

FOR THE RECORD - Recent Books

by Michael Biel

Rust, Brian. The American Record Label Book. New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1978. 336 pp. illus.

There's an old adage: "You can't judge a book by its cover." Well, in this case that is not true--you can judge it by its cover but you can't judge it by its title! Brian Rust is a very prolific discographer who, on more than one occasion, I have had to defend from the complaints of the non-published perfectionists among us. I have tended to look upon The Complete Entertainment Discography, The American Dance Band Discography, and others, with the idea that even though flawed and incomplete they were more than I would have ever had the patience to do. (And mind you, my Ph.D. dissertation was only 1,183 pages long!) However, this book is different. It is big and expensive but it ain't what the title says it is.

Now remember, Brian is British. While they and other Europeans have often been more resourceful in preserving, researching, and reissuing American music than we have, they still are separated from the mainstream of the supply of American records. This book is unmistakably written from the British point-of-view for a British audience of collectors who have access to the records more commonly available in England. Its secondary purpose is to enlighten American collectors about the British record labels which occasionally released American recordings before 1942 -- the period the book covers. That American record companies are illustrated and discussed goes without saying, but often these listings are either briefer than for a British record company which is known to have issued only one American record (Citizen) or are more concerned with British counterparts of the American company or name. The premise of the book--which is not discernable from the title--is to discuss American companies and the British companies which had issued American recordings. Why just British companies? Why not Canadian as well? (He seemingly begrudgingly includes Ajax because they worked out of a Chicago address in addition to Lachine, Quebec.) Why not German, Swedish, French, Argentine, Australian, Japanese, and all the others who also issued American recordings? Why? Because Brian Rust is British, that's why.

Let's start with the cover. It alone contains the only color photos so make sure your library does not discard it! Of the 33 labels visible (including 4 partially cut off) nine of them are English -- 27%. But of the seven labels mainly visible on the front of the book cover, four of them are English -- 57%. Of the 287 labels pictured in the book itself, 75 of them are British -- 26%. You see, you can judge the book by its cover but not its title.

The selection of labels to be illustrated in color on the cover was not completely advantageous. All too many were either too common or too plain. We did not need the black and gold Cameo, Lincoln, Arto, Golden, Broadway, and QRS labels; the Blue and gold Gennett, Banner, and Decca labels, nor the maroon and gold Harmony and Auto-graph labels. Besides, the color reproduction on some of these labels is so bad as to be misleading. Most of the black labels look brown, and the blue Decca and Gennett labels look purple. I can't be sure whether the LaBelle label pictured is blue or black -- and that is the only reason I didn't mention it under the above categories. The copper-bronze flag Columbia label looks orange, and the blue in the Clover label looks brown. Some of the labels are reproduced excellently so most of the troubles are due to the original photography. Some of the off-color pictures seem to have been taken at the same photo sessions, so it appears that conditions varied. Some are unevenly lit, over- and/or under-exposed, or the color of the light was just not right. It would have been much more interesting if the really colorful labels had been on the cover, such as the Columbia Paul Whiteman label, the Columbia tricolor, early Gray Gull, Van Dyke, (U.S.) Starr, Rainbow, and Actuelle. I could mention some other favorite colorful labels, but these were not even in the book.

Now let's get to the book itself. The problems continue. Ninety-nine listings do not have any illustrations -- most of these are of American labels. None of the pictures of labels are captioned or keyed to the text. This makes their usefulness limited and sometimes misleading in the longer narratives about the major labels. The illustrations are not in any proper order in these listings, so the reader is not able to fully place the proper picture with the proper description. The six labels for Columbia on page 72 is a typical example. The first label is a large-note type -- but is it black or blue? Then comes a Columbia Graphophone Personal 91000. Is it on black or blue paper and how does the novice know when it dates from? Third comes a 1940's Columbia red label but of a 1927 recording with the date right there on the label. The reader might believe that the label style dates from 1927 because there is no information to the contrary. Next comes a later Columbia Personal than the one above but its number is only 138-P so one might assume it to be older than 91000 was. Lastly, how does the reader know that the electrical 14358-D is on shiny black paper and the acoustical A 2844 is on dull blue paper? Four pages later (after skipping two pictures of Columbia labels from England) comes a bronze flag label 51-D, and an early black label of 395-D -- or maybe it's a Royal Blue that still was in print that late. Lastly, side by side are a plain silver Ted Lewis special label and a multi-colored Paul Whiteman special label -- and both look exactly the same color. I haven't even mentioned the three black-and-silver labels pictured (or are the Carmen selections on a red-and-gold) that are without an explanation in the text that they are all from the early period.

There is a problem with the text as well. Take a look at the last

two lengthy paragraphs on page 77. Each paragraph starts off with one and two sentences about the labels in the United States and then 5 or 6 sentences explain what was going on in England. The narrative gets broken up between these two countries. He should just stick to one country at a time. So many label types are mentioned in those two paragraphs, and it is impossible for the novice to know which labels are pictured and which are not.

