

Derek B. Scott, ed. *Music, Culture, and Society: A Reader*. Oxford University Press, 2000. x, 238 pp.

Reviewed by Timothy D. Taylor

It is always easy to quibble with collections of previously published materials over the important writings that are excluded and those that are included. But Derek B. Scott clearly made some rather curious decisions in compiling this reader (decisions made in part, he tells us, because of the prohibitive cost of reprinting certain items). There is only one ethnomusicologist represented (John Blacking); no Steven Feld, or Charles Keil. Most of the scholars in the U.S. who are primarily associated with the "New Musicology" are also absent, such as Philip Brett, Richard Leppert, Susan McClary, and Gary Tomlinson. Among figures of the past, those who have long toiled, with little or no recognition by the vast majority of musicologists, on the subject of music and culture are entirely side-stepped, for example, K. Peter Etzkorn and the German sociologists of music who influenced him, such as Georg Simmel (who wrote his Ph.D. thesis on music); Max Weber; Alfred Schutz; or more recent scholars such as Kurt Blaukopf and Alphons Silbermann. And important ethnomusicologists of the past such as Alan Lomax and Alan P. Merriam are omitted as well (see the list of references at the end of this review for a representative sample of work by these writers).

Perhaps most curious is Scott's decision to forego writing a new introduction to the materials in this book; his introduction is instead a reprint of an article published in 1990 on the sociology of music. This article is reasonably useful as far as it goes; it provides a helpful overview of writings on music and society, and identifies some areas for future research, areas that have only been addressed in the intervening decade, such as the importance of funding and patronage to composers. But it doesn't serve to provide an overview of the excerpts that comprise the book, much less introduce them. A new introduction would also have permitted Scott to discuss important writings that are not represented in the book. Those introductory writings that are present Scott disperses into the body of the volume. These brief introductions, which sometimes refer to writings not included in the reader, precede each of the reader's five sections: "Music and Language," with contributions by Harold Powers, Deryck Cooke, Leonard Bernstein, and others; "Music and the Body," with contributions by Simon Frith, Angela McRobbie, Elizabeth Wood, John Blacking, and others; "Music and Class," including writings by Theodor Adorno, Paul Willis, Richard Middleton, and more; "Music and Criticism," with writings

by Lucy Green, Michel Foucault and Pierre Boulez, Rose Rosengard Subotnik, and others; and "Music Production and Consumption," with contributions by Evan Eisenberg, Lydia Goehr, Peter Wicke, and more. The only other newly written text in the book is a section at the end entitled "Brief Explanatory Notes on Theory," with three parts, "Structuralism and Poststructuralism," "Cultural Sociology," and "Feminism."

The section called "Music and the Body" includes a hodgepodge of writings on gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. The editor fails to make a distinction between "race" as a category that refers to racial groups and "ethnicity" as a category that refers to subgroups within a larger group (for example, Jews as a subgroup of European Americans), which is the accepted practice. But the section title unfortunately seems to perpetuate essentialist notions of race, ethnicity, and gender, as though these three are rooted somehow in biology—"the body"—rather than in culture and history.

Scott has chosen to take excerpts from previously published articles rather than present articles in their entirety. While this allows him to maximize the number of contributors and texts (there are thirty-six excerpts), most are disappointingly brief at just two or three pages, though a few are longer. Since everything in this volume has been previously published, the remainder of this review will concentrate more on the volume's positioning of itself as a reader in the new musicology or critical musicology than on the evaluation of the included articles.

Given the occasional discussion about the nature of the field of historical musicology these days, it is probably inevitable that *Music, Culture, and Society* will be seen as attempting to make an intervention in the new musicology or critical musicology, though editor Scott is a bit circumspect on this point in his foreword, saying simply that he wanted to include articles that provide alternatives to the musicological mainstream. Just what this mainstream is, and what these musicologies are, seems to be a matter of current debate, at least in North America. There are those who seek to find meanings in musical works, meanings beyond the formal and stylistic concerns that form the basis of most musicological inquiries. But are meanings to be found primarily in the notes—the musical texts—or are meanings to be found in a larger complex of the musical work and its time and place—in a word, its culture?

