out his stern *auteur*'s hand and brushed the actor's hair, changing its parting from the left side to the right, where it has remained ever since'; and records Mae West's ultimate comment on Grant: 'You can be had.' Schickel himself somewhat surprisingly describes him as 'the finest movie actor in the world'. In his ill-written and morose rival biography, which nevertheless is very good on young Archie Leach's early years in Bristol with his irresponsible father and repressive mother, Geoffrey Wansell comes nearer the mark in quoting *Time* magazine's view that Grant 'is a technician only, but he is a technician of genius'.

In her career as a Broadway producer, one of Mrs Selznick's few flops starred Michael Redgrave, who tactfully (or self-regardingly) does not refer to this event in his scrappily-written, selective, but nevertheless fascinating autobiography. Remarkably frank about his somewhat improbable love affair with Edith Evans, but less so on his relationship with a mysterious Roy, he provides a bemusing account of a reunion in Moscow with an old Cambridge fellow undergraduate, Guy Burgess: 'He lurched past me and, with what looked like practised accuracy, was sick into the basin.' If Coral Browne's experience, recorded in Alan Bennett's *An Englishman Abroad*, is anything to go by, this action seems to have been Burgess's customary, if flamboyant, greeting to visitors from Britain.

In My Mind's Eye, whatever its faults, is highly readable as, even more so, is James Hill's ruefully funny memoir of his courtship and married life with Rita Hayworth, which foundered because 'behind every successful man there is a woman holding him back'. These enjoyable books contrast with ludicrously jargon-ridden volumes on *The James Bond Man* (in which Andrew Rissik provides a unique critique of the cine-aesthetics of Sean Connery's starring vehicle *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*) and—illustrated by dozens of magnificent photographs—on the director Stanley Kubrick: 'Kubrick's approach . . . is centripetal . . . its aim is to create an autarchic system.'

For ex cathedra views on the films of all the above, plus thousands of others, hurry along and buy *5001 Nights at the Movies*, a compilation so seductive that I lost many hours of sleep until I had gulped down all its 676 pages of irresistible self-opinionation by the *New Yorker*'s film critic. There is no defying the quirkiness of Pauline Kael's view of Godard's *Alphaville* that 'the picture is brilliant, but it's no good'; or of the all-seeing eye which notices in *Little Fauss and Big Halsy* that Robert Redford is 'constantly fiddling with his zipper and juggling his genitals (on one occasion, in what is possibly a movie first, in a close shot)'; or of her long-overdue denunciation of Danny Kaye in *Knock on Wood*: 'If he uses that Irish impersonation again, even the infants may crawl out for a cigarette.' For straight fact, rather than magnificent bias, a film bookshelf cannot be complete without *Screen World 1983*. Listing all of the previous year's releases from *ET*, via *Doctor Jekyll's Dungeon of Death* and *Tootsie*, right through to *Zapped!*, this is Volume 34 of the ultimate reference book for film nuts like myself.

Elizabeth M. Thomson

Hard rock

The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock 'n' Roll
Edited by Jon Pareles and Patricia Romanowski
Joseph £12.95 and £8.95
The Illustrated Rock Handbook
Salamander £5.95
Popular Music 3: Producers and Markets
Edited by Richard Middleton and David Horn
Cambridge £12.50 (to individuals, £20 institutions)

Most people imagine they understand what is meant by the term 'popular music'. But the difficulties of studying it are compounded by the uncertainty that shrouds both the nature and the range of the genre. Starting as an updated and industrialised version of 'folk', 'pop' acquired a further new character with the arrival of such groups as the Beatles, writing their own wholly original music for a new breed of marketing executive.

Those commentators whose main interest is the music itself face another problem: there is no equivalent of classical music's 'full score'. Rock artists commit their work to tape, not paper, and because studio effects cannot be represented in print, sheet music copy reduces rock to sterile basics.

