

methodological approaches. Despite being so detailed, this monograph provides a clear springboard for further research on Björk rather than closing down avenues in an attempt to be 'definitive'. There are areas such as gender which Dibben is aware of and clearly points to, but which are outside the scope of this book, opening up possibilities for future research. Indeed, it will be interesting to see how Dibben's further work on Björk develops. This is particularly true for her current engagement with Björk's *Biophilia* project, which is concerned with the merging of science, technology and music. Björk's record label, One Little Indian, have brought Dibben on board with *Biophilia*, employing her as a musicologist whose role is to document the project, which clearly has exciting prospects for further research and dissemination.

Sarah Boak

University of Southampton, UK  
slb3g10@soton.ac.uk

***Britpop and the English Music Tradition*. Edited by Andy Bennett and Jon Stratton. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010. 225 pp. ISBN: 978-0-7546-6805-3  
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The Ashgate Popular and Folk Music series is at the forefront of popular music academic publishing and will certainly be familiar to readers of *Popular Music*. It has published several landmark texts and is widely admired. So it is with some regret that I find that overall this volume adds comparatively little to the existing knowledge of Britpop. Here I must confess to a little vested interest. In 1997 I published an article on Britpop (Cloonan 1997) which, among other things, pointed out Britpop's links to earlier forms of Englishness in pop and noted that most of the musicians given the Britpop moniker were white English males working in genres in which songs were important and which harked back to earlier eras. All this is acknowledged in the Introduction (p. 2). The 11 chapters which follow often make pretty much the same points (albeit it in greater detail) and, while such vindication is welcome, how much new knowledge has been generated by most of the chapters remains a moot point.

The 11 chapters are divided into three parts – History and Context (five chapters), Britpop (four) and Post Britpop (two). In their introduction Bennett and Stratton write that the book aims to be 'both a historical study and one that brings the Britpop legacy right up to date' (p. 3) and in this it is successful.

The first part is the strongest for me and provides genuinely new knowledge. Dave Laing writes with his customary insight and authority in the opening chapter which deals with the links between music hall and pop Englishness, while Jon Stratton follows up with some reflections on skiffle, rightly noting its influence on 1960s pop Englishness. Both chapters also show how such constructs were influenced by reactions to American popular culture. In Chapter 3 Stratton outlines how the Beatles, Small Faces and Kinks wrote 'new songs in traditional styles with an indigenized beat' (p. 52).

Sheila Whiteley discusses woman musicians of the Britpop era and it is refreshing to read more about Elastica, Echobelly and Sleeper, although I would have welcomed some discussion of acts such as Shampoo and, most of all, the Spice Girls, whose first single came out in 1996, the year after the peak of Britpop (symbolised by the Blur *vs.* Oasis 'battle'). Andy Bennett outlines a number of 1970s Britpop precursors such as Slade, Peter Skellern, the Jam and Squeeze. This is welcome

and forms part of Bennett's larger reappraisal of 1970s UK music. However, his habit of making generalised claims without naming the guilty parties (e.g. pp. 72 and 79) irks a little. Along with Rupa Huq later in the next chapter, he assigns the concept of 'Cool Britannia' to the New Labour government of 1997 when the phrase was actually first used by its Conservative predecessor.

The next part begins with Huq's account of the politics of Britpop which draws analogies with Britpop's rejection of indie and New Labour's rejection of Old Labour. Her statement that 'It is easy to overstate the importance of Britpop' (p. 100) is one which some readers may find themselves agreeing with. Derek Scott follows with the best chapter in the book. He provides a detailed musical analysis of key Oasis songs and shows how lazy comparisons to the Beatles are wide of the mark. In effect, Scott offers a stirring defence of a band whose public antics (and patchy later albums) have perhaps blinded too many critics to their early importance.

J. Mark Percival follows, outlining what was happening in the parts of the UK beyond England, concentrating on Scotland and Wales and including first-hand accounts from musicians he has interviewed. The second part concludes with Stan Hawkins' measured consideration of laddism and Britpop. This is another good musicological account which is particularly strong in its accounts of the voice. It fits well with that offered by Scott and succeeds in broadening out the book.

