

closing admiration for many works but also admitting that, in some cases, Cage's efforts fell short. The "number pieces" of Cage's late career are, according to Haskins, "among his greatest" (p.126), and of those, he points to *Two*² as "one of the greatest" examples (p.142). (Haskins knows *Two*² well; hear his beautiful recording of it with Laurel Karlick Sheehan on Mode 193.) But Cage did not always attain sublimity, and Haskins acknowledges this with reasoned but to-the-point critiques and observations. Most striking is a broad statement in the biography's last pages, where Haskins credits "the singularity and brilliance" of many of Cage's ideas but concedes that "Cage's work and aesthetic after 1950 had limitations" (p.153). While Cage went further and further in his pursuit of new sounds and new ways of conceiving music, he removed personal expression, intuition, and customs as much as possible from his composing and from the experience of performers. As a consequence of this detachment, "Cage's work has not supported the development of a truly new and humanistic art," Haskins asserts (p.154). Nevertheless, the book concludes optimistically, in the spirit of Cage, by urging that, even if the music has not yet inspired the subjective and selfless society Cage envisioned, it still could.

The absence of an index is the only fault to mention, and this sole shortcoming detracts little from what the book accomplishes. Though mainly an introductory guide ideal for anyone just beginning to discover Cage, this biography also puts forward critical positions and insights that suggest new ways of appraising Cage's works, their value, and their implications. *Reviewed by D.J. Hoek*

Henry Cowell: A Man Made of Music. By Joel Sachs. NY: Oxford University Press, 2012. 624pp (hardcover). ISBN: 9780195108958 \$45

As the first complete biography of one of America's leading modernist composers, Joel Sachs's *Henry Cowell: A Man Made of Music* has been long awaited. I can attest, having worked with thousands (and yet only a small portion) of the documents in the New York Public Library's Henry Cowell Collection, that writing this book faithfully must have been a monumental task. Sachs began the arduous process in 1988, which gives the reader an idea of the anticipation those in the American music community experienced while waiting for this biography.

The resulting book in six parts spans Cowell's entire life. His early years, recounted in part one ("Child to Man"), will be mostly familiar territory to Cowell scholars. His mother, Clarissa Dixon Cowell, and later his stepmother, Olive Thompson Cowell, both collected every shred of evidence they could find and wrote extensively to document Henry's existence. The "third hoarder," as Sachs puts it, was Henry's wife Sidney Robertson Cowell. As he notes, these three women amassed and wrote such an enormous amount of biographical material that their presence is continuously felt throughout the book. Sachs carefully treads the treacherous ground between Sidney's (often contradictory) statements and the extant personal correspondence. In parts it feels almost as much a biography of Sidney as of Henry. Her memories narrate in the rare instance when documented evidence fails, and Sachs kindly offers her opinion before covering evidence that points to a contrary interpretation.

Two parts of the book cover years in Cowell's life that have remained obscure until

now. Parts four (“Four Endless Years”) and five (“Life Resumes”) cover Cowell’s imprisonment on a morals charge from May 1936 to June 1940 and the ten to twelve years of aftermath during which he tried to resume a normal, productive life and reestablish ties to previous friends and associates. This turned out to be a longer and more difficult process that has remained untold until now, and it is well documented here. Sachs clearly took great pains to collect correspondence from those who wrote to Cowell in San Quentin. The result is a more complete picture of these years than we could have hoped for.

Henry Cowell is a compelling read, but it also offers a remarkable contribution to studies of American musical culture in the twentieth century. There are numerous gems of previously untold stories here. Who knew that Henry worked as manager of Sidney’s father’s fig ranch from 1945 to 1947 as he adjusted to life after his prison years and before he cautiously reentered the music scene? Sachs also covers Cowell’s work at the Office of War Information in the early 1940s, a role for which he was chosen because of his extensive knowledge of world music. Cowell’s own arrangement of “Yankee Doodle” became the call sign of Voice of America radio. Because he had studied Iranian folk music, the State Department commissioned him to compose and record music for physical exercises; apparently, the Shah of Iran wanted more fit soldiers! Similar stories told herein reinforce Cowell’s reputation as an unorthodox character always willing to try something new. The Cowell scholar will also find here many seeds for future research, particularly in Cowell’s complicated personal and professional relationships with Carl Ruggles, Percy Grainger, and Lou Harrison.

One cannot review this book without briefly mentioning Michael Hicks’s 2002 biography, *Henry Cowell, Bohemian*, which treats Cowell’s early life and leaves off with his imprisonment. It is not really fair to compare these books; they are completely different. During the time Hicks was writing, he lacked access to Cowell’s personal papers, a collection that Sidney willed to the New York Public Library in 1994 but was not fully processed and catalogued until 2006. As a result, the main strength of Hicks’s book proves to be his frequent forays into discussions of Cowell’s music, while Sachs is able to luxuriate in the fascinating details of the composer’s life and the friendships that sustained him.

In short, Sachs has offered both a captivating biography for the general reader interested in American music and an excellently documented version of the composer’s life in which even a dedicated Cowell scholar is sure to find something new and of interest.
Reviewed by Stephanie N. Stallings

Miscellaneous

The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies. Edited by Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 593pp (hardcover). Illustrations, Bibliography, Companion Website, and Index. ISBN 978-0-19-538894-7

Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld’s new collection of essays, *The Oxford Handbook of Sound Studies*, provides scholars an up-to-date overview of the major trends in the now-flourishing field of sound studies. In some ways, we can see this volume as a continuation of the project the editors set forth in a 2004 special issue of *Social Studies of Science*, entitled “Sound Studies: New Technologies and Music.” Pinch and Bijsterveld sought to bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines to explore how Science and