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Doo-Wop: The Forgotten Third Of Rock 'N Roll



Synopsis

For those who were teenagers in the 1950s and early 1960s, doo-wop music conjures up memories of first romances, first dances and hanging out with friends. This is an extensive history of doo-wop, with prices for 1000 top doo-wop records. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book mainly has three distinct parts: text, "Best 500", and songography. The text part is 129 pages about various topics involving doo-wop music. The authors do a decent job of defining doo-wop and associating the music with the meaningful events of its era. I especially liked the chapter on the influence of "The Personality Deejays." However, that chapter as well as much of the text of this book is New York City focused and ignores the rest of the country. The second part of the book is a list of the authors' choices for the best 500 doo-wop recordings of all-time. This list is, of course, very subjective. To my delight, I concurred with the majority of their selections. I would have preferred seeing a list of the 500 best selling doo-wop recordings of all-time or a list of the doo-wop songs that reached #1. The third part of the book is an extensive songography listing over 25,000 doo-wop recordings by artist including the title, label and number, and year. If you know the group name, it's usually easy to locate the song you want. One caveat is that the authors classified the artists by exactly what was written on the record label. Thus you may sometimes find multiple artist headings for the same group. For example instead of a single heading for "Lee Andrews and

the Hearts", you will have to search through "Andrews, Lee (bb the Hearts)", "Hearts (aka Lee Andrews & the Hearts", "Hearts (Lee Andrews & the)", and "Hearts (Lee Andrews & the) (as Lee Andrews)". That said, the songography by itself is worth the price of the book if you are into doo-wop music.

Due to the popularity of T.J. Lubinsky's "American Soundtrack" series on PBS there has been renewed interest in the music we call "doo wop". As an avid collector of 45's, I became interested in the genre in the late 1980's. Collectable Records had reissued hundreds and hundreds of doo wop records. There was just one problem. There were simply no reference books available to help me distinguish the great stuff from the mediocre or bad. In 1992, the original incarnation of this book entitled "Doo Wop: The Forgotten Third of Rock and Roll" was issued. It was a quite literally a godsend. It was very apparent that the authors loved their subject matter and I referred to this book constantly. In 2000, Dr. Anthony Gribin and Dr. Matthew Schiff released the updated version of their book. Now entitled "The Complete Book of Doo-Wop", this expanded version includes a complete "songography" of just about every doo-wop 45 rpm record ever made. The list is arranged alphabetically by artist and includes song title (both A & B sides), year of issue and record label and number. All these years later I still find myself referring to this on a regular basis. But the most useful portion of the book for me is the list of the "Best 1000 Doo-Wop Songs." This list is what really helps one separate the wheat from the chaff. And while one may quibble about individual entries on that list, I have found it to be remarkably accurate over the years. It is what really helped turn me on to the music of artists like the Harptones, the Cardinals and the Ravens to name just to name a few. One of my favorite features in the updated version of the book is a list of "100 Recommended Pre-Doo-Wop Recordings". On this list you will find music by such artists as the Four Vagabonds, the Deep River Boys and the Boswell Sisters. This is all great stuff and definitely worth a listen. Finally, there are dozens of wonderful photographs, a doo-wop aptitude test, doo-wop crossword puzzles and so much more. For any collector of American popular music this book should be an essential part of your library. Highly recommended.

To be able to search for specific groups and their history would have been a nice addition. This book gets too caught up in doing lists and tables. An addition of a searchable appendix in the back would have been a great addition. I would have been very interested in the history of specific groups and what their members are doing now (if they're still alive..which may not be the case in many instances). This book is just not what I expected.

Not too many books actually "increase in value" over such a short period of time, but "The Complete Book of Doowop" is a fine example of a reference book that has accomplished that feat...in two ways...I had purchased the earlier book, "Doowop..The Forgotten Third of Rock and Roll" (616 pages) shortly after it was released in 1992 (price was \$19.95). The book was the best single reference available on the subject of Doowop, and the information contained in "The Forgotten Third..." had never before been presented in a single reference. From cover to cover, it is a valuable reference for the Doowop enthusiast, disc-jockey, as well as those of us that "thought we knew it all". Eight years later (2000), Drs. Gribin and Schiff" released a second book, "The Complete Book of Doowop" (496 pages...priced at \$24.95), and the subject of this review. Although alot of the material presented in "The Complete Book..." is available in it's predecessor, "The Forgotten Third...", the authors have added additional information that greatly expands the reader's knowledge base on Doowop. From beginning to end, this reference pours with accurate information on the music and groups that contributed to the Doowop era. Over the years, both books have become more valuable; 1) as a definitive reference on the subject of Doowop, and 2) the price that they both currently bring in "used condition". It is not unusual to see these books for sale on the internet for 2-3 times their selling price at time of release, sometimes even higher. In summary, if you are interested in Doowop, and the vocal groups that "made it a part of Americana", there are no better references available on the subject, and I highly recommend that you add "The Complete Book of Doowop" to your library.

Tremendous information source

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