



Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular)

Marc Myers (Translator) , Ezequiel Martínez Llorente

Download now

Read Online →

Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular)

Marc Myers (Translator) , Ezequiel Martínez Llorente

Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular) Marc Myers (Translator) , Ezequiel Martínez Llorente

Las historias de 45 canciones que revolucionaron la música popular del siglo xx.

Detrás de las grandes canciones hay historias fascinantes. A partir de la columna que publica en el *Wall Street Journal*, el crítico e historiador Marc Myers ilumina cinco décadas de música popular explicando cómo nacieron y cómo impactaron en los oídos 45 temas que han dejado una huella indeleble en la memoria de nuestro tiempo. Los protagonistas de esos impactos tejen el relato contándole al lector los secretos y las peripecias de sus aventuras creativas.

Entre las canciones cuyos orígenes se narran en este libro hallaremos "Whola Lotta Love", de Led Zeppelin, "Mercedes Benz", de Janis Joplin, "Maggie May", de Rod Stewart, y "Time After Time", de Cyndi Lauper. Joni Mitchell recuerda la cueva de Creta donde vivía con el "viejo gruñón" que inspiró "Carey"; Elvis Costello habla de la breve epifanía que produjo "(The Angels Wanna Wear My) Red Shoes" cuando iba en tren a Liverpool; John Fogerty confiesa que manipuló la Quinta Sinfonía para componer "Proud Mary"... Mil curiosidades con cabezas de cartel como Mick Jagger, Jimmy Page, Smokey Robinson, Grace Slick, Mavis Staples, Steven Tyler, los Clash, Merle Haggard, Bonnie Raitt, Debbie Harry o R. E. M.

"Revivir y contextualizar la gestación de estas canciones es un verdadero placer y nos revela aspectos desconocidos de sus orígenes."

The New York Times Book Review

"Un compendio de conversaciones que entusiasmará a propios y extraños."

Bookreporter

"Un prodigioso anecdotario rebosante de erudición. Léase a todo volumen."

The Guardian

Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular) Details

Date : Published May 28th 2018 by MALPASO (first published November 2016)

ISBN :

Author : Marc Myers (Translator) , Ezequiel Martínez Llorente

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Music, Nonfiction, History, Rock N Roll, Culture, Pop Culture

 [Download Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas q ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular) Marc Myers (Translator) , Ezequiel Martínez Llorente

From Reader Review Anatomía de la canción: Historia oral de 45 temas que transformaron el rock, el r&b y el pop (Cultura Popular) for online ebook

Marilyn C. says

I have always enjoyed knowing the background on songs, and Marc Myers in Anatomy of a Song delivers with just that. This is not a compilation on the greatest songs ever written, but songs Myers feels have been the most influential of their times. The book begins in 1952 and ends in the early 90's, and goes into the mindset of the music industry at the time and how each song fit into its perspective era. I took the authors advice and listened to the song when I read each story. It definitely added to the enjoyment of this book. Here are just a few stand-out stories for me:

-Different Drum by the Stone Poneys: I haven't heard this song in years but now have become hooked on it! Linda Ronstadt has such an incredible voice.

-Fist City by Loretta Lynn: You just have to read the background on this song, Lynn was one strong woman.

-Mercedes Benz by Janis Joplin: What a talented artist Joplin was, to write a song on a napkin one night in a bar then go on stage within a half hour and perform it is amazing.

-Carey by Joni Mitchell: I am not a huge fan of Mitchell's but I admire her songwriting abilities and the background story on this song was very interesting.

-Another Brick in the Wall by Pink Floyd: Any background information on a Pink Floyd song is most helpful and the interview with Roger Waters does not disappoint.

-Time After Time by Cyndi Lauper: This story brought me right back to the 1980's with Aqua Net hair spray and MTV! Lauper is the quintessential 80's girl!

My list does not even touch on the stories of some of my all-time favorite bands such as The Rolling Stones, Blondie, Aerosmith and Led Zeppelin or great songs such as (Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay, Midnight Train to Georgia or Losing My Religion.

I recommend this book to all music lovers, and I hope Myers picks up in the nineties with a future book.

Tony Parsons says

So many of my favorites musical legends growing up in the 60's who succumbed drug overdoses. I sure didn't know Linda Ronstadt was in the Stone Poney's group. A must read for all rock country music lovers.

