

locate a desired artist or recording here. *EBAR, Volume II* cries for an artist and title index. The author planned to publish one in a subsequent volume, but Volume III never materialized.

Nevertheless, the information in *EBAR* is so valuable that it is no wonder researchers who neglected to buy it originally are now paying a premium for used copies. Essentially, this is 500 pages of high-quality reprints of original source documents. The few aggravations (lack of index) and inconsistencies (what are Diamond Disc notes doing here?) are worth the trouble.

What is the moral of all this? Dethlefsen recently has published a comprehensive, 275 page book on Edison Diamond Discs, covering 1910-1929. (This a revised edition of his earlier, smaller book on the same subject.) It is to be printed in a limited edition of 250 copies at a cost of \$45. Too much? Think about it for awhile? If you're at all interested in the subject—don't wait too long. *Reviewed by Tim Brooks*

Rock On Almanac: The First Four Decades of Rock 'n' Roll: A Chronology.
By Norm N. Nite. New York: Perennial Library, 1989. 532 pp., illus. \$14.95.

Chronologies are irresistible. We are so grateful for them that we are willing to overlook faults that might disturb us in other books.

The *Rock On Almanac* has its share of faults, but in such an ambitious and accurate look at rock from the early fifties to mid-1989, it is best to be forgiving, yet vigilant.

Year by year, Nite ushers readers through the major songs released each month, top debut artists, top singles and albums, and such extras as musical highlights of the year, Grammy winners, significant births and deaths, and information on pop-music related movies.

That apparently was not enough, so we also get news highlights, major sports winners, top television shows, Academy Award winners and non-music deaths. This reinforces the almanac nature of the book, and it is fun to read, but this reviewer is not convinced it is crucial information.

For librarians wondering whether the *Rock On Almanac* is a worthwhile reference source, the answer is yes. There is a 42 page index; one section for performers, the other for song titles.

The methodology is presented clearly in the three page introduction. Readers are in no doubt about how this book was crafted. It is intriguing that the information was derived from a computer software product, RockCom, which Nite co-developed with Ken Zychowski in 1983. Nite is a well-known and respected name, the author of three previous books in the *Rock On* series and a long-time radio personality.

The vigilance comes to bear on points like the inclusion of record labels but not numbers, and release dates tied to chart appearance, rather than actual record company release. Picky, but worth noting.

The Debut Artist section for each year also is mildly troubling. Because it is geared to the charts, and not to when each artist actually started recording, we only find out, for example, when Paul McCartney or George Benson first had solo hits, but not when they began their solo careers.

Another point which librarians and others might find jarring is the out-of-sequence nature of some of the photographs. Thus we get a glamorized early-1970s shot of the Rolling Stones with their 1964 listing. With the 1961 entry for Gladys Knight and the Pips is a photo which, unless the Pips anticipated the Nehru jacket sartorial fad by seven years, probably dates from the late 1960s.

Still, this is an excellent ready-reference source on a sprawling subject. The accuracy is scrupulous, and there are nice touches, like noting if a particular record went gold or platinum, and if it reached number one.

Consulting the *Rock On Almanac* will help us decide if rock'n'roll has really progressed. It is difficult to compare, for instance, the singles of 1964 and 1989, and say we have better music now. Even a glance at the supposedly barren pre-Beatles early sixties reveals songs and artists that have easily passed the test of time.

Years that brought us The Ventures, Dion, Lee Dorsey and the Beach Boys couldn't have been all bad.

And how nostalgic and pleasant to see a roll call of the now-departed independent record labels of the fifties and sixties. Come back Scepter, Swan, Valiant, Ascot and B. T. Puppy: all is forgiven. *Reviewed by Bruce Rosenstein*

Performance Practice, 2 vols. I: Music before 1600, II: Music after 1600.

Howard Mayer Brown and Stanley Sadie. New York, London: W. W. Norton and Company, 1989. 281 and 533 pp. \$32.50 and \$39.50.

These two volumes are part of "The Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music" series, and as such carry a standard disclaimer that parts of these books have appeared in *The New Grove Dictionary*. The preface contradicts this, however, stating that the contents are entirely new. Performance practice may be called the solution to the problems artists face in deciding how to interpret the printed notes before them. About thirty authors contribute chapters on every aspect of music history from "Chant" to "Since 1940." This journal would not be reviewing books intended for musicologists but for their acknowledgement that recordings are indispensable as objects of academic study on this topic. From first to last, they accept the place of recordings in the study of performance practice.

That last chapter offers splendid examples.

"Although the major works of Stravinsky, Britten, Copland and Stockhausen have nearly all been recorded in performances supervised by the composers, the authority that should be given these recordings is not certain. Stockhausen has indicated that his recordings are to be taken as adjuncts to the published scores, and in at least one case has even asked that the recording be understood as a correction."

(The work is *Refrain*.) Further on, the author Paul Griffiths writes of Boulez: "Both his recordings of *Pli selon pli* take a tempo at the start of "Tombeau" which manifestly contradicts the score; yet in neither case does he observe . . . that the recording is to be taken as a correction."

David Hiley's insights in the chapter on "Chant" drew an appreciative cheer, especially in his discussion of rhythm, but his only reference to recordings cites the Gregorian Congress discs of 1904 as reissued on Discant LPs (reviewed in *ARSC Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 72), apart from a passing reference to the series of recordings made at Solesmes. There are far more recordings of chant, with far more to be learned from their myriad approaches to performance.

In between, the introduction to the medieval section cites the complete recording of the secular songs of Dufay on L'Oisau-Lyre, but Christopher Page's essay on "Secular Monophony" modestly fails to mention any of the author's wonderful Hyperion discs. Page, also writing on "Polyphony before 1400," mentions only one of