

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

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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