaye and Ricky Nelson on the early years of rock and roll; Stevie Ray Vaughan on Jimi Hendrix; Gregg Allman on his brother, Duane Allman; Carlos Santana, Eric Johnson, and Pops Staples on spirituality in music; Jerry Garcia, Neil Young, and Tom Petty on songwriting and creativity; and early interviews with Eddie Van Halen, Joe Satriani, and Ben Harper.

**Jas Obrecht** is an award-winning music journalist and former editor of *Guitar Player* magazine. He has written for *Rolling Stone*, *Living Blues*, and many other publications. His books include *Rollin' and Tumblin': The Postwar Blues Guitarists* and *Early Blues: The First Stars of Blues Guitar*. He lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

#### **Praise & reviews**

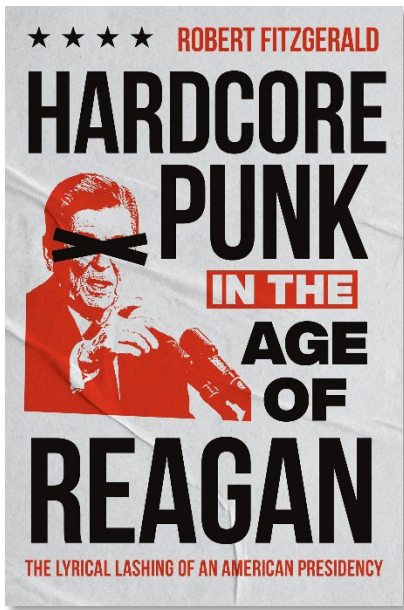
“Over the course of his esteemed career, Jas Obrecht has amassed a unique collection of interviews with seminal guitarists pivotal to the study of popular music. *Talking Guitar* shows, in its subjects' own vibrant words, how both the artists and their work fit into the big picture of American culture. A must-read for those interested in the behind-the-scenes of some of our greatest music.”—Holly George-Warren, author of *A Man Called Destruction: The Life and Music of Alex Chilton*

“Based on extensive first-person interviews and exhaustive research, Jas Obrecht's *Talking Guitar* transcends guitar playing, uncovering the lives of the guitarists themselves. Obrecht once again shows that he is one of our leading contemporary music writers.”—Brett J. Bonner, editor of *Living Blues* magazine

“The electric guitar has become such a staple of every genre of modern music that we take it for granted—like running water, refrigerators, or, indeed, electricity itself. Jas Obrecht gives us a new appreciation for the instrument's history and development, and even more so for the way it's been used and taken in new directions by some of the greats, both those who are well known and others who should be. This book is a joy to read.”—Jim DeRogatis, cohost of *Sound Opinions*

“An absorbing collection of conversations with guitarists from a wide swath of the musical map, these chronicles will appeal to a broad readership, not only to those who strum.”—*Library Journal*

“For music fans, especially those with an affection for the guitar, it's essential reading.”—*Booklist*



## Hardcore Punk in the Age of Reagan

### *The Lyrical Lashing of an American Presidency*

by Robert Fitzgerald

Publication date: May 27, 2025  
252 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 10 halftones, 1 table  
Popular music / rock

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*The screamed, hollered, and sung opposition to Reagan's conservative '80s*

Few politicians produced the musical reaction that Ronald Reagan did. His California-branded conservatism inspired countless young people to pick up guitars and thrash out their political angst. Punk bands across the United States took aim at the man, his presidency, and the idea of America he was selling to voters nationwide. Small yet vibrant scenes across the country emerged to challenge the

communal norms and social values projected on them by the popular media and consumer culture. Punk enthusiast Robert Fitzgerald argues that these songs' lyrics aren't just catchy and fun to scream along with; they also reveal the thoughts and feelings of artists reacting to their political environment in real, forthright, and uncensored time.

In candid detail, Fitzgerald shows how these lyrics illustrated what young adults felt and how they reacted to one of the most influential and divisive leaders of the era. Punk lyrics are seemingly simple, the author argues, but they sketch out a complex, musically inspired countermovement that is as canonical in the American songbook as the folk and rock protest music that came before.

**Robert Fitzgerald** is assistant principal of the Thomas Metcalf Laboratory School, an admittedly un-punk position, and a lifelong punk fan.

#### Praise & reviews

"*Hardcore Punk in the Age of Reagan* is a great introduction to the world of hardcore punk in the 1980s. ... I heartily recommend reading it."—*CounterPunch*

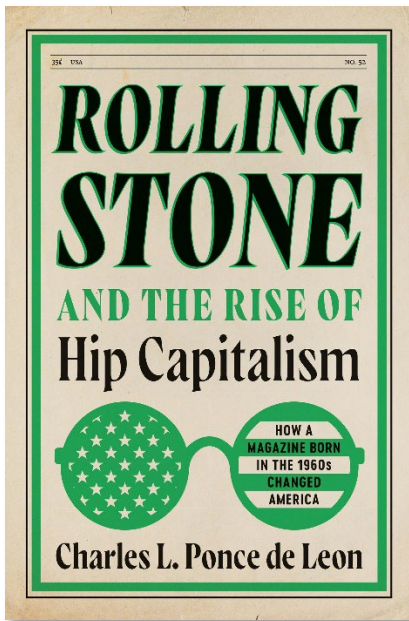
"For every band you recognize, there are about five you probably haven't heard of; *Hardcore Punk in the Age of Reagan* excels at cataloging these bands. It doesn't matter if the band was well-known or extremely under the radar. Fitzgerald treats those smaller bands with the same respect as the legends who endured... For as researched as it is on these punk rockers' responses, it is just as researched on Reagan's flawed policies."—*Dying Scene*

"I could spend a long time detailing everything that I took away from *Hardcore Punk in the Age of Reagan* ... but then I would create a bloated post akin to the bloated stadium rock that punk usurped... Fitzgerald navigates a vast amount of territory, working to cram as much as possible into a small book."—*Interminable Rambling*

"*Hardcore Punk in the Age of Reagan* is a memorable cataloging of Reagan's crimes as articulated through the lyrics of punk bands of the era. Fitzgerald's writing is entertaining and informative, and this book is a welcome and novel addition to Reagan-era studies for historians as well as anyone who loves punk music."

—Kevin C. Dunn, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

"Fitzgerald forces us to take 1980s punk seriously, making the case that punk rock lyrics served as a form of cultural criticism and anger directed at Ronald Reagan's presidency. Perfect for historians, political scientists, or anyone wanting to know more about a key political and musical moment."—Kevin Mattson, Ohio University



## **Rolling Stone and the Rise of Hip Capitalism** *How a Magazine Born in the 1960s Changed America* by Charles L. Ponce de Leon

Publication date: April 21, 2026  
304 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 5 halftones, notes, index  
Popular music / rock

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*A look into Rolling Stone's golden age*

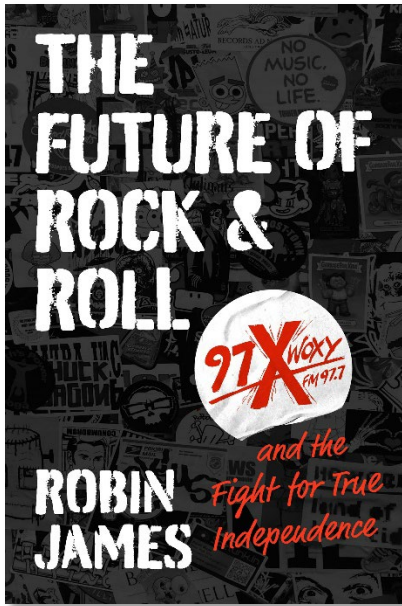
In its early years, *Rolling Stone* stood out on the magazine rack: an iconoclastic bimonthly aimed at young Americans, dedicated to music, culture, and politics. Magazine cofounder Jann Wenner's vision of a magazine that blended politics with sophisticated coverage of rock music and related social and cultural trends was groundbreaking and a surprising commercial success, turning the brash young publisher into the era's quintessential "hip capitalist."

This is a history of *Rolling Stone*'s heyday, from its founding in 1967 to its twentieth anniversary, examining its coverage of notable social, cultural, and political developments and the contributions of its distinguished and often brilliant writers—from Greil Marcus and Hunter S. Thompson to William Greider and P. J. O'Rourke. It also reveals how, in response to shifts in its audience, the magazine industry, and the broader culture, *Rolling Stone* gradually changed, becoming more successful but also less innovative and influential. In the magazine's prime, however, Wenner and company showed how a thoughtful, irreverent magazine could attract advertisers as well as readers and spread sixties-inspired values into the mainstream.

**Charles L. Ponce de Leon** is the author of several books, including *Fortunate Son: The Life of Elvis Presley* and *That's the Way It Is: A History of Television News in America*.

### **Praise & reviews**

"Ponce de Leon brilliantly contextualizes the history of *Rolling Stone* while attending to the broader historical transformations that had swept up the magazine by the time of Reagan's ascent. A brilliant examination of the 1960s and its legacies."—Andrew Hartman, author of *Karl Marx in America*



## The Future of Rock and Roll

### *97X WOXY and the Fight for True Independence*

by Robin James

Publication date: May 2, 2023

190 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 15 halftones

Popular music / rock

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Cutting edge creativity and the necessity of community*

In 1983, an Ohio radio station called WOXY launched a sonic disruption to both corporate rock and to its conservative home region, programming an omnivorous range of genres and artists while being staunchly committed to local independent art and media. In the 1990s, as alternative rock went mainstream and radio grew increasingly homogeneous, WOXY gained international renown as one of *Rolling*

*Stone's* "Last Great Independent Radio" stations. The station projected a philosophy that prioritized such independence—the idea that truly progressive, transgressive, futuristic disruptions of the status quo were possible only when practiced with and for other people.

In *The Future of Rock and Roll*, philosopher Robin James uses WOXY's story to argue against a corporate vision of independence—in which everyone fends for themselves—and in favor of an alternative way of thinking and relating to one another that disrupts norms but is nevertheless supported by communities. Against the standard retelling of the history of "modern rock," James looks to the local scenes that made true independence possible by freeing individual artists from the whims of the boardroom. This philosophy of community-rooted independence offers both a counternarrative to the orthodox history of indie rock and an alternative worldview to that of the current corporate mainstream.

**Robin James** is a writer, editor, and philosopher. She is author of four books including *Resilience & Melancholy* and *The Sonic Episteme*.

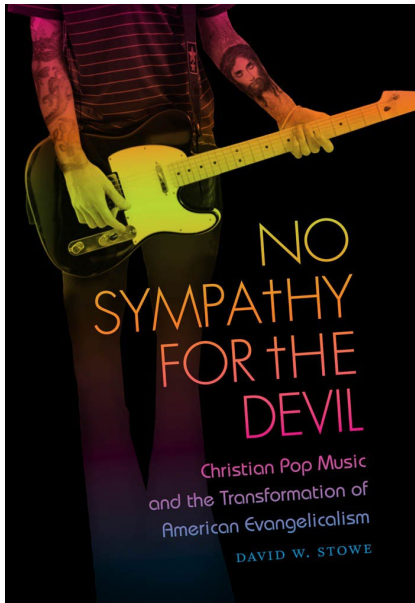
#### Praise & reviews

"*The Future of Rock and Roll* is a kind of testament—a document to a cultural phenomenon that outgrew its meager material infrastructure, affecting rock culture in ways that James helps ensure will not be forgotten. ... *The Future of Rock and Roll* does justice to the living memory of 97X, its listeners, and the values this station helped them live."

—*Journal of the Society for American Music*

"Robin James writes with the analytical astuteness of an impassioned fan and the vision of a committed scholar to illustrate how a small radio station proffers a pathway of mutually supported independence, giving us a model for how to survive outside the realm of social and economic inequality bequeathed to us by four decades of neoliberalism and rapacious capitalism."—Barry Shank, Ohio State University

"Highly readable, entertaining, and edifying—Robin James has written what is at once a heartfelt tribute to a vanishing breed of American independent media and a trenchant critique of how the neoliberal economy has co-opted independence to essentially justify worker exploitation."—Theo Cateforis, Syracuse University



## **No Sympathy for the Devil** *Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism* by David W. Stowe

Publication date: February 1, 2013  
304 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 12 illus., notes, bibl., index  
Popular music / rock

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

### *Rock and religion in America*

In this cultural history of evangelical Christianity and popular music, David Stowe demonstrates how mainstream rock of the 1960s and 1970s has influenced conservative evangelical Christianity through the development of Christian pop music. The chart-topping, spiritually inflected music created a space in popular culture for talk of Jesus, God, and Christianity, thus lessening for baby boomers and their children the stigma associated with religion while helping to fill churches and create new modes of worship. Stowe shows how evangelicals' increasing acceptance of Christian pop music ultimately has reinforced a variety of conservative cultural, economic, theological, and political messages.

