

*Have Not Been The Same: The CanRock Renaissance, 1985-1995.*  
By Michael Barclay, Ian A. D. Jack and Jason Schneider.  
(Toronto: ECW Press, 2001. Pp. vii + 757, annotated table of contents, black/white and colour photographs, selected critical discography, interview schedule, bibliography, cast of characters, index, ISBN 1-55022-475-1, pbk.)

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[See table of contents](#)

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***Have Not Been The Same: The CanRock Renaissance, 1985-1995.*** By Michael Barclay, Ian A. D. Jack and Jason Schneider. (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001. Pp. vii + 757, annotated table of contents, black/white and colour photographs, selected critical discography, interview schedule, bibliography, cast of characters, index, ISBN 1-55022-475-1, pbk.)

When the University of British Columbia's radio station, CITR, amplified its FM broadcast to 1800 watts in February of 1989, a 1986 song release by Vancouver's Slow, "Have Not Been The Same," was the first one played over the broadened airwaves. Barclay, Jack and Schneider have picked this song's title to introduce their account of the Canadian music scene during the decade 1985-1995 and its effects on contemporary Canadian singers, musicians and songwriters. The chapters read eastward through the decade from Vancouver to Halifax and document, by interviews with highlighted artists and insightful comments from Barclay, Jack and Schneider, *The CanRock Renaissance*. This rebirth represents "a ten-year window during which a new canon of CanRock was created" (2); a temporal period described as "a golden age, a defining moment, and indeed, since then, we have not been the same" (2). The book also discusses developments in fields related to

musical creation and performance such as: political policies (Cancon and the Massey Commission); the growth in number and reach of university radio stations; televised music video rotation; independent domestic recording and distribution companies; music producers, band promoters and managers. *Have Not Been The Same*, in title and theme, plays on Peter C. Newman's analysis of the Canadian political-economic climate of the same decade and entitled *The Canadian Revolution 1985-1995: From Deference to Defiance*. Similarly, a companion text to *Have Not Been The Same* is David Bidini's *On A Cold Road: Tales of Adventure in Canadian Rock*, wherein the author uses personal experiences as a member of the musical troupe, Rheostatics, and extensive interview material from a myriad of Canadian musicians, producers and promoters to articulate the occupational folklife of Canadian musicians and the particularities of the domestic touring and recording industries.

The authors' devotion to their topic is immediate in the physical thickness of the book and in the breadth and depth of interview materials with which its contents approach the subject matter. Their writings blend experience in music journalism, freelance writing, musicianship and teaching and this collaborative authorship benefits the book in terms of its structure and its content. It is formatted, simultaneously, as a popular culture document, a journalistic piece, an avid fan's production and an academic text. A poem from The Tragically Hip's Gord Downie is the Foreword and lyrics from Stompin' Tom Connors and the Local Rabbits are used as a poetic coda. The first chapter opens with a quotation from a Rheostatics song and one from a Margaret Atwood novel. Similarly, each chapter is introduced with quotations from lyrics, interviews and writings from such disparate sources as the Group of 7, Brian Wilson, and Albert Camus as well as other artists, authors and musicians.

Of the seventeen chapters comprising *Have Not Been The Same*, six deal specifically with artists (Neil Young, The Tragically Hip, Sloan, Blue Rodeo), producers (Daniel Lanois), and recording companies (Nettwerk), while four look at specific localities (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax). Other chapters visit topics of musical genres, poetry and literature, campus radio, national and industry politics, and particular record shops. The book's non-academic jargon reads easily, while the rich and detailed interview material gives a well-researched, ethnographic appeal which itself is further substantiated by bibliographic and discographic sources. The authors write as informed fans and their

analyses gel coherently with interview quotations to lend to the story a smooth and informative flow. The photographs of artists interspersing the text range between press kit photos, family-album style photos and on-stage “action” shots which bring their mediated images into a familiar and intimate relief of their private and occupational settings. The multi-representational practices in *Have Not Been The Same* produce a defined, well-rounded image of the artists and their practices.

The authors clearly state that this is not an analysis of Juno appearances, radio charts or sales figures, and they are neither attempting to provoke nationalist sensibilities regarding Canadian music as better than music from other places, nor are they arguing that Canadian music is just as good as music from other places. Instead, they have produced an original work that does exactly what it sets out to do: to demonstrate how Canadian kids took an unofficial approach to producing their own musical culture and carving out individual and social or scene-oriented identities as well as a canon of work which future musicians could source for repertoire development. That is, a do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic regarding making, recording, performing and distributing music began to develop hand in hand with an increase in hardcore punk bands throughout the early 1980s. The practice of self-recording/distribution works on a local scale to produce social scenes operating and growing through reciprocal exchange and cementing a rhetorical community or an ideal of a *sodalitas*: a cooperative, though often anonymous and geographically disparate group of people working to put on shows, print fanzines and support artists. In short, such multimediated communication is characteristic of contemporary folk groups and scenes.

