

Music and Musicians in American History
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781.66 / PRE

All shook up: The life and death of Elvis Presley.

Barry Denenberg. 2001. 176 p. (EM)

From Publishers Weekly - This personable biography of the man who swayed his hips and ushered in the age of rock 'n' roll chronicles not only the turbulent life of Elvis but the sweeping shifts he brought to popular culture. "Before Elvis Presley, black music was separate from white music. There was no such thing as 'teenage music,'" Denenberg (*An American Hero: The True Story of Charles A. Lindbergh*) asserts in his introduction. But he clearly demonstrates how this shy boy from the wrong side of the tracks in Tupelo, Miss., quickly changed all that.

781.62 / SAN

The American songbag.

Carl Sandburg. Original copyright 1927. 495 p.

Carl Sandburg was not only one of America's best-loved poets, but also a collector and performer of American folk music. This comprehensive anthology includes words and music to 290 songs and ballads, organized under a range of chapters, including "Mexican Border Songs," "Minstrel Songs," "Bandit Biographies," "Tarnished Love Tales," "Pioneer Memories," and "Railroad and Work Gangs," and "Prison and Jail Songs." ***Songs Sung Red, White and Blue: The Stories Behind America's Best-Loved Patriotic Songs*** by Ace Collins tells anecdotes behind several of the most famous patriotic songs throughout US History.

781.62 / AME

American roots music.

Edited by Robert Santelli, Holly George-Warren & Jim Brown. 2000. 232 p.

From Publishers Weekly - To unite the "uniquely American genres of folk music such as blues, gospel, country, Western swing, Cajun, zydeco, Tejano and Native American" under the designation of roots music and to attempt to explore such a diverse category sufficiently is to invite charges of folly or hubris or both. But this large volume, the companion text to **a four-part PBS series of the same name**, boldly does so and largely succeeds. While the 11 essays cover material that has been studied in-depth elsewhere, together they make a convincing case that the tradition of "pre-rock" folk music is worthy of respect and reinvestigation. See also the accompanying CD collection by the same name.

DVD / 977.366 / AND

And the beat goes on: The spirit in the legacy of the Douglass Center Drum Corps.

WILL TV in cooperation with Will Patterson. 2006. 23 minutes.

The story of the Douglass Center Drum Corps and Drill Team in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois in its heyday in the 1960s. Produced by local high school students.

J784 / BIO / JON

Big star fallin' mama: Five women in Black music.

Hettie Jones. 1974.

Booklist - After a brief history of the blues, Jones blends biographical discussions of Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Mahalia Jackson, Billie Holiday, and Aretha Franklin--their

lives and contributions to American music--with important social history and a deep sense of musical heritage.

305.896 / STR

Black like you: Blackface, whiteface, insult and imitation in American popular culture.

John Strausbaugh. 2006. 370p. (S and Adult)

An exploration of race relations in American popular culture, focusing particularly on blackface--strange, often scandalous, and now taboo entertainment. Although blackface performance came to be denounced as purely racist mockery, and shamefacedly erased from most modern accounts of American cultural history, Strausbaugh shows that, nevertheless, its impact has been deep and longlasting.

J781.643 / BIO / LES

The blues singers: Ten who rocked the world.

Julius Lester with illustrations by Lisa Cohen. 2001. 47p. (EM)

From Publishers Weekly

Lester profiles 10 blues, or blues-inspired, legends including Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, B.B. King and Billie Holiday as well as Mahalia Jackson who was widely considered a gospel singer but was influenced by and certainly influenced other blues singers and Little Richard, who grew out of a blues background to invent rock 'n' roll. Each mini-biography contains factual information about the artist's singing/playing style as well as the author's personal connection to the singer/musician.

***Shake, Rattle and Roll: The Founders of Rock & Roll** is another picture book approach to music history, this time profiling such artists as Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Wanda Jackson, and Buddy Holly.*

DVD / 789.42 / Carter

The Carter family: Will the circle be unbroken?

Produced, written and directed by Kathy Conkwright. 2005. 60 minutes.

Documents the public and private life of roots music pioneers, the Carter Family.

J970.12 / BRA

Drumbeat...heartbeat: A celebration of Powwow.

