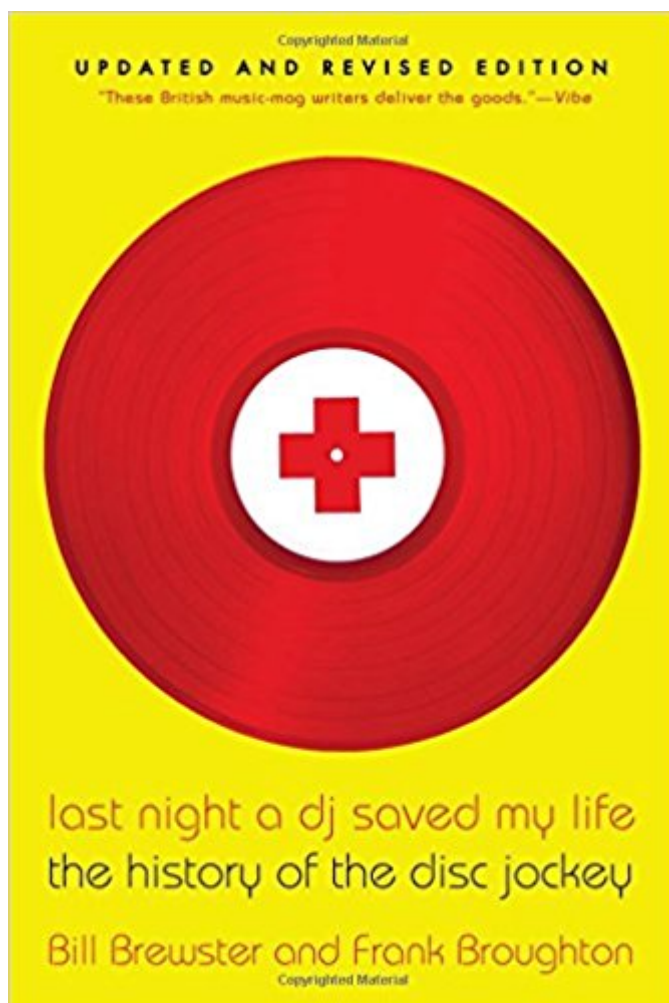


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# Last Night A DJ Saved My Life: The History Of The Disc Jockey



## Synopsis

Last Night a DJ Saved My Life was the first comprehensive history of the disc jockey, a figure who has become a powerful force shaping the music industry; and since its original publication, the book has become a cult classic. Now, with five new chapters and over a hundred pages of additional material, this updated and revised edition of Last Night a DJ Saved My Life reasserts itself as the definitive account of DJ culture, from the first record played over airwaves to house, hip hop, techno, and beyond. From the early development of recorded and transmitted sound, DJs have been shaping the way we listen to music and the record industry. Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton have tracked down the inside story on some of music's most memorable moments. Focusing on the club DJ, the book gets first-hand accounts of the births of disco, hip hop, house, and techno. Visiting legendary clubs like the Peppermint Lounge, Cheetah, the Loft, Sound Factory, and Ministry of Sound, and with interviews with legendary DJs, Last Night a DJ Saved My Life is a lively and entertaining account of musical history and some of the most legendary parties of the century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Beginning with the contention that the disc jockey is "dance music's most important figure," Brewster and Broughton persuasively argue that the contemporary DJ is the epitome of the postmodern artist and that disc jockeys have long influenced the evolution of American musical tastes. Brewster and Broughton's ardent history is one of barriers and sonic booms, spanning