**David W. Stowe** is professor of English and religious studies at Michigan State University.

### **Praise & reviews**

“Stowe offers a serious and impressive examination ... Anyone even remotely interested in American or religious studies will be captivated by this study.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“The exploration of musical/social/political connections is perhaps the greatest strength of this well-written, carefully researched book. Stowe explains the early development of Christian pop and rock music more thoroughly than perhaps any other book available.”—*Library Journal* (starred review)

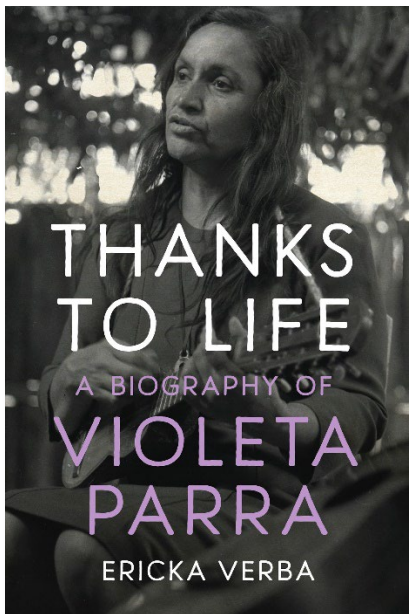
“The real success story of political pop in recent history is the saga of Christian rock ... Stowe follows Christian pop as it evolves from sound-tracking the left-leaning countercultural Jesus movement, with its saucer-eyed teen burnouts baptized in the surf of '60s Corona del Mar, California, to mobilizing Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority and the Reagan Revolution.”—*Bookforum*

“Stowe's engaging book makes an excellent contribution; I recommend it highly for both scholars and students.”  
—*Journal of American History*

“A compelling spiritual biography of—and a vivid memory book for—the boomer generation ... a rich source for further thought on America's *n*th Great Awakening. —*Journal of Religion*

“A must-read for anyone seeking to understand the relationship between evangelical Christianity and popular music.”  
—*Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*

“Stowe has provided an intriguing, important, and readable book, ably showing both the sympathies that conservative Christians held toward the “devil” of rock 'n roll and countercultural affectations.”—*Journal of Southern Religion*



## Thanks to Life

### *A Biography of Violeta Parra*

by Ericka Kim Verba

Publication date: January 14, 2025  
456 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25 in, 29 halftones  
Latin America & Caribbean music / biography

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*The rebellious life of an internationally renowned Chilean musician*

Chilean musician and artist Violeta Parra (1917–1967) is an inspiration to generations of artists and activists across the globe. Her music is synonymous with resistance, and it animated both the Chilean folk revival and the protest music movement Nueva Canción (New Song). Her renowned song “Gracias a la vida” has been covered countless times, including by Joan Baez, Mercedes Sosa, and Kacey

Musgraves. A self-taught visual artist, Parra was the first Latin American to have a solo exhibition at the Museum of Decorative Arts in the Louvre. In this remarkable biography, Ericka Verba traces Parra’s radical life and multifaceted artistic trajectory across Latin America and Europe and on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Drawing on decades of research, Verba paints a vivid and nuanced picture of Parra’s life. From her modest beginnings in southern Chile to her untimely death, Parra was an exceptionally complex and talented woman who exposed social injustice in Latin America to the world through her powerful and poignant songwriting. This examination of her creative, political, and personal life, flaws and all, illuminates the depth and agency of Parra’s journey as she invented and reinvented herself in her struggle to be recognized as an artist on her own terms.

**Ericka Verba** is professor of Latin American studies at California State University, Los Angeles.

#### Praise & reviews

“Highly engaging ... a gripping read that puts chronology back into the narrative of a cultural icon on the verge of becoming just a one-dimensional symbol. The humanity of Violeta Parra as a Chilean woman and a worldclass artist shines through.”—*Not Even Past*

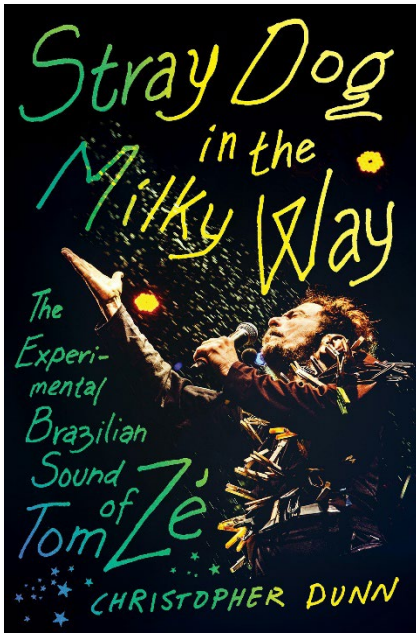
“Verba’s more than forty-year journey, her bond with music as a musician in her own right, and her gathering of materials surrounding the life of an artist, a woman, a country, all come together in a profound and colossal work—a detailed, almost archaeological immersion in Parra’s life.”—*Latin American Literature Today*

“Vivid and intense ... *Thanks to Life* is an in-depth, detailed involvement that highlights not only Parra’s life, but also the biographer’s tenacity to acquaint the reader with the humanity behind the legendary name.”—*NACLA*

“Drawing on an extensive archival research and personal immersion in the musical traditions Parra herself helped ignite, Verba constructs a layered narrative that acknowledges the inevitable contradictions of any life lived so defiantly.”  
—*Caló News*

“A stunning achievement. This comprehensive analysis of Parra’s life provides an unparalleled opportunity to appreciate one of Latin America’s greatest artists. *Thanks to Life* is an outstanding piece of biographical work on a world-class artist whose legacy continues to shape Latin American music and culture.”

—Heidi Tinsman, author of *Buying into the Regime: Grapes and Consumption in Cold War Chile and the United States*



## **Stray Dog in the Milky Way** *The Experimental Brazilian Sound of Tom Zé* by Christopher Dunn

Publication date: December 15, 2026  
320 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25 in, 24 halftones, notes, bibl., index  
Latin America & Caribbean music / biography

### **Rights information**

- Portuguese, Alameda Casa Editorial

*A music outsider's sonic revolution*

Brazilian musician Tom Zé (b. 1936) is one of the most inventive artists of the past century. His transformative music and poetic lyricism received critical acclaim in Brazil's Tropicália, a countercultural movement that blended Brazilian music with global pop, psychedelia, and political critique. As many in the movement ascended to the mainstream, Tom Zé's commitment to experimentalism kept him in outer orbit, drifting at the fringes of the Brazilian musical universe. That was until his

imaginative art and sound captured the attention of Talking Heads front man David Byrne, who propelled Tom Zé to global renown.

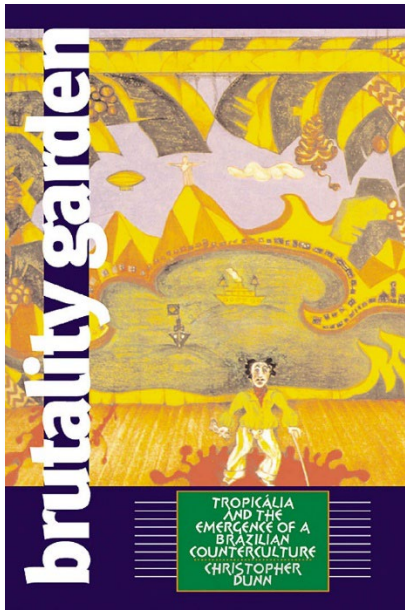
Taking readers inside Tom Zé's remarkable seventy-year career, Tropicália expert Christopher Dunn draws upon decades of conversation to decipher the musician's unique genius, unraveling the cultural and political forces that have shaped Tom Zé's life and work. Tom Zé conceives of his own performances and concept albums as sung journalism, confronting issues of poverty, authoritarianism, and corruption through irreverent and playful invention. Reminding us of the power of art amid political turmoil, *Stray Dog in the Milky Way* offers a critical retrospective of a visionary who transcends the constraints of the earthbound here and now.

**Christopher Dunn** is professor of Spanish, Portuguese, and Africana studies at Tulane University. He is author of *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*.

### **Praise & reviews**

"Tom Zé belongs in the pantheon of great Brazilian singer-songwriters. Dunn's in-depth analysis shows us why."  
—Charles A. Perrone, author of *Chico Buarque's First Chico Buarque*

"This impressive, engaging book illuminates the enduring impact of Tom Zé's singular body of work. It stands to become a touchstone in the field."  
—Kathryn Bishop-Sanchez, author of *Creating Carmen Miranda: Race, Camp, and Transnational Stardom*



## Brutality Garden

### *Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*

by Christopher Dunn

Publication date: October 15, 2001

276 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 12 color / 18 b&w illus., notes, bibl., index

Latin America & Caribbean music

#### Rights information

- Portuguese, Editora UNESP
- Previously published in Japanese

*Understanding the vibrant and explosive Brazilian cultural movement*

In the late 1960s, Brazilian artists forged a watershed cultural movement known as Tropicália. Music inspired by that movement is today enjoying considerable attention at home and abroad. Few new listeners, however, make the connection between this music and the circumstances surrounding its creation, the most violent

and repressive days of the military regime that governed Brazil from 1964 to 1985. With key manifestations in theater, cinema, visual arts, literature, and especially popular music, Tropicália dynamically articulated the conflicts and aspirations of a generation of young, urban Brazilians.

Focusing on a group of musicians from Bahia, an impoverished state in northeastern Brazil noted for its vibrant Afro-Brazilian culture, Christopher Dunn reveals how artists including Caetano Veloso, Gilberto Gil, Gal Costa, and Tom Zé created this movement together with the musical and poetic vanguards of São Paulo, Brazil's most modern and industrialized city. He shows how the tropicalists selectively appropriated and parodied cultural practices from Brazil and abroad in order to expose the fissure between their nation's idealized image as a peaceful tropical "garden" and the daily brutality visited upon its citizens.

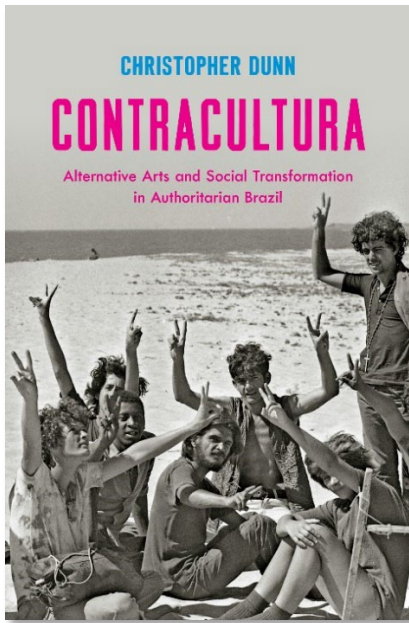
**Christopher Dunn** is associate professor of Brazilian literary and cultural studies at Tulane University. He is coeditor of *Brazilian Popular Music and Globalization*.

#### Praise & reviews

"An impressive and thorough look at Brazil's all too brief Tropicália movement that is also one of the best books on music to come out in years. Neither unconditionally devoted nor coldly analytical, the genius of Dunn's text is that it is essentially a history of Brazil's relationship with globalisation... [Dunn's] book captures both the beauty and insight of the movement itself."—*The Wire*

"*Brutality Garden* is an exhaustive and exquisitely researched history of the tropicália movement. He links superbly the social, political, economic, and cultural debates in Brazil to the movement, situating the music in larger, intersecting spheres of intellectual, artistic, and governmental activity."—*Ethnomusicology*

"From a northern perspective, this book is a window opening an alternative version of our own past, a cultural history of a parallel and magical universe—a universe fully equal to our own, although with the heat turned way up. The creativity, danger, humor, politics and weirdness mirror and match our own '60s and '70s, but it's all just a little different. The feeling is that of encountering one's own history for the very first time—it's all familiar and yet completely strange. The issues this movement dealt with—race, identity, high vs. low culture, North vs. South—are all issues we ourselves deal with every day. Here are clues to the puzzle that is our own identity—clues picked up in an alternative universe and brought back and decoded."—David Byrne



**Contracultura**  
*Alternative Arts and Social Transformation in Authoritarian Brazil*  
by Christopher Dunn

Publication date: November 14, 2016  
272 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25 in, 20 halftones, notes, bibl., index  
Latin America & Caribbean music

**Rights information**

- Portuguese, Editora Azougue

*A vibrant, globally connected countercultural scene that flourished even under a brutal military regime*

Christopher Dunn's history of authoritarian Brazil exposes the inventive cultural production and intense social transformations that emerged during the rule of an iron-fisted military regime during the sixties and seventies. The

Brazilian *contracultura* was a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that developed alongside the ascent of hardline forces within the regime in the late 1960s. Focusing on urban, middle-class Brazilians often inspired by the international counterculture that flourished in the United States and parts of western Europe, Dunn shows how new understandings of race, gender, sexuality, and citizenship erupted under even the most oppressive political conditions.

Dunn reveals previously ignored connections between the counterculture and Brazilian music, literature, film, visual arts, and alternative journalism. In chronicling *desbunde*, the Brazilian hippie movement, he shows how the state of Bahia, renowned for its Afro-Brazilian culture, emerged as a countercultural mecca for youth in search of spiritual alternatives. As this critical and expansive book demonstrates, many of the country's social and justice movements have their origins in the countercultural attitudes, practices, and sensibilities that flourished during the military dictatorship.

**Christopher Dunn**, associate professor of Brazilian literary and cultural studies at Tulane University, is author of *Brutality Garden: Tropicália and the Emergence of a Brazilian Counterculture*.