In addition to the pictures not being keyed to the text, some of the pictures are cropped so close that important elements of the label's rim have been chopped off. Many labels are missing their border ring. "Everybody's" has been so botched up that it is difficult to understand his textual reference to its similarity "to the Victor design of the time." I know what he means, but does the reader know which Victor label he is talking about? Looking at the Victor pictures on page 304 and 305 I see 18255 with a similar loss of ring and 19672 with the ring and outside border intact. How is the reader to know that the label forms of those two are basically the same when they look so different? Some Perfect labels have lost not only their border rings but the address at the bottom of the label. Those that have not lost the address are too fuzzy to read, anyway. I wonder who was responsible for the criminal trimming of the label pictures and their haphazard placement in the book. Was it the book's designer Marge Terracciano? Whoever is responsible should him-or-herself be personally cropped as closely as the label pictures were.

The list of factual errors in the book are far too numerous to list here. The ones I have discovered would double the length of this already long column. I filled two handwritten pages with sketchy notes and I only got up to the "E's"! Martin Bryan's review of this book in The New Amberola Graphic, Number 31, Winter 1980 lists many others I had not noticed. (If you think I am spewing venom, you ought to read his review.) The notable ones I had noticed include a complete lack of knowledge of the Hawthorne and Sheeble labels and the Imperial, Leeds & Catlin groups, and other early labels from the patent pool era. He pictures an unusual Odeon version of the American Record (the one with the color picture of the Indian listening to a phonograph) and does not even mention the record label itself under "American". It is listed only under Odeon's listing. His ignorance of the origins of Oxford are inexcusable. If he had checked a Sears catalogue, or known about the complete Oxford and Silvertone catalogue by Bill Bryant and Martin Bryan, he would have known. A picture of a paper label for an Edison Diamond Disc is placed in the Edison Bell section about that English label. His section on the regular Edison label comes after the Edison Bell section alphabetically because it is titled: "Edison Blue Amberol and Edison Diamond Disc." Why not just Edison? Why mention Blue Amberol in the title and not Gold Moulded? And why no pictures of any of the other label forms used by Edison? There are so many interesting variations. Rust does not mention the Columbia-produced Climax label from the mid-teens. He feels that most Autograph labels are Blue when most of them were really maroon,

including the one on the cover. I can't understand why he feels that the American and British Decca companies remained related until 1974. The split came back in the late 1940's. He shows a paper-labeled Little Wonder while stating they were all without paper labels. He neglects to mention the Bubble Book discs they produced. I could go on and on and on but you get the idea. These are not little mistakes. They are all big.

I can't think it is possible to ever list all of the omissions from this book. We at least can be satisfied that Rust did not include the word "Complete" in the title of the book as he did in The Complete Entertainment Discography. However his publisher was a little over-enthusiastic in the description they gave in the flyer for their Nostalgia Book Club: "Brian Rust tells the colorful story of all the American record labels in the first half-century of recording ..." (Emphasis theirs.) They further state "Nearly every label is pictured." As already mentioned there are 99 listings without pictures out of about 245 distinct listings -- 59.6% is not "nearly every" as far as I am concerned. The value of some listings is dubious. Moxie only had one issue -- it was an advertising record for the soft drink of that name. How about the dozens of other advertising, weight reducing, language lesson, and other similar labels that were also as short-purposed. None of them were listed.

The club brochure notes that Rust has used the research done by others, but:

Brian Rust gives due credit, every step of the way, to the pioneering researches of collectors like Carl A. Kendziora, Jr. If you are an active collector or researcher, chances are you'll find several of your friends in these pages -- getting credit long overdue.

Well, Carl is a friend of mine and I am glad to see him given credit. But as Martin Bryan points out, Carl is given credit for only a very few of the items which are sometimes almost verbatim from his writings. And, as Martin points out, Carl's original work was usually more complete and included pictures that Rust does not equal. While Rust could borrow from Kendziora's writings, he did not attempt to use Carl's magnificent collection. Last summer I visited George Blacker's house and spent a happy evening looking through the four large boxes of records with very rare labels that George had borrowed from Carl to photograph for his (George's) forthcoming label book. Hundreds of fascinating labels that Rust does not picture or does not even know exist. And that is only part of what George Blacker and Chester Collins intend to picture in color in their book -- if any prospective publisher has not been scared off by having to compete with this inferior book by Brian Rust. That would be the real tragedy of this book if it is allowed to happen.

Why is the Rust book such a problem? For one thing, Brian is a renowned expert and discographer. Although some collectors have had

complaints about his other works, most consider him to be an authority. On the surface, the book appears to be excellent. It is impressively laid out. There are so many unusual labels included, which the average collector does not normally see, that the first impression is positive. To the non-collector or the inexperienced beginner who owns a few Victor's, Columbia's, a few Harmony's, a Cameo, and one or two Perfect's, this book appears to be the answer to all of their dreams. But those of us with more experience know that our nightmares are just beginning. We are going to start to see many inaccurate statements about particular records and labels crop up every so often in articles and other books that will be related directly to the numerous errors in this book. The book looks trustworthy and so it will be trusted. While this is not a reason to completely shun the book -- it is interesting to look through -- I would suggest that a note be placed in library copies for general use to the effect that "facts contained in this book are to be treated with a grain of salt and must be confirmed by some other source before being used in a research article."

