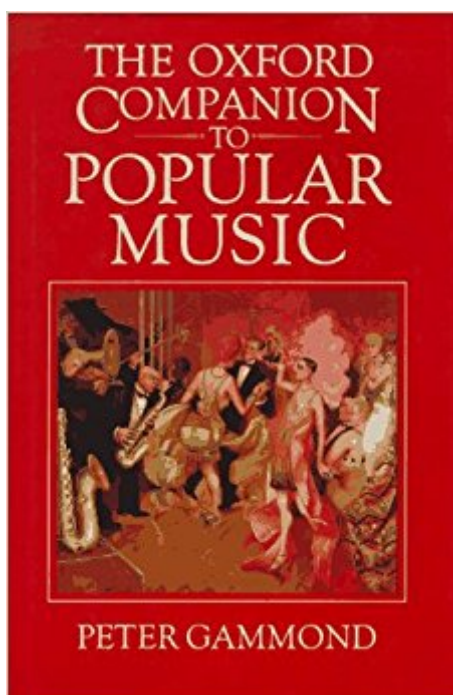


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# The Oxford Companion To Popular Music



## Synopsis

Harper's has called them "the best reference books in the language." And The Boston Globe wrote, "How did we ever get along before Oxford began to publish its thick, encyclopedic volumes which, modestly and accurately, it calls Companions?" From the redoubtable Oxford Companion to English Literature to the fascinating Oxford Companion to the Mind, these browsable volumes have long been acclaimed as goldmines of information, capturing in thousands of entries the essence of a particular field of interest. Now comes the newest addition to the Companion series, The Oxford Companion to Popular Music, encompassing in one alphabetic sequence all that is notable within this vast subject, everything from jazz, reggae, blues, and calypso, to Broadway musicals, rock and roll, and country western. There are hundreds of biographical entries on such diverse figures as John Philip Sousa and Ma Rainey, Fred Astaire and Joan Baez, Josef Lanner (the Father of the Viennese Waltz) and Mistinguett, Otis Redding and Prince. The great Broadway writers, performers, and musicals (including plot outlines) are all here: Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern; "South Pacific," "West Side Story," "Show Boat," "Porgy and Bess"; Mary Martin, Ethel Merman, Fanny Brice, Robert Preston. It covers rock groups from The Beatles, to Led Zeppelin, to Talking Heads; jazz figures such as Fats Waller, Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Bix Beiderbecke, and Louis Armstrong; folk singers such as Bob Dylan, Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell, and Arlo Guthrie; and country western figures such as Hank Williams, Patsy Cline, Tammy Wynette, Merle Haggard, and Johnny Cash. Not the least important feature is the many informative essays on particular genres of popular music, from operetta and waltz, to vaudeville and blues, to brass band and gospel. In the article "Popular Song (USA)," for instance, Gammond traces our popular musical heritage from "Yankee-Doodle," to "Jump, Jim Crow" (a popular minstrel tune that was America's first international song hit in 1832), to "Dixie" (written by Northerner Daniel Decatur Emmett in 1859), to "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" (written by James Bland, the first great Afro-American songwriter), to "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and the enormous outpouring of song in the 20th century. As in any Oxford Companion, one of the great pleasures is the discovery of odd, colorful details--for example, that "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" may date back to the time of the Crusades, or that singer Frankie Laine (who recorded "Rawhide" and other hit tunes) holds the all-time dance marathon record: 3,501 hours in 145 consecutive days. And throughout, Gammond includes generous cross-referencing as well as helpful bibliographies for the larger entries. This authoritative and comprehensive volume offers a matchless tour of the popular music world, providing a balance between substantial information and a concise assessment of the subject.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 752 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; First edition (April 4, 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0193113236

ISBN-13: 978-0193113237

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.9 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,119,915 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Ethnic & International > World Beat #435 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Publishing & Books > Bibliographies & Indexes > Music #1199 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Blues

## Customer Reviews

Okay, it's the Oxford Companion, which explains why so much space is devoted to English music-hall perennials such as Al Bowlly or Ray Noble. But this wrist-wrenching book covers the other bases, too, with copious material on jazz, blues, reggae, country, folk, and even light opera. A superb reference, a browser's delight, and one of the very few places you can read about Grand Funk Railroad, Stephane Grappelli, and the Grand Ole Opry on a single page. (Complaint: Leith Stevens and Shakin' Stevens made the cut, but somehow Cat has been omitted.)

YA-- This comprehensive, alphabetically arranged guide to popular music offers information on the history and style of all major strands, including jazz, blues, country western, ragtime, folk, musical theater, brass, and military. Helpful bibliographies follow many of the entries, and three indexes will assist researchers. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

The Oxford Companion to Popular Music: great as far as it goes, but so many, many omissions ---of musicians active in the sixties and seventies. Where is the Sir Douglas Quintet (or Doug Sahm, at least)? Where is the inestimable Dr. John? Or Cat Stevens (a/k/a Yusuf Islam)? Boz Scaggs is also missing. All of the above were active stars from the 1960s. Mr. Gammond and/or The Oxford Press should bring this important volume up to date. 1991: that was 26 years ago!

When i first bought this book ten years ago, i was already an old rock fan but i didn't know much

about JEROME KERN and IRVING BERLIN even if their names were familiar;this book made me aware of them.Plots,songs and original cast of all the classic musicals from SHOWBOAT to the present time are included here.What was the name of that musical in which MARY MARTIN first made MY HEART BELONGS TO DADDY a popular song;you'll find out.Were was JIMI HENDRIX born?Why are the early LOUIS ARMSTRONG recordings so important to the developpment of jazz and popular music?Who founded LE CHAT NOIR that famous cabaret that made ARISTIDE BRUANT a well known name around MONTMARTRE and after that throughout FRANCE.I could go on and on , but since i don't want to bore you,i'll suggest that you get a copy of that book and cancel your plans for the week-end because if you like music, you'll be hooked for good.

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