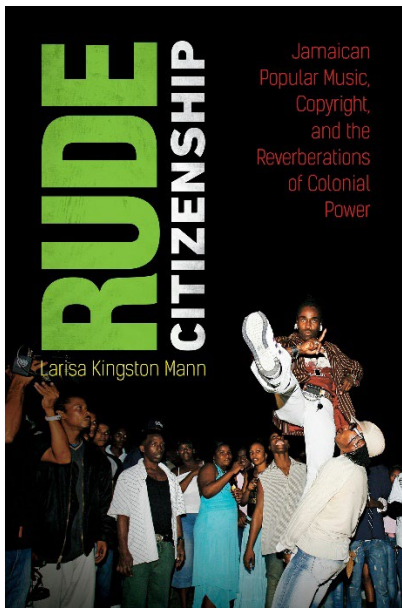
**Praise and reviews**

2017 Brazil Section Award, Latin American Studies Association Brazil Section  
2017 Roberto Reis Book Prize, Brazilian Studies Association

“Beautifully written and stylistically brilliant, Christopher Dunn’s lucid analysis of the Brazilian counterculture, which deserves as much attention as the North American one, lays out a new field of study. Conveying multiple points of view—the radicals and counterculturalists as seen even in the eyes of the police—this book is a page-turner.”  
—Robert Stam, New York University

“A masterful work of cultural history, sure to be of compelling interest to any student of Brazil in the 1970s and of Latin American counterculture more generally.”—*HAHR*

“Dunn’s recurring discussions of the importance of a collective politics of style, his attention to geographic and imagined spaces of countercultural practice, and his analysis of the relationship of the counterculture to a growing consumer culture are especially worth noting. The book is a tour de force of both historical and cultural analysis that will push our understandings of counterculture and of its political potential. It should be of enormous interest to scholars of the long Sixties anywhere.”—*The Sixties*



## Rude Citizenship

### *Jamaican Popular Music, Copyright, and the Reverberations of Colonial Power*

by Larisa Kingston Mann

Publication date: March 29, 2022

242 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 1 table

Latin America & Caribbean music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

#### *Sound systems of independence*

In this deep dive into the Jamaican music world filled with the voices of creators, producers, and consumers, Larisa Kingston Mann—DJ, media law expert, and ethnographer—identifies how a culture of collaboration lies at the heart of Jamaican creative practices and legal personhood. In street dances, recording sessions, and global genres such as the riddim, notions of originality include reliance on shared knowledge and authorship as an interactive practice. In this context, musicians, music producers, and audiences are often resistant to conventional copyright practices. And this resistance, Mann shows, goes beyond cultural concerns.

Because many working-class and poor people are cut off from the full benefits of citizenship on the basis of race, class, and geography, Jamaican music spaces are an important site of social commentary and political action in the face of the state's limited reach and neglect of social services and infrastructure. Music makers organize performance and commerce in ways that defy, though not without danger, state ordinances and intellectual property law and provide poor Jamaicans avenues for self-expression and self-definition that are closed off to them in the wider society. In a world shaped by coloniality, how creators relate to copyright reveals how people will play outside, within, and through the limits of their marginalization.

**Larisa Kingston Mann**, assistant professor of media studies and production at Temple University, has worked as a performing DJ and event organizer for more than twenty years.

#### Praise & reviews

2023 Best Historical Research in Country, Folk, Roots, or World Music, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

*“Rude Citizenship is thought-provoking and raises questions for future investigation regarding how disadvantaged populations from Jamaica and other postcolonial societies resist existing power imbalances by engaging with musical practices to flourish.”—International Journal of Communication*

*“The concept of the original ... crystalizes much of the important work Rude Citizenship does: understanding Jamaican practices of music-making on their own terms; emphasizing how, in this context, creativity is understood as relational; and working through the legal tensions that result. The book is of interest to scholars approaching music through cultural studies of law, contextually-specific conceptualizations of creativity, or 20th and 21st century Jamaica.”—Popular Music*

*“This book presents scholars and music lovers alike with a powerful interdisciplinary investigation of how Jamaican popular music enables the island's oppressed classes to resist the predations of postcolonial society. Using the lens of copyright law and its ability to define culture as property owned by individuals, Larisa Mann exposes the inadequacies of copyright's legal framework to render visible Jamaican popular music practices.”—New West Indian Guide*



## Rhythms of Race

### *Cuban Musicians and the Making of Latino New York City and Miami, 1940-1960*

by Christina D. Abreu

Publication date: May 4, 2015

322 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 6 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Series: Envisioning Cuba

Latin America & Caribbean music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Music making and identity making among Cuban Americans before the revolution*

Among the nearly 90,000 Cubans who settled in New York City and Miami in the 1940s and 1950s were numerous musicians and entertainers, black and white, who did more than fill dance halls with the rhythms of the rumba, mambo, and cha cha

chá. In her history of music and race in midcentury America, Christina D. Abreu argues that these musicians, through their work in music festivals, nightclubs, social clubs, and television and film productions, played central roles in the development of Cuban, Afro-Cuban, Latino, and Afro-Latino identities and communities. Abreu draws from previously untapped oral histories, cultural materials, and Spanish-language media to uncover the lives and broader social and cultural significance of these vibrant performers.

Keeping in view the wider context of the domestic and international entertainment industries, Abreu underscores how the racially diverse musicians in her study were also migrants and laborers. Her focus on the Cuban presence in New York City and Miami before the Cuban Revolution of 1959 offers a much needed critique of the post-1959 bias in Cuban American studies as well as insights into important connections between Cuban migration and other twentieth-century Latino migrations.

**Christina D. Abreu** is associate professor of history and director of the Center for Latino/Latin American Studies at Northern Illinois University.

#### Praise & reviews

“A fascinating account of an understudied form of labor migration in an equally understudied period of U.S. immigration history.”—*American Historical Review*

“Makes significant contributions to pan-ethnic studies about Cubans and Latinos in the United States.”

—*Journal of American History*

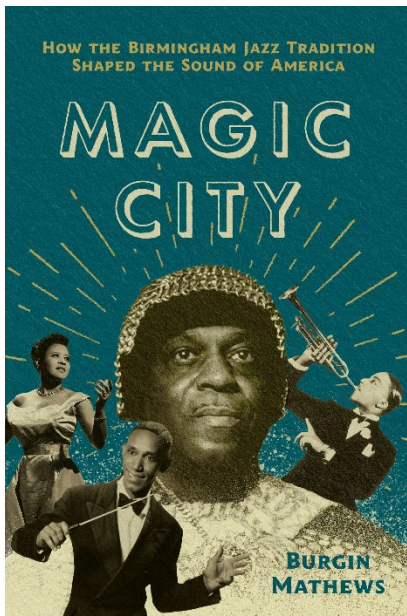
“This significant study helps elucidate the multiple evolving meanings of Cubanidad and Latino/a identity in the US.”

—*CHOICE*

“Demonstrates that Cuban musicians and diverse audiences shaped what it meant not just to be (Afro) Cuban but also Latin or Hispanic within the United States.”—*Florida Historical Quarterly*

“A very thoroughly researched work and the first to deal deeply with the topic, Abreu’s book is a very necessary contribution to Cuban and Latino scholarship.”—*International Migration Review*

“A valuable addition to the Latino music-making historiography.”—*Journal of Southern History*



## Magic City

### *How the Birmingham Jazz Tradition Shaped the Sound of America*

by Burgin Mathews

Publication date: November 28, 2023

352 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 29 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Series: American Music: New Roots

Jazz

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*The forgotten jazz legacy of Birmingham, Alabama*

*Magic City* is the story of one of American music's essential unsung places: Birmingham, Alabama, birthplace of a distinctive and influential jazz heritage. In a telling replete with colorful characters, iconic artists, and unheralded masters,

Burgin Mathews reveals how Birmingham was the cradle and training ground for such luminaries as big band leader Erskine Hawkins, cosmic outsider Sun Ra, and a long list of sidemen, soloists, and arrangers. He also celebrates the contributions of local educators, club owners, and civic leaders who nurtured a vital culture of Black expression in one of the country's most notoriously segregated cities. In Birmingham, jazz was more than entertainment: long before the city emerged as a focal point in the national civil rights movement, its homegrown jazz heroes helped set the stage, crafting a unique tradition of independence, innovation, achievement, and empowerment.

Blending deep archival research and original interviews with living elders of the Birmingham scene, Mathews elevates the stories of figures like John T. "Fess" Whatley, the pioneering teacher-bandleader who emphasized instrumental training as a means of upward mobility and community pride. Along the way, he takes readers into the high school band rooms, fraternal ballrooms, vaudeville houses, and circus tent shows that shaped a musical movement, revealing a community of players whose influence spread throughout the world.

**Burgin Mathews** is a writer, a radio host, and the founding director of the nonprofit Southern Music Research Center. He lives in Birmingham, Alabama.

#### Praise & reviews

"*Magic City* is impressively researched and gracefully written by an author who clearly loves his topic. ... [It] will be of interest to readers hoping to learn more about jazz and the wider history of music in America, but also readers who want to learn more about the communities and individuals who made Black Birmingham a vibrant and innovative place."

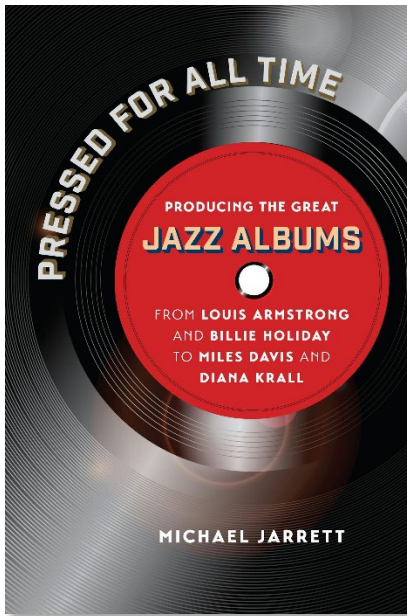
—*BirminghamWatch*

"Burgin Mathews successfully argues for Birmingham, [AL]'s pivotal role in jazz, swing, and big band, among other American musical traditions. ... Centering Black southern community, ingenuity, and resistance throughout, Mathews has created an important account of Birmingham's influence on American popular music."

—*North Carolina Historical Review*

"Fascinating and rewarding."—*Jazz Journal*

"An invaluable description of the twentieth-century jazz scene emanating from an often-overlooked location: Birmingham, Alabama. ... Mathews's emphasis on the concurrent role of Birmingham in jazz music and the struggle for Black civil rights reminds us of the importance of music beyond a purely aesthetic interpretation—it is instead the core of humanity, in all its messiness."—*Journal of Southern History*



## Pressed for All Time

*Producing the Great Jazz Albums from Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday to Miles Davis and Diana Krall*

by Michael Jarrett

Publication date: November 1, 2020

336 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 225 halftones, notes, index

Jazz

### Rights information

- All rights available

*The true stories of producers behind jazz's unforgettable sounds*

In histories of music, producers tend to fall by the wayside—generally unknown and seldom acknowledged. But without them and their contributions to the art form, we'd have little on record of some of the most important music ever created.

Discover the stories behind some of jazz's best-selling and most influential albums in this collection of oral histories gathered by music scholar and writer Michael Jarrett. Drawing together interviews with over fifty producers, musicians, engineers, and label executives, Jarrett shines a light on the world of making jazz records by letting his subjects tell their own stories and share their experiences in creating the American jazz canon.

Packed with fascinating stories and fresh perspectives on over 200 albums and artists, including legends such as Louis Armstrong, John Coltrane, and Miles Davis, as well as contemporary artists such as Diana Krall and Norah Jones, *Pressed for All Time* tells the unknown stories of the men and women who helped to shape the quintessential American sound.

**Michael Jarrett** is professor of English at Pennsylvania State University, York.

### Praise & reviews

“Read this book and you'll learn two things: What a record producer actually does and the fascinating stories behind some of the world's most loved jazz recordings. Either way, it's another riveting book from Michael Jarrett.”

—Jason Verlinde, *Fretboard Journal*

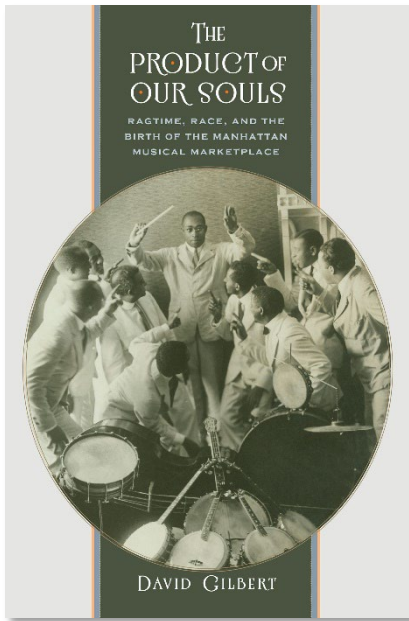
“In his enlightening book, Michael Jarrett has produced a concise history of the innovative practices of jazz record production. While interviewing over fifty legendary producers who orchestrated albums with jazz greats such as Louis Armstrong, Ray Charles, and Billie Holiday, Jarrett, in turn, produces a rich and engaging oral history that will appeal to jazz aficionados, fans, and scholars alike.”—Susan Schmidt Horning, St. John's University

“Essential reading for every jazz aficionado.”—*DownBeat*

“Successfully details the untold narrative of jazz production from the perspective of those with an astounding array of technical skills and artistic background[s], who coaxed iconic recordings out of the giants of jazz. Jazz fans and record buffs will relish poring over these accounts of how their favorite records were made.”

—*Library Journal*

“Filled with fresh stories and insights about the process of recording jazz, filling in an important gap in jazz history. . . . highly recommended.”—Scott Yanow, *Los Angeles Jazz Scene*



## **The Product of Our Souls** ***Ragtime, Race, and the Birth of the Manhattan Musical Marketplace*** by David Gilbert

Publication date: June 1, 2016  
312 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 15 halftones, 1 map, notes, bibl., index  
Jazz

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*Laying the foundations for the Jazz Age and Harlem Renaissance*

In 1912 James Reese Europe made history by conducting his 125-member Clef Club Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. The first concert by an African American ensemble at the esteemed venue was more than just a concert—it was a political act of desegregation, a defiant challenge to the status quo in American music. In this book, David Gilbert explores how Europe and other African American performers, at the height of Jim Crow, transformed their racial difference into the mass-market commodity known as “black music.” Gilbert shows how Europe and others used the rhythmic sounds of ragtime, blues, and jazz to construct new representations of black identity, challenging many of the nation’s preconceived ideas about race, culture, and modernity and setting off a musical craze in the process.