These problems are sidestepped by critics who opt for a sociologically-oriented approach. But sociologists too often retreat into a semiological obscurantism that is infuriating to the outsider. The sociologist Simon Frith has succeeded in making rock-as-sociology both interesting and accessible. However, only Paul Oliver, upon whose studies everyone has drawn, manages to discuss the blues as both musical form and social phenomenon.

Oliver joined David Horn, Philip Tagg and others to found the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) in 1981. The practice of making music in society and the theoretical discussion of its nature and function had separated; the IASPM was seen as an exercise in bridge-building. At around the same time, a similar academic group proposed a popular music yearbook; perhaps surprisingly, Cambridge University Press took on the project.

Meanwhile, in the mass-marketplace, business continues as usual. The recent *Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock 'n' Roll* contains 600-odd pages of textual information broken only by small black and white photos of the key figures. The rival *Illustrated Rock Handbook*, while providing a good deal of factual detail, opts for the glossy magazine approach (photo-based with a four-column layout) which suggests that rock 'n' rollers can't read too well. This is a production job that reveals a fundamental insecurity in British rock publishing: if it looks serious, it won't sell! The Rolling Stone book exhibits a greater confidence: the packaging and format promise a no-frills reference book.

In fact, each volume has its merits and failings. In a section entitled 'Management/Promotion Personalities', the *Rock Handbook* covers arrangers, producers, journalists, DJs, video directors, instrument specialists—just about everyone connected with the music s. Yet one questions the wisdom of an l policy that allows the promoter Harvey Goldsmith more space than producer-arrangers such as George Martin (the Beatles and others) or Arif Mardin (Aretha Franklin). Figures such as Goldsmith exist because of rock 'n' roll: they simply feed off it, making no creative contribution.

The Rolling Stone book gives very little space to non-performers, and says so in its introduction. Producers and production techniques are dealt with in an inadequate one-page entry. Although neither Martin nor Mardin command individual pieces, Phil Spector, Lieber and Stoller, and Jack Nitzsche are in—as producer-*songwriters*. The producer Jerry Wexler is also included, evidence of a US bias which runs throughout.

Both books make an effort to be up-to-date, although both miss Scritti Politti, for example. The Thompson Twins and Warren Zevon rate only a few lines in the *Handbook*'s 'Appendix to Performers', while Rolling Stone omit Fun Boy Three and its forebears, Soft Cell, Phil Collins and Pete Townsend as solo performers and, somewhat surprisingly, Culture Club and Eurythmics.

As one might expect, the American book is much better when it comes to coverage of such 'forms' as blues, gospel and country. Even the odd minimalist (e.g. Phillip Glass) makes it. The *Handbook* makes an attempt to redress the balance. In its coverage of musicians ouside rock's mainstream, it draws on the Salamander encyclopedias of *Jazz* and *Country*. The old *NME Encyclopedia of Rock*, which this new *Handbook* supersedes, considered itself hipper-than-thou and wouldn't have dreamed of including the likes of Johnny Mathis.

While the serious rock historian-listener will probably find the Rolling Stone book the better buy, it's still a quantum leap to *Popular Music 3: Producers and Markets*. Five volumes were originally scheduled, each to be organised around a specific theme, and edited by Richard Middleton, an Open University lecturer in music, and David Horn.

In the event, much space has been given over to the discussion of the theories of writers like Adorno and Barthes—the gravitational pull is very much toward sociology, 'the anti-musicology of pop song'. Even Middleton's own contribution, 'Play It Again, Sam: Some Notes on the Productivity of Repetition in Popular Music', which (with its 33 musical examples) one might expect to be a essay in musicology, turns out to be founded on a semiotic thesis.

Of course, it's interesting to learn about rock in Hungary, about the record industry in Wales, about the manipulation of the mass media. But does it bring us any closer to an understanding of the fusion of words and music that is popular song? The effort expended in producing these yearbooks is to be applauded. The sad fact remains that the whole undertaking seems to have become a means through which a small group of individuals can expound their obsessions.