The crime is that all these mistakes and omissions were avoidable. This book hit all of us by surprise. I had just printed in this column about the future appearance of the aforementioned book planned by Blacker and Collins when I received the flyer about this book in the mail. I checked with many noted researchers and discographers around the country and absolutely none of them had known that Brian Rust was even working on the project, let alone that the book had been completed. Rust did the one thing that most of us would never do with an undertaking such as this -- he kept it a secret. The first thing most of us would do would be to contact our most knowledgeable friends and ask for the info we were lacking. Rare records would be borrowed and/or photographed. Finally we would ship parts of the manuscript around for nitpicking before publication. It is the opinion of many I have spoken with about this book that the project was rushed to the point that it is little more than a compilation of the note cards that Rust might have written up over the years. Not one person is thanked in the introduction for helping out or reading the manuscript. That should not be; I can think of ten people who should have been given the opportunity to correct the manuscript. No one person can do it alone -- not even Brian Rust. Apparently this is not the only book of his that has suffered from this malady. It seems that the 4th edition of Jazz Records and the Discography of Historical Records On Cylinder and 78s both were written without advice and corrections from experts in the field.

If I can add a personal note to the author: Brian, please contact a number of us and let us know what projects you are working on and what material you will need. Let us see how you are progressing. We promise that we will buy the books when they come out -- and will probably be even more eager to buy them because we know that they would be better than one you had done all alone. Your work is so good that it is a shame to have it all spoiled just because you couldn't

know everything.

McWilliams, Jerry. The Preservation and Restoration of Sound Recordings. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979. 138 + XIII pp, illus.

Most of our members have already received a brochure about this book from the publisher so this review is really a reminder to send for a copy if you have not already done so. The book is good -- not perfect, but good. The author's stated purpose is to provide information "to persons responsible for collections of sound recordings who did not necessarily have professional experience in the field" to assure that the recordings in their care "are used and stored under optimum conditions." As we all know, many archivists and record librarians stumble into their jobs through blind luck (sometimes dragged in kicking and screaming) and need to learn on the job. (Some of you might remember the ARSC ad hoc committee chaired by the late Ida Rosen which studied this situation -- the committee on Training and Qualifications of Sound Archivists.) Hopefully this book will make some of that training easier, quicker, more complete, and more accurate.

It has been twenty years since the publication of the landmark Library of Congress study "Preservation and Storage of Sound Recordings" by Pickett and Lemcoe, now regrettably out-of-print (unless you can get one from Bob Carneal.) Archivists have had little else to use since then, and even it was difficult to understand by anyone but experts. Pickett and Lemcoe set up the problems and their proposed ways to solve them, but left it up to the reader to provide specific methods. McWilliams sets out to describe the ways some major archives and libraries have put Pickett and Lemcoe into practice. The advice is good -- with a few exceptions -- as far as it goes. For example, my personal feeling is that the Library of Congress is a little more concerned with excessive humidity than page 34 of his book seems to indicate, but that might be my personal interpretation of their methods versus his interpretation. When it comes to humidity and shellac, my guiding light is John Stratton's "Crackle" in Recorded Sound 39, July 1970. Based on Pickett and Lemcoe, Stratton's advice is to keep 'em dry.

The book does fall short in four areas. Foremost is the lack of details on tape storage. It is covered but not anywhere near adequately. Anybody with more than one reel of tape needs to get and study a copy of Phonographic Bulletin no. 18 from the International Association of Sound Archives. It contains, among other useful items, the vitally important EMI Central Research Laboratories report by G.A. Knight. (For some strange reason it is not in McWilliams' bibliography.) Perhaps I am concerned because of the recent disaster I had with some reels of old half-mil acetate (!!), but there are unique tapes all over the place that are in dire peril of similar fates and I don't

want to see it happen to anybody else. (The blasted tapes absorbed so much moisture and dished so much that they broke the reels.) This flaw in the book is important because of the stated purpose of the book.

Secondly is the overlooking of so many unusual types of recording media which the archivist might encounter. I realize that we usually deal with these things only when we happen to work at a place that gets these unusual items or stumble across them in an antique store or dealer, but some of these unusual items are very, very common. This includes wire recordings, bare embossed aluminum instantaneous discs; pre-grooved instantaneous discs which need to be played with very broad, blunt styli; flexible celluloid Memovox, SoundScriber, Gray Autograph, dictation-type Edison Diamond Disc, and AEC/Veritas discs; Dictabelts, Durium pressings, grooved celluloid tapes made on Cellaphilm, Recordgraph, Filmgraph, and Jay C. Fonda machines, cardboard bases discs, glass based lacquer discs, optical film, the easily damaged mechanographically recorded but optically reproduced Philips-Miller film-tapes; and steel-based lacquer discs with their problems of rust and magnetic attraction to the pick-up. None of these recording media were even hinted at, let alone discussed. These are the type of items which cause the most problems when some inexperienced archivist or librarian happens across them. And they are the most likely items to contain some irreplaceable recording.