Gilbert sheds new light on the little-known era of African American music and culture between the heyday of minstrelsy and the Harlem Renaissance. He demonstrates how black performers played a pioneering role in establishing New York City as the center of American popular music, from Tin Pan Alley to Broadway, and shows how African Americans shaped American mass culture in their own image.

**David Gilbert** is an independent scholar who received a Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He lives in Asheville, North Carolina.

### **Praise & reviews**

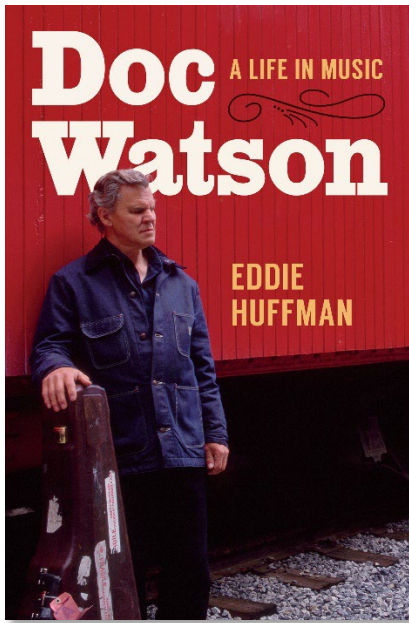
2016 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title

Gilbert’s work narrates racism’s history and its potential transcendence through musical forms, with ragtime the groundbreaking example of the modern era. ... Has lasting value as a detail-oriented cultural history.”  
—*Journal of American History*

“Gilbert’s race-infused academic analysis may be clearer than either the romanticized notions inherited by the general public about the era, or the culture blindness of earlier authorities on this topic. It may also be off-putting to some readers. But if you find these ideas captivating do yourself a favor and read the book.”—*The Syncopated Times*

“*The Product of Our Souls* has the potential to be one of the most important works of urban cultural history produced in the last twenty years. For so long, the stories of the Johnson Brothers, the Marshall Hotel, James Reese Europe, and others have been used to close the curtains on minstrelsy or open the doors of the New Negro Renaissance. But here we see a cogent and fully developed story of its own, the story of a ragtime modernity, the period where race is identified as a key conduit in the creation of the American musical marketplace.”

—Davarian L. Baldwin, author of *Chicago’s New Negroes: Modernity, the Great Migration, and Black Urban Life*



**Doc Watson**  
*A Life in Music*  
by Eddie Huffman

Publication date: January 28, 2025  
288 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 14 halftones, bibl., index  
Series: American Music: New Roots  
Country & American roots music / biography

**Rights information**

- Audio, Tantor Audio

*The story of a small-town man who changed music forever*

Arthel “Doc” Watson (1923–2012) is arguably one of the most influential musicians Appalachia has ever produced. A musician’s musician, Doc grew up on a subsistence farm in the North Carolina mountains during the Depression, soaking up traditional music and learning to play guitar even though he was blind. Rising to fame in the 1960s as part of the burgeoning folk revival scene, Doc became the

face of traditional music for many listeners, racking up multiple Grammys and releasing dozens of albums over the course of his long career. Eddie Huffman tells the story of Doc’s life and legacy, drawing on extensive interviews and hundreds of hours of archival research. In making the most comprehensive biography of Watson ever, Huffman gives us an affecting and informative portrait of the man they called Doc.

Full of fascinating stories—from Doc’s first banjo made from his grandmother’s cat to the founding of MerleFest—this promises to be the definitive biography of the man and how he came to be synonymous with roots music in America and shows how his influence is still felt in music today.

**Eddie Huffman** is a writer, reporter, and author of *John Prine: In Spite of Himself*. He lives in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**Praise & reviews**

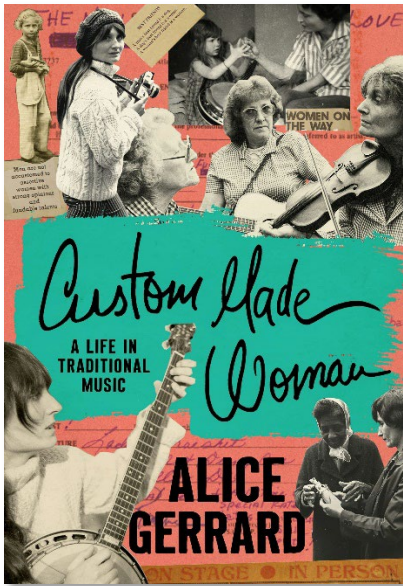
“An illuminating new biography ... Huffman offers a straight ahead, chronological, account of Watson’s life and music. ... Huffman’s book also serves as a useful introduction to Doc Watson, and it will encourage long-time fans to listen yet once again to Doc’s records.”—*No Depression*

“Huffman has carefully researched Watson’s life and music ... It’s hard to imagine why any Doc Watson fan wouldn’t want this one in their collection.”—*Bluegrass Today*

“I’ve always thought of Doc as the patron saint of the mountains. His life, like his music, was clear as mountain water. Eddie Huffman has done a beautiful job of bringing this story to life. This book also serves as a reminder that Doc Watson not only was one of the greatest guitar players who ever walked the planet but also will undoubtedly be revered as an inspirational figure for the ages.”—Marty Stuart, award-winning country and bluegrass musician

“Doc Watson stood as a vital bridge between the worlds of folk music and bluegrass. His songs and musical prowess showcased a broad spectrum of more than a century of American music. Huffman provides a comprehensive look at an American treasure whose legacy still shines in the fabric of our cultural landscape. Watson has influenced thousands of musicians, including me, by embracing the everlasting power of reinterpreting and arranging the folk-song tradition so that it can live on for the next generations to enjoy.”

—Dom Flemons, musician, songwriter, and founding member of the Carolina Chocolate Drops



## **Custom Made Woman** *A Life in Traditional Music* by Alice Gerrard

Publication date: December 2, 2025  
184 Pages, 7 × 10, 102 halftones  
Series: American Music: New Roots  
Country & American roots music / biography

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*A trailblazing musician, in her own words*

Alice Gerrard, an award-winning and storied folk and bluegrass musician for over 50 years, is one of the notable few women in a heavily male genre. *Custom Made Woman* tells Gerrard's story through the music, the folk festivals, the kids, and the relationships—both personal and professional—that defined her storied life and

career. Her collaborations with Appalachian singer Hazel Dickens during the 1960s and 1970s were pivotal recordings during the decades after the American folk music boom of the midcentury; the duo produced four albums that have recently been rereleased by Rounder Records and Smithsonian Folkways. In addition to Dickens, Gerrard has worked with folks like Tommy Jarrell, Enoch Rutherford, Otis Burris, Luther Davis, and Matokie Slaughter, and founded *The Old-Time Herald*, based in Durham, North Carolina, serving as its editor-in-chief from 1987 until 2003.

She's also a lifelong documentarian of the folkways scene, and this book features nearly 100 rare photos—many never before seen—of key musicians, including Doc Watson, Bill Monroe, Hazel Dickens, Elizabeth Cotten, Mike Seeger, and more. In telling the story of her time as a player of traditional music, Gerrard gives us a deeply personal way to understand and appreciate a quintessentially American genre that has a long history and thrives to this day.

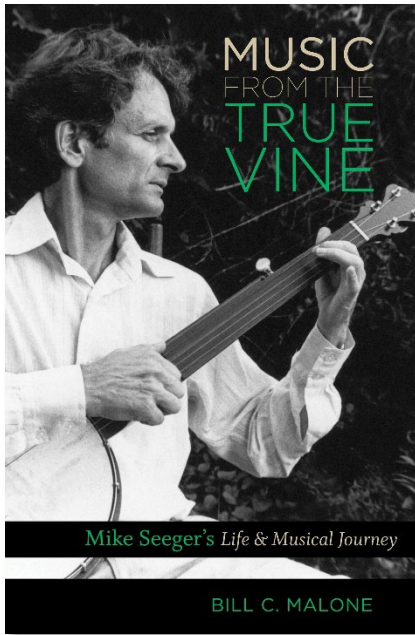
**Alice Gerrard** is a Grammy-nominated old-time and bluegrass musician whose career has spanned nearly six decades.

### **Praise & reviews**

“As a ‘pioneering woman of bluegrass,’ the founder of *The Old-Time Herald*, and musical collaborator with the likes of Hazel Dickens, Mike Seeger, Tommy Jarrell, and Elizabeth Cotten, Alice Gerrard has played a defining role in the evolution and transmission of American traditional music. Through stories of the many musicians who nurtured her, plucky personal reflections, and stunning photographs, Gerrard offers us a generous and intimate view of her remarkable life at the forefront of the old-time music revival.”—Emily Hilliard, author of *Making Our Future*

“*Custom Made Woman* is a deeply engaging, humorous, and heartfelt tale told in Gerrard's inimitable voice. Telling her life's story—from motherhood to her and Hazel Dickens breaking the bluegrass ‘glass ceiling’ and more—we get to learn the incredible impact Gerrard has had on old-time music; she is a tradition bearer, collector, activist, and a promoter of one of America's original sounds. This is a one-of-a-kind literary and musical experience.”

—Trevor McKenzie, author of *Otto Wood, the Bandit*



## Music from the True Vine

### *Mike Seeger's Life and Musical Journey*

by Bill C. Malone

Publication date: December 1, 2014

256 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 25 illus., notes, bibl., index

Country & American roots music / biography

#### Rights information

- Audio, Audible

*Seeger's substantial and enduring contributions to American roots music*

A musician, documentarian, scholar, and one of the founding members of the influential folk revival group the New Lost City Ramblers, Mike Seeger (1933–2009) spent more than fifty years collecting, performing, and commemorating the culture and folk music of white and black southerners, which he called “music from the true vine.” In this fascinating biography, Bill Malone explores the life and musical contributions of folk artist Seeger, son of musicologists Charles and Ruth

Crawford Seeger and brother of folksingers Pete and Peggy Seeger.

Malone argues that Seeger, while not as well known as his brother, may be more important to the history of American music through his work in identifying and giving voice to the people from whom the folk revival borrowed its songs. Seeger recorded and produced over forty albums, including the work of artists such as Libba Cotten, Tommy Jarrell, Dock Boggs, and Maybelle Carter. In 1958, with an ambition to recreate the southern string bands of the twenties, he formed the New Lost City Ramblers, helping to inspire the urban folk revival of the sixties. *Music from the True Vine* presents Seeger as a gatekeeper of American roots music and culture, showing why generations of musicians and fans of traditional music regard him as a mentor and an inspiration.

**Bill C. Malone** is professor of history emeritus at Tulane University. Widely regarded as the foremost historian of country music, he is author of *Country Music, U.S.A.* and *Don't Get above Your Raisin': Country Music and the Southern Working Class*. For UNC Press, he is also the editor of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, Vol. 12: *Music*.

#### Praise & reviews

2013 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title

“Resistant to making his own life a central part of his legacy, [Mike Seeger] remained an enigma to many who'd long relished and built on his music. ... The more obscure parts of the story are clarified in Bill C. Malone's biography.”

—*Wall Street Journal*

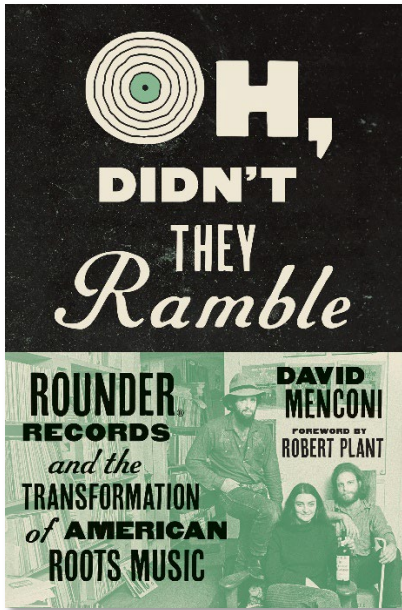
“An illuminating biography... . Paints Seeger's contribution to the folk music revival as one of genuine respect for and commemoration of the music he was preserving and lets the importance of Seeger's work speak for itself.”

—*Library Journal*

“An excellent and affectionate biography.”—*Times Literary Supplement*

“Malone, long the nation's most authoritative historian of country music, has written an impressively researched, psychologically insightful, and eminently readable biography of an individual whose lifework changed our understanding both of folk music and the southern region that spawned it.”—*Journal of Southern History*

“An important contribution to folklore scholarship ... Rich in detail and could be a blueprint for telling the story of an individual's entrance into a musical career.”—*Journal of American Folklore*



## Oh, Didn't They Ramble

### *Rounder Records and the Transformation of American Roots Music*

by David Menconi

Foreword by Robert Plant

Publication date: October 17, 2023

224 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 42 halftones, bibl., index

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*The definitive history of a leading force in American music*

What is American roots music? Any definition must account for a kaleidoscope of genres from bluegrass to blues, western swing to jazz, soul and gospel to rock and reggae, Cajun to Celtic. It must encompass the work of artists as diverse as Alice

Gerard and Alison Krauss, George Thorogood and Sun Ra, Béla Fleck and Clarence “Gatemouth” Brown, the Blake Babies and Billy Strings. What do all these artists and music styles have in common? The answer is a record label born in the wake of the American folk revival and 1960s movement politics, formed around the eclectic tastes and audacious ideals of three recent college grads who lived, listened, and worked together. The answer is Rounder Records.

