by the London Philharmonic with the Roger Wagner Chorale, Roger Wagner conducting. Her *Suite for Orchestra*, the first large work by a woman composer premiered by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Alfred Wallenstein conducting, was recorded by the Oslo Philharmonic conducted by William Strickland.

Finger's exhaustive bibliography, her collection of personal correspondence (including a letter from John Cage recalling Dillon as his piano teacher), her citations from friends of composers, genealogists, reference librarians, university archivists and other university officials, lend a dignity and overall accuracy to this dissertation not previously encountered in the dissertation literature on women composers.

BRENT MADDOX

Mary Carr Moore, American Composer. By CATHERINE PARSONS SMITH and CYNTHIA S. RICHARDSON (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987. xi + 287 pp. incl. genealogical charts, 9 pp. of music, catalog of compositions, endnotes, bibliography, index. 6 p. inset of photographs).

Smith—Professor of Music at the University of Nevada, Reno—and Richardson—a librarian at Western Washington University—offer an antidote to conventional music scholarship with this latest volume of the University of Michigan's "Women and Culture Series." Their preface correctly places this book outside mainstream music history, but inside a developing feminist theory of music history. They imply that historical methodology should now be rethought—perhaps broadened and restructured to encompass the kind of sociological approach taken in their own present study of west-coast composer Mary Carr Moore (1873–1957).

If the book falls into the field of feminist studies, it does so because any thorough study of a professional woman working at the turn of the century cannot escape some gender specific aspects of her struggle—just as any work on a black composer would necessarily belong within black studies. The authors raise the question whether in Moore a major American composer of the first half of our century has been overlooked because of both gender and geography, and they further question whether music history in our century has been so narrowly viewed as to exclude composers such as Moore. Moore put it most succinctly when she said that she had three "strikes" against her—because she was alive, an American, and a woman.

In the first chapters of this biography, Smith and Richardson offer a detailed picture of Moore's family and childhood, much of it told in Moore's own words taken from an autobiographical account of her first three decades. Also included in the early chapters are excerpts from the published and unpublished writings of Moore's mother, Sarah Pratt Carr (1850–1935), selected to illustrate the family values, attitudes, and expectations that helped to shape Moore's character and continued to influence her throughout her life.

Moore received her musical training in San Francisco and pursued her creative career in Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. She composed songs, operas, and vocal and instrumental chamber music. Descriptions of specific compositions from each period are woven into the chronological narrative, with particular emphasis on the operas. Moore's first and most ambitious grand opera, *Narcissa*, is based on the 1847 massacre of missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman in the Oregon Territory. Because its composition and première (Seattle, 1912) and two revivals (San Francisco, 1925; Los Angeles, 1945), all conducted by the composer, mark pivotal points in Moore's life, *Narcissa* is discussed more thoroughly than any other work.

About midway through the book, Smith and Richardson veer from a chronological to a topical approach for their coverage of Moore's thirty years in Los Angeles. Chapter headings suggest the different professional and personal perspectives from which Moore is viewed: "The First Los Angeles School," "Teaching," "Promoting and Surviving," "The Federal Music Project," "The Ultra-Moderns," and "Musical Americanism." These chapters also furnish detailed accounts of organizations and personalities in Los Angeles, beginning with the composer's transfer to that city in 1926. While telling Moore's story, they shed light on a group of composers whom they call "The First Los Angeles School," and they for the first time recount the true saga of the maligned Society of Native American Composers (1939–1944). To obtain their data, they sifted through Moore's collected manuscripts, datebooks, music catalogs, and miscellanea —most of which material was originally bequeathed to Moore's four grandsons, but is now part of UCLA's Mary Carr Moore archive. They located over sixty former friends and students with whom they corresponded or conducted personal interviews. They consulted archives, even those containing but a single pertinent letter. Dissertations dealing with relevant background were considered.

Only when it is necessary to cover gaps in Moore's own accounts do Smith and Richardson hazard some careful speculation. Her personal testimony is sketchiest between 1907, the end of her typewritten autobiography, and 1928, the beginning of her datebooks.

Paradoxically, Moore's choice of texts during these years does not seem to reflect events that transpired. For instance, Moore's first foray [1915] into vaudeville slapstick writing came hard on the heels of her father's death

and the dissolution of an unhappy marriage. Nonetheless, it is certain that she mourned her divorce, and "could not bring herself to set the lyrics that she wrote in the blank pages of the red leather journal she had given her father" (p. 93 from Moore's catalog, dated 1914 and 1915):

> There comes a moment in this surging life
> When all of strength, and all of self-control
> Gives way; and the dead past, in bitterness,
> Resistless, overwhelms my tired soul!
>
> or
>
> Shall Life, forever mock at all the soul's desires?
> Shall Love, forever be an empty name?

To illustrate the same point, Smith and Richardson cite Moore's rejection of a libretto on the subject of divorce, submitted by the composer's mother, but dismissed because it was "too personal."

The strengths of this volume include: (1) the authors' sympathetic approach to their subject and (2) their engaging prose style. One comes away with a clear image of Moore as a strong and talented woman, torn between her Victorian ideals of duty to family and society and her need to create. Most importantly, Moore persevered, even though she knew that her many ambitious works had little chance of being heard in worthy performances. She was a fighter who struggled against these several conflicting messages: (1) that women should develop their talents (as did her mother, who became a Unitarian minister and was a serious author, the librettist of two of Moore's operas, and the founder of cultural and educational societies), but (2) that family must be a woman's priority; (3) that music was a gift, but (4) that professionalism was undignified. Moore composed, performed, kept house, raised children, participated in club life, weathered two unhappy marriages, and eventually saw her once forward-looking music dismissed as old-fashioned. Through it all, she composed: "I have composed as much as I have had time for; squeezing it in late at night . . . mostly because I just couldn't help it" (p. 200, quoting an undated letter, written in 1949, from Moore to Jessica Fredricks, Art and Music Department, San Francisco Public Library).

The authors have organized the volume with a wide readership in mind. Their writing style—laced with humorous anecdotes—will charm both active and armchair historians. The catalog of compositions, arranged by genre and opus number, includes title, text attribution, date of composition, date and place of first performance, and remarks, regarding arrangements and revisions. Although no discography is included, a recent recording is mentioned in the preface, CAMBRIA's album of her songs. The book contains copious endnotes and a bibliography of the more useful sources consulted. The volume is also sprinkled with reproductions of selected pages of Moore's manuscripts.

However, these barely begin to satisfy one's curiosity about her music. Perhaps the authors believe that final judgment must await adequate performances and subsequent reevaluation. Their lively and insightful biography should provide the impetus for such a reevaluation.

SUSAN FINGER