Susan Braine. 1995. (EM)

***From School Library Journal** - This photo essay by an Assiniboine radio takes readers on a visit to a powwow from an insider's perspective. Braine packs a lot of information into this slim volume, including a preface in which she gives an excellent personal talk on why she loves powwows and what they mean to many Indian people today. She goes on to explain how they started, when and where they are held, and what one can expect to see there. Detailed descriptions of the various dance styles for both men and women are given, followed by information on the singing and drumming, a special plus. Other books on the subject talk a lot about dancing, but often little about the all-important drums. In addition, readers learn about round dances, contest dancing, special dances, honor songs, and giveaways.*

*Other recommended titles include **Powwow** by George Ancona, **Powwow Summer: A Family Celebrates the Circle of Life** by Marcie Rendon, and **Jingle Dancer** by Cynthia Leitich Smith. An excellent source for reviews, critique and discussion of books by and about Native people is the blog done by Debbie Reese, a UI professor and member of the Nambe Pueblo:*

<http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

J782.42 / EDE

The glorious American songbook: A classic illustrated edition.

Compiled by Cooper Evans. 2005. 77 p. (E)

From School Library Journal - Archival illustrations and fine-art reproductions from the late-19th and 20th century accompany traditional and popular American tunes. A diverse collection of 53 selections, the book includes the date and origin, melodic musical notation, and a verse or two. Beautiful, occasionally full-page art complements the selections, which consist of ballads from the earliest days of the American experience to folk songs of the 1900s as well as pieces by Cole Porter, Gene Autry, and Irving Berlin.

Q810.9 / HIL

Harlem stomp! A cultural history of the Harlem Renaissance.

Laban Carrick Hill. 2003. 151 p. (JS)

From School Library Journal - Hill explains the violence, frustration, and dreams of economic opportunity that led to the African-American migration to the North at the beginning of the 20th century. He describes the sense of pride, responsibility, and rights engendered by participation in World War I and the white resentment that resulted in such violence that James Weldon Johnson "dubbed the summer of 1919 the 'Red Summer'" in response to the bloodshed. The author discusses why blacks settled in Harlem and how it became the "Mecca of the New Negro," attracting the likes of Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, and Claude McKay. Also highlighted are publications such as the National Urban League's *Opportunity: A Journal of Negro Life*, which not only supplied forums for these writers but also attempted to generate income for them and provide a sense of racial identity. Music, theater, and the visual arts are also covered. The book contains aspects of everyday culture, too, such as the role of churches, funeral processions, and rent parties. Numerous quotes from speeches, poems, articles, and other works are included. The volume is a visual feast, packed with contemporary photographs, reproductions, magazine covers, and posters, and enhanced by an interesting graphic design.

781.64 PRI

Hip-hop culture.

Emmet G. Price. 2006. (S)

VOYA Reviews - This single volume, geared toward high school and college students as well as teachers, features a wealth of information on the evolution and development of hip-hop. Ten chapters, amply illustrated with black-and-white photographs, cover a multitude of topics ranging from the emergence of hip-hop as a means of expression for politically and economically disenfranchised youth to an analysis of its influence worldwide. Individual chapters include a chronology of the major events, innovations, and recordings in hip-hop history; a review of some of the major challenges and controversies associated with hip-hop culture (e.g., the rise of "gangsta" rap, hip-hop and women, and the relationship between hip-hop and violence); biographical sketches of forty-seven well-known and well-regarded hip-hop innovators; statistical data presented in graph and chart form detailing the economic and cultural influence of hip-hop; a listing of organizations, associations, and programs dedicated to the preservation, promulgation, or practice of hip-hop; and an extensive annotated list of both print and non-print resources. Of particular interest are the appendixes, which detail thirty influential hip-hop albums and fifty influential hip-hop singles. A glossary provides an explanation of common hip-hop terms and phrases. This one-stop resource is excellent for students interested in

conducting research into a cultural phenomenon as well as fans wanting to broaden their knowledge of favorite artists.

For younger readers see **One Nation Under Groove: Rap Music and Its Roots** by James Haskins and **Hip-Hop: A Short History** by Rosa Waters which is part of a series of books on Hip-Hop and popular hip-hop artists for lower level readers.

781.66 / LEN

John Lennon - all I want is the truth: A photographic biography.

Elizabeth Partridge. 2005. 232 p. (S)

From School Library Journal - Partridge cuts through the mythology and misinformation surrounding the life of the legendary singer/songwriter and goes a long way toward revealing the complexities of his personality. She relies heavily on Lennon's own writings and the wealth of interviews he granted during his lifetime. What emerges is an unflinchingly honest portrait of a troubled, angry, and highly creative individual who was captivated by rock 'n' roll and often used it as a means of expressing his unhappiness and confusion.

J782.642 / BER

The long gone lonesome history of country music.

Bret Berhoff. 2007. (EM)

A picture book history of country music from singing cowboys to rockabilly rebels, Minnie Pearl to Dolly Parton, barn dances to the Grand Ole Opry...