For more than fifty years, Rounder has been the world’s leading label for folk music of all kinds. David Menconi’s book is the label’s definitive history, drawing on previously untapped archives and extensive interviews with artists, Rounder staff, and founders Ken Irwin, Marian Leighton Levy, and Bill Nowlin. Rounder’s founders blended ingenuity and independence with serendipity and an unfailing belief in the small-d democratic power of music to connect and inspire people, forging creative partnerships that resulted in one of the most eclectic and creative catalogs in the history of recorded music. Placing Rounder in the company of similarly influential labels like Stax, Motown, and Blue Note, this story is destined to delight anyone who cares about the place of music in American culture.

**David Menconi** is a journalist, music critic, and author based in Raleigh, North Carolina. His most recent book is *Step It Up and Go: The Story of North Carolina Popular Music from Blind Boy Fuller and Doc Watson to Nina Simone and Superchunk*.

#### Praise & reviews

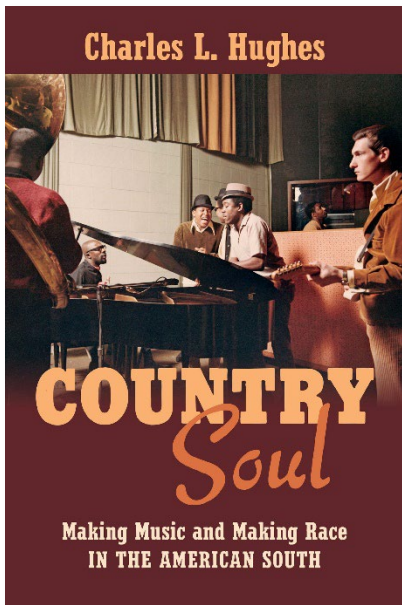
2025 Short-listed, Last Syllable Book Awards

2024 Best Historical Research on Record Labels or General Recording Topics, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

“A richly detailed presentation of the facts [Menconi] uncovered through research and countless interviews. ... *Oh, Didn't They Ramble* tells an important story in an entertaining and informative way. If you only read one book about music this year, this should be the one.”—*Bluegrass Today*

“With extensive access to Rounder artists, staff, and founders Ken Irwin, Marian Leighton Levy, and Bill Nowlin ... David Menconi is able to tell Rounder’s story, from its humble but audacious and idealistic beginnings to becoming one of the most influential record labels in the history of recorded music.”—*Bluegrass Situation*

“A terrific piece of writing. *Oh, Didn't They Ramble* isn't just a book. It's a guide to our essential musical past.”  
—Greg Kot, *Sound Opinions*



## Country Soul

### *Making Music and Making Race in the American South*

by Charles L. Hughes

Publication date: February 1, 2017

280 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 24 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Bringing together country and soul—and their unseen connections*

In the sound of the 1960s and 1970s, nothing symbolized the rift between black and white America better than the seemingly divided genres of country and soul. Yet the music emerged from the same songwriters, musicians, and producers in the recording studios of Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee, and Muscle Shoals, Alabama—what Charles L. Hughes calls the “country-soul triangle.” In legendary

studios like Stax and FAME, integrated groups of musicians like Booker T. and the MGs and the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section produced music that both challenged and reconfirmed racial divisions in the United States. Working with artists from Aretha Franklin to Willie Nelson, these musicians became crucial contributors to the era’s popular music and internationally recognized symbols of American racial politics in the turbulent years of civil rights protests, Black Power, and white backlash.

Hughes offers a provocative reinterpretation of this key moment in American popular music and challenges the conventional wisdom about the racial politics of southern studios and the music that emerged from them. Drawing on interviews and rarely used archives, Hughes brings to life the daily world of session musicians, producers, and songwriters at the heart of the country and soul scenes. In doing so, he shows how the country-soul triangle gave birth to new ways of thinking about music, race, labor, and the South in this pivotal period.

**Charles L. Hughes** is director of the Memphis Center at Rhodes College.

#### Praise & reviews

2015 Best Historical Research in Recorded Blues, Gospel, Soul, or R&B, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

“A deep, fresh examination of various power relations involved in the making of soul music, country music, and the sonic space between them.”—*Wall Street Journal*

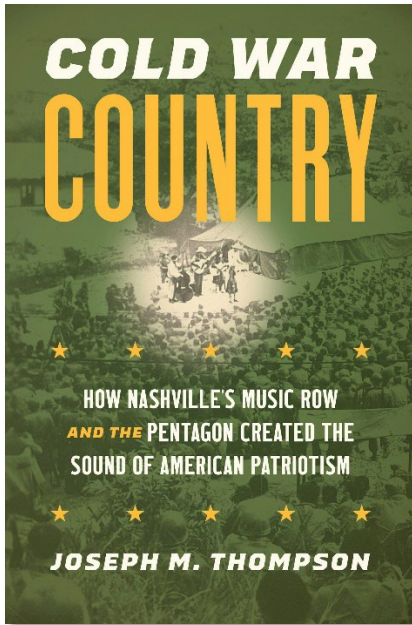
“*Country Soul* is an excellent place to begin a more honest accounting of this golden era.”—*Pitchfork*

“A valuable addition to the literature on southern music, black and white.”—*American Historical Review*

“A fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the apparent spaces of racial harmony in the country-soul triangle.”  
—*Journal of Southern History*

“With its courageous, thoroughly researched, and deeply considered take on the racial politics of the southern music industry in a pivotal period for not just the music but the South and the nation at large, *Country Soul* claims its own essential place in the telling of that messy history.”—*Paste*

“An essential piece of Southern musical history.”—*Kirkus Reviews*



## Cold War Country

### *How Nashville's Music Row and the Pentagon Created the Sound of American Patriotism*

by Joseph M. Thompson

Publication date: April 2, 2024

344 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 23 halftones, notes, bibl., index

Series: Studies in United States Culture

Country & American roots music

#### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*Inside the all-American relationship between country music and the US military*

Country music maintains a special, decades-long relationship to American military life, but these ties didn't just happen. This readable history reveals how country music's Nashville-based business leaders on Music Row created partnerships with the Pentagon to sell their audiences on military service while selling the music to

servicemembers. Beginning in the 1950s, the military flooded armed forces airwaves with the music, hosted tour dates at bases around the world, and drew on artists from Johnny Cash to Lee Greenwood to support recruitment programs. Over the last half of the twentieth century, the close connections between the Defense Department and Music Row gave an economic boost to the white-dominated sounds of country while marginalizing Black artists and fueling divisions over the meaning of patriotism.

This story is filled with familiar stars like Roy Acuff, Elvis Presley, and George Strait, as well as lesser-known figures: industry executives who worked the halls of Congress, country artists who dissented from the stereotypically patriotic trappings of the genre, and more. Joseph M. Thompson argues convincingly that the relationship between Music Row and the Pentagon helped shape not only the evolution of popular music but also race relations, partisanship, and images of the United States abroad.

**Joseph M. Thompson** is assistant professor of history at Mississippi State University.

#### **Praise & reviews**

2024 Short-listed, *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize in History

2024 Best Music Book, *Rolling Stone*

2025 Belmont University Curb Music Industry Award for Country Music Book of the Year, International Country Music Conference

“Essential reading ... Thompson's exploration of the longstanding ties between the US military and country music doesn't just help you rethink country music, but the ways in which America uses popular music to its own ends. Thompson's immaculately researched book upends expectations while diving deep into the previously unreported ties ... between the army and Music Row.”—*Rolling Stone*

“Joseph Thompson tells the fascinating and forgotten story of how the Pentagon and Music Row encouraged and reinforced each other ... [and] reveals why this happened.”—*Boston Globe*

“Essential ... Written in clear, engaging prose, *Cold War Country* is a delight to read, and would work very well in an undergraduate classroom. ... Any scholar of the US military, popular music, and the wider cultural paradoxes of the modern United States will learn a tremendous deal from Thompson's eye-opening book.”—*Diplomatic History*



## The Sound of Navajo Country

### *Music, Language, and Diné Belonging*

by Kristina M. Jacobsen

Publication date: March 13, 2017

200 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 18 halftones, 4 maps, notes, bibl., index

Series: Critical Indigenities

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

#### *Country music and the politics of Native identity*

In this ethnography of Navajo (Diné) popular music culture, Kristina M. Jacobsen examines questions of Indigenous identity and performance by focusing on the surprising and vibrant Navajo country music scene. Through multiple first-person accounts, Jacobsen illuminates country music's connections to the Indigenous politics of language and belonging, examining through the lens of music both the

politics of difference and many internal distinctions Diné make among themselves and their fellow Navajo citizens.

As the second largest tribe in the United States, the Navajo have often been portrayed as a singular and monolithic entity. Using her experience as a singer, lap steel player, and Navajo language learner, Jacobsen challenges this notion, showing the ways Navajos distinguish themselves from one another through musical taste, linguistic abilities, geographic location, physical appearance, degree of Navajo or Indian blood, and class affiliations. By linking cultural anthropology to ethnomusicology, linguistic anthropology, and critical Indigenous studies, Jacobsen shows how Navajo poetics and politics offer important insights into the politics of Indigeneity in Native North America, highlighting the complex ways that identities are negotiated in multiple, often contradictory, spheres.

**Kristina M. Jacobsen** is associate professor of music and anthropology (ethnology) at the University of New Mexico. She also cofacilitates the UNM honky-tonk ensemble, is a touring singer/songwriter, and fronts the all-girl honky-tonk band Merlettes. All author proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to the Navajo Nation Museum.

#### Praise & reviews

2018 Woody Guthrie Award, International Association for the Study of Popular Music, US Branch

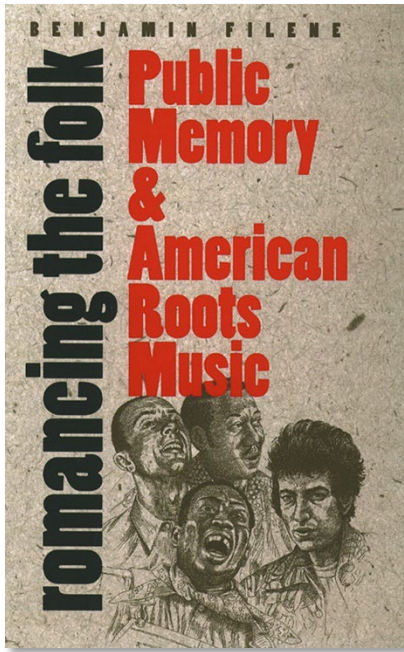
“Jacobsen is absolutely correct that we should pay more attention to the many forms and uses of voice, including but not limited to music and singing, in analyzing ascriptions and avowals of identity and belonging.”

—*Anthropology Review Database*

“This book, grappling with the face-to-face interactions of music making, offers a robust framework for considering how Navajo musicians perform and express membership within their community through the lens of country music performance practice. ... An important contribution to country music scholarship, expanding the geo-cultural boundaries of country music discourse, and indeed broadening our understanding of the genre's narrative and cultural identity.”

—*Journal of the Society for American Music*

“One can ‘hear’ Navajo voices threading throughout Jacobsen's *The Sound of Navajo Country*. ... [The book] should be of interest to students, teachers, and researchers of vocal anthropology, popular music, the social construction of genre, and the contemporary expressive practices of indigenous peoples. It is also a fine teaching instrument for debunking the myth that Native American expressive practices are rooted only in the distant past.”—*Ethnomusicology*



## Romancing the Folk

### *Public Memory and American Roots Music*

by Benjamin Filene

Publication date: June 26, 2000

344 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 22 illus., notes, bibl., index

Series: Cultural Studies of the United States

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

#### *American music in the popular imagination*

In American music, the notion of “roots” has been a powerful refrain, but just what constitutes our true musical traditions has often been a matter of debate. As Benjamin Filene reveals, a number of competing visions of America’s musical past have vied for influence over the public imagination in this century.

Filene builds his story around a fascinating group of characters—folklorists, record company executives, producers, radio programmers, and publicists—who acted as middlemen between folk and popular culture. These cultural brokers “discovered” folk musicians, recorded them, and promoted them. In the process, Filene argues, they shaped mainstream audiences’ understanding of what was “authentic” roots music.

Filene moves beyond the usual boundaries of folk music to consider a wide range of performers who drew on or were drawn into the canon of American roots music—from Lead Belly and Woody Guthrie, to Muddy Waters and Willie Dixon, to Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. Challenging traditional accounts that would confine folk music revivalism to the 1930s and 1960s, he argues instead that the desire to preserve and popularize America’s musical heritage is a powerful current that has run throughout this century’s culture and continues to flow today.

