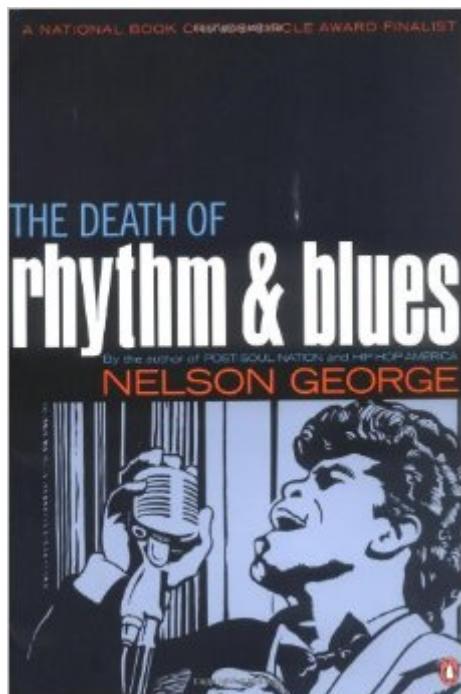


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# The Death Of Rhythm And Blues



## Synopsis

From Nelson George, supervising producer and writer of the hit Netflix series, "The Get Down," this passionate and provocative book tells the complete story of black music in the last fifty years, and in doing so outlines the perilous position of black culture within white American society. In a fast-paced narrative, Nelson George's book chronicles the rise and fall of a *race music* and its transformation into the R&B that eventually dominated the airwaves only to find itself diluted and submerged as crossover music.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Slicing through the main layers of the world of R & B, George, music critic for Billboard and Playboy, profiles his personal heroes in the recent history of black music especially in the evolution of black radio, the growth of independent record labels and the development of retail outlets for R & B records. Here are perceptive summations of the contributions of such star creative performers as Chuck Berry, James Brown, Aretha Franklin and Michael Jackson, as well as of lesser-known musicians, and of the links between black social and economic affairs and the changes in contemporary black culture. Above all, George examines the business of black music and probes the ways in which it has affected the "symptoms of illness" in R & B. He is convinced that "black America's assimilationist obsession is heading it straight toward cultural suicide." Photos not seen by PW. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

George, music editor at Billboard and contributor to Playboy and the Village Voice , has written a provocative book describing how white society has changed black music. Providing as much a cultural as a musical history, he takes the extreme view that black music has become so assimilated into white culture that it is near destruction. In response, he urges blacks to achieve integration and practical power by becoming more self-sufficient, politically and economically. An important and perceptive book. Daniel J. Lombardo, Jones Lib., Inc., Amherst, Mass. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book documents the evolution of African-American R&B music since WW II. The term R&B is used loosely by me, and by the author. In order to fully understand R&B specifically, a wider musical net is spread historically. The book is a good, and quite historical read. That was a great plus for me. My only very small negative is I would have enjoyed a few more anecdotes, vignettes, quotations, experiences to further paint the smell and scent of the world he describes. Read the book! It's worth the money. Oh, check out the publish date as it doesn't cover the most recent years of musical history.

The back story is unbelievable so on point

Great and informative book on the pre and post world war I history of Black music. It is said that 'history repeats itself for those who refuse to study it'. Thus, this book actually gave me a historical understanding as to why Hip Hop is in the state it's currently in (dying). The only issue I had with it is that Nelson ends the book on the issue of Hip Hop when its obvious he hasn't quite done the proper homework. There was no mention of Kool Herc or Bambaata as the originators of the art form and instead the credit is given to DJ Hollywood declaring the "rap started in the discos" (it actually started in the STREETS of the bronx at least 10 years before it found its way into the discos).   
HOWEVER, roughly 10 years later, Nelson authors 'Hip Hop America' (which I'm currently reading) and (so far) totally redeems himself. He has used the time wisely to reflect on his own historical relationship with the art form (having been one of the first, if not THE first, journalists to cover Hip Hop in 1979 - not to mention his monumental Source interview with 'the 3 Fathers of Hip Hop', Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaata and Grand Master Flash) and accurately depicts Hip Hop's organic and humble beginnings. Still 'The Death of Rhythm and Blues' is a MUST-READ for anyone seriously concerned about the future of Black music as well as the the Black community for, as Nelson bluntly puts it, "it is clear that Black America's assimilationist obsession is heading it straight towards

cultural suicide" .

It's okay. Not what I expected. But its useful for basic information on the history of R&B. Still a good buy

I gained knowledge from reading this book, and I could relate completely. I am giving this book a four star simply because there was a lot of jargon that made some sections hard to read, if you are not a musician. Then again, it is a book about music. Here are some excerpts that moved me: "Through the history of black music in the United States, it has been through the repetition and revision of texts, through the interplay of black language and black music in a long chain of Signifyin(g) tropes, that African American peasants became and continue to be the poets in a land that initially denied them the right to be called artists of any stripe. But poets they have become, as makers of the spirituals and the blues, as creators of R&B and rock `n` roll, and as composers of works for the concert hall. It is clear from the nature of their texts and their tunes that the makers of this music--the repeaters and revisers of the musical derivatives of the ring--have privileged and honored the spirit of Esu as, for example, that spirit is personified in the redoubtable Harriet Tubman, who bid many thousands to come ride her train.." The only thing I can say is "preach brotha, preach!" - Big Sistah Pat" In the 1960s, gospel music became entertainment." Interesting! - Big Sistah Pat" Sometimes when "new" sounds emerge in jazz they are perceived as foreign to the black-music tradition and, consequently, are unacceptable to many critics, mostly white, who reside on the margins of the culture. For example, John Coltrane's sound was strongly criticized as being inferior, but was applauded and appreciated by listeners from within the culture." Ain't that some bull! De folks ise all dat matters!" - Big Sistah Pat Reviewer's Note: This comment reminds me of how the mainstream critics hate Tyler Perry. Yet he is loved and supported by numerous regular folks in Black American society. The so-called critics have no value to the folks that support Tyler's productions. They determine what is worthy of their support, not self appointed outsiders. He speaks to them and aspects of Black American culture they can identify." In the late nineteenth century, the advertising of musical products became the primary means of developing, perpetuating, and communicating the negative images of black people in American society. The coon song was the vehicle for repeating these messages in American culture. The stereotypes perpetuated by these publications linger as both conscious and unconscious images of blacks in the memory of countless Americans." What fool said that images aren't powerful! -- Big Sistah Pat" Essentially and most fundamentally, the African-American musical experience is largely self-criticizing and self-validating.

As such experiences unfold, for example, listeners show approval, disapproval, or puzzlement with vocal and physical responses to, and interaction with, events as they occur. African Americans serve critical notice on inferior music making either by withholding their participation or, as in New York's tough Apollo Theatre in the 1940's and 1950's, by addressing criticism directly to the performers on stage. The culturally attuned are aware when the notes and the rhythms do not fit the context and when the idiomatic orientation is wrong; they know when an act is a Signifyin(g) one, when it is effective, and when it is not". You got that right. You know how well you are doing right then by the audience response. We are going to let you know. - Big Sistah Patl would recommend this book if you have a strong interest in learning about the origins and the evolution of African American music in the United States.

It's a really good book! But i don't like the fragile cover.

very good book

WAS AS ADVERTISED, I WOULD BUT FROM THIS SELLER AGAIN!

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