Edwin Hawkins singers, & the Neville Brothers.

& Cyndi Lauper still as goofy as ever.

I did not receive any type of compensation for reading & reviewing this book. While I receive free books from publishers & authors, I am under no obligation to write a positive review. Only an honest one.

A very awesome book cover, great font & writing style. A very well written past musical artists book. It was very easy for me to read/follow from start/finish & never a dull moment. There were no grammar/typo errors, nor any repetitive or out of line sequence sentences. Lots of exciting scenarios, with several twists/turns & a great set of unique characters to keep track of. This could also make another great musical educational movie, a college PP presentation, or even a documentary (A & E, History channel), or better yet a mini TV series. There is no doubt in my mind this is a very easy rating of 5 stars.

Thank you for the free Goodreads; MakingConnections; Grove Press; hardcover book
Tony Parsons MSW (Washburn)

Jennifer Ozawa says

I liked the way the author wove important aspects of music history into his choices, but some of the choices were questionable and I would have liked to see the late seventies and eighties better represented. He paid a lot of focus to the sixties, but certainly a synthpop choice could have worked?

Tracey says

I love this stuff. I love learning the background, the genesis for a work, be it a book or painting, tv episode or – obviously – a song. Websites like SongFacts are huge rabbit holes that I can and do fall into and lose ridiculous amounts of time. And this collection of 45 tales, originally articles in the Wall Street Journal, derived from the author's interviews with those who participated in the songs' creation and recording, are (more or less) fascinating.

There's a fairly common bit of trivia about the Beatles' "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds", about how although everyone pretty much assumes it's about an acid trip (the capitals of the song title are LSD!), John Lennon always denied it, said it was based on a crayon drawing from one of his kids. Similarly, Steppenwolf's "Magic Carpet Ride" is not, as – oh, come on, as everyone who's ever heard it – thinks, about any mind-altering substances. It makes so much sense when you hear the story. ("Lucy" is not one of the 45 songs in this book, by the way – consider this a bonus.)

I do love this stuff. I love inside information, inspiration, in-jokes – I will never hear "Groovin'" the same again, now that I know about the Misheard-Lyric Joke the band used to make, which ranks up there with "There's a bathroom on the right" and "Hold me closer, Tony Danza".

I still find the selection of songs a little surprising. Despite never having heard of several, I have no argument with the songs and artists included (except for "Suspicious Minds" – I despise that song) – but I do wonder about so many artists who are not represented. Billy Joel, Simon and/or Garfunkel, Rush, Melissa Etheridge, Elton John, Styx, Bruce Springsteen. Bob Dylan. Michael Jackson – any of the Jacksons. Prince. David Bowie. Hell – the Beatles. I mean. There were two songs from the Rolling Stones, though. That doesn't work for me. But it's not my collection. I just wonder why. In a perfect world would these 45 songs be the 45 songs he would have chosen out of all the songs ever? Or did the songs choices depend on the interviews – whether people involved in the production were still alive, were willing, were otherwise available?

Why "Mercedes Benz" and not "Me and Bobby McGee?" I mean, it's a great story, but how do I know "Bobby McGee" doesn't have just as cool a background?

In audio format it took a bit of adjusting for me. Jonathan Yen did an excellent job of narrating, but still – knowing that the essays were based on taped interviews, it seemed *off* not to have the artists' own voices telling the stories. To sit with them, talk with them and extract the answers, edit everything down and write an article, and then give it to someone else to read – verbatim, with all of each person's idiosyncrasies – into a microphone – it just feels a little crazy. I mean, it does make sense, in that having to get the rights and permissions would have taken time and money from the book's budget, and the edited-down versions of the interviews were, I'm sure, pretty choppy. It just took a little time to adapt to the same voice reading Grace Slick and Loretta Lynn and Stevie Wonder and Michael Stipe. I absolutely commend the narrator and the producers for the decision not to try for impersonation of any sort – no accents, none of those characteristic speech tics, only a slightly lighter voice used for women's contributions. None of my problems with the book were due to the narrator – he was very good.