**Benjamin Filene** is chief curator at the North Carolina Museum of History.

#### Praise & reviews

2001 Award for Excellence in Historical Folk and Ethnic Music, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

2001 ASCAP-Deems Taylor Book Award, American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers

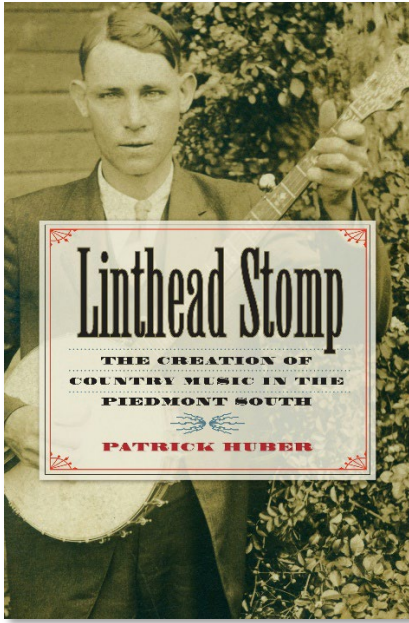
2001 Herbert Feis Award, American Historical Association

“*Romancing the Folk* explores a cultural phenomenon—the discovery of the idea of an American folk music tradition and of the consequent attempts to redefine and canonize those musicians who seemed to best represent it—that heretofore has been described in only bits and pieces. Filene is the first scholar who has discussed the whole broad field of American folk music from such a perspective. He argues convincingly, with a clear and direct writing style, that folk music has never come to us in an unmediated form.”—Bill Malone, author of *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Culture and the Roots of Country Music*

“A fascinating history of the shifting notions of what constitutes American folk music. ... The folklorists, academics, bureaucrats and entrepreneurs who dominate [this] story are colorful characters, and they are joined by artists who inspire Filene to critical heights few historians approach.”—*New York Times Book Review*

“Filene’s book is smart and careful and should gain a wide audience.”—*Journal of American History*

“A learned and lively look at the development of our national music. Much of the territory covered here is overlooked in books on folk music.”—*Library Journal*



## Linthead Stomp

### *The Creation of Country Music in the Piedmont South*

by Patrick Huber

Publication date: December 1, 2014

440 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 39 illus., 1 map, appends., notes, bibl., index

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- Audio, Audible

*The urban and industrial roots of American country music*

Contrary to popular belief, the roots of American country music do not lie solely on southern farms or in mountain hollows. Rather, much of this music recorded before World War II emerged from the bustling cities and towns of the Piedmont South. No group contributed more to the commercialization of early country music than southern factory workers. In *Linthead Stomp*, Patrick Huber explores the origins and development of this music in the Piedmont's mill villages.

Huber offers vivid portraits of a colorful cast of Piedmont millhand musicians, including Fiddlin' John Carson, Charlie Poole, Dave McCarn, and the Dixon Brothers, and considers the impact that urban living, industrial work, and mass culture had on their lives and music. Drawing on a broad range of sources, including rare 78-rpm recordings and unpublished interviews, Huber reveals how the country music recorded between 1922 and 1942 was just as modern as the jazz music of the same era. *Linthead Stomp* celebrates the Piedmont millhand fiddlers, guitarists, and banjo pickers who combined the collective memories of the rural countryside with the upheavals of urban-industrial life to create a distinctive American music that spoke to the changing realities of the twentieth-century South.

**Patrick Huber** is professor of history at Missouri University of Science and Technology and the author or editor of five books, including *The Hank Williams Reader*.

#### Praise & reviews

2009 Award for Excellence: Historical Recorded Sound Research in Country Music, Association for Recorded Sound Collections

2009 Belmont Book Award, Belmont University

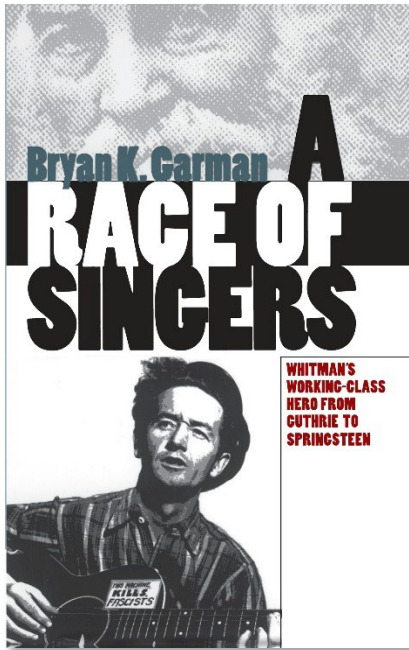
2010 Wayland D. Hand Prize, History and Folklore Section of the American Folklore Society

“A new, canny take on Old, Weird America, this colorful, contrarian book does much to dispel a spate of antediluvian tropes, musical and otherwise.”—*The Atlantic*

“With respect and passion, Huber puts ... pioneering artists in well-deserved perspective, gracefully illuminating the birth of an American art form.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“Well-researched, carefully argued, and beautifully written ... An impressive contribution to our understanding that country music was not born in some pristine corner of America, untouched by the winds of change. ... A splendid account of [country music's] development in the vital crucible of the Piedmont South.”—*American Historical Review*

“A splendid book ... One of its principle achievements, due to its author's subtle but insistent writing, is to encourage the seeking out of [the performers'] work. Huber provides a very useful discography, rightly flagging up the sterling work done by labels such as Document, County and Bear Family in the dissemination of early country music recordings.”  
—*Journal of Popular Music*



## A Race of Singers

*Whitman's Working-Class Hero from Guthrie to Springsteen*

by Bryan K. Garman

Publication date: September 11, 2000

352 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 14 illus., notes, bibl., index

Series: Cultural Studies of the United States

Country & American roots music

### Rights information

- All rights available

*Singing the limits of Whitman's democratic vision*

When Walt Whitman published *Leaves of Grass* in 1855, he dreamed of inspiring a “race of singers” who would celebrate the working class and realize the promise of American democracy. By examining how singers such as Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, and Bruce Springsteen both embraced and reconfigured Whitman’s vision, Bryan Garman shows that Whitman succeeded. In doing so, Garman celebrates the triumphs yet also exposes the limitations of Whitman’s legacy.

While Whitman’s verse propounded notions of sexual freedom and renounced the competitiveness of capitalism, it also safeguarded the interests of the white workingman, often at the expense of women and people of color. Garman describes how each of Whitman’s successors adopted the mantle of the working-class hero while adapting the role to his own generation’s concerns: Guthrie condemned racism in the 1930s, Dylan addressed race and war in the 1960s, and Springsteen explored sexism, racism, and homophobia in the 1980s and 1990s.

But as Garman points out, even the Boss, like his forebears, tends to represent solidarity in terms of white male bonding and homosocial allegiance. We can hear America singing in the voices of these artists, Garman says, but it is still the song of a white, male America.

**Bryan K. Garman**, who received his Ph.D. from Emory University, is chair of the history department at the Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C.

### Praise & reviews

“[Garman] ... has produced a strong work of scholarship that encourages us to think about the many ‘traditions’ that defined American music in the twentieth century.”—*Journal of American History*

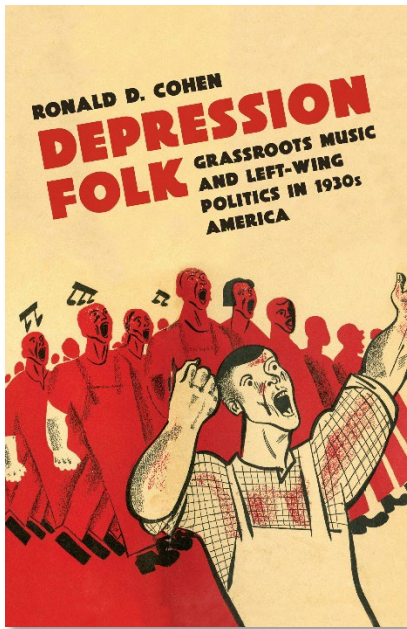
“Very well written and admirably researched.”—*Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas*

“Well written, well researched, and provocative, this book provides an interesting interpretation of three popular music icons and their connection to the Whitman tradition.”—*Library Journal*

“*A Race of Singers* contributes tremendously to our understanding of the ways in which Whitman’s much-discussed male homoeroticism is really part of a larger formulation of white male working class community. A major contribution to masculinity studies.”—Cecelia Tichi, Vanderbilt University

“Garman captures Whitman’s heritage in all of its light and its shadow, its soaring lyricism and its ominous silences. Acknowledging the genius and power of Whitman’s example, this fine study of artistic influence also shows how social forces shaped the reproduction of a manly and individualistic cultural radicalism across generations.”

—David Roediger, University of Minnesota



## Depression Folk

### *Grassroots Music and Left-Wing Politics in 1930s America*

by Ronald D. Cohen

Publication date: September 12, 2016

218 Pages, 5.5 × 8.5, 15 halftones, notes, index

Country & American roots music

#### Rights information

- All rights available

Chronicling the vernacular music and musicians that soundtracked 1930s America

While music lovers and music historians alike understand that folk music played an increasingly pivotal role in American labor and politics during the economic and social tumult of the Great Depression, how did this relationship come to be? Ronald D. Cohen sheds new light on the complex cultural history of folk music in America, detailing the musicians, government agencies, and record companies that had a lasting impact during the 1930s and beyond. Covering myriad musical styles

and performers, Cohen narrates a singular history that begins in nineteenth-century labor politics and popular music culture, following the rise of unions and Communism to the subsequent Red Scare and increasing power of the Conservative movement in American politics—with American folk and vernacular music centered throughout. Detailing the influence and achievements of such notable musicians as Pete Seeger, Big Bill Broonzy, and Woody Guthrie, Cohen explores the intersections of politics, economics, and race, using the roots of American folk music to explore one of the United States' most troubled times. Becoming entangled with the ascending American left wing, folk music became synonymous with protest and sharing the troubles of real people through song.

**Ronald D. Cohen** is emeritus professor of history at Indiana University Northwest.

#### Praise & reviews

“Successfully weaves together some of the important people engaged with left-wing music in this era and draws attention to the importance of music to a historical understanding of the 1930s.”—*Arkansas Historical Quarterly*

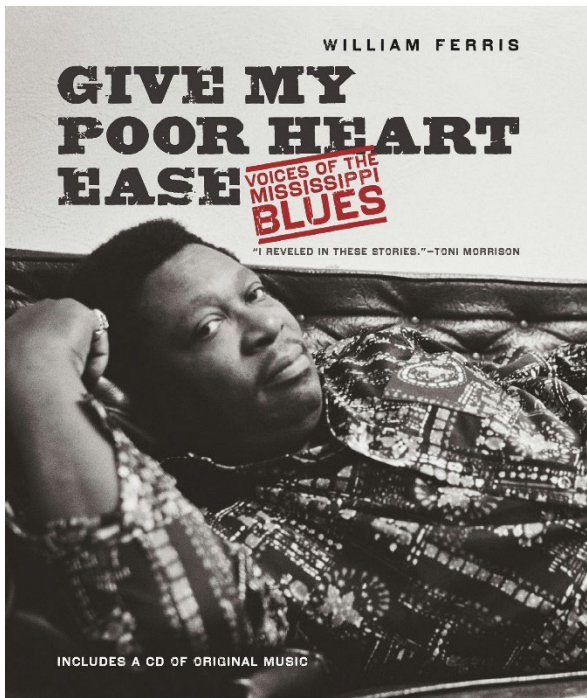
“Cohen’s approachable writing style makes this book appropriate for general readers as well as scholars of folk music, cultural history, and American politics. Highly recommended.”—*CHOICE*

“A book that is made to order for anyone who wants to understand where folk music came from and what the 1930s sounded like.”—*Labour/Le Travail*

“A primer for anyone looking for an overview of the vernacular music that contained political commentary during this tumultuous yet pivotal American decade.”—*Journal of Southern History*

“Through the insightful lens of music, Ronald D. Cohen reveals a definitive narrative of labor struggles, politics, leftist thought, and the effects of the Great Depression on everyday Americans during this tumultuous era in our nation’s history.”—Ron Pen, University of Kentucky

“Ronald D. Cohen has written a compelling, engaging, and highly readable account of the indelible, influential, and important style of music we associate with the Great Depression. A much-needed work that fills a void in the scholarship of the labor movement and folk music in the 1930s.”—Timothy Lynch, author of *Strike Songs of the Depression*



## **Give My Poor Heart Ease** *Voices of the Mississippi Blues* by William Ferris

Publication date: February 15, 2016

320 Pages, 8 × 9.5, 45 illus., 1 map, bibl., index, CD of original music  
Series: H. Eugene and Lillian Youngs Lehman Series  
Blues

### **Rights information**

- French, Editions LaBerlue

*A multimedia introduction to the blues and its roots*

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, folklorist William Ferris toured his home state of Mississippi, documenting the voices of African Americans as they spoke about and performed the diverse musical traditions that form the authentic roots of the blues. Now, *Give My Poor Heart Ease* puts front and center a searing selection of the artistically and emotionally rich voices from this invaluable documentary record. Illustrated with Ferris's photographs of the

musicians and their communities and including a CD of original music, the book features more than twenty interviews relating frank, dramatic, and engaging narratives about black life and blues music in the heart of the American South.

Here are the stories of artists who have long memories and speak eloquently about their lives, blues musicians who represent a wide range of musical traditions—from one-strand instruments, bottle-blowing, and banjo to spirituals, hymns, and prison work chants. Celebrities such as B. B. King and Willie Dixon, along with performers known best in their neighborhoods, express the full range of human and artistic experience—joyful and gritty, raw and painful.

In an autobiographical introduction, Ferris reflects on how he fell in love with the vibrant musical culture that was all around him but was considered off limits to a white Mississippian during a troubled era. This magnificent volume illuminates blues music, the broader African American experience, and indeed the history and culture of America itself.

**William Ferris** is Joel R. Williamson Eminent Professor of History and senior associate director of the Center for the Study of the American South at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Ferris coedited the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* and is the author of *Blues from the Delta*. *Rolling Stone* magazine has named him among the top ten professors in the United States. In 2010, Ferris received the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters.

