



The Concise Guide to Hip-Hop Music: A Fresh Look at the Art of Hip-Hop, from Old-School Beats to Freestyle Rap

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In 1973, the music scene was forever changed by the emergence of hip-hop. Masterfully blending the rhythmic grooves of funk and soul with layered beats and chanted rhymes, artists such as DJ Kool Herc and Grandmaster Flash paved the way for an entire new genre and generation of musicians.

In this comprehensive, accessible guide, Paul Edwards breaks down the difference between old school and new school, recaps the biggest influencers of the genre, and sets straight the myths and misconceptions of the artists and their music. Fans old and new alike will all learn something new about the history and development of hip-hop, from its inception up through the current day, in *The Concise Guide to Hip-Hop Music*.

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From Reader Review The Concise Guide to Hip-Hop Music: A Fresh Look at the Art of Hip-Hop, from Old-School Beats to Freestyle Rap for online ebook

Anusha says

Filled with great and useful information in an understandable format, however it disregarded everything past the early 2000s. It justifies this by saying that everything past the 2000s was paved the way by the old school. Although that is true, it doesn't mean that there's nothing worth mentioning in modern hip-hop. Still an enjoyable read though.

Byron says

Rarely has the title of something been such an accurate description of its contents. You'd probably have to go back to the advent of store-brand cereal.

Essentially, this book does for the entire genre of rap music what the two How to Rap books did for, erm, rapping. It goes topic by topic and it breaks down what a certain term, style or technique is and then has various elaborate via blockquotes from interviews conducted by the author himself as well as things I recognized from the Internets, including the legendary Unkut.com (which I hear is working on its own collection of interviews).

Some of these things are basic to the point of being obvious to someone who's never heard rap music, like if they've been in a coma since the 1940s like Robert De Niro in the movie awakenings, while some of these are things that should be obvious and probably aren't. All but the most knowledgeable hip-hop heads will learn at least something from this book -- so probably 99.5% of current rap writers and maybe 97% of the general population. LOL

One thing I noticed: This book, not unlike the recent Check the Technique Vol 2 (the most recent album in which was released in 1998) takes the widely held and obviously correct view that hip-hop blossomed creatively in the late '80s-early '90s, petered out in the late '90s, and has rarely been worth a shit since. Certain regional styles and styles that have become popular since then are hardly so much as mentioned. I imagine this will be a disappointment for OU SAE.

Corbin says

There was useful information and a lot of first-hand testimony about the development of hip-hop and rap, but even though it's a recent book, it pretty much ignores (and even denigrates) music after 1996. It's also tough to rely solely on anecdotes and testimony to characterize large movements and be authoritative--a balance of statistics and larger picture analysis would have been helpful to contextualize the names and stories comprising most of the content. I did learn about the instruments, early history, and iconic artists and albums, so it was a worthwhile read for someone with very little knowledge of hip hop, but I suspect fans of the genre will be disappointed by a rather surface treatment.

Shaun says

Masterful. The first word that comes to mind after reading *The Concise Guide to Hip-Hop Music*. I first really started listening to rap music when Dr. Dre released "The Chronic". I've listened to the music ever since, and also went back and started to love old and new school rap as well. So I was at least somewhat familiar with the content. However, I think if someone was not at all familiar with hip-hop music, this Guide would still be an easy and informative read. You'll find interview snippets from everyone from Afrika Bambaataa and Grandmaster Flash to Eminem and Nas.

Author Paul Edwards pulls together information from an incredible number of sources and puts them all together in this informative and truly concise reference book. I consider it a reference book to hip-hop music (1973 to ~1996, the end of the "Golden Age" of rap).

This Guide covers everything from beatmaking, to rapping, to sampling, to the culture and the origins of such. In the description of the book it states, "Fans old and new alike will all learn something new about the history and development of hip-hop..." and that is entirely accurate. Even if you think you know the history of hip-hop music, you get the history straight from those that were there. Edwards pulls quotes from interviews done himself, from books, from website interviews and more. It's a masterful arrangement that gives you a chronological look and understanding of the subject. The book also includes an index and a detailed section of notes of where the quotes came from. It really is a reference guide to hip-hop music, as I stated earlier.

I received a copy of the book through a Goodreads First Reads giveaway. It's now among my favorite books and I'm glad I got a chance to check it out, and give it an informed and positive review.

Matt says

A nice primer for thinking about the basic elements and history of hip hop. Generally uses an oral history format, though appears to be completely based on third party sources. Can be a little repetitive at times.

Tiffany Westlund says

Gah...browser just lost my wonderful review of this book....will have to rewrite later.