I think – apart from that – my only real complaint about this book is that it ended quite abruptly. The last song, "Losing My Religion", is featured, and then ... that's it, no wrap up. Some kind of coda would have been nice. Other than that, it was a well-put-together compendium of articles.

But seriously, why two Stones songs?

1. Lloyd Price – Lawdy Miss Clawdy – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYO26...>
2. Little Willie Littlefield – K.C. Loving – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BEPt9...>
3. The Isley Brothers – Shout – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFCeP...>
4. The Marvelettes – Please Mr. Postman – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSlzh...>
5. Dion – Runaround Sue – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ID-js...>
6. The Dixie Cups – Chapel of Love – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTq7w...>
7. The Kinks – You Really Got Me – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTTsY...>
8. The Righteous Brothers – You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NONMS...>
9. The Temptations – My Girl – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bsdG...>
10. The Four Tops – Reach Out I'll Be There – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qd6Xk...>
11. The Lovin' Spoonful – Darling Be Home Soon – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXjzO...>
12. The Doors – Light My Fire – (7 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deB_u...
13. The Young Rascals – Groovin' – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=falI0...>
14. Grace Slick (Jefferson Airplane) – White Rabbit – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR8LF...>
15. The Stone Poneys – Different Drum – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FLN4...>
16. Otis Redding – (Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyPKR...>
17. Loretta Lynn – Fist City – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvPnY...>
18. The Rolling Stones – Street Fighting Man – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_ypZ...
19. Tammy Wynette – Stand by Your Man – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM-b8...>
20. Steppenwolf – Magic Carpet Ride – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ccBi...>
21. Creedence Clearwater Revival – Proud Mary – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfyEp...>
22. The Edwin Hawkins Singers – Oh Happy Day – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjz3p...>
23. Elvis Presley – Suspicious Minds – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RxOBO...>
24. Led Zeppelin – Whole Lotta Love – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0outA...>
25. Janis Joplin – Mercedes Benz – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qev-i...>
26. The Rolling Stones – Moonlight Mile – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stpRI...>
27. Rod Stewart – Maggie May – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxtCq...>
28. Joni Mitchell – Carey – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bulwl...>
29. The Staple Singers – Respect Yourself – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1pYK...>
30. Jimmy Cliff – The Harder They Come – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0Nm5...>

31. Gladys Knight and the Pips – Midnight Train to Georgia – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0F9L...>
 32. The Allman Brothers – Ramblin' Man – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1x28j...>
 33. The Hues Corporation – Rock the Boat – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fO1Z8...>
 34. Aerosmith – Walk This Way – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UFFa...>
 35. Stevie Wonder – Love's in Need of Love Today – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmcXI...>
 36. Steely Dan – Deacon Blues – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2A0wG...>
 37. Elvis Costello – (The Angels Wanna Wear My) Red Shoes –
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0aAG...>
 38. Blondie – Heart of Glass – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aa911...>
 39. Pink Floyd – Another Brick in the Wall – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YR5Ap...>
 40. The Clash – London Calling – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7Ziw...>
 41. The Neville Brothers – Brother John/Iko Iko – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99NYJ...>
 42. Merle Haggard – Big City – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Th7tg...>
 43. Cyndi Lauper – Time After Time – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdQY7...>
 44. Bonnie Raitt – Nick of Time – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dy8gH...>
 45. R.E.M. – Losing My Religion – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwtdh...>
-

Scarlet Cameo says

This book was really, really fun to read. I love get informed about music, not all the time but some days i dedicated to that work, but i almost never do about music i don't like and i'm not exactly a big fan of R&B and Pop, but Rock, Heavy Metal and Blues, Geez! I love those things and the history of all these genres is united.

Well, all the interviews here shows all the work need to produce a song, even if you don't think that gonna be a hit, and how the music bussiness has changed. Probably the part i most enjoy and influence me was the perception of a song, when i was young i always believe that a song must sound the most equal to the CD version but, when i grow up i learn that it's imposible because all the production need, but hell! here is so well explain, not exhaustive but detail enough to appreciate all the hard work that need.

The things that i learned here, and i'm grateful, are:

- You never can say wich song will be a hit (dah!), even if you created to be one more in the tracklist suddently can be a surprise
- Greatest lyrics are the result of a "hit of luck", must of the time aren't planned
- The most important part is the production, failure in that part can sink awesome songs
- All songs deserve a second chance to be a success
- "Losing my religion" is a romantic song (WTH!)

