



Chasing Sound: Technology, Culture, and the Art of Studio Recording from Edison to the LP (Studies in Industry and Society)

By Susan Schmidt Horning

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In *Chasing Sound*, Susan Schmidt Horning traces the cultural and technological evolution of recording studios in the United States from the first practical devices to the modern multi-track studios of the analog era. Charting the technical development of studio equipment, the professionalization of recording engineers, and the growing collaboration between artists and technicians, she shows how the earliest efforts to capture the sound of live performances eventually resulted in a trend toward studio creations that extended beyond live shows, ultimately reversing the historic relationship between live and recorded sound.

Schmidt Horning draws from a wealth of original oral interviews with major labels and independent recording engineers, producers, arrangers, and musicians, as well as memoirs, technical journals, popular accounts, and sound recordings. Recording engineers and producers, she finds, influenced technological and musical change as they sought to improve the sound of records. By investigating the complex relationship between sound engineering and popular music, she reveals the increasing reliance on technological intervention in the creation as well as in the reception of music. The recording studio, she argues, is at the center of musical culture in the twentieth century.

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Editorial Review

Review

[*Chasing Sound*] does more than traverse the technology of sound recordings: it provides a history on the evolution of sound recording, quality, and even popular music movements, and is a 'must' for any music history or music technology library.

(Midwest Book Review)

Chasing Sound is a welcome addition to a growing literature illuminating the history of sound recording.... What makes the book unique are the author's interviews with dozens of engineers and producers. The voices of those who worked in the studios day in and day out enliven the rest of the book's narrative with a perspective born of practical experience.

(Journal of American History)

This 292-page hardbound book goes back to Edison's invention, moves through the electrical recording era and brings us to the end of the analog recording studio.

(Steve Ramm Anything Phonographic)

Schmidt Horning's excellent dissertation... provides us with valuable and well-founded information of the recording music business from its early beginnings until the rock music era. This book can be recommended to all not only interested in the technological development of sound recording, but also in the sociological change of the recording profession from the 1890s to the late 1960s.

(Peter Tschmuck Music Business Research)

Chasing Sound represents an indispensable and critical approach for historians of sound, one that is unafraid of reconfiguring the central players in a narrative as big as the history of recorded music.

(Enongo Lumumba-Kasongo Sounding Out!)

Schmidt Horning provides an insightful look into the conception and maturation of the recording industry and ways the continuing quest for improved sonic fidelity impacts popular music and Western culture.

Susan Schmidt Horning's recent book, however, is a compelling exploration of a world largely hidden from view that has been shaped by scientists and recording engineers whom she calls tinkerers. More importantly, *Chasing Sound* is a vital contribution to sound studies that traces the shift from the aesthetic of live

performance to the recorded object that has dominated the popular imagination for nearly a century... Moreover, Schmidt Horning attends to intricate detail but includes so much archival research that recordists, scientists, musicians, and others are humanized players in an important tale of American culture. Schmidt Horning cleverly unfolds this unique history while underscoring the significant accomplishments that they wrought.

(Kathryn Metz *ARSC Journal (Association for Recorded Sound Collections)*)

An engaging and colorful narrative about the evolution of a profession.

(Andre Millard *American Historical Review*)

This book is rich in detail and analysis, resulting from years devoted to researching into archives and collecting interviews (as well as Schmidt Horning's knowledge of the trade as a musician herself).

(Simone Turchetti *British Journal for the History of Science*)

Meticulously researched...

(Steve Savage *Journal on the Art of Record Production*)

Chasing Sound is a masterful accomplishment. It offers a crucial addition to the burgeoning scholarship on sound and recording and holds significant value for students and scholars of labor, technology, and popular culture in the twentieth-century United States. With a sharp eye and keen ear, Susan Schmidt Horning gives us that rarest of treasures: a book that succeeds equally well as sophisticated analysis and engrossing narrative. It is highly recommended.

(Charles L. Hughes *History: Reviews of New Books*)

Chasing Sound is a rich account of the development of recording studio technology and musical culture. It offers captivating new material and is a valuable contribution to scholarship in sound studies.

(Emily Thompson, Princeton University)

Schmidt Horning provides a diligent and thoughtful contribution to the history of the recording industry... A valuable addition to the body of scholarship on the recording industry... Marvel at the intricacy of the art, the miracle that we can preserve and retrieve sounds from decades ago, and appreciate the individuals who worked so thanklessly for the love of the music.

(*The Journal of Popular Culture*)

A well-written, fascinating account of the multiple shifts and changes in studio recording--from the art of capturing a live performance to the art of engineering an illusion and the concomitant reversal of the historical relationship between live and recorded music.

(*Isis*)

Recording technology is at the heart of *Chasing Sound*, Horning has made it user-friendly for those without extensive technical backgrounds, and she draws attention to matters easily overlooked by specialists... A welcoming introduction to the history of musical recording.

(*Technology and Culture*)

Schmidt has gone above and beyond the call of duty. By letting more than 80 different types of stinging insects jab him, he has developed a "pain index" for each sting... His descriptions of the pain are wry and eloquent.

(*Science*)

From the Back Cover

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ronald Brun:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite e-book and reading a publication. Beside you can solve your condition; you can add your knowledge by the guide entitled Chasing Sound: Technology, Culture, and the Art of Studio Recording from Edison to the LP (Studies in Industry and Society). Try to the actual book Chasing Sound: Technology, Culture, and the Art of Studio Recording from Edison to the LP (Studies in Industry and Society) as your buddy. It means that it can for being your friend when you really feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you. The book makes you considerably more confidence because you can know every thing by the book. So , let me make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

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Jonathan Peterson:

Is it anyone who having spare time then spend it whole day through watching television programs or just laying on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This Chasing Sound: Technology, Culture, and the Art of Studio Recording from Edison to the LP (Studies in Industry and Society) can be the response, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are and so out of date, spending your spare time by reading in this completely new era is common not a geek activity. So what these ebooks have than the others?

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