McWilliams admits that he does somewhat lack hands-on experience with early and unusual recordings. That is understandable because, as I mentioned before, we don't often have the opportunity to work with these things unless we have to. But the lack of experience really shows during the discussions about cylinders in the book. Here he botches things up so thoroughly that I almost feel like recommending that you don't even read those sections and censor them out of library copies of the book. Some of the mistakes can cause more harm than good. (Pages 98-100 and 52-54.) He lacks a basic understanding of what cylinders were made of. On page 52 he talks about the wax cylinders and cylinders with bases of wood flour as if they are the same. In fact, he has completely misread an article by Walter Welch which talks about the wood flour base of Edison Diamond Discs. Wax cylinders were solid (except for the early Volta lab-type) and celluloid cylinders (except for Lambert's) had bases of different materials. The Edison Blue Amberol cylinders were the ones with a base, but they used plaster of paris. He then also shows no knowledge of the two other basic types of celluloid cylinders: the Indestructable which used a cardboard lining with steel rings at the edges, and the Everlasting which used a tar-like composition. All four of these cylinder types are distinctly different and each have their own characteristic problems. It seems that to McWilliams a cylinder is a cylinder. Those of us who own the different types know that it is not so.

The third area of omission and confusion concerns styli sizes and sources. First of all, I totally abhor the word "Styluses." I just

checked eight current dictionaries and only three list it first -- two don't even list it. Make it styli, please. But beyond that picky comment, there are no details on optimum styli sizes such as those determined by Dr. Robert Hardie of International Observatory Instruments, W.D. Hodgson of Expert Pickups, C. Ray Bennett of Pickering, and George Alexandrovich of Stanton. Some space is spent discussing specific amps and preamps but there is no correct data given concerning styli sizes and availability of custom tips. He does mention that the Institute of the American Musical plays cylinders with a 1 mil stylus (probably using as the information source the 1977 Stanton ad picturing Miles Kreuger and an admirer), but neglects to state whether that is for two-minute or four-minute type. By the way, Expert Pickups recommends the use of a 4.7 mil stylus for four-minute grooves and Diamond Discs, while the two-minute groove uses an even larger tip. One-mil, really???

The fourth problem area is actually the first in the book. The opening chapter outlining the history of sound recording is an excellent summary of the field except that there are many small errors all over the place and a couple of major boo-boos. The Bell and Tainter machine is called a "gramophone" in the book instead of "Graphophone," Bettini's device is called by McWilliams "microphonograph" instead of "Micro-Phonograph," the "Gold Mold" cylinders he cites as being introduced in 1901 were actually "Gold Moulded" cylinders introduced in 1902, the tinfoil machine did not "cut" a groove but embossed it, acetate discs should have been called "lacquer" discs, and they were more often recorded at 33 1/3 than at 78, the Edison l.p. was a high speed system rather than using a slow speed, film soundtrack discs were 16 inches instead of 20 inches, Extended-play 45's were introduced in 1954 but the regular 45 came out in 1949 (McWilliams stated that the 45 e.p. came out in 1950 as a response to the l.p.), Ampex was in business before 1948, and the RCA l.p. of the 1930's did use a narrower groove than the standard 78's. There are many more little errors or confusing and inexact statements.

There is one major historical error that completely re-writes history on the second page of his book. He states that Charles Cros invented the "Phonautograph." As we should all know, the Phonautograph was a recording machine developed in 1856 by Leon Scott. Cros proposed a recording machine in 1877 which could produce a glass negative that would be photoengraved to make a reproduceable recording. Scott's Phonautograph used a lampblack coated cylinder just as Edison used a cylinder. Cros used a disc to have a continuous groove when the recording was removed from the machine for photoengraving. Scott used a cylinder so that the sound would be visible in parallel lines of equal surface speed for visual inspection. The uses the recordings were to be put to is a necessary concept to understand in order to fully appreciate the reason each of these machines were designed as they were. This understanding is not evident here even when the error is overlooked.

All of these faults aside, the book is necessary to our field until an improved second edition comes out or someone else tackles the subject in an equally broad fashion. The book should however be accompanied by the Stratton and Knight articles along with some Cecil Watts and G.A. Briggs books for good measure. A Bob Carneal article on cylinders is also needed. While many individuals and ARSC members were consulted by the author, a review of the completed manuscript by these experts before publication would have resulted in a more complete and correct book.

Sandberg, Larry, and Dick Weissman. The Folk Music Sourcebook. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976. 260 + X + XVI pp. illus.