Playlist of all the songs mentioned in the book

A digital copy of this book was provided by NetGalley

Perry says

ANATOMY OF A SONG

The Oral History of 45 Iconic Hits that Changed Rock, R&B and Pop

A solidly sapid salute (4.1) to the creative process that goes into writing a song, forty-five of them to be exact. I found it fascinatingly robust when it came to the rock songs, not quite as much so on the pop and R&B, but that's just a personal preference likely.

To give you a taste, in no particular order (the book covers them chronologically):

"Losing My Religion," R.E.M., Feb. 1991: According to Michael Stipe,

For the lyric, he knew he wanted to write an unrequited love song, like the Police's 'Every Breath You Take.' In writing the lyric, he wanted it to be unclear whether the relationship in the song was real or a figment of the protagonist's imagination. He created a character so shy and insecure that he questions every one of his moves and choices. He's yearning for love and acceptance. He was never much of an autobiographic songwriter, but rather more of a storyteller. But he could draw from his own experiences and use details or observations from life to help bring resonance to the song's character. Within the details of the story, he hit upon a universal feeling that everyone has experienced—one of terrifying uncertainty and an almost teenage desire for acceptance. "That's me in the corner" is a wallflower, shy and frightened and not able to speak up. "That's me in the spotlight" was initially "That's me in the kitchen," but "spotlight" had a harder consonant and worked better. It also flips the narrative. "Choosing my confessions" fit the atmosphere of uncertainty, in a near-religious, ecstatic context. The use of ecstatic or epiphanic moments is something I learned from his great friend and mentor Patti Smith. The song's title came from an old Southern phrase—"I almost lost my religion"—that he heard growing up in the South. He changed it to "Losing My Religion," which sounded better for the song. The phrase is a gentle way of saying that you're at wit's end over something stressful that's out of your control.

"Maggie May," Rod Stewart, May 1971:

In July 1961, Stewart went with a few friends to the south of England to camp out at the Beaulieu Jazz Festival. ... He was sixteen and just coming out of his beatnik phase.... They snuck into the festival through a large runoff pipe and eventually made their way to a beer tent. There, he met an older woman who was something of a sexual predator. One thing led to the next, and they ended up nearby on a secluded patch of lawn. He was a virgin, and all he could think was, 'This is it, Rod Stewart, you'd better put on a good performance here or else your reputation will be ruined all over North London.' But it was all over in a few seconds. Her name wasn't Maggie May, but the experience he had with her would influence the writing of the song ten years later."

"Another Brick in The Wall (Brick 2)," Pink Floyd, Nov. 1979:

According to Roger Waters, the lyrics were a reaction to his time at the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys in 1955, when he was twelve. Some of the teachers there were locked into the idea that young boys needed to be controlled with sarcasm and the exercising of brute force to subjugate the boys to their will. That was the teachers' idea of education. When the band first recorded 'Brick 2' in the studio in early 1979, he thought of it as just a short thematic interlude in The Wall. After they finished it though, they realized the song was catchy and had bigger potential, but they weren't quite sure how to build it out. They tried a guitar solo over the verse, but the song was still too brief. It wasn't until The Wall was almost finished that he thought it might be good to get a bunch of English kids to sing the chorus, to animate the lyrics. They were in Los Angeles at the time, finishing the album at the studio.... So they sent the twenty-four track studio tape of "Brick 2" to the engineer back in Britain and asked him to find some kids to sing on it. He found the kids at the Islington Green School in North London, near the band's studio. He put together about 25 students between ages thirteen and fifteen and overdubbed them singing several times, so it would sound as if there were many more of them. He originally thought they'd use their voices as background for the lead vocals Dave and he had recorded, but the sound they heard on the tape when it came in was so emotionally powerful that they let them sing their part alone. To hear those kids from a not-so-affluent part of London singing the lyrics took his breath away. By adding those voices, the engineer had made the song visceral and deeply moving in a very serious way.

"You Really Got Me," The Kinks, August 1964:

According to Ray Davies, the inspiration for the lyrics and title came one night while playing at the Scene Club in Soho. During the set, he looked out in the darkness about 10 ft. from the stage and saw what appeared to be a 17-year-old girl moving better than anyone else on the dance floor. She had ash-colored hair set in a beehive style that was popular then. When they finished, he went off to find her, but she was gone and never returned to the club. She really got me going.

