

What's New in Reference?

General Reference

REF ML3477 .B36 2004

Barnet, Richard D. et al. *The Story Behind the Song: 150 Songs That Chronicle the 20th Century*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2004.

“Songwriters often use lyrics to describe the current events and social attitudes of a particular period or people. An examination of America's popular songs--and the stories behind their creation--can help us better understand our history and culture. This chronologically organized volume provides the stories of 150 songs in 20th-century American history. Each chapter begins with an historical overview of how songs from the period reflected the political, social, and economic culture of the decade. A discussion of 15 influential songs from each decade provides the songs' histories, what inspired the writers to create them, and why they have resonated over time. Included are patriotic songs, such as "The Yankee Doodle Boy" and "God Bless America," protest songs of the civil rights and women's rights movements, such as "We Shall Overcome" and "I Am Woman," songs that defined musical genres, such as "Heartbreak Hotel" and "Stayin' Alive," and contemporary, often controversial music like Eminem's "Stan." Each song's entry includes the song title, songwriter(s), publication information, and current availability. A selected bibliography includes web sites and books helpful for researching songs, songwriters, and events of the 20th century. Indexes are arranged alphabetically, by song title, by songwriter name, and by subject, making this an excellent research tool for students and general readers alike.”

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