

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Great Plains Quarterly

Great Plains Studies, Center for


---

Spring 2010

Review of *Music of the First Nations: Tradition and Innovation in Native North America* edited by Tara Browner

Anna Hoefnagels  
Carleton University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly>

 Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

---

Hoefnagels, Anna, "Review of *Music of the First Nations: Tradition and Innovation in Native North America* edited by Tara Browner" (2010). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 2592.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsquarterly/2592>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Great Plains Studies, Center for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Great Plains Quarterly by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

a wide geographic span, ranging from the Inuits of northern Canada to the Choctaws of Mississippi, and the Passamaquoddies of New Brunswick in eastern Canada to the Coast Salish of western Washington. Many of these chapters highlight the movement of Aboriginal people and their music, as well as the transformations and retentions that characterized these movements and interactions with other Aboriginal groups and European settlers. An article addressing intertribal powwow music and another on country music complement the seven Nation-specific articles. These two further reinforce the travel routes, sharing, and interaction characteristic of Native American culture and music-making.

The chapters by T. Christopher Aplin and Judith Vander address traditions performed in the Plains region, illustrating the retention and transformation of musical repertoires and associated practices and the individualization of cultural practices within a specific geographic region. Aplin's examination of the Fire Dance of the Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache highlights the tenacity of the Fort Sill Apache in retaining this ceremony and its music, despite colonization, cultural isolation, and forced relocation. Vander's article examines the Ghost Dance songs, or *Naraya*, of the Shoshone, to illustrate the complexity of this music repertoire and its sacred and aesthetic power.

The two chapters that examine non-Nation-specific music raise important considerations and challenges to genre definitions and transformations. Tara Browner makes an important contribution to the understanding of the regional variation of powwow music styles as she addresses regional inflections within Northern Style and Southern Style powwow music. David W. Samuels offers an engaging exploration of the seeming contradictions inherent in country music performance, creation, and consumption by Aboriginal people. Their articles further illustrate the complex intercultural interactions and relationships, both among Native peoples and between Natives and non-Natives, that continue to

*Music of the First Nations: Tradition and Innovation in Native North America.* Edited by Tara Browner. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. 166 pp. Maps, figures, tables, musical examples, notes, references, index. \$35.00.

This collection of nine essays examines diverse traditions and issues in contemporary Native American music from a variety of perspectives. The anthology also covers

influence musical performance and creativity in Native North America.

This anthology's importance lies in the fact that its contents illustrate the diversity and vitality of contemporary Aboriginal music as well as the variety of styles of scholarship and research issues. Readers may notice the lag in time of publication from when the chapters were first written, and they may come away from the anthology wishing for more articles on equally interesting topics. The volume is essential reading for ethnomusicologists, Native music scholars, and other readers who are interested in the musical journeying of people and repertoires across North America.

ANNA HOEFNAGELS  
School for Studies in Art and Culture  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, Ontario