This is sort of a "Whole Earth Catalogue" of folk and folk-based music. Included are extensive annotated lists of books and recordings on the subject along with some short articles of information, and lists of organizations, associations, festivals, periodicals, suppliers, and companies. It is very extensive and a good guide for both beginners and experts in the folk music field. Included are ethnic music and regional styles. The book is arranged according to music types, publication types, and instruments -- so often you will have to look in several sections to find everything on a subject you might be interested in. While it is starting to get out of date and many of the then-available records are regrettably out-of-print, the book is still valuable because most items are available in major libraries and collections. This is a very extensive sourcebook and at least two copies belong in every library -- one on the reference shelves for the users and another in the acquisition department.

"Subject Guide to the Radio and Television Collection of the Museum of Broadcasting. Second Edition. January 1, 1979." 186 + IV pp. 1 East 53rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10022.

My hat is off to the gentleman who once said that "The pen is mightier than the sword." Never underestimate the power of the press. The second edition of the Museum of Broadcasting's computerized Subject Listing is now available and almost all of the comments I made in my review of the first edition (in Vol. X, No. 1) have been heeded. When I brought a group of my broadcasting students up to the MB in New York a few months ago I was greeted by a copy of our Journal on their reading rack with the aforementioned review annotated with underlining of all of my criticisms!

Almost every listing now includes not only the date of original broadcast but the scheduled New York time as well (although I understand that many of these times were not notated on the original masters and could conceivably be disguising the existence of the West Coast live re-broadcast version of some broadcasts.) The new category of "Comedy" now covers over five pages, and the specific

examples I gave of these programs being listed under serious topics are now deleted. The listings within these broad topics such as "Comedy" are still in accession number order rather than in chronological or alphabetical order -- but the search to find a listing is still fascinating, even if time consuming.

My original comments concerning the lack of categories for "Newscast" as well as "Commentary" and "Editorial" unfortunately still stand because -- even though there are items in the collection which cry out to be categorized under these descriptions -- these program types are still not listed. I still feel that a newscast is a separate and distinct program type and must be treated as such. There is no distinction made between the Red and Blue NBC networks pre-1942 and no source identification is given (except in error) for syndicated, local, or internationally originated broadcasts. The user is left to guess whether the Museum either doesn't know the source or if it is one of the aforementioned three categories. The computer has not been programmed for anything but the designations NBC, CBS, ABC, MBS, and PBS -- I have not seen a Dumont program listed. BBC programs remain anonymous and I assume that the 1942-1944 broadcasts of The Blue Network will be misidentified as ABC.

There still are a number of items in the list -- most notably some acoustical Nations Forum recordings -- which are listed as "(Radio Broadcast Unverified)." I and many other record collectors and discographers are more than willing to verify that these items are merely phonograph records, not broadcast recordings. What makes matters worse is that many of these phonograph records have been given fictitious broadcast times. Whole strings of musical records have been given the same broadcast times of 11:55 P.M. NYT or 8:00 P.M. NYT. A six-minute Amos 'n' Andy listed under "U S Elections - 1928" is credited as having been on CBS at 8:00 P.M. NYT on an unknown date in 1928. That's nifty except the program was not on a network then. It was aired on WMAQ, Chicago with syndication via recordings on about 40 other stations. However, it turns out that the recording in question really is from Victor 21608, The Presidential Election-- Parts 1 & 2--a phonograph record, not a broadcast recording. (By the way, I know Victor released some real broadcast recordings such as the Lindbergh arrival, but all the Correll and Gosden records are from recording sessions.)

Again, this book is meant as a working guide to their collection when you can't be there on the premises to use the full card catalogue and ask questions. The inclusion of the broadcast dates does now make it useful for personal research as long as you have the personal knowledge of what material was not really a broadcast. Its chief value is showing and gauging the scope and depth of the collection. The television material is excellent and generally unsurpassed in private collections because of the expense of film and videotape. The radio collection is only average. The concept of the collection causes it to be a selective repository of portions of other major collections.

There is no background archival collection of the originals of unique items. The vast majority of the collection is simply available elsewhere, and usually in greater depth, in either institutional collections like the Library of Congress, National Archives, and UCLA's NATAS Television Library; or several large private collections who have already traded their originals extensively with other collectors. It is akin to an art museum opening up with Xerox prints of paintings from other museums hanging on the walls.