I wanted the song to sound like a repetitive Gregorian chant over a blues so I pushed for a dirtied-up guitar sound.

"Proud Mary," Creedence Clearwater Revival, Jan. 1969:

John Fogerty picked up his Rickenbacker guitar, and began playing a song intro he'd been working on, with a chord riff based on the opening to Beethoven's Fifth that he'd first heard on TV growing up. He didn't like how Beethoven had composed it, preferring to hit the first chord hard for emphasis, not the fourth. When he added rhythm to the chords, the song had the motion of a boat. He'd always loved Mark Twain's writing and the music of Stephen Foster, so he wrote lyrics about a riverboat. The line "rollin' on the river" was influenced by a movie he once saw about two riverboats racing. He finished most of the song in two hours. Then he opened his notebook [of song title ideas] for a song title and the first entry was "Proud Mary."

"London Calling," The Clash, Dec. 1979, became one of the era's most stirring and influential rock anthems.

With its martial beat, radio warning beeps, rocksteady funk bass line, and lashing lyrics, the song warned of a world facing dire ecological risks.

According to Mick Jones, who co-wrote the song with the late Joe Strummer, the initial inspiration for the song wasn't British politics—it was their fear of drowning. In 1979 they saw a headline on the front of the London Evening Standard warning that the North Sea might rise and push up the Thames, flooding the city. They flipped. To them, the headline was just another example of how everything was coming undone.

Thank you, Grove Press and NetGalley, for an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Nancy Delvecchio says

What I really love about this book is how well-researched it is. This is a collection of 45 mini-features that spotlight some of the greatest songs in pop music history. Mind you, this isn't the 45 best songs of all time. Some of them are up there. Others are hits, or album tracks by legendary artists -- songs you may have long forgotten about, but now will want to revisit like a long-lost friend. I particularly enjoyed the feature on "Carey" by Joanie Mitchell. Not only did the author interview the songwriter, but also the man who is the subject of this song from a half century ago. My one criticism of this book is the inclusion of some songs that really aren't classics, but only included because of who wrote them. For instance, Moonlight Mile by the Rolling Stones isn't one of that band's top 50 songs. And yet, he includes it in this collection because it gave him the ability to interview Mick Jagger. Overall, a book that hardcore music fans will love.

Peter Boyle says

The concept behind this book is great - take 45 iconic singles and talk to the artists behind them about their inspiration, the recording and what happened after the songs were released. The idea was originally conceived as a column in the Wall Street Journal and the interviews are all assembled here. The genres explored are mostly pop, rock and R&B (old school Rhythm & Blues, not the contemporary racket that young folk listen to nowadays). However the song selection is downright bizarre. There is one song from the 90s (REM's Losing My Religion), which sticks out like a sore thumb in comparison to everything else featured. And a measly four from the 80s, my favorite music decade. Cyndi Lauper is a worthy inclusion but I doubt Merle Haggard's Big City springs to many minds when asked to recall an iconic 80s tune.

The book comes to life in the 60s and 70s songs that are examined. The discussion of You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin' in particular gave me chills. Now there's an iconic song, no doubt about it. I was delighted to learn that Brian Wilson phoned one of its songwriters in the middle of the night to tell him that it had basically restored his faith in music. The story behind Joni Mitchell's Carey is another highlight, a madcap tale of hippies and Greek caves. I also enjoyed Mick Jagger's thoughts on Moonlight Mile and discovered new meaning behind its lyrics (though Mick still maintains it's not about cocaine, I'm not so sure).

It's a real treat to hear from the likes of Smokey Robinson, Jimmy Page and Stevie Wonder about the songs that changed their lives. The oral history format works well and it's easy to devour the book in one big gulp (with the odd visit to Spotify/YouTube in between of course). I would *love* to have seen a better representation of the 80s (Bruce Springsteen, Madonna and Bono perhaps?) - maybe that's just me. But if you're a fan of 60s and 70s music you're sure to discover a treasure of fascinating details about some of your

favourite songs.

Katie K says

Whither the index, Marc Myers?

