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## EDITORIAL BOARD

**Joan Cunningham** (Ph.D. Public Health: Epidemiology) is a cancer epidemiologist, recently retired from the Medical University of South Carolina. She holds an MSc (Biology: aquatic eco-embryology) from the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada and Ph.D. (Public Health: epidemiology) from the University of Texas School of Public Health (Houston). Her work focuses on racial disparities in breast cancer, and non-pharmacological mitigation of cancer treatment side effects. She also gives invited lectures on cancer epidemiology to the graduate program at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas.

**Amanda Haste** (Ph.D. Musicology; Dip.Trans.) is a British musicologist and academic translator whose research interests include identity construction through music and language. She is a Chartered Linguist and taught courses in Translation and in English for Specific Purposes at Aix-Marseille University, France until 2022. As well as publishing widely in peer-reviewed journals, she co-edited *Constructing Identity in an Age of Globalization* (Ex Modio, 2015), *Global Cuisines: A Scholarly Cookbook* (NCIS, 2022) and the *NCIS Guide for Independent Scholars* (NCIS, 2024), and recently published her first monograph *Music and Identity in Twenty-First-Century Monasticism* (Routledge, 2023). Her awards include the Louise Dyer Award for research into British music, and the Elizabeth Eisenstein Essay Prize (2018).

**Jordan Lavender** (Ph.D. Spanish Linguistics) teaches Spanish and Latin American History at Pomfret School in Pomfret, CT and has conducted research on the use of minority languages on Twitter in Spain, bilingualism in the linguistic landscapes of Azogues, Ecuador, and forms of address in Ecuadorian Spanish, based on ethnographic research in both online and offline contexts.

**Annie Rehill** (Ph.D. Modern French Studies, MFA) specializes in the literature and history of Francophone Canada, focusing on intercultural expressions and implications. Most recently she has studied Métis literature and art. Previous work in ecocriticism centered on representations of the Canadian *coureur de bois* figure, and on Francophone Caribbean writings. Her publications include "Le Travail dans la nature canadienne: L'Équilibre (et le déséquilibre) humain tel qu'il est représenté par Louis Goulet et Joseph-Charles Taché" (2018); "An Ecocritical Reading of Joseph-Charles Taché's *Forestiers et voyageurs*" (2018); *Backwoodsmen As Ecocritical Motif in French Canadian Literature* (2016); and "Inscriptions of Nature from Guadeloupe, Haiti, and Martinique" (2015).

**Shelby Shapiro** (Ph.D. American Studies), the General Editor of *The Independent Scholar*, served for many years as the English-language editor of *Tsum punkt/To the Point*, the magazine of Yiddish of Greater Washington, as well as for its predecessor publication, and was Associate Editor of *Records of the State of Connecticut* from 2012 to 2021. His Ph.D. dissertation dealt with acculturation and American Jewish women in the Yiddish press; he is a Yiddish-English translator, and his research interests include Jazz and Blues (having presented jazz radio programs for nine years), the labor movement, the First World War, and immigrant anarchism.



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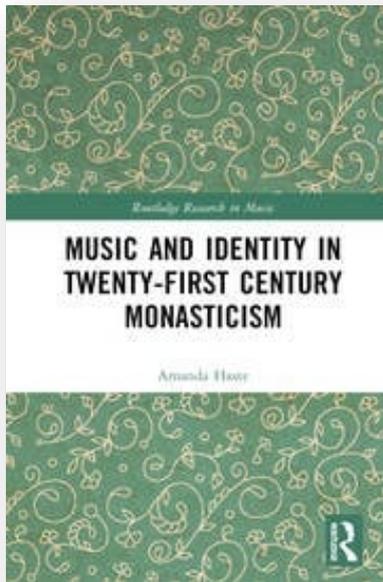
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## *Music and Identity in Twenty-First-Century Monasticism*

**Amanda J. Haste**

London & New York: Routledge, 2023

ISBN 9781032441788

182 Pages 13 B/W Illustrations

<https://www.routledge.com/Music-and-Identity-in-Twenty-First-Century-Monasticism/Haste/p/book/9781032441788>

**Review by Jasmine Hazel Shadrack. Review was first published online 9 April 2024 and will appear in Volume 11 of *The Independent Scholar*.**

In this book, musicologist Amanda Haste explores the role of music in Catholic, Anglican/Episcopalian and neo-monastic communities in Britain and North America. She points out that twenty-first-century monastic communities represent unique social environments in which music plays an integral part, and engages closely with communities of practice to produce an expertly researched book.

Each chapter moves seamlessly into the next, taking us through various aspects of modern contemporary monastic life. While the core theme of the book is the role of music in the negotiation of personal and communal identity, the author also brings out a sub-theme of self-care, thus exploring both the physiological and the psychological dimensions of the musical experience.

Following an Introduction in which the author situates this research within the literature and explains essential monastic and musical terminology, Chapter 1 explores the considerable agency of music in monastic life, both historically and in contemporary communities, including its role as a vector of both conflict and reparation. Chapter 2 then explores the encoding of monastic identity through musical composition, drawing on case studies of several monastic composers.

Numerous musical examples and clear explanations demonstrate the different ways in which they use notation (including specialist chant notation software) to express their awareness of and connection to two millennia of monastic history, while creating new music in different genres.

Chapter 3 tackles the negotiation of identity through instrumental music, and through the music that monks and nuns play and listen to just for pleasure, while Chapter 4, "Dancing my Prayer, Dancing My Self" extends into embodied identity using Balanchine's definition of dance as "music made visible" (p. 3).

The author then widens the focus to explore issues closely related to communal and personal music-making. Chapter 5 on the expression of gender identity through words and music is rich in insights from monastics themselves. Creative and procreative metaphors abound, with nuns referring to "giving birth" to musical ideas, and one monk describing how he found he was "just pumping [hymns] out" (p. 81).

Chapter 6 examines the commodification of monastic music, for which the world at large seems to have an insatiable appetite, and offers case studies of several communities for whom their music has

provided not only an income stream but also a means of outreach.

Chapter 7 explores the “singing nun” phenomenon, in which a single musically talented member of a monastic community is promoted on the world stage. Through four fascinating studies of the original Singing Nun, “Sister Smile” (whose life ended tragically); the Australian Sister of Mercy Janet Mead (who wrote rock masses); Franciscan friar Br Alessandro (“The Voice of Assisi”); and Sr Cristina (who won the Italian version of “The Voice”) the author examines issues of authenticity, naming and identity, and the consequences of leading a double life within their community and in the glare of the spotlight.

The final two chapters offer examples of how music is used in forging a particular denominational and/or community identity. Chapter 8 looks at the creation of an Anglican musical identity, while the final chapter examines how monastic traditions and more contemporary musical influences have played out in selected established and emerging neo-monastic communities.

The result is a comprehensive and compelling study of the agency of music in the construction and expression of personal and community identity. This is not a book just for university libraries, this is a text for choral composers, those fascinated by chants and plainsong but also those interested in exercises in the ethnography of unusual groups, how to embed those diatribes and conversations within rigorous academic endeavors.

Overall, this is an exceptional feat of research and ethnography.

**Jasmine Hazel Shadrack, PhD** is a British composer, conductor and performance autoethnographer, and her research areas are psychoanalysis, performance studies, trauma studies, disability and crip theory and extreme metal. She is adjunct professor at the Don Wright Faculty of Music Research and Composition Western University, Canada; visiting lecturer in music at Falmouth University, UK; and a visiting scholar in gender at the University of Central Missouri, USA. <http://nacht-hexe.com>