J782.25 / BIO / JACKSON

Mahalia: A life in gospel music.

Roxane Orgill. 2002. 132 p. (EMJ)

From School Library Journal - A readable, moving portrait of a passionately religious woman devoted to bringing the gospel to audiences around the world through her music. Jackson's remarkably strong impact on her listeners is related in anecdotes such as this one: people began knocking on church doors in New Orleans asking to be baptized just days after her recording of "God Shall Wipe Away All Tears" appeared on tavern jukeboxes in 1938. Rhythmic sentences, sometimes fragments, capture the beat of gospel music and incorporate vernacular African-American speech patterns from the 1920s to the early 1970s. Events in the singer's personal life and musical career are skillfully blended with material about the social climate of the times. Black-and-white photographs of Jackson; people and places in her life; and other aspects of African-American history such as storefront churches, segregated restrooms, and civil rights marches appear throughout the book. An excellent addition for those interested in biography, music, and African-American history.

J782.253 / GIO

On my journey now: Looking at African-American history through the spirituals.

Nikki Giovanni. 2007. 116 p. (JS)

Booklist - Personal and passionate, Giovanni's short narrative talks about the sacred songs first sung by slaves, tracing how the people in bondage created the great spirituals to tell their stories, and what the songs still mean to us today.

782.1 / ROB

Paul Robeson: Hero before his time.

Rebecca Larsen. 1989. (MJS)

From School Library Journal - This biography covers the major events of Paul Robeson's life from his early days struggling as one of the first blacks to graduate from Rutgers University before World War I, through the phenomenal growth of his career as an actor and singer in the U. S. and abroad, to the relentless persecution he experienced for his association with the Communist party during the McCarthy era. The account focuses on his public life, his career, and his political activities, and emphasizes his continual fight against discrimination and for equality and freedom for all peoples. Larsen clearly admires Robeson, and she glosses over the details of the depression he experienced in his later years. She also assumes a knowledge of history that her audience may not have. This is an interesting book because Robeson is an extraordinary subject; the text, however, never rises above pedestrian prose. A center section contains 14 black-and-white photographs.

The definitive adult biography of Paul Robeson is simple titled, **Paul Robeson** and was written by historian Martin Duberman. **Here I Stand** is classic book of autobiographical essays by Robeson himself, published in 1958. The picture book biography by Eloise Greenfield, **Paul Robeson**, is also recommended.

J782.42 / BIO / ORG

Shout, sister, shout! Ten girl singers who shaped a century.

Roxane Orgill. 2001. 148 p. (MJS)

Booklist - This lively collective biography presents one female singer from every decade of the twentieth century, each chosen for her music, her story, and her claim to represent the times in some sense. This selection also allows Orgill to present a variety of American musical genres (blues, jazz, folk, rock, country) and formats (minstrel show, cabaret, Broadway musical, festival, music video). A typical entry tells of Bessie Smith, who was born into poverty in Tennessee, joined a minstrel troupe in her teens, and found fame and fortune with the release of her first record, "Tain't Nobody's Bizness If I Do," in 1923. Her vibrant personality comes through in the writing, and so do the problems of performing as a black artist in a racist society. Quotes from reviewers, people who knew her, and "Miss Bessie" herself help bring this portrait to life. Three photos of Smith illustrate her story. Period photos also illustrate some of the sidebars, which include features on the blues, Smith's style of clothing, and music-related technological innovations of the decade: the phonograph, the radio, the jukebox, and the "talkies." Those who enjoy good music and a good debate will happily argue about Orgill's choice of singers: Sophie Tucker, Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Ethel Merman, Judy Garland, Anita O'Day, Joan Baez, Bette Midler, Madonna, and Lucinda Williams.

See the picture book **Bessie Smith and the Night Riders**, a book for young readers about Bessie Smith's confrontation with the Ku Klux Klan.

781.5 / CRO

Stand & be counted – Making music making history: The dramatic story of the artists and events that changed history.

David Crosby. 1999. (S)

From School Library Journal - Adult/High School-Writing in anecdotal style and arranging the stories by topic rather than by chronology, these authors describe popular musical artists' involvement in American culture and history from the 1960s through 1999. Their emphasis is the political activism of performing artists and, just

as importantly, the political power of their lyrics and songs. The authors showcase musicians' participation in civil rights, the antiwar movement, birth of the benefit, global activism, farm aid, and human rights, and provide both personal narrative and the collective memory of hundreds of performers from Harry Belafonte and Joan Baez to REM and Red Hot Chili Peppers.