(Nonetheless, a fun read, best read while listening to the songs.)

Phil Overeem says

One can take or leave the author's framing; his history of pop rock, as he often calls it, leaves a good bit out. But the interview subjects provide some fascinating information about the recording of these 45 songs that even aficionados might not know.

Art says

I joked for years that five hundred earworms live in my head. Funny because that seemed like such a preposterous number. And yet, that number may understate the reality.

A year or two ago, I began archiving and annotating my musical memories in iTunes. It began slowly. A tune here, a memory there. But late last summer, the project amped up into work-in-progress musical memoir.

We all remember many songs and tunes. My archive, however, includes only the tunes, songs and singers with a specific memory attached. For example, I will always remember the warm and sunny beautiful spring afternoon that the cool girls came into class singing “Going to the Chapel” by The Dixie Cups. There’s a concrete memory attached to a song. I saw Marcia Ball and B B King three times, Dylan twice and Leonard Cohen once. More memories. And on and on.

Hard to know for sure, but I may be halfway done after adding three hundred tunes running seventeen hours so far. People asked if I will publish this musical memoir. Don’t know. This began as a personal project. It’s a lot of work, fun work. But I’ve searched a little and cannot find a similar project or model. So this may finish as a one-off.

ANATOMY OF A SONG arrived, and its table of contents includes ten songs or artists already in my musical memoir playlists, which got this book off to a good start. Marc Myers writes about rock, jazz, soul and the arts for The Wall Street Journal. A version of each chapter here appeared in the paper since 2011.

But when I opened the book, the content appeared as interviews. Ugh, not my favorite format. Myers did a good job weaving the thoughts into forty-five interesting stories. “Think of this book as an oral-history jukebox,” he writes.

Favorite highlights:

— Dion di Mucci, a better blues guy than his big pop hits suggest, gave up his seat on the ill-fated flight

almost sixty years ago to The Big Bopper as the tour rocked The Winter Dance Party, which began in Milwaukee and ended in Iowa when the plane crashed. Back in the studio, Dion said that he always enjoyed working with good session musicians, such as Milt Hinton, bass; Mickey “Guitar” Baker, guitar; and, Bucky Pizzarelli, rhythm guitar.

— John Sebastian, founder of The Lovin’ Spoonful, came to his music as the son of an Italian immigrant man who played classical chromatic harmonica. John, most active in the sixties, was offered stronger pleasures along the way. But he was just a pot guy, refusing anything stronger.

— “Light My Fire,” by The Doors, released in sixty-seven as one of the first extended album tracks of a song, clocking in at seven minutes. The single for radio of the day cut out four minutes of solos. But where did the idea for a long track begin.

Ray Manzarek, the musical brains of the operation, drew on several influences, including “My Favorite Things,” stretched out to thirteen minutes by John Coltrane, and “The Girl from Ipanema,” a popular bossa nova. Manzarek, who played the melody with his right hand on one keyboard while playing the bass on another keyboard, said his bass line grew out of “Blueberry Hill” by Fats Domino, which he liked while growing up in Chicago. Manzarek also used a Bach motif that came from a piano book he played as a kid. Robbie Krueger, the guitarist who wrote the song, liked the ballad version released by Jose Feliciano the following year.

For the best ever conversation that breaks down a song and its influences, listen to Ray Manzarek on Fresh Air with Terry Gross. Although the song seems dated and overwrought, Ray’s talk and demonstration with Terry made the song new again for me. <https://www.npr.org/2017/07/28/539989...> Don’t just read the interview. You need to click the play button and enjoy these twelve minutes.

— Grace Slick of The Jefferson Airplane explains “White Rabbit,” released in sixty-seven. Talking to her generation of parents, Grace mentioned kid books we grew up on that influenced her song: “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,” describing what Alice drank and ate that made her small, tall and high. “The Wizard of Oz,” where our heroes cut through a poppy field, get stoned and fall asleep. Grace describes her song as built on a bolero, which builds in intensity.

— “The Dock of The Bay” by Otis Redding, released in sixty-eight. Otis liked to ad-lib at the end of songs. So, Steve Cropper, at Muscle Shoals, left ten measures of instrumental background at the end. Otis could not think of anything to say, so he whistled, which made the song. Three days after finishing it, Otis Redding and his band died in a plane crash in Madison. After that loss, producers went back to the track and added sounds of the sea and gulls. I served sixty-eight in Nam. This relaxing song played everywhere, reminding us of a time to come when we could stretch out after we returned home.