The use of the Museum of Broadcasting's collection is very extensive, but its use is both indicative and causative concerning the scope of the collection. Ironically the programs that are the most often requested are also the ones most easily available elsewhere. "War of the Worlds" is the most requested radio program while television programs that are the most popular include the Ed Sullivan Show episodes with the Beatles and Elvis Presley, and Edward R. Murrow's "See It Now" about Joe McCarthy. "War of the Worlds" has been available in a complete version on commercially released discs for over a decade and can be borrowed from almost every public or college library in the country, or purchased in many record or book stores -- even the Doubleday bookstore adjoining the Museum on 5th Avenue and 53rd Street. The Ed Sullivan appearances of Presley and the Beatles (along with just about every other TV appearance of these performers) are readily available from a vast multitude of film and videocassette dealers and libraries. I saw some of them last summer at a county fair here in Kentucky at a gas company booth -- that's how common they are! Joyce Worley's article about the Museum in the March 1980 issue of Video tells of a recent afternoon when Leonard Bernstein visited the Museum to view some of his "Young Peoples' Concerts" and stayed to see the Beatles' first Sullivan appearance because he had taken his kids to see that show. He could have saved the cab fare because many of his programs have long been sold and rented by McGraw Hill Films and CBS Films. They are standard fare in many music school libraries -- I'm surprised that he doesn't own a set of them himself. I recently bought one on film in color for \$15, in new condition. (Legally, I might add.) Other CBS programs such as "See It Now," "CBS Reports," "Face the Nation," "You Are There," and "The Twentieth Century" have long also been available for sale or rent from McGraw Hill Films, CBS Films, and vast multitudes of film libraries. Other proud holdings of the Museum of Broadcasting are the complete series of such BBC programs as "Civilization," "The Ascent of Man," "America," and some of the drama series seen on PBS's Masterpiece Theatre. All of these are also sold to libraries, educational institutions, and the general public by Time-Life Films and are some of the most popular holdings of an incredible number of local public libraries as well as college libraries. And there is nothing to indicate that the Museum's tapes are the as-broadcast versions with the PBS tags and Masterpiece Theatre intro's rather than the standard Time-Life versions. The holding of these complete series is also in violation of the Museum's own statement of purpose which is to provide a sampling of different programs rather than giving in-depth attention to any one series.

This is not to say that there are not a great many items in the collection that are unusual and hard to find. Many of the television programs have come from producers' collections and from the networks' own closely guarded archives. However it is hopeful that eventually these TV archives will be deposited in the National Archives and/or the Library of Congress just as the radio collections of ABC and NBC have been respectively deposited in these two national collections. We researchers are stuck with the selection of material that the Museum of Broadcasting's staff have selected for us. We are unable to use our own initiative to see the specific items we think are important or want to research in greater detail than anyone has ever done before. To the great credit of the Museum staff, they are now referring this type of researcher to the more complete collections in Washington, D.C. and are helping get copies of specific programs for these researchers to see in New York. But there is a great fear in this industry-sanctioned institution about letting any of their material get out to any researcher who can't get to New York. No matter that the item might be available elsewhere or legally in the public domain, they just won't copy it.

For its own purposes the Museum of Broadcasting is excellent. It shows a broad overview of what it feels is the best of network broadcasting. It gives the broadcasting industry a showplace in the seat of the advertising and broadcasting industries to allow critics of the industry to see that not all broadcasting has been bad. But there are no tapes of classic rock disc jockeys. No in-depth survey of TV soap operas. No examples of "The Newlywed Game," "Let's Make a Deal," ABC's very shortlived "Turn On," Charles Van Doren giving prepared answers on "Twenty One," or some trendsetting cable TV local access programming. Maybe these will eventually be included but I do not see this trend from the type of programs listed in this book. The Museum of Broadcasting is not an archive, it is what its name says it is, it is a museum. Its holdings are limited and selective. It is geared towards the average individual's interests. As a researcher with far more exacting needs I can only wish that the vast publicity and the multi-million dollar funding had been channelled to the far better pre-existing broadcast collections in the National Archives and the Library of Congress with their world-famous staff of experts. So much has been spent here to make so little available at the Museum while a vast treasuretrove has to get along with limited facilities.

Tullos, Allen, ed. "Long Journey Home: Folklife In The South."
Southern Exposure, Vol. 5, Nos. 2/3, Summer/Fall 1977. Special Issue.
224 pp. illus.

Another excellent regional magazine about the South. This special issue contains many authoritative articles about folk culture, including music. Of special interest is the section with detailed annotations on "Centers, Schools, Libraries, and Archives" concerned with the area, as well an extensive "Folklife Bibliography." (As a city-slicker from

up North, now living in the hills of Kentucky, I am determined to get all the rest of you turned on to the joys of this music. Besides, some of the old records of this stuff are worth Big Bucks!)

Tyne, Gerald F.J. Saga of the Vacuum Tube. Indianapolis: Howard W. Sams, 1977. 494 pp. illus.

We have been waiting over thirty years of this book. It had its origins in a series of articles Tyne wrote in Radio News starting in 1943 and ending with part 22 in April 1946. The original series had traced the development of the vacuum tube through the end of World War I. The current volume extends that information through 1930. Tyne is uniquely qualified for the task as his experience started as far back as 1913 when he first saw a deForest Audion -- and extends to his hand-building some of the components of the original Telstar satellite.

The amount of information in this book is staggering. While the emphasis is on the physical appearance and structure of individual tubes themselves as a physical item, this is not just a catalogue of different tube types. The narrative is exceedingly detailed on the development of different tube types, methods of manufacture, advancements in design, corporate struggles, personalities of people and companies, and the identification of nearly every variation of early tubes. The electrical circuitry and equipment the tubes were used in are mentioned only when they affected the structure or manufacture of the tube. It is akin to studying phonographs without mentioning the contents of the records and vice-versa -- both viable ways of relating the history of the respective inventions. We are left with a history unclouded by extraneous details which can be found in so many other references. My hat is off to his valiant restraint.

