Addendum: response to Moore (see *Popular Music* 25/3)
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Allan Moore's review of my book, *Neil Young and the Poetics of Energy*, recently appeared in *Popular Music* (25/3, 2006). I need to answer two aspects of the review, not so much to dispute Moore's position as to make sure that *Popular Music* readers are informed of what's in the book. Maybe the omissions in Moore's review resulted from my own lack of clarity. Be that as it may, the review fails to describe features of the book which may well interest readers of *Popular Music*. So here is some clarification, with thanks to the editors for providing an opportunity.

First, while Moore notes that theory is a major component of the work, he reports uncertainty as to 'where the core to this theory is'. The core is complicated, but here it is: a semiotic/cognitive model is developed which shows how metaphors of energy and space can unite descriptive approaches from musical and cultural theory. More specifically, emphasis is placed on how such metaphors become elaborated as affective qualities, which in turn become elaborated as personas, both real and virtual, partial and complete. Given such a model, we can discuss cultural theory (as social force), philosophies of desire and identity (as the structuration of virtual and actual personas), genre (as a dialogic negotiation between real and virtual actors), musical sound, and so forth. Every theoretical argument developed in the book is related to this core model, and the model itself is significant because it fuses now-canonised elements of popular music theory with branches of musical semiotics developed elsewhere. For readers who have been following such popular music theories as developed by Tagg, Middleton, Shepherd and others, the book offers a wealth of material, elaboration and, above all, synthesis.

The second thing has to do with strategy. Moore concludes that '[the book's] theoretical stance offered a great deal but, for me, has failed to deliver'. This is no accident. In the introduction I begin by quoting Richard Rorty, and build to a suggestion, based on the inspiration of Gilles Deleuze, that a 'space of poetics [as conceived in this book] ... is productive and suggestive rather than explanatory, and forms an attractive model for the study of an artist who, like Neil Young, is still very active. It is too early for final statements' (pp. 6–7). The open-endedness of my book is deliberate, and is based both in theory (neo-pragmatism) and respect for the living artist. Indeed, a core theoretical concern raised in various ways throughout the text is the problem of how we can develop an approach which is both rigorous and open-ended. Moore's review well conveys the frustration that might be experienced by a reader who wants a more definitive picture. But I trust it won't frighten off readers who are looking for something more pointedly amorphous!

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