— “Proud Mary” by Creedence (Clearwater Revival), released in sixty-nine. John Fogerty, leader of the group, based the opening chord riff on the opening of Beethoven’s Fifth. Fogerty said that his voice and music channels Howlin’ Wolf and Wilson Pickett. Because he always liked the writings of Mark Twain and Stephen Foster, Fogerty wrote this song about a riverboat.

— “Oh, Happy Day” by the Edwin Hawkins Singers, released in sixty-nine. This gospel song that went mainstream quickly inspired others to write in that vein, including Paul Simon’s “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” George Harrison’s “My Sweet Lord,” and “Godspell,” as well as Melanie, who recorded with The Edwin Hawkins Singers.

Just a few of the many backstory stories that fill this interesting book. Even though many of these stories appeared elsewhere over the years, I enjoyed reading the first-person accounts. Well done.

Alex Bledsoe says

A compilation of columns from the Wall Street Journal, this runs from "Lawdy, Miss Clawdy" to "Losing My Religion." Most of the songs are well-known, and the stories behind them interesting, but it's like a "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead" tour through the music, with only occasional interludes from true classics. Judicious editing smooths out any quirks of accent, speaking patterns or gestures, giving each entry a sameness of tone. Still, moments occasionally shine through, like the image of Steven Tyler frantically writing the lyrics to "Walk the Way" on a wall because he didn't have any paper, or the tale behind "Carey" that involves Joni Mitchell, at one point, having fleas. A good read if you're interested in popular music as a whole, and the way some songs are crafted piece by piece, while others just sort of pop out all at once.

Stephen says

This book was a gift and the premise initially struck me as gimmicky. But I really enjoyed the backstories and the insights into writing and producing songs. Maybe best read in small bites, I usually did five at a sitting. It's light and fun and is easily read alongside another book (my current model is two at a time, one fiction and the other non-). Nice gift for fans of music.

Julie says

Anatomy of a Song by Marc Myers is a 2016 Grove Press publication.

I love books about music and pop culture and so I was convinced this book would be up my alley.

Sure enough, I thoroughly enjoyed this look back at some of the most iconic songs that made up the pop music landscape from the fifties all the way up to the early nineties.

I didn't know every one of these songs, but I did know most of them. Many of them I had completely forgotten about over the years. But, what really sets this book apart from others with similar formats is the backstory of each song.

The forty-five songs that are listed tell a fascinating story about how the song was written, or the way it was produced, or how it almost didn't get recorded and what impact it had on the music scene, who influenced the writer of the song, along with personal interviews and recollections.

There are classic R&B songs, pure pop songs, plenty of Motown, songs that changed the landscape of music, especially in the sixties, soul music, country music, anthems, folk music, soundtrack hits, dance tunes, new wave, punk, classic rock, MTV icons, and everything in between.

This is a delightful piece of nostalgia and pop culture, with carefully chosen songs, all them representing various trends and the climate of the era in which they were first recorded and became hits.

Be aware that Myers' doesn't always pick the most popular song by a band or performer. Instead, he goes for

the most iconic or personal songs, the ones with longevity, and the ones with the best stories attached to them. A few times I scratched my head at his selections, but by and large his choices were very thoughtful, which kept the format from becoming stale.

The book is chock full of enthralling facts and stories and fun tidbits of trivia, but the interviews were my favorite part of each song featured. Some of the interviews were funny, but a few were poignant as well, revealing personal loss and various struggles along the way.

I told Alexa to play these songs for me and enjoyed listening with a new perspective, now that I know more about them.

The author did a great job of organizing the material, sticking to a chronological timeline, and there are pictures which helps put names with faces if you are not familiar with the song or the performer.

I had a hard time hunting down a copy of this book, but thankfully found it on Hoopla. It was definitely worth the wait.

I found this book to be both an informative and entertaining list book, which can be enjoyed by anyone and everyone.

4 stars

Sarah says

I think some of the song choices are odd, but there are some great stories in here (and some cool recording trivia).
