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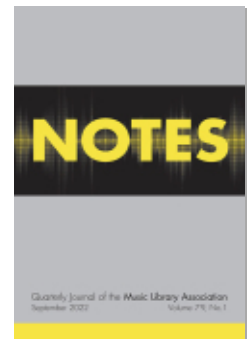
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*Spencer Kimball's Record Collection: Essays in Mormon Music* by Michael Hicks (review)

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religious institutions (or those heavily influenced by them), we hear echoes of some of the themes in earlier chapters. The need for a rationale for music education clearly predates modern efforts by a substantial amount of time. Chapter 14, “When Hell Freezes Over: Black Metal—Emancipatory Cosmopolitanism or Egoistic Protectionism?,” is particularly fascinating as it looks at ideology as religion—even the ideology that rejects conventional religions, as in the case of black metal bands in Europe. Authors Ketil Thorgersen and Thomas von Wachenfeldt examine the role of music as the deliverer of a message and consider what attracts people to a certain musical genre or style. The authors assert that the field of music education can take lessons from black-metal culture’s emphasis on aestheticism, artistry, and musical devotion. These are aspects that are deeply held in that community and really are not different from the expectations of music educators.

The final part, “Agency and Social Change,” is primarily concerned with music as a means of creating community in groups that already have a strong community bond through their common religious practice. This is an effective bookend to part 1, which confronted the use of religious music in secular school environments. What are the challenges, roles, and applications of music in a religious educational community? What happens when there are interreligious interactions, and can music facilitate them? These questions are confronted in the chapters in this part. The basic tenet of “do unto others” is a guiding principle in the case studies of Iris M. Yob. Removing overt religious components and holding with this basic tenet we can see how music study holds a similar goal in its community-building aspect and its effectiveness as a tool of social justice.

The tension between strict religious practice and education is seen in religiously observant Muslim and Jewish schools in “Dancing on the Limits: An Interreligious Dialogue” by Belal Badarne and Amira Ehrlich. These two teachers engaged in dialogue about the challenges and restrictions on music in their respective religious schools. Guided by the dictum “for education—it’s OK” (p. 268), both educators push boundaries and create more learning opportunities for their students. Badarne and Ehrlich find themselves “dancing on the limits” in the hope to “expose students to musical worlds that lie beyond their reach” (p. 265).

It is this pushing of boundaries—straddling the lines between acceptable and unacceptable, provoking thought through music, education, and religion—that lies at the heart of all the chapters in this exceptional volume. I found each chapter a challenge to read—not because of the writing, which is excellent, but because of the content, which includes many topics that it would never have occurred to me to consider. Not only do I recommend it, I will also return to it multiple times for reference and for assistance in developing arguments for embracing the music of various religions in our music education curricula, be they public school, private school, or community learning.

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**Spencer Kimball’s Record Collection: Essays in Mormon Music.** By Michael Hicks. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2020. [x, 232 p. ISBN 9781560852865 (paperback), \$17.95; ISBN 9781560853855 (e-book), \$9.99.] Illustrations, bibliographic references, index.

Michael Hicks conceived of *Spencer Kimball's Record Collection: Essays on Mormon Music* as the third in a series on music in the belief and practice of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). Unlike his earlier monographs—*Mormonism and Music* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989) and *The Mormon Tabernacle Choir: A Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015)—this volume is a collection of Hicks's essays on diverse topics spanning the early nineteenth century to the present, ranging from historical studies to personal reflections. Published by Signature Books, a Utah-based press devoted to Mormon studies, the book is aimed at readers who are already versed in Mormon history and culture. Still, the volume offers important research that brings new perspectives to contextualize Mormon music within its historical and contemporary cultural spaces.

The book is divided into three roughly chronological sections. In the first, Hicks focuses on the nineteenth century, addressing many of the same issues discussed in *Mormonism in Music* but adding numerous findings that he made in the intervening three decades. The section begins with "Joseph Smith's Favorite Songs (or Not)," a chapter that explores the sundry musical forms circulating in the early LDS Church by investigating a selection of songs favored by the church's founding prophet. Hicks creates a rich image of Smith's musical world within contemporaneous US culture, in contexts ranging from militarism to temperance. Chapter 2 is a critical reevaluation of early Mormon music from a feminist perspective, detailing Emma Smith's work in creating the first LDS hymnal. Emma Smith was not only Joseph Smith's wife but also an important Mormon leader in her own right as founding president of the Relief Society, the female corollary to Mormonism's exclusively male

priesthood. Hicks uncovers the gender dynamics attending the book's production and reception, as Emma Smith struggled to maintain institutional support for her hymnal against competing publications launched by male church leaders. Hicks explores how Emma Smith's strategic selection of texts—and deletion of texts in a later revision—supported the intimate personal piety that she espoused, in contrast to her husband's focus on communal religious experience. Hicks tracks this narrative up to the present, demonstrating how the current LDS hymnal, in use since 1985, bears the traces of this struggle through the erasure of Emma Smith's imprint. In the third chapter, Hicks offers a case study of the musical eclecticism that characterized the early development of Mormon hymnody, speculating on possible musical sources for one of the church's most popular hymn tunes, "The Spirit of God." He convincingly argues that the tune, long assumed to have been adopted from an unknown non-Mormon source, was instead likely composed by LDS musicians by combining melodic elements of several popular hymn tunes. In chapter 4, Hicks returns to cultural-historical analysis by detailing the prevalence of blackface minstrelsy in nineteenth-century Mormonism. He shows how musical representations of Blackness paralleled developing LDS perspectives on race. Limited early openness to African Americans ended in the 1850s with the establishment of racist doctrinal pronouncements denying people of African descent leadership roles or entry into the church's temples. In unearthing and contextualizing the presence of blackface minstrelsy beginning in early Mormonism and continuing into twentieth century Utah, Hicks makes an important contribution to the growing body of scholarship on the history of race in Mormonism. Hicks could go further in theorizing the intersection

of race and music in Mormonism. His conclusions are focused more on the reasons that Mormons embraced black-face minstrelsy than on the impacts of its performance, whether in its direct effect on African American Latter-day Saints or in its broader reinforcement of racist beliefs and practices in Mormon history.