See also ***Which Side Are You On? An Inside History of the Folk Music Revival in America*** by Dick Weissman and ***Farm Aid: A Song for America*** edited by Holly George-Warren and featuring the voices of Willie Nelson, Neil Young, John Mellencamp, and Dave Matthews.

781.62 / GUT

This land was made for you and me: The life and songs of Woody Guthrie. Elizabeth Partridge. 2002. (MJS)

From School Library Journal - This outstanding biography belongs in every library collection, large or small. With access to the extensive Woody Guthrie Archives and opportunities to interview two of his children and his longtime friend and fellow musician Pete Seeger, Partridge has written a fascinating portrait not only of the man, but also of the historical upheavals that shaped his life and were captured and reflected in his songs. Against a backdrop of the Depression, the Dust-Bowl migration, farm workers' camps in California, World War II, and the Cold War era, readers are introduced to the whirlwind of creative, nervous energy and often-erratic behavior that characterized Guthrie. Although he was hospitalized with Huntington's Disease by the time of the 1960s' folk-music boom, young singers including Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, and Odetta led a new generation to love his music. While deeply appreciative of his many talents, the author does not gloss over his irresponsible behavior and frightening outbursts of violence, which grew worse as his disease progressed, or the family tragedies he endured. Although Guthrie's active career lasted just over two decades, readers are left with an overwhelming sense of the remarkable creativity and productivity of those years and its enduring legacy for future generations. Numerous black-and-white photographs, reproductions of Guthrie's drawings and letters, and concert posters and flyers appear throughout the handsome volume. Partridge includes detailed source notes and a page of resource information about the archives and the Huntington's Disease Society of America.

See also the many recent books written about Guthrie: For younger readers see ***Woody Guthrie: Poet of the People*** by Bonnie Christensen, ***This Land is Your Land***, an illustrated version of the classic folk song with paintings by Kathy Jakobsen; Books for older readers include ***There Ain't Nobody that Can Sing Like Me: The Life of Woody Guthrie*** by Anne E. Neimark, ***Woody Guthrie: American Balladeer*** by Janelle Yates and ***Woody Guthrie: America's Folksinger*** by Karen Mueller Coombs.

J782.1 / BIO / Anderson

The voice that challenged a nation and the struggle for equal rights.

Russell Freedman. 2004. 115 p. (MJS)

Booklist - In his signature prose, plain yet eloquent, Freedman tells Anderson's triumphant story, with numerous black-and-white documentary photos and prints that convey her personal struggle, professional artistry, and landmark civil rights role. Everything leads up to her 1939 historic performance at the Lincoln Memorial, where, denied the right to sing at Constitution Hall, she thrilled a crowd of 75,000 and a national radio audience. Freedman reveals that Anderson never invited political confrontation, but with the support of such friends as Eleanor Roosevelt, she had a

profound effect on the nation. Documentation is an essential part of her exciting story, with many pages of source notes as well as an enthusiastic, annotated bibliography, and, of course, a discography.

See also ***What I Had Was Singing: The Story of Marian Anderson*** by Jeri Ferris and the picture book, ***When Marian Sang*** by Pam Munoz Ryan.

781.66 / HEN

Voodoo child: The illustrated legend of Jimi Hendrix.

Created and produced by Martin I. Green. 1995.

From Publishers Weekly - Often cited as one of the most innovative and influential rock musicians, guitar legend Jimi Hendrix had a short and turbulent life, succumbing early, as did many other rock icons of his generation, to pressures generated by the conflicts between their creative visions and the economic imperatives of the music industry. He died of an overdose in 1970 at the age of 27. This collaborative tribute to Hendrix, described by one of its creators as "not so much outright biography as speculative fantasy," explores the excitement and the pitfalls of rock stardom sympathetically and perceptively. Lavishly and beautifully illustrated by Sienkiewicz (*Electra: Assassin*), this draws on the layout and narrative style of comic books to recreate Hendrix's life in a more impressionistic manner than standard bios typically permit. Much of the text is drawn from Hendrix's own letters, poetry and lyrics.

A recent Young Adult novel, ***Jimi and Me*** by Jamie Adoff, is about a biracial teen who finds comfort in the music of Jimi Hendrix. The book was a Coretta Scott King award winner.

A sampling of CDs used in this presentation

Classis Folk Music from Smithsonian Folkways

Classic Labor Songs from Smithsonian Folkways

Folksongs of Illinois from the Illinois Humanities / U of I Press

Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands by Marian Anderson

Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of American Music

Some of These Days by Sophie Tucker

The West (soundtrack) from the PBS documentary

E = Elementary readers

M = Middle school readers

J = 7th, 8th and 9th graders

S = High School readers