



American Hit Radio: A History of Popular Singles From 1955 to the Present

Thomas Ryan

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Starting in 1955, America began tracking its favorite songs on the Top 40 Charts. More than a record of our collective music tastes, the charts became snapshots that reveal who we are. Now **Thomas Ryan** takes us through all forty years, providing a wealth of insight based on exhaustive research.

Arranged chronologically, *American Hit Radio* puts 1,250 of the Top 40 songs in perspective, spotlighting 500 with carefully crafted essays describing the artists' backgrounds and inspirations, the cultural context of the songs, and how the song styles and statements relate to the music scene before and since. From Fats Domino to Nirvana, popular music reflects the radical changes we have experienced as a country and a culture. *American Hit Radio* explores where our music has taken us in the last half-century—what we have left behind, what persists, and why.

Whether the song is "Maybellene" or "Billie Jean," popular music is something we all share. *American Hit Radio* is more than an enjoyable popular music survey, it's a vivid cultural history of the American psyche.

About the Author

Thomas Ryan, a music reviewer and obsessive vintage vinyl collector, has been an active drummer for the past twenty years. He has spent the past decade actively studying the Top 40 lists, accumulating in the process a massive collection of music and videos.

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