

One suggested way to make use of the book is to look up the patents found on one's own early phonographs, records and accessories. I found this a rather unproductive endeavor, however. Most records and machines carry patent *dates* rather than numbers, and half a dozen different phonograph-related patents (all with frustratingly generic titles) might have been issued on each of those dates. Unless the patent you're after happens to be described in an essay, it may be difficult to identify. A better approach might be to simply browse through the book and make notes. I guarantee that no matter how expert you are in the field, you will learn a lot. *Reviewed by Tim Brooks*

Directory of Record and CD Retailers, 1990-1991 Edition.

By Keith Whelan. Wharton, NJ: Power Communication Group, 1990. 368 pp. \$14.95. Available from Power Communications, P.O. Box 786, Wharton, NJ 07885

This is a listing of approximately 1,000 record and compact disc stores throughout the U.S. that carry "specialty or rare recordings and memorabilia." The compiler began with a database of all record stores that advertise in the yellow pages, subtracted major chains that carry primarily current material, then sent a survey to the rest. The survey was conducted in early 1990. Those who responded (percent not given) are included here. Note that this is a store list; most dealers who operate by mail order only are not included.

Each entry gives the name, address, phone number and hours of the store, plus a variety of information about the types of recordings sold: percent of stock that is new or used, percent import or domestic, size of stock in various formats (e.g. LPs, CDs, 45s, 78s), and types of music carried. It is in the latter area that the entries are weakest. The author has defined seven broad "music categories"—pre-1950s, 1950s, 1960s, Jazz/Soul/R&B, Folk/C&W, 1970s/1980s and the inevitable "miscellaneous." Each of these is further broken down for a total of 49 sub-categories, some of them oddly placed indeed. For example "classical" and "opera" are under "Pre-1950s," as is "Sinatra" (a musical category?).

Formats are quantified, so the reader has a pretty good idea whether the store specializes in LPs, 78s, or whatever. However, the musical categories are not (and most stores checked off a lot of them), so it is pretty difficult to determine whether a store specializes in, say, operatic recordings or reggae. For example, New York's midtown Colony Music is known for its reissues and out-of-print LPs (at healthy prices), but its entry here lists 48 categories of music indiscriminately. The phone number is given, so I suppose you can call them and ask.

In addition to the main listing, there are helpful indexes by record format (who sells 78s in your county?) and by musical category (looking for military music in Mississippi?). A final section of maps is rather pointless, since it shows simply where the counties are in each state—but does not locate the record stores.

The layout of the book is serviceable, but hardly ideal. In fact, this is not so much a book as a computer print-out bound between covers. It uses the ugly "Line Printer" typeface found on computer printers, no bold or italics to help guide the eye, and lines that seem to run together because the spacing apparently was off.

Despite its limitations, the *Directory* is a useful starting point to help you find stores that sell what you are looking for. *Reviewed by Tim Brooks* 