It is a tribute to the excellence of the original articles that in thirty years of continued research only two things needed correction. One was simply an incorrect designation letter of a rare European tube, and the other was tying the links between the Fleming valve and deForest's Audion a bit closer. (Once again the reputation of Lee deForest as an idea "borrower" is confirmed through the shop records of the bulb manufacturer who made duplicates of the Fleming valve for deForest in 1905 prior to the Audion patent application.) Reference to the original articles might be of interest because some details of the early theoretical developments are condensed. (My personal bound set of Radio News of that era unfortunately is lacking the 1943 volume which included the first eight installments where this change would be evident -- so I can not now report on that particular revision.)

Comparing the book with the latter fourteen installments of the original Radio News articles shows consistent additions of information. There are occasional revisions of organization of the data but that is

to be expected. As a writer of a long involved work of research, I can sense the frustration he must have felt when deciding that he had to split the original continuous narrative of the Western Electric story into two chapters which would appear at different points in the book. There are so many parallel stories being told that it is hard to decide which ones to tell before the others! Parts of each of the original narrative (January, March, and April 1944) were split into the two chapters at 1920. The original organization followed particular tubes through to their eventual discontinuance -- practically the only breaking of the original series' 1920 cut-off date.

It is here that I find my only complaint about the book. The original narrative of the Western Electric type 101 tube had concluded with a brief updating of the continued manufacture of the 101D and 101F through after 1940. In the book the story ends abruptly at the 1929 revision of the 101D (on pages 284-285) because of the book's 1930 cut-off date. There was no part of the original series that so thoroughly entranced me than Tyne's detailing Western Electric's continued manufacture of an improved version of a 1917 vintage telephone repeater tube for equipment that was still in service as late as 1944! (See January 1944, pages 58 and 62.)

You may be asking why a book about the history of vacuum tubes would be of interest to recorded sound collectors. The background of this book comes from the same era of Radio News under the leadership of Managing Editor Oliver Read which produced Read's long series on sound recording that later became two of the most important books in any of our libraries: The Recording and Reproduction of Sound (First Edition 1949, Revised and Enlarged Second Edition 1952) and Read & Welch's From Tinfoil To Stereo which has recently been re-printed. The Tyne book is of the calibre of Tinfoil, is from the same publisher, and even has covers of matching graphics. They sit nicely together on the shelf -- not only for aesthetic reasons -- they are both good examples of detailed research on similar fields. You may not appreciate vacuum tubes now, but you will after reading just a part of this book. It is a treasure.

Meeker, David. Jazz in the Movies--A Guide to Jazz Musicians 1917-1977. London: Talisman Books, 1977. illus.

While the pages are unnumbered, there are 2239 films listed in this jam-packed book. Listed by title and indexed by major artists, the listed films run the gamut from feature films to jukebox soundies. The films are not limited to those where the musicians appear on-screen. The major flaw to this book is tying each film to a number. This book cannot be considered absolutely complete. Most readers will be able to recall at least a few films not included. If there is to be a revised edition, these numbers would have to be different. The inconsistency of how many sidemen are listed limits how easily a particular musician's films can be located. Jazz filmography is still in its

infancy. There are only a very small handful of jazz film collectors in the world and not all of them were consulted prior to publication. It is a useful book, but the second edition will probably be far better -- if and when it comes.

Johnson, Diana, ed. "The Official Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum Souvenir Book." Nashville: Country Music Foundation, 1978. 66 pp. illus.

Attention: this book contains a full color centerfold foldout -- staples and all -- of ... Elvis Presley's car! But aside from that, this well produced volume also contains articles on the history of country music recording, biographies of the Hall of Fame members, and pictures of the museum exhibits and the library's archive collection and facilities. My favorite part of the museum are the small dioramas of scenes with pioneers of the country music recording business such as Ralph Peer, Frank Walker, Arthur Satherley, Jack and Dave Kapp, and Eli Oberstein. While they are pictured in this book, these pictures are monochrome and excessively fuzzy. Most of the dioramas are set in recording studios, but the one for Jack Kapp shows him in a record store in the early 1930's -- at a time well after he left the retail end of the business. The miniature records on the display shelves are striking, nevertheless. With the photos of old artists, some 78's, and Dolly Parton, this booklet is interesting even if you haven't had a chance to visit. (A separate post-card folder contains a good color picture of the Satherley diorama and a photo of some records and cylinders.)

Fisher, Stephen L., J.W. Williamson, & Juanita Lewis, eds. "A Guide to Appalachian Studies." Appalachian Journal, Vol. 5, No. 1, Autumn 1977.