The final part comprises Ian Collinson's discussion of post-Britpop guitar bands and Nabeel Zuberi's account of dance music. Collinson shows how bands such as the Kaiser Chiefs, Arctic Monkeys and Bloc Party offered a wider notion of Englishness than the class of '95, but one which is still ultimately somewhat narrow for a modern multicultural society. Zuberi concludes the book with a chapter on black and Asian British dance music and artists such as Dizzee Rascal and M.I.A. Zuberi rightly argues that 'dance music multiculturalism continues to thrive in the UK' (p. 191) and thus ends the book on an optimistic note. Along with the chapters by Whiteley and Percival, this chapter illustrates much of what was missing from media accounts of Britpop at the time.

Overall this book actually adds little to previous discussions of Britpop *per se*. Indeed only three chapters are specifically about it (although two of these are the strongest in the book). This is partly due to a desire to trace pop Englishness back in time and to include aspects which media accounts of Britpop generally missed (pretty much anything that wasn't straight white English heterosexual men). Those chapters which take a more broadly musicological approach (namely Scott and Hawkins) emerge as the strongest and contribute most to new knowledge.

Meanwhile, if Britpop was about exclusion, then ironically a book which puts the term at the front of its title has large parts where it is absent. There are also other important absences. There is too little here about the industrial side of Britpop which deserves further attention. The role of the music press in the construction of Britpop is also underplayed. (The terms music industry and music press are absent from the bibliography.) This is telling when much of what *is* here has been said elsewhere and it is also telling that it is the musicological accounts of Britpop which add new understandings. Thus overall this volume, while having highlights, perhaps represents a missed opportunity to add to existing knowledge.

Martin Cloonan

University of Glasgow, UK  
martin.cloonan@glasgow.ac.uk

## Reference

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***Learning, Teaching, and Musical Identity: Voices across Cultures*. Edited by Lucy Green. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011. ISBN 978-0-253-22293-0**

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This collection of essays, part of a series at Indiana University Press entitled *Counterpoints: Music and Education*, further expands editor Lucy Green's already substantial record of major publications in the field of music education research (1997, 2002, 2008a, 2008b). This new book features a substantial introductory chapter by the editor and 20 essays by 20 other contributors – experts in music education, musicology, ethnomusicology, music performance and social information studies, among other areas.

The goal of the collection, according to the editor, is 'to investigate aspects of the interface between' the three terms in the main title (p. 1). This objective is pursued through case studies of musical learning-and-teaching settings culled from assorted cultural traditions and geographical locations. The breadth here of cultural and geographical representation is quite impressive – indeed, for this reason alone the book is worth a read. Stories reach us from the UK, Sweden, Greece, Ghana, South Africa, Brazil, the USA, Australia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, India ... the list keeps going. The chapters are arranged 'in a rough geographical line' (p. 2), which is to say that their arrangement is more or less arbitrary. (Chapters are not organised into larger topical groupings, and the editor even advises us that the chapters can be read in any order.) The book gives the impression of an ethnographic slideshow about various musical locales, offering snapshots of colourful places and talkative folks encountered during a long, meandering, trek across the globe.

In the limited space of this review it would be impractical to name, let alone summarise, every essay. But each of the 20 chapters essentially operates under one general thesis, which I would summarise thus: personal and communal musical identities come into being neither automatically nor uniformly, but rather through the interactions of individual humans with diverse small-scale and large-scale historical and sociocultural forces. The case study in each chapter comprises a professional researcher's observation and articulation of a specific instance of such interactions. As is often true of edited collections, certain chapters will strike the reader as more substantive, more interesting and better written than others. While none of the present essays is especially lacking in any of these areas, a few of the essays conform less obviously than others to the editor's stated topic. Sophie Grimmer's chapter on the relationship between *gurus* (teachers) and *shishyas* (students) in Karnatic classical music offers relatively little explicit commentary about musical identity (although plenty is *implied*). John Baily's chapter (previously published as a stand-alone article) on Gujarati Muslim musician-barbers living in the UK is much more about identity – musical and otherwise – than about musical teaching and learning *per se*. An essay that does not explicitly engage all three areas of learning, teaching and musical identity cannot be easily described as investigating the 'interface between' them. This is not to say that these chapters seem out of