

required more space, or it may be that the personal interests and expertise of the contributors, and the amount of new research needed to be undertaken for the book, provided more information in some areas rather than for others. Or again, it may be that as not all of the contributors are established academics, some of had less researched material to draw upon. In fact, one of the strengths of the book is that while many of the writers are established international scholars of popular music and musicologists, others are listed as emerging and independent researchers, or well-known practitioners of music and dance. Many are simultaneously researchers and practitioners, and all are clearly enthusiasts for the particular art forms they write about. This insider knowledge makes the readings particularly informative and unusual, with many sections including unexpected details, focusses and esoteric elements, providing overall 'a wealth of information not readily available elsewhere' (p. 5). The carefully selected cross-references at the end of each segment, highlighting overlaps and interactions between technologies, instruments, genres and artists, together with the comprehensive index at the end of the collection, provides a particularly valuable resource for researchers and lay readers alike.

In spite of this unusual mix of contributors, and their sheer numbers, the style of the companion is relatively consistent, producing a certain uniformity of style and tone. It seems that Whiteoak and Scott-Maxwell have taken pains to weave into the tapestry of contributions a common stylistic and linguistic thread with a minimum of specialist jargon, all of which makes for easy and accessible reading. Overall, this is a highly enjoyable volume, and it is an amazing feat to have collated so much detailed material. It is a highly recommended acquisition for every library's collection, and a must for the bookshelf of every serious scholar of music and dance studies.

Shane Homan, *The Mayor's a Square: Live Music and Law and Order in Sydney*
Newtown, NSW: Local Consumption Publications, 2003.
ISBN 0 949793 30 2, ix + 210pp., index, bibl.

Reviewed by Bruce Johnson

In the year 2000, I had the pleasure of examining a doctoral thesis on the history of the regulatory framework of popular music in Sydney since the 1950s, written by Shane Homan. In my report, I signalled its potential as a platform for cultural policy development with far-reaching social implications. I also enthusiastically recommended that it be developed for publication. I am delighted to see both of these propositions come to fruition. At that time, I had just presented a preliminary submission to the NSW Ministry for the Arts on the apparent decline of live music in New South Wales. When the Ministry and the Australia Council provided funding to develop the study, Shane Homan's research made him an obvious choice as co-investigator, and I invited him to collaborate on the project. The possibilities for arts policy are thus now emerging in the recent publication of the report *Vanishing Acts: An Inquiry into the State of Live*

Popular Music Opportunities in New South Wales (available on-line at www.ozco.gov.au and www.arts.nsw.gov.au). The Report has already become the catalyst for public and scholarly debate both here and overseas, and it was the platform for a major forum for government and industry stakeholders held in October 2003.

At the same time, the doctoral thesis has become a public resource in the form of this book. It is an outstanding piece of work, researched in fine detail, yet embedded within a coherent and intelligently synthesised theoretical framework. But for me, it is the primary sources and the empirical groundwork that makes this book essential in the literature of Australian popular music in the second half of the twentieth century. Because the topic has for so long been regarded as too trivial for Australian academic scholarship, or too Australian for Anglo-American publishers otherwise alert to the importance of popular music studies, there was only a negligible amount of secondary material to build on. In the entire body of writing on Australian rock, most of it is unreliable, unchecked anecdote, or, where it is empirically sound, it is what I think of as 'Trivial Pursuit' data, prepared by obsessive enthusiasts, but lacking critical cultural perspective. The author therefore had, in large measure, to create his own body of primary data, of kinds that required a diverse range of checks and balances. One can assemble regulatory documents like local and state government legislation, but conclusions about actual practice have to recognise the often arbitrary conditions of compliance. Indeed, it is those interventions between regulation and application that lie at the heart of the matter. Hence the importance of ethnographic material, and apart from the value of the book as a set of arguments, the dozens of interviews which Homan conducted with participants in the field are an invaluable contribution to cultural archiving.

Of course, such testimony has its own hazards. Memories are erratic, and to a greater or lesser extent informants tell us both what they want to be believed and what they think the interviewer wants to hear. Assessing and cross-checking oral history materials requires both methodology and instinct. Shane Homan has been a researcher for long enough to have the former, and his active career as a rock drummer has sharpened the latter, as well as helping him to bypass the guard that industry practitioners often put up against political or academic curiosity. The writing is thus complexly layered with a combination of open-mindedness and genial scepticism. It has a sense of humour and of irony that sharpens, rather than blunts the analytical edge.

The main narrative begins with the arrival of rock in Australia, and for that reason, the 'popular music' that dominates this discussion of live music regulation is rock and the pop forms that have succeeded it. These are the musics that have come to dominate academic popular music studies. Unlike many examples of that critical literature, however, in which those youth musics are assumed to have been preceded by an eternity of silence, Homan's study has a deeper historical perspective, and part of his contextualisation includes an introductory overview of performance environments prior to the mid-1950s. At the same time, not surprisingly in view of the main focus of the study, it is in this area that I would quibble with a few points of detail and emphasis. In discussing the forerunners to the rock/pop performance sites he summarises the early theatre networks. Arguably more appropriate analogues were the purpose-built dance halls, which proliferated from about 1913, and the nightclubs which enjoyed great popularity from the late twenties to the late fifties. Likewise,

the 'milk bar' scene, which began to feature live music as early as the mid-1940s. While there is some reference to these, my feeling is that their importance is understated. I would also suggest an alternative etymology for the term 'bodgie,' presented here as a kind of parallel to 'dodgy.' My own 'ethnography' of Sydney's jazz and nightclub musicians of the 1940s suggests it arose from the Americanisation of Australian popular culture in the post-war era. Fashionably zoot-suited youth in the late forties to fifties were referred to (and referred to themselves) as 'bodgie Yanks,' meaning rough approximations of Americans (the word 'botch' is related to this, I believe, and it survives in this sense in such statements as 'it's a bodgie job,' something less than fully finished).