The three essays in the second section address Mormon music in the twentieth century through material artifacts. In chapter 5, Hicks details the production of a little-known folk record, *The Mormon Pioneers* (Columbia Records, LS1024 [1965], LP), as a case study of the LDS Church's mid-century effort to rehabilitate its image by celebrating early Mormons as heroic settlers of the American West. While previous scholarship has focused on literary and visual representations, Hicks reveals how music contributed to this effort, providing extensive archival research detailing negotiations between representatives of the LDS Church and Columbia Records. In chapter 6, Hicks returns to the theme of race, exploring the contested interrelations of Latter-day Saints and Native Americans. The album *People of the Book* (Artisan Sound Recorders ASR 1066 [1967], LP), and the theatrical pageant it documented, appropriated elements of music by indigenous peoples while reaffirming the Book of Mormon's claim that Native Americans were descended from biblical Israelites. As Hicks describes, the record contributed to a broader discourse asserting this alleged history as a justification for assimilating Native American Latter-day Saints into White American cultural practices, culminating in the church's Indian Student Placement Program, which removed young Native American people from their reservation homes to live with White Mormon families. Hicks adds an important new perspective to an extensive scholarly conversation about the

church's efforts to acculturate Native American peoples, demonstrating how music contributed to this discourse. In the section's final chapter, Hicks focuses on a book rather than a record album, detailing the often-messy revision process that resulted in the current LDS hymnal, *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1985). While Hicks gives limited attention to the shifting cultural contexts that influenced the hymnal's content, his discussion focuses on the church's assessment metrics and on the competing agendas of various LDS leaders of the era, so the chapter will be of special interest to Mormon studies scholars and members of the LDS Church.

Hicks describes the final section as "ad hoc slices of criticism and memoir" (p. vii). Chapter 8 is a review of the musical *The Book of Mormon*. Hicks offers a surprisingly laudatory take from an LDS critic, seeing the show's jocular ridicule and ribald language as useful corrections to Mormonism's tendency toward over-seriousness and perfectionism. He also provides a helpful analysis of the musical's engagement of twentieth-century Mormon pop culture that will give outsiders an even deeper appreciation of the musical's cultural references. In Chapter 9, Hicks recounts being given a collection of record albums by a son of Spencer W. Kimball, president of the LDS Church from 1973 to 1985. He frames Kimball's collecting process in the context of his church leadership, noting, for example, the numerous records by indigenous artists gifted to the church president who famously revived Mormonism's problematic interest in Native Americans. Hicks muses on the collection's eclecticism; recognizing this quality in his own collection of essays, he employed the chapter's title for the book. The concluding chapter is a memoir of Hicks's experience writing academic studies of Mormon culture while employed by the

church-owned Brigham Young University—a sobering reminder of the power that institutions can exercise as they attempt to control scholarly narratives. While the specifics will be most valuable to Mormon-studies specialists, Hicks offers an insightful account of the struggle scholars face while striving for dispassionate objectivity when working on topics in which they feel deep personal investment.

Although *Spencer Kimball's Record Collection* includes important scholarly research, it is written for a general audience, with minimal theoretical scaffolding or academic jargon. It is an easy, compelling read. Readers who are specialists in musicology might wish for more introductory context to better situate Hicks's findings within broader scholarly conversations. The volume could be accessible to a broader

readership if it offered more exposition of the LDS historical events, figures, beliefs, and practices that it addresses. Hicks's forthright discussion of his own Mormon belief helps frame the book's subjective perspective, although he occasionally writes as if his readers share his faith. The title of the book, which will be inscrutable to anyone outside the world of Mormonism, suggests that Signature Books may have assumed a mostly Mormon readership as well. Nonetheless, the book makes a valuable contribution to scholarship in musicology, hymnology, and Mormon studies, bringing a contemporary update to research on music in Mormonism and adding important new perspectives on race and gender.

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### FIDDLELING

**George P. Knauff's Virginia Reels and the History of American Fiddling.** By Chris Goertzen. (American Made Music Series.) Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2017. [xiii, 223 p. ISBN 9781496814272 (hardcover), \$99; ISBN 9781496928163 (paperback), \$30; ISBN 9781496814319 (e-book), price varies.] Illustrations, maps, music examples.

Chris Goertzen makes an important contribution to the literature on fiddle tunes, Appalachian music, and early United States music printing with *George P. Knauff's Virginia Reels and the History of American Fiddling*. As the title suggests, Goertzen places Knauff's thin volumes within the larger—and largely oral—context of US fiddling and analyzes how some of the tunes collected by Knauff in central Virginia in the first half of the nineteenth century have changed but also remain recognizably the same from Knauff's time to ours.

The book begins with a biographical sketch of Knauff and an analysis of known copies of Knauff's publications, which are fiddle tunes, mostly

found from local fiddlers, arranged for the piano. Knauff, a German immigrant, was a piano teacher and entrepreneur who sold pianos, sheet music, musical instruments, and many other products and services aimed primarily at the amateur music market. This section is fascinating not only for its glimpse into rural United States music making but also for the larger discussion of life, especially for a merchant-teacher in central Virginia at that time, when transportation was largely based on the river system, traversed by large *batteaux*—long, narrow, flat-bottomed boats that formed the basis of commercial transportation in the days before the railroad.

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