I had thought that the new musicology, at least in part, represented an attempt to link historical events with musical ones, so that musical works were better situated in culture and history than they had been in most earlier musicologies. The new musicology, however, has proved to be more influenced by philosophy and literary theory than by theories and methods from history and the softer social sciences such as anthropology (not

forgetting ethnomusicology). Meanings, it seems, are thought to reside in the texts, the main belief of earlier musicologies.

Not surprisingly, then, even though Scott's volume features the words "culture" and "society" in the title, the selection of writings show that this book is as much representative of the more textological orientation of philosophy and literary theory—and the new musicology—as it is of culture and society. There are entire selections that never address the subject of society or culture at all, confining themselves to music as text, music as structure—for example, most of the excerpts in the section "Music and Language," even though language, as Mikhail Bakhtin and others have taught us, is deeply social. This is a reader that clearly traces its sociology of music not to scholars of the social—much less, the cultural—but scholars of the musical text. Scott's study of music, society, and culture is thus decidedly textological in orientation, not, ironically, all that social or cultural.

It is also rather ironic that those musicologists whose work argues most forcefully for linking culture and history to studies of musical works—e.g., Susan McClary (1991, 1992), Gary Tomlinson (1999), and Richard Taruskin (1995)—are all omitted from this volume, though McClary is at least mentioned in one of Scott's introductory paragraphs. And, displaying the kind of bias, witting or not, against culture and history in the new musicology, Taruskin, something of a New Historicist, is never mentioned or cited by anyone in this volume.

Judging from this volume, it appears as though the "new" and/or "critical" musicology, in order to distinguish itself from the old ones, had to jettison history in favor of theory. It is sadly not the case that older musicologies (with the exception of the work of some individuals) were attentive to cultural and historical questions as they impinged on particular musical works, but at least most musicologists were mindful of historical questions surrounding a work, even if they lacked a cultural theoretical way of connecting the work to larger historical and cultural forces. In *Music, Culture, and Society: A Reader*, most, though not all, of the articles oscillate between the twin cultural studies pillars of Text and Theory, eschewing deeper questions of culture, society, and history.

Finally, I should note a few typographical errors and other problems. Scott refers to John Cage's famous piece as 4' 32" in his introduction (not, of course, 4' 33"); the influential author of *How to Do Things with Words* is referred to as J. L. Austen, not Austin. These and other minor problems aside, *Music, Culture, and Society*, while usefully reprinting parts of some classic and more recent important articles not always grappled with adequately in mainstream musicology, doesn't really live up to two thirds of its title.

References

- Bakhtin, Mikhail. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, edited by Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Blaukopf, Kurt. 1989. *Musical Life in a Changing Society*. Translated by David Marinelli. Portland, Oreg.: Amadeus Press.
- Brett, Philip, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds. 1994. *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Etzkorn, K. Peter. 1974. On Music, Social Structure and Sociology. *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 5: 43–49.
- . 1987. Musicological and Social Analysis of Music. In *Transplanted European Music Cultures*, edited by Geoffrey Moon. *Miscellanea Musicologica: Adelaide Studies in Musicology* 12: 90–95.
- Feld, Steven, and Charles Keil. 1994. *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Leppert, Richard. 1993. *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lomax, Alan. 1962. Song Structure and Social Structure. *Ethnology* 1: 425–51.
- McClary, Susan. 1991. *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 1992. *Georges Bizet: Carmen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Merriam, Alan P. 1964. *The Anthropology of Music*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.
- Schutz, Alfred. 1951. Making Music Together: A Study in Social Relationships. *Social Research* 18: 76–97.
- Silbermann, Alphons. 1963. *The Sociology of Music*. Translated by Corbet Stewart. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Simmel, Georg. 1968. Psychological and Ethnological Studies on Music. In *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*. Translated and edited by K. Peter Etzkorn, 98–140. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Taruskin, Richard. 1995. *Text and Act: Essays on Music and Performance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Tomlinson, Gary. 1999. *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Weber, Max. 1958. *The Rational and Social Foundations of Music*. Translated and edited by Don Martindale, Johannes Riedel, and Gertrude Neuwirth. Carbon-dale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press.