The review of the existing theoretical literature is assured, though, given the topic, a little more on subcultural theory might have been expected. Major models derive from Foucault's 'governmentality,' but Homan recognises that all theory must be critically adapted to its subject—there is no 'theory dandyism' in this thesis. The concept of 'the scene' also informs the analysis, particularly in the excellently researched case studies—such as the Manly Vale and Newcastle's Star Hotel—that constantly ground the theory. A number of these involve overview histories of particular venues, such as the Harold Park Hotel in Glebe, or particular moments in the life of a venue that proved to be a larger watershed in the perception and regulation of popular cultures associated with music. One of the most detailed of these is his examination of the death of Anna Wood in connection with the Phoenician Club, and the way in which he pieces together the various kinds of evidence, each with slightly differing criteria of verification, is an exemplary model of the critical historiography of popular culture.

The importance of this book registers in a range of current discourses that have particular urgency in the current delicate but decisive negotiations between global and local. In post-Soviet political destabilisation and the emerging anomalies in an apparently triumphant capitalism, the question of how communities and individuals define themselves has become, in many instances, a matter of life and death. These negotiations are crucially mediated by popular music, its forms, technologies, and the instruments of its regulation. As Martin Stokes has observed, among cultural practices, popular music is perhaps the most intense site of macro- and micro-identity formation.

It is a paradox that a site of such importance in the making of ourselves, both individually and collectively, is generally so carelessly and misleadingly mapped. As Homan points out in his introduction, he entered a maze of misleading discourses, covert agendas, and institutionalised illegalities. As a long-time practitioner and researcher in the field, with experience in government policy formation and implementation, I have also tried to cut my way through similar thick, entangled, and deceptive undergrowth. This experience underscores my admiration for his critical persistence, his synthesis of street anecdote, ephemeral reporting and public policy. This has street-cred without uncritical sentimentality, theoretical poise but a gritty engagement. In the case of Australia there are particular reasons that such a study is timely. What this book is about is, in and of itself, a matter of great importance to any cultural historian or policy maker. The culture of the licensed club and pub is central to the texture of Australian life and leisure, spaces of public recreation and personal re-creation. How the practices conducted in those spaces are regulated is one of the keys to understanding ourselves.

But I want to emphasise that there is also a great deal more at stake here. In Sydney, there is currently a critical focus on the cultural consequences of changes in recreational environments, specifically the role of sites of live music performance and of gambling. The regulation of leisure connects these debates with issues raised by the 2000 Olympics, the symbolic weight of the millennium and more recently the attacks on the Trade Centre towers in New York and the 'Bali bombing.' To assert such a connection might once have seemed to be pulling a long bow, but the current global political El Nino is very much a factor in current anxieties about who we are in the world and what liberties we may enjoy. At the national level, these anxieties are manipulated by the culturally conservative Howard government with the stealthy fascism of its 'ASIO Bill,' its increased scrutiny of the protocols of the governance of popular recreation, and the surveillance of everyday life.

At the state level, there are major confrontations taking place over the relationship between gaming revenue flowing into pubs and clubs, and community welfare projects. In New South Wales, the confrontation has a virulency proportionate to the massive funds at stake. As the antagonists become overheated, prevarications, anecdotes, mythologies, caricatures and deceptions become part of the propaganda battle, which itself is intensified by the larger anxieties I have referred to. These are all becoming entangled with larger issues of local and national identity, crystallised in such primitive archetypes as the ocker and the egghead. The former has massive historical momentum, a bullying version of the pragmatic no-nonsense 'if-she-ain't-broke-don't-try-to-fix-it' attitude that gained purchase in the early years of a colony directing all its resources to physical survival. But if we may speak of the banality of evil, we are also witnessing the potential evil of banality. The recent revelations of corporate self-interest, incompetence and impropriety are on such a massive scale that it is becoming clear that behind the benevolent 'she'll be right' of corporate management, and the 'relaxed and comfortable' image of John Howard's vision of Australia, there is a profound dissonance which reverberates through everyday life, labour and recreation. Carelessness with the truth is becoming a public issue. It just might be that our growing disillusionment with our public institutions will produce a new public respect for the kind of lucid but rigorous analysis that Shane Homan brings to a field usually littered with casual anecdote and prejudice.

Phil Jackson, *Inside Clubbing: Sensual Experiments in the Art of Being Human*

Oxford and New York: Berg Publications, 2004.

ISBN 9 85973 708 0, hardback, 189pp., index, bibl.

Reviewed by Adrian Renzo

Electronic dance music and club cultures have been the subject of a rapidly growing body of literature, particularly since the explosion of rave music in the United Kingdom during the 1980s. Many texts about this culture are anecdotal, relying on producers, DJs, and dancers to celebrate the magic of losing control on the dance floor. However, there is also an expanding body of scholarly work that attempts to make sense of club cultures, theorising dance music