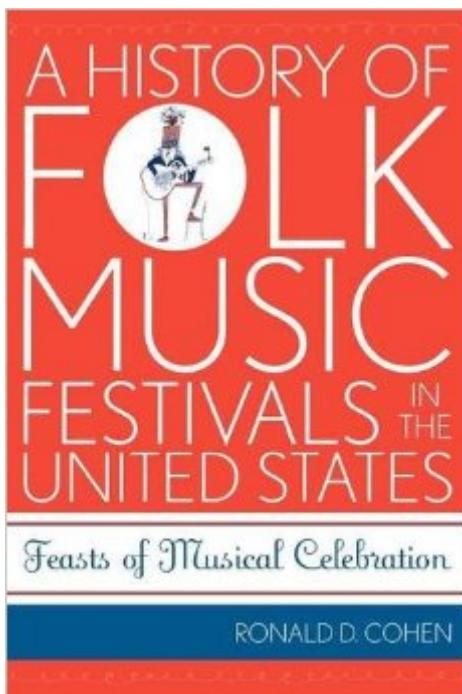


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# A History Of Folk Music Festivals In The United States: Feasts Of Musical Celebration (American Folk Music And Musicians Series)



## **Synopsis**

In *A History of Folk Music Festivals in the United States: Feasts of Musical Celebration*, Ronald D. Cohen presents a comprehensive narration of folk music festivals in America, providing details on events both large and small from the 19th century to the present. Cohen discusses events like the Newport, Philadelphia, University of Chicago, and National Folk Festivals, describing and analyzing long-running as well as short-lived festivals throughout the country and covering a dizzying array of musical styles, including blues, Cajun, Irish, klezmer, women's, bluegrass, gospel, country, singer-songwriters, and world. Cohen draws on a wide range of primary and secondary sources to create a detailed description of these exciting "feasts of musical celebration," capturing the nature and variety of the festivals and fully expressing this vital part of the development of folk music. Studying these events brings a truly national perspective to our understanding of folk music and provides important insights into their social, cultural, musical, and even political contexts. This account of folk music festivals in America is vital to folklorists, ethnomusicologists, U.S. historians, and readers with an interest in folk music and its history.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This week I received the newest volume in Scarecrow Press's series American Folk Music and Musicians. It's "A History of Folk Music Festivals in the United States: Feasts of Musical Celebration" by Ron Cohen. I've not read every word - it's been a busy week - but delved into nearly every chapter, enough to give this book a recommendation. It's not a very big paperback - 154

pages including footnotes and index - but then it was written to provide a background more than detailing every folk festival out there. The first 40% covers the earliest small regional "festivals" mostly in the South and the National Folklife Festival. This is all "Pre-Newport". There's a chapter on the beginning of the "Folk Revival" period, when Newport and Berkeley were started, and when the Philly Festival began during the years Newport wasn't continuing in the early 1960s. One of my favorites - Fox Hollow - gets a few paragraphs. The Clearwater Festival (with it's many names) gets just one paragraph. Cohen used program books and posters to list a sample of the artists performing. Following 16 pages of black & white reproductions of rare Festival posters come the chapter devoted just to Newport (35 pages) and then the "others" which survived after 1980 (Philly, Kerrville, and the Smithsonian Folklife Fest.). The index has more listings for Pete Seeger (obviously) and Joan Baez comes in a close second. Critic Robert Shelton, Archivist Alan Lomax and the venerable Editor (and bookseller) Izzy Young have lots of listings too. The book is an easy read - more like a really long article - with LOTS of footnotes. So, I'll certainly recommend the book - not as a reference text, but as good background as to how the festivals began (going back to one in Philly in 1912!). Steve Ramm "Anything Phonographic"

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