The book initially situates on the Vancouver punk scene of the early to mid-1980s. While the punk genre remains an underlying theme throughout the book, the authors and the musicians interviewed recognise a relationship between punk and folk/country music in Canada which becomes a core issue of the book. *Have Not Been The Same* suggests that the beginning of a very active grassroots and national music scene was sparked when localised folk practices were applied to a (inter)national genre of music, punk, and its accompanying “anti-corporate” approach to music. This premise underscores what the interested fan, musician or musicologist might appreciate most about the book. That is, by weighing their own expertise and analyses as Canadian documenters, producers and critics of contemporary music with the insights, analyses and experiences of an assemblage of domestic

musicians and producers, the authors pinpoint the fission and fusion of genres and trace the genealogies of particular bands in terms of their membership, their repertoires and stylistic developments as well as their influences, motives and artistic visions.

When Barclay, Jack and Schneider began discussing the possibility of writing a book such as *Have Not Been The Same*, some critics wondered if there would be enough of a story to tell. The authors clearly demonstrate that there is indeed a story to be told. As is often the case, what they omit from and leave undeveloped in this book could easily fill several volumes. From its annotated table of contents to its selected discography, it provides a fascinating and awesome example of effective writing and research, thoughtful layout, compelling use of ethnographic material, contextual cultural and social elements, and clear thematic development. However, the book oscillates between idealistic romanticisation and nostalgic epitaph.

On one hand, by interpreting the decade 1985-1995 in celebratory terms as a golden era of domestic musical production in Canada, the authors implicitly isolate an imagined community, a *sodalitas*. But this is a partially forced aspect of imagining an ideal whole based on geopolitical borders and it is an aspect of the book that is counterbalanced by a focus on local scenes (Vancouver or Halifax) and specific individuals. The romantic quality that the authors bring to their work is less a lamenting than it is an obvious expression of their lifetime passion. On the other hand, *Have Not Been The Same* reveals in its temporal subtitle a notion that the golden age has passed. By the mid-1990s, several independent record labels in Canada closed shop, some bands took the trek south, others disappeared and a few have remained in Canada having achieved unprecedented acclaim and respect as well as having established strong foundations in local and international fan bases. The multinational corporate music agenda essentially swallowed the advances made by local independent recording labels and bands during the decade in focus and we are now back to an age of predominantly imported pop-star idolatry. Therefore, contrasting with an explicitly celebratory enthusiasm and optimism is a sense of an epitaphic obituary in which the demise of large-scale independent cultural production is signaled and canonised as an event of a mythological past. However, their book, be it a celebratory documentation or a romanticised and posthumous eulogy, or both, does provoke me to reflect that, for better or worse, things have not

been the same since the CanRock renaissance and to recommend that anyone interested in listening to and reading about that era should unhesitatingly obtain this book.

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***The Sámi People: Traditions in Transition***. By Veli-Pekka Lehtola. (Translated by Linna Weber Muller-Wille, Aanaar-Inari: Kustannus-Puntsi, 2002. Pp. 136, ill., ISBN 952-5343-11-1.)

Among the relatively small number of English language monographs on the culture of the Sámi people of northern Scandinavia, this book is not only the most up-to-date, but also admirable for its interpretation of history, contemporary social issues, and cultural achievements from a Sámi perspective. This book is a substantial update of the Finnish language edition, *Saamelaiset — Historia, Yhteiskunta, Taide* [The Saami — History, Society, Art], published in 1997. A significant aspect of the update is its dedication to the memory of cultural icon, writer, and musician Nils Aslak Valkeappa, who died unexpectedly in 2001, and about whom the final chapter of the book is written. The rapid mythologizing of Valkeappa before and especially since his death is evident even in the slightly renuanced title with its future-oriented emphasis on “transition;” similarly, Valkeappa’s work is frequently cited for its emphasis on “bridge-building” and “border crossing,” metaphors that permeate the text.

Lehtola emphasizes points of change, offering something like a Foucauldian genealogy of significant historical moments in order to demonstrate Sámi adaptability. He places a high value on creative work, referencing literature, art, music, theatre and film, as well as the media of newspapers and radio. Evidence of this is the integration of a rich