### **Praise & reviews**

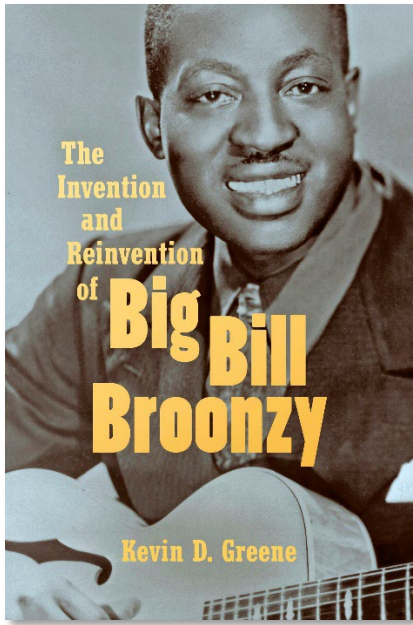
2009 Okra Pick: Great Southern Books Fresh Off the Vine, Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance

2010 Certificate of Merit, Association for Recorded Sound Collections Best Research in Recorded Blues, Rhythm & Blues, or Soul Music

2009 Commended, Coup de Coeur, Academie Charles Cros

“Captures the cadences of [the musicians'] spoken voices and the stories of their lives, and the DVD and CD that accompany the book allow us to hear their music. ... If the unhealed wound of injustice is everywhere present in these stories, many of the people telling them, like Ferris himself, have refused to see their lives reduced to race and stubbornly resist despair.”—*Harper's Magazine*

“A captivating and diverse multimedia experience for fans and scholars of the blues and gospel music. ... Highly recommended for anyone interested in the blues or Southern history.”—*Library Journal* (starred review)



## The Invention and Reinvention of Big Bill Broonzy by Kevin D. Greene

Publication date: November 26, 2018  
242 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 10 halftones, notes, bibl., index  
Blues / biography

### Rights information

- All rights available

*Tracing the evolving identity of a blues legend*

Over the course of his long career, legendary bluesman William “Big Bill” Broonzy (1893–1958) helped shape the trajectory of the genre, from its roots in the rural Mississippi River Delta, through its rise as a popular genre in the North, to its eventual international acclaim. Along the way, Broonzy adopted an evolving personal and professional identity, tailoring his self-presentation to the demands of the place and time. His remarkable professional fluidity mirrored the range of expectations from his audiences, whose ideas about race, national belonging,

identity, and the blues were refracted through Broonzy as if through a prism. Kevin D. Greene argues that Broonzy’s popular success testifies to his ability to navigate the cultural expectations of his different audiences. However, this constant reinvention came at a personal and professional cost. Using Broonzy’s multifaceted career, Greene situates blues performance at the center of understanding African American self-presentation and racial identity in the first half of the twentieth century.

Through Broonzy’s life and times, Greene assesses major themes and events in African American history, including the Great Migration, urbanization, and black expatriate encounters with European culture consumers. Drawing on a range of historical source materials as well as oral histories and personal archives held by Broonzy’s son, Greene perceptively interrogates how notions of race, gender, and audience reception continue to shape concepts of folk culture and musical authenticity.

**Kevin D. Greene** is the Nina Bells Suggs Assistant Professor of History and Director of the Center for Oral History and Cultural Heritage at the University of Southern Mississippi.

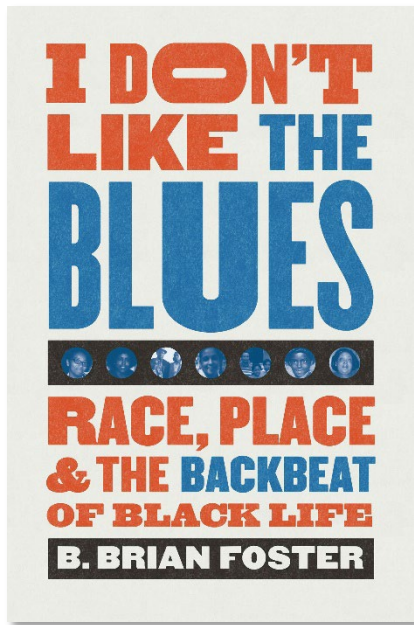
### Praise & reviews

“A wonderfully engaging and intellectually creative rendering of African American life, the city, and even U.S. foreign affairs through the life and music of Big Bill Broonzy.”—Davarian L. Baldwin, author of *Chicago’s New Negroes*

“By emphasizing Broonzy’s successive (and successful) eras of self-reinvention, Greene persuasively positions this blues musician as a prism for understanding shifts in racial, national, and global identity in the twentieth century.”  
—Joel Dinerstein, author of *The Origins of Cool in Postwar America*

“Greene challenges the typical construction of Broonzy, and the genre, by illustrating how the parameters of race, class, and geography influenced both the sound and interpretation of the tradition. ... Greene’s multidisciplinary approach goes beyond biography and history.”—*Arkansas Historical Quarterly*

“*The Invention and Reinvention of Big Bill Broonzy* dissects our motivations for remembering or forgetting individual musicians and ethically documents social and cultural networks that can aid our ability to understand human creativity in relation to the passing of time.”—*Journal of Southern History*



## **I Don't Like the Blues**

### ***Race, Place, and the Backbeat of Black Life***

by **B. Brian Foster**

Publication date: December 14, 2020

206 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 2 maps, 11 tables, appends., notes, bibl., index  
Blues

#### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*Who gets to feel the blues?*

How do you love and not like the same thing at the same time? This was the riddle that met Mississippi writer B. Brian Foster when he returned to his home state to learn about Black culture and found himself hearing about the blues. One moment, Black Mississippians would say they knew and appreciated the blues. The next, they would say they didn't like it. For five years, Foster listened and asked: "How?" "Why not?" "Will it ever change?" This is the story of the answers to his

questions.

In this illuminating work, Foster takes us where not many blues writers and scholars have gone: into the homes, memories, speculative visions, and lifeworlds of Black folks in contemporary Mississippi to hear what they have to say about the blues and all that has come about since their forebears first sang them. In so doing, Foster urges us to think differently about race, place, and community development and models a different way of hearing the sounds of Black life, a method that he calls *listening for the backbeat*.

**B. Brian Foster** is assistant professor of sociology and southern studies at the University of Mississippi.

#### **Praise & reviews**

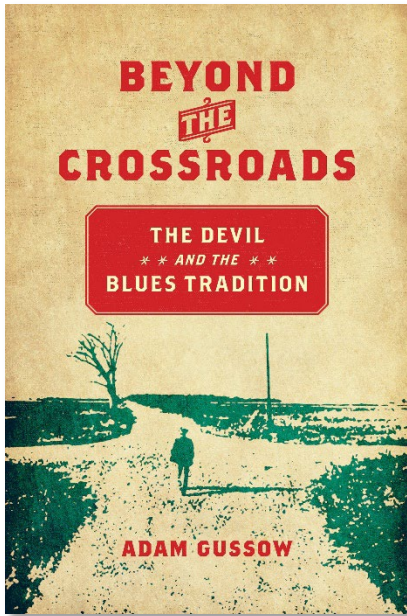
2022 Eduardo Bonilla-Silva Book Award, Society for the Study of Social Problems

"*I Don't Like the Blues* interlaces historical events and personal stories that illuminate the lived experiences of Black residents of the city of Clarksdale, Mississippi. ... [Foster's work] retains the true characters of Black Clarksdalians whilst providing them a space and tool to talk about their lives."—*Social Forces*

"This is a book about music and culture. But, most of all, this is about Clarksdale's Black residents' self-conscious challenging of the possibilities denied to them by the status quo. ... [Foster's] work also opens room for other comparative investigations approaching similar processes all over the African Diaspora spaces in the American continent."—*Oral History Journal*

"Just as southern Black folks are supposed to uncritically love the blues, a sociologist is *not* supposed to give us such a superbly written book. But southern Black folks will fool you, and apparently so will southern Black sociologists. There will be important books and essays written about what B. Brian Foster has done from a critical and methodological perspective, but the writing in *I Don't Like The Blues* is breathtaking—the best I've read in 2020. I have never needed a book as much as this one."—Kiese Laymon, author of *Heavy: An American Memoir*

"*I Don't Like the Blues* is a transdisciplinary book of great importance. A rich and incisive portrait of the lifeworlds of the American South, it beautifully illustrates how redevelopment, blues tourism, race, and place collide and generate ways of knowing, living, and being black amid rapid global and local shifts. Creative and thought provoking, B. Brian Foster's account is deeply relatable, rigorous, and necessary."—Marcus Hunter, University of California, Los Angeles



## **Beyond the Crossroads** *The Devil and the Blues Tradition* by Adam Gussow

Publication date: October 2, 2017

416 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 6 halftones, 2 maps, 1 table, appends., notes, bibl., index

Series: New Directions in Southern Studies

Blues

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*Getting beyond the clichés about Robert Johnson and the devil’s music*

The devil is the most charismatic and important figure in the blues tradition. He’s not just the music’s namesake (“the devil’s music”), but a shadowy presence who haunts an imagined Mississippi crossroads where, it is claimed, Delta bluesman Robert Johnson traded away his soul in exchange for extraordinary prowess on the guitar. Yet, as scholar and musician Adam Gussow argues, there is much more to

the story of the devil and the blues than these clichéd understandings.

In this groundbreaking study, Gussow takes the full measure of the devil’s presence. Working from original transcriptions of more than 125 recordings released during the past ninety years, Gussow explores the varied uses to which black southern blues people have put this trouble-sowing, love-wrecking, but also empowering figure. The book culminates with a bold reinterpretation of Johnson’s music and a provocative investigation of the way in which the citizens of Clarksdale, Mississippi, managed to rebrand a commercial hub as “the crossroads” in 1999, claiming Johnson and the devil as their own.

**Adam Gussow** is associate professor of English and southern studies at the University of Mississippi and author of *Mister Satan’s Apprentice: A Blues Memoir*.

### **Praise & reviews**

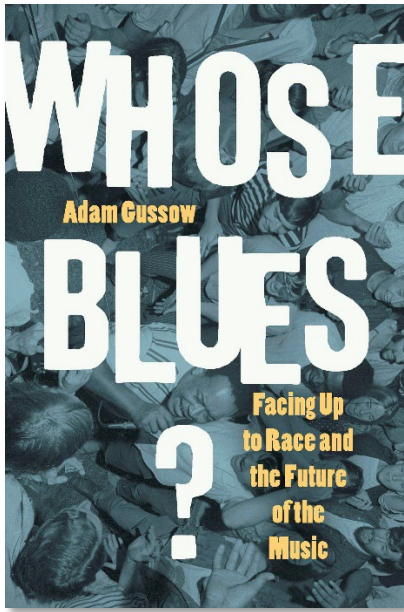
“A model work of scholarship: years of meticulous and extensive archival work are the foundation for this multidisciplinary study that carefully and respectfully applies research in cultural history, anthropology, psychology, popular culture, film studies, and more to the use of the devil figure and related imagery within the blues tradition.”  
—*Journal of Southern History*

“By looking at over 125 blues songs, Gussow illustrates that the devil stands at the center of the black Southern blues tradition as a figure that sows trouble, wrecks love, but also gives power.”—*No Depression*

“Masterfully researched, impeccably well-written, spell bindingly interesting food for thought for curious minds. ... An important addition to any serious blues reader’s bookshelf.”—*Country Blues*

“Gives blues fans plenty to ponder in this challenging book that doesn’t back away from taking on some cherished parts of the blues tradition. Readers will be compelled to revisit some classic tunes to hear the songs with fresh ears, ready to garner new meanings based on the many forms of the devil illuminated in this work. Thanks to Mr. Gussow for attempting to get us out of our blues comfort zones, and for providing readers with well-researched concepts that invite us to do more than just listen to the music.”—*Blues Blast*

“Gussow asks ... of all the many kinds of African American popular music, why is/was it that blues alone has been singled out as the devil’s music?”—*American Music*



## Whose Blues?

### *Facing Up to Race and the Future of the Music*

by Adam Gussow

Publication date: October 19, 2020

332 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 30 halftones, appends., notes, bibl., index  
Blues

#### Rights information

- All rights available

*Sparking honest conversation on the past, present, and future of the blues*

Mamie Smith's pathbreaking 1920 recording of "Crazy Blues" set the pop music world on fire, inaugurating a new African American market for "race records." Not long after, such records also brought black blues performance to an expanding international audience. A century later, the mainstream blues world has transformed into a multicultural and transnational melting pot, taking the music far beyond the

black southern world of its origins. But not everybody is happy about that. If there's "No black. No white. Just the blues," as one familiar meme suggests, why do some blues people hear such pronouncements as an aggressive attempt at cultural appropriation and an erasure of traumatic histories that lie deep in the heart of the music? Then again, if "blues is black music," as some performers and critics insist, what should we make of the vibrant global blues scene, with its all-comers mix of nationalities and ethnicities?

In *Whose Blues?*, award-winning blues scholar and performer Adam Gussow confronts these challenging questions head-on. Using blues literature and history as a cultural anchor, Gussow defines, interprets, and makes sense of the blues for the new millennium. Drawing on the blues tradition's major writers including W. C. Handy, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Amiri Baraka, and grounded in his first-person knowledge of the blues performance scene, Gussow's thought-provoking book kickstarts a long overdue conversation.

**Adam Gussow** is professor of English and southern studies at the University of Mississippi and author of four previous books on the blues, including *Beyond the Crossroads: The Devil and the Blues Tradition*. He is currently appearing on Netflix in *Satan & Adam*, an award-winning documentary about his thirty-five-year partnership with Mississippi-born bluesman Sterling "Mr. Satan" Magee.

