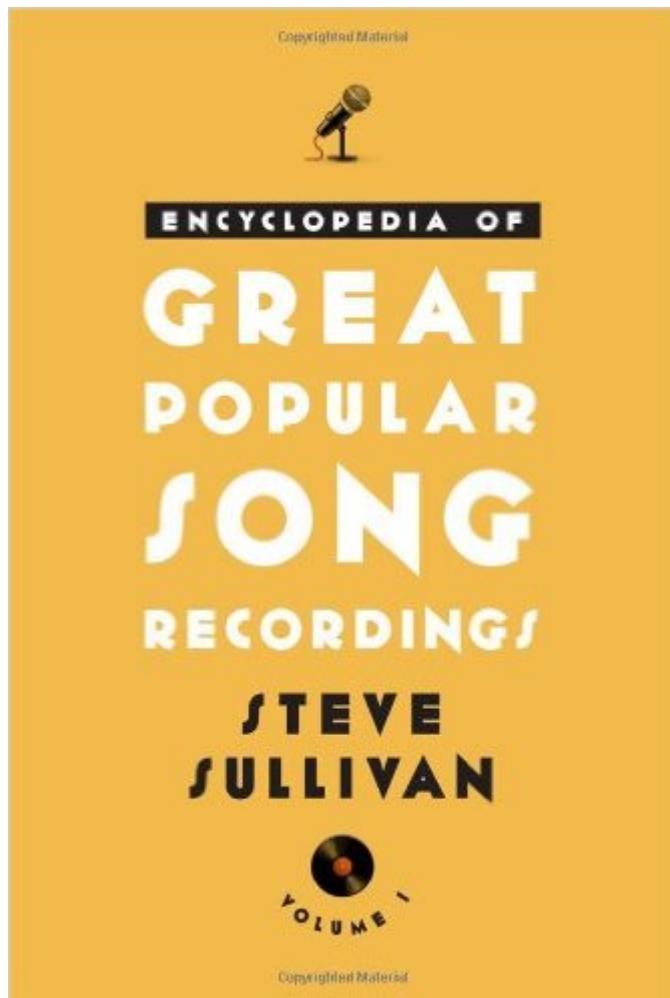


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Encyclopedia Of Great Popular Song Recordings (Volume 1 And 2)



Synopsis

From John Philip Sousa to Green Day, from Scott Joplin to Kanye West, from Stephen Foster to Coldplay, *The Encyclopedia of Great Popular Song Recordings*, Volumes 1 and 2 covers the vast scope of its subject with virtually unprecedented breadth and depth. Approximately 1,000 key song recordings from 1889 to the present are explored in full, unveiling the stories behind the songs, the recordings, the performers, and the songwriters. Beginning the journey in the era of Victorian parlor balladry, brass bands, and ragtime with the advent of the record industry, readers witness the birth of the blues and the dawn of jazz in the 1910s and the emergence of country music on record and the shift from acoustic to electrical recording in the 1920s. The odyssey continues through the Swing Era of the 1930s; rhythm & blues, bluegrass, and bebop in the 1940s; the rock & roll revolution of the 1950s; modern soul, the British invasion, and the folk-rock movement of the 1960s; and finally into the modern era through the musical streams of disco, punk, grunge, hip-hop, and contemporary dance-pop. Sullivan, however, also takes critical detours by extending the coverage to genres neglected in pop music histories, from ethnic and world music, the gospel recording of both black and white artists, and lesser-known traditional folk tunes that reach back hundreds of years. This book is ideal for anyone who truly loves popular music in all of its glorious variety, and anyone wishing to learn more about the roots of virtually all the music we hear today. Popular music fans, as well as scholars of recording history and technology and students of the intersections between music and cultural history will all find this book to be informative and interesting.

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Customer Reviews

I just added Sullivan's two-volume music encyclopedia to my already stuffed shelves of music reference books. It may not be on the shelf much as I'll be pulling it down to reference so often. To echo the reviews above, Sullivan doesn't just present a "best of" list. He compiles a myriad of resources (including yours truly's own DavesMusicDatabase dot com) as a starting point, but also corrects a problem inherent in most lists - the imbalance of current songs to older songs. As any list enthusiast will tell you, "best-of all-time" lists are generally misnamed, choosing to focus almost exclusively on songs from the rock era. Sullivan gives pre-1950s songs the attention they deserve by balancing the representation not just of different eras but different genres. If that's all these books did, they would dwarf most of the competition. However, Sullivan also has done phenomenal research to give roughly one-page histories of each song, offering detailed accounts of a song's back story and importance. An absolute must-have for any fans of music history - of ANY era or ANY genre.

Yes, it's a costly two-volume set, but I had ordered it for the library where I work, and found I didn't want to let go and put it on the shelf! So I bought my own copy from . I think anyone who really likes popular music and history would find it fascinating. The set contains the story behind a large number of hit songs, back to the 1800's. For instance, the composer who wrote "Amazing Grace" had formerly worked as the captain of a slave ship. Some aspects of the song popularized by Eric Burden and the Animals, "The House of the Rising Sun," have their roots in songs of the 1700's. As you can see from the examples, the definition of "popular songs" goes well beyond the rock-and-roll era.

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