Already acclaimed as an excellent scholarly journal concerning a fascinating region of the country, this special issue provides the best (and most inexpensive) guide to the folklore of the area. Of most concern to us is the article on Appalachian music by David E. Whisnant. In it he refers to just about every major publication of authoritative information on mountain and folk music. The appendices list additional sources. I strongly urge the acquisition of this issue by all music libraries and any private collector who wants to learn more about real country music.

Foxx, Redd and Norma Miller. The Redd Foxx Encyclopedia of Black Humor. Pasadena: Ward Ritchie Press, 1977. 264 + 4 pp. illus.

Did you ever get mad at a book. I mean really mad. So angry that you felt that a grave injustice had been done. Well, that is the way I and several other researchers have felt about parts of this book

which itself is a valiant attempt to correct past injustices. The latter half of this book is written with the love of close personal friendship that Redd Foxx must have had with most of the performers profiled. Additionally, since most of them are still around, they were able to provide the authors with information in interviews. It is in the early part of the book that the authors falter, mainly due to mixing personal observations and impressions with untraceable "research." There are absolutely no source attributions at all. No footnotes, no bibliography, not even a mention of some favorite books in the preface or acknowledgements. Nothing.

The section on the black comedy team of Miller and Lyles provides an example of where emotion took the place of authoritative research. The book claims that the more successful white team of Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll had taken most of their style and catch phrases of "Sam 'n' Henry" and "Amos 'n' Andy" from Miller and Lyles. But just about every historical fact is wrong -- and this negates most of their evidence. The book is completely confused concerning when and on what stations Correll and Gosden appeared, how the program got started, and just when Miller and Lyles enter into this picture.

The book claims that Miller and Lyles had been rejected for a radio series by Log Cabin Syrup because of race. On page 62 they mentioned that the station in question was WGN, which was also where Correll and Gosden had begun "Sam 'n' Henry." On page 65 the culprits are the syrup and CBS. Following this rejection of Miller and Lyles the book states that Correll and Gosden auditioned for the parts using a Miller and Lyles routine. In actuality, Correll and Gosden had already been working for WGN as paid employees in 1925 when asked to prepare a program series based on "The Gumps" comic strip. Not being familiar with married life, they declined, but instead developed "Sam 'n' Henry" because they could do Southern Black dialect. The program started on WGN January 12, 1926. The book states that Miller and Lyles created a new style for themselves for the Broadway show "Great Temptations" in a routine called "Indefinite Talk." If it is this style that is claimed to be the basis of Correll and Gosden's "stolen" act, then the book might be placing the blame for the theft on the wrong party. "Great Temptations" opened in late 1926 -- about nine months after "Sam 'n' Henry"'s debut. Furthermore, CBS was not founded until 1927 -- and it might well be that CBS and Log Cabin Syrup rejected Miller and Lyles because their style was thought to be a copy of the Correll and Gosden program that had already been on the air for several years. To make matters more complicated, it is said by other sources that Correll and Gosden themselves were rejected by CBS in 1928 or 1929 after they had moved to WMAQ (not WLS as the book states) which was a CBS affiliate at that time. From early 1928 through the summer of 1929, "Amos 'n' Andy" was unsponsored on WMAQ and was syndicated to 40 stations via recordings. It did not go on NBC Blue (not The Blue Network, as the book states) until a year and a half after leaving WGN. Thus, Correll and Gosden did not leave WGN -- as the book claims -- because of the offer from Pepsodent -- that offer didn't

come until later. In all of this the book has not been able to prove that Miller and Lyles ever auditioned for radio prior to the time that Correll and Gosden had already established their characters on the air. Once you check out the real dates, the statements about Miller and Lyles' failures start to sound like sour-grapes excuses. All this is capped off by quoting at length an October 1930 column by Mark Hellinger who writes that Miller and Lyles had been doing things for years like Amos and Andy [sic] have been doing since "last August." Just because Hellinger had only first noticed Correll and Gosden in August 1929 doesn't mean that they had not been around before then. I will leave it to Robert Cogswell to analyze the pre-1926 Miller & Lyles records on OKeh for the real answer to this controversy, but my point is that this book has not done as precise a job of research as is necessary to prove who did what first.

Despite these shortcomings, this book is a useful reference in a readable style until a more authoritative book comes along. If nothing else, the book is entertaining and readable. It is not easy to use if you just want to look up a fact. For one thing, there are few specific facts -- just descriptions and memories. Secondly, there is no index. This is shameful in a book entitled an "encyclopedia." Especially since the aim of the book is to call attention to black performers and artists who are normally overlooked. Except for the performers who were given their own chapters in the table of contents, the performers will continue to be overlooked even in this book. And lastly, the book just ends suddenly after a short chapter on "Black Language." Zap, that's it. No final statement, no prognosis for the future, no overview of where black humor has been. It seems just as if my copy of the book is missing the last pages -- or else the authors had a deadline to meet and couldn't finish. But, try to find a copy -- I had to get mine in a "remaindered" pile. It's a good book to have around, but scholarly it's not. There are mistakes galore. Given some good research and an index, the book could have become a standard reference work.