#### Praise & reviews

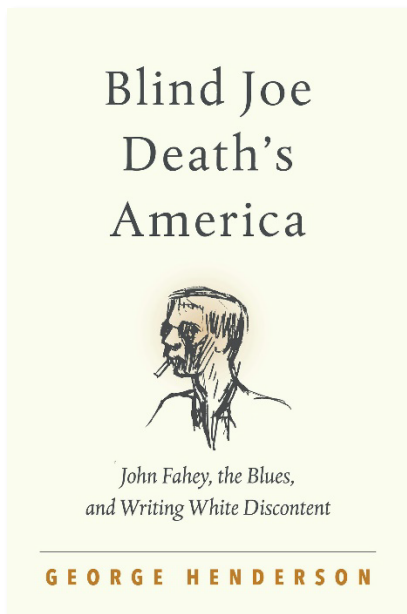
2021 CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title

"In *Whose Blues?*, Adam Gussow tackles the provocative reality of the blues. He ties the music's tortured history to the current racial climate and adds chapters on blues' place in African American literature and the Black Arts Movement. This is essential reading to better understand the power of the blues."

—Art Tipaldi, editor, *Blues Music Magazine*

"In an act of fidelity to the blues itself, Adam Gussow returns us to a fundamental question that sadly is often unspoken and repressed in today's everyday blues consciousness. Gussow, a blues performer and a man of deep reflection, busts open the silence but also cautions against unnecessary fights as he supports and intensifies struggles for equality in the blues."—Sugar Brown Ken Kawashima, University of Toronto

"This thought-provoking work comes highly recommended for anyone interested in stepping beyond the music itself to gain a broader understanding of the forces that have fashioned it into a powerful musical form that transcends boundaries of all kinds."—*Blues Blast Magazine*



## Blind Joe Death's America

*John Fahey, the Blues, and Writing White Discontent*

by George Henderson

Publication date: May 10, 2021

236 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 3 halftones

Blues

### Rights information

- All rights available

*Understanding the white suburban Blues*

For over sixty years, American guitarist John Fahey (1939–2001) has been a storied figure, first within the folk and blues revival of the long 1960s, later for fans of alternative music. Mythologizing himself as Blind Joe Death, Fahey crudely parodied white middle-class fascination with African American blues, including his own. In this book, George Henderson mines Fahey's parallel careers as essayist, notorious liner note stylist, musicologist, and fabulist for the first time. These

vocations, inspired originally by Cold War educators' injunction to creatively express rather than suppress feelings, took utterly idiosyncratic and prescient turns.

Fahey voraciously consumed ideas: in the classroom, the counterculture, the civil rights struggle, the new left; through his study of philosophy, folklore, African American blues; and through his experience with psychoanalysis and southern paternalism. From these, he produced a profoundly and unexpectedly refracted vision of America. To read Fahey is to vicariously experience devastating critical energies *and* self-soothing uncertainty, passions emerging from a singular location—the place where lone, white rebel sentiment must regard the rebellion of others. Henderson shows the nuance, contradictions, and sometimes brilliance of Fahey's words that, though they were never sung to a tune, accompanied his music.

**George Henderson** is professor of human geography at the University of Minnesota.

### Praise & reviews

“Henderson's book balances crucial biography with scholarly analysis of 1950s and '60s American culture, not just explaining Fahey but situating him in a web of hitherto invisible artistic relationships. In *Blind Joe Death's America*, you meet Fahey's influences and decide for yourself how to react.”—*Los Angeles Review of Books*

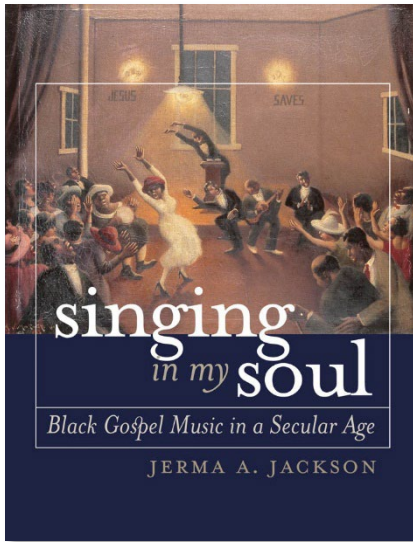
“A fair-minded and appropriately unsparing interrogation of this singular, and singularly American, artist. This is the John Fahey I knew.”—Dean Blackwood, co-founder of Revenant Records

“A carefully calibrated account of a writer and musician who comes across as a minor but real confrere of Mailer and Roth, another self-chronicler of the complexities of mid-century American white masculinity in terminal decline.”

—Robert Fink, UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

“A fascinating read, showing how Fahey's writing, both satirical and serious, opens up an important discussion of the racial commitments, investments, and intimacies of the 1950s and '60s folk revival's 'love and theft' dynamics.”

—Sonnet Retman, University of Washington



## **Singing in My Soul** *Black Gospel Music in a Secular Age* by Jerma A. Jackson

Publication date: April 19, 2004  
208 Pages, 6 × 9, 8 illus., notes, bibl., index  
Gospel

### **Rights information** • All rights available

*Religious music in a secular world*

Black gospel music grew from obscure nineteenth-century beginnings to become the leading style of sacred music in black American communities after World War II. Jerma A. Jackson traces the music's unique history, profiling the careers of

several singers—particularly Sister Rosetta Tharpe—and demonstrating the important role women played in popularizing gospel.

Female gospel singers initially developed their musical abilities in churches where gospel prevailed as a mode of worship. Few, however, stayed exclusively in the religious realm. As recordings and sheet music pushed gospel into the commercial arena, gospel began to develop a life beyond the church, spreading first among a broad spectrum of African Americans and then to white middle-class audiences. Retail outlets, recording companies, and booking agencies turned gospel into big business, and local church singers emerged as national and international celebrities. Amid these changes, the music acquired increasing significance as a source of black identity.

These successes, however, generated fierce controversy. As gospel gained public visibility and broad commercial appeal, debates broke out over the meaning of the music and its message, raising questions about the virtues of commercialism and material values, the contours of racial identity, and the nature of the sacred. Jackson engages these debates to explore how race, faith, and identity became central questions in twentieth-century African American life.

**Jerma A. Jackson** is associate professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### **Praise & reviews**

“Emphasizes the fascinating connections between sacred and secular forms of black music ... Enlightening.”  
—*Ethnomusicology*

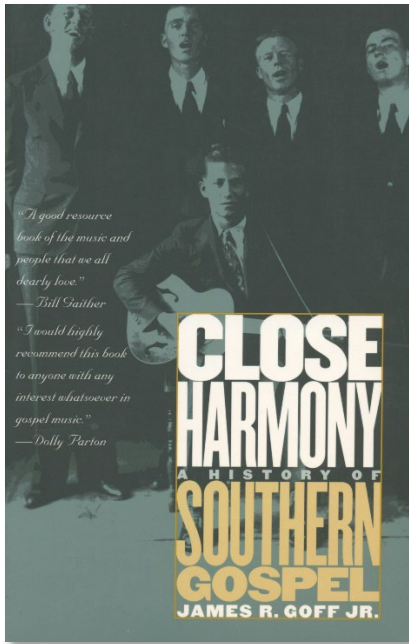
“Documenting the intersections of race, gender, and culture, as well as the traditions of the church and the community as they relate to black gospel music, makes Jackson’s work a rich contribution to the music history of African Americans.”  
—*Journal of African American History*

“Jackson thoroughly explores largely uncharted territory. The souls of scholars, historians and students of gospel music will surely sing at work that not only moves the spirit, but also educates the mind.”—*Black Issues Book Review*

“If you enjoy Gospel music, you’ll enjoy this book. ... From Thomas A. Dorsey ... to contemporary icons, the author offers profiles and insightful research.”—*Gospel Today*

“Those of us who enjoy blues- and jazz-inflected Gospel—classic or contemporary—owe a debt of gratitude to Jerma A. Jackson for writing this book.”—*Sing Out!*

“Concise and well-written ... Jackson does an admirable job of exploring the early formation of the sanctified religious movement that created the powerful denomination of the Church of God in Christ.”—*Journal of American History*



## **Close Harmony** *A History of Southern Gospel* by James R. Goff Jr.

Publication date: March 25, 2002  
416 Pages, 6 × 9, 88 illus., notes, bibl., index  
Gospel

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

*Four generations of singers, songwriters, and music promoters*

Comprehensive and richly illustrated, *Close Harmony* traces the development of the music known as southern gospel from its antebellum origins to its twentieth-century emergence as a vibrant musical industry driven by the world of radio, television, recordings, and concert promotions.

Marked by smooth, tight harmonies and a lyrical focus on the message of Christian salvation, southern gospel—particularly the white gospel quartet tradition—had its roots in nineteenth-century shape-note singing. The spread of white gospel music is intricately connected to the people who based their livelihoods on it, and *Close Harmony* is filled with the stories of artists and groups such as Frank Stamps, the Chuck Wagon Gang, the Blackwood Brothers, the Rangers, the Swanee River Boys, the Statesmen, and the Oak Ridge Boys. The book also explores changing relations between black and white artists and shows how, following the civil rights movement, white gospel was influenced by black gospel, bluegrass, rock, metal, and, later, rap.

With Christian music sales topping the \$600 million mark at the close of the twentieth century, *Close Harmony* explores the history of an important and influential segment of the thriving gospel industry.

**James R. Goff Jr.** is professor of history at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. He also serves as the chief historical consultant for the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, and is a regular columnist for *Singing News* magazine.

### **Praise & reviews**

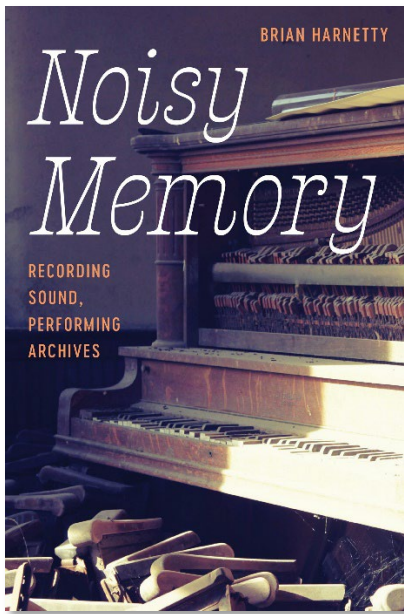
“I am so happy that someone has written a book on the history of southern gospel music. I am especially glad that it was James R. Goff Jr. This is a wonderful book, and it really covers everything. ... I would highly recommend this book to anyone with any interest whatsoever in gospel music. It is also a great way to get someone interested in it that is not aware of it.”—Dolly Parton

“The combination of academic research and good journalistic footwork rounds out the book and makes it relevant to a wide readership. ... Goff has managed to make the worlds of academe and gospel music a little more comfortable with each other in this history of southern gospel. He presents solid facts and interpretations that will please the academic community without abandoning the core beliefs of the southern gospel world.”—*American Historical Review*

“Goff has produced a compelling narrative spiced with arresting anecdotes. *Close Harmony* succeeds admirably as a history of southern gospel.”—Randall Balmer, *Journal of American History*

“His enjoyment and respect for southern gospel shines through in this book, which stands as the definitive book on the subject to date.”—*American Music*

“[Goff] gives important insights into one of the most intriguing aspects of southern gospel music, its existence as both a spiritual and an entrepreneurial phenomenon.”—*Journal of Southern History*



## **Noisy Memory** *Recording Sound, Performing Archives* by Brian Harnetty

Publication date: August 26, 2025  
204 Pages, 6.12 × 9.25, 25 halftones

### **Rights information**

- All rights available

### How to play an archive

Composer and sound artist Brian Harnetty explores the remarkable everyday stories of sound recordings and shows us a new way to listen to the past. From murder ballads and oral histories in Appalachian Ohio, to the Afrofuturistic music of Sun Ra in Chicago, to the recorded thoughts of monk and writer Thomas Merton in Kentucky, Harnetty reveals rich historical contexts of the recordings and introduces us to the people and places connected to them. The result is a new, interdisciplinary approach to sound archives, listening, creative practice, and community engagement.

Drawing on his two-decade career as an artist and researcher, Harnetty builds upon and expands the tradition of composers and artists writing about their work. A unique combination of ethnography, memoir, philosophical text, and meditation on the creative process, *Noisy Memory* presents both scholarly and innovative approaches to ethically working with sound archives.

**Brian Harnetty** is an interdisciplinary sound artist, composer, and author.

### **Praise & reviews**

“A deeply personal rumination on how [Harnetty] listens empathetically and critically to diverse forms of recordings. ... Comparing musical analysis, a form of sonic ethnography, and composition to literary writing, he maintains that understanding requires concerted recognition of time and place.”—*Library Journal*

“Harnetty traces decades of his career in rich, engaging detail ... mining his memories throughout, exploring the many human connections that have helped to bring his archival albums more fully to life, while also accounting for the ways that time has evolved the emotional weight carried by certain projects.”—Andy Downing, *Matter News*

“Brian Harnetty’s warm, thoughtful, and inclusive narrative offers a window not only into the creative process but also into what it means to be a steward of archival sound. A compellingly personal, marvelously written evocation of art, place, and community.”—David Grubbs, musician, author, and Distinguished Professor of Music, Brooklyn College

“A beautifully rendered mix of memoir, creative practice, deep listening, and social history, *Noisy Memory* insists that cultural studies can be both scholarly and personal, artful and ethical. Brian Harnetty reminds us that archival study is never neutral but always situated—materially, socially, historically, and politically—in community. This book is a model for community-engaged humanistic scholarship.”

—Ryan Thomas Skinner, author of *Afro-Sweden: Becoming Black in a Color-Blind Country*