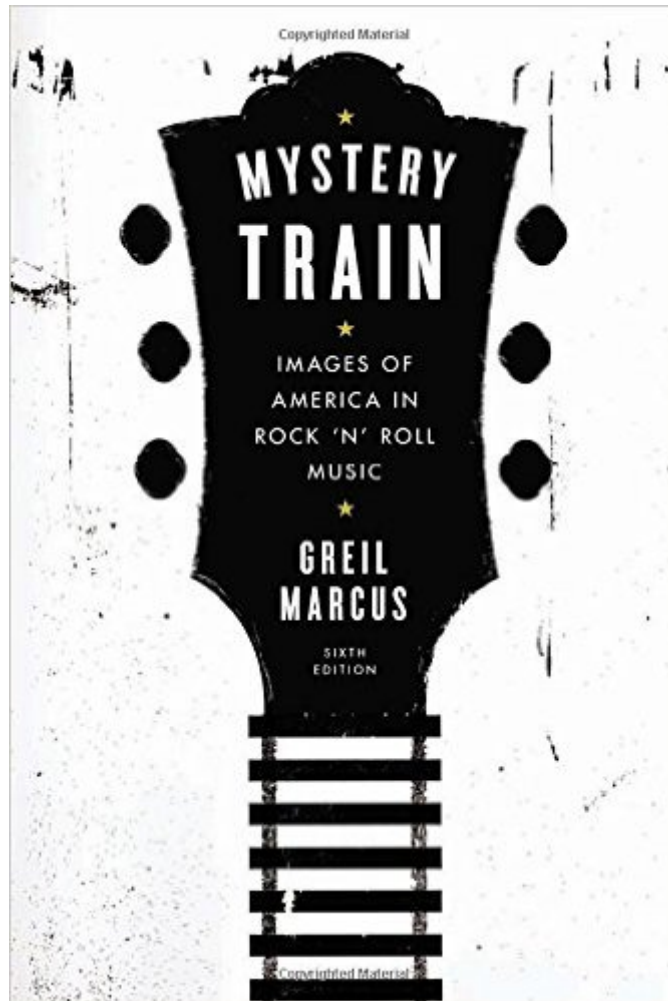


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Mystery Train: Images Of America In Rock 'n' Roll Music: Sixth Edition



Synopsis

In 1975, Greil Marcus's *Mystery Train* changed the way readers thought about rock and roll and continues to be sought out today by music fans and anyone interested in pop culture. Looking at recordings by six key artists—Robert Johnson, Harmonica Frank, Randy Newman, the Band, Sly Stone, and Elvis Presley—Marcus offers a complex and unprecedented analysis of the relationship between rock and roll and American culture. In this latest edition, Marcus provides an extensively updated and rewritten Note and Discographies section, exploring the recordings' evolution and continuing impact.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Always interesting, but a certain imposition of the author's ego seemed to suffuse the content. When I listened to some of the songs and riffs he has described, in some cases, I thought he was right on, and in others I could not find anything resembling the qualities and characteristics he described. The selection of Randy Newman left me completely cold, while his Elvis was extremely well done. Uneven, but the later notes are very, very solid and worth reading and following up by listening, as well.

This book has enjoyed a great reputation for decades. I never read it because I figured that reading any book about great music is like reading the menu of a great restaurant. It's the music! However, an article in the New York Times convinced me that I should read it anyway. It was this article: [Just a](#)

Book? No, More Like a Trusty Companion By DWIGHT GARNER SEPT. 2, 2015 So, I bought a used copy, which turned out to be the first edition and the print was so small it's a pain to read, so I bought this 6th edition paperback here at . The print is fine, what bothers me is that it's printed on that pulpy stock that you just know is going to yellow quite a bit over time. So, I'm docking it a star! Were it on bright solid white stock (the kind that doesn't yellow) it would get 5 stars. Marcus' observations are subtle and well founded.

After six editions and many printings, this book has obviously become a classic. I can see how it would appeal to a sliver of music specialists, but not the typical reader. At one level there is so much detail in the main text and notes that it quickly becomes overwhelming. On another level, furthermore, the author's statements about each of the profiles are so presumptuous and "conclusive" as to appear ridiculous. Reviewing music is much more like describing a sunset than the approach this book takes.

Terrific and erudite analysis of American thought and culture. The notes/sources at the end of invaluable.

As another reviewer stated "The Holly Grail" this isn't. How did this book get to be called out as one of the epic books on American music? That is the question I started asking myself from the beginning. Clearly the writer knows a lot about American music and the details of recordings in the back of the book are valuable. But why did he pick Harmonica Frank, Sly Stone, and Randy Newman as some of the few to represent all of American music and mostly ignore Hank Williams, Jimmie Rodgers, the Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, and others. But by far my biggest complaint is that the writer goes on and on with deep analysis of how he is positive all the musicians felt and what exactly they were thinking and how it changed and the complex and deep meanings behind every sneeze they ever contemplated. Please. Give me a break. Some evidence based analysis and conclusions are acceptable and stating what you think lyrics mean or what you think was the thinking and feeling behind the songs is OK. But no one can have the level of certainty about so much that was in the mind and heart of these artists without presenting proof that those artists shared those thoughts and feelings. The level of mind reading that the author carries out makes a third rate carnival husker look like a scientist. I have read many truly great books on American music but this is not one of them.

I bought this as a gift for my music-loving husband. You can't go wrong with Greil Marcus and he doesn't disappoint with this classic, literate and utterly absorbing book.

Essential, even if occasionally too esoteric

Delivered as promised!

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