almost 100 years, including nods to pioneers Christopher Stone, Martin Block, Douglas "Jocko" Henderson, Bob "Wolfman Jack" Smith and Alan "Moondog" Freed. Along the lines of Kurt B. Reighley's recent *Looking for the Perfect Beat: The Art and Culture of the DJ*, this is an obsessively unabridged and ever-unraveling (the authors will offer updates at [www.djhistory.com](http://www.djhistory.com)) chronology of DJs and the music. Northern soul, reggae, disco, hip-hop, garage, house and techno. They have fostered, and, more accurately perhaps, the music that has fostered them. So as not to miss a note, the authors, both former editors at *Mixmag USA* and contributing writers to *The Face*, interviewed more than 100 DJs, dancers and scenesters and elicited some vibrant, pull-quote anecdotes, especially in the hip-hop chapters. What comes to light makes sense: readers learn that the DJ is a distinctly American invention (Reginald A. Fessenden in 1906), but they came into their own, and into wealth and fame, in Britain (case in point: Paul Oakenfold). Brewster and Broughton's subtext is refreshing: rather than draw curt lines between American and British contributions, they show how intimate the countries were in forging a communications phenomenon. (Aug.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The DJ has been at the center of music history for the last forty years—from the first time a record was played over the airwaves, through reggae and Northern Soul, the births of disco, hip hop, house, and techno, to the current global underground. The club economy now brings in billions and superstar DJs like Paul Oakenfold and Fatboy Slim are overtaking rock stars in popularity and earning power. *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life* is the first comprehensive history of the disc jockey, a figure who has revolutionized the way music is conceived, created, and consumed. Drawing on in-depth interviews with the world's most important DJs and the revelers at some of the century's most legendary parties, this book is nothing less than the life story of dance music. "Brewster and Broughton...have written a lively and—to anyone with a more than casual interest in the history of popular music in the latter half of the 20th century--necessary volume."--*The New York Times Book Review* "A riveting look at record spinning from its beginnings to the present day, the authors show that the history and art of deejaying makes for a grander and more fascinating story than one would think..... The book is intricately detailed and informative, filled with grand themes and historical anecdotes, all leavened with a wiseass humor that keeps the whole thing from getting too pretentious."--*Time Out* "What makes [*Last Night a DJ Saved My Life*] so good, besides the crisp, lucid writing, is that it also gives a fascinating, episodic history of the jive-talking radio DJs and Parisian discos that established the themes that would play out in hip-hop, disco and rave culture."--*Salon* "These British music-mag writers deliver the goods with humor and a basic sense of

good storytelling."--Vibe "Brewster and Broughton exhibit considerable skill in rendering the meta-story seamless, subtly turning what is essentially an oral history, culled from original interviews and other published sources, into an orchestral piece."--Hartford Courant "Very informative...takes you way back into the 'true roots' of dance music and hip hop's culture, then smoothly brings you into the future."--Danny Tenaglia "This is for anyone who has ever found themselves lost on the dancefloor."--The Face "Exhaustive yet entertaining...a definitive history of the disc jockey.... The book lovingly captures a host of compelling stories from every seminal DJ across the last century.... Energy jumps from the book's pages."--iD "From counterculture to mainstream leisure, the DJ has always been at the heart of clubland.... An illuminating, thoughtful, and insightful tome."--Muzik

Excerpts Last Night a DJ Saved My Life: "Today (no offense to priests and ministers, who try their best), it is the DJ who presides at our festivals of transcendence. Like this witchdoctor, we know he's just a normal guy really--I mean, look at him--but when he wipes away our everyday lives with holy drums and sanctified basslines, we are quite prepared to think of him as a god, or at the very least a sacred intermediary, the man who can get the great one to return our calls. "In a good club, and even in most bad ones, the dancers are celebrating their youth, their energy, their sexuality. They are worshipping life through dance and music. Some worship with the heightened levels of perception that drugs bring; but most are carried away merely by the music and the people around them. The DJ is the key to all this. By playing records in the right way the average DJ has a tremendous power to affect people's states of mind. A truly great DJ, just for a moment, can make a whole room fall in love. Because, you see, DJing is not just about choosing a few tunes. It's about generating shared moods; it's about understanding the feelings of a group of people and directing them to a better place. In the hands of a master, records become the tools for rituals of spiritual communion that for many people are the most powerful events in their lives." Bill Brewster has been editor of Mixmag's Update USA. His writing appears reg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A must read for all aspiring and current DJ's alike. This well researched book covers it all: from the beginning of single-turntable jocks to US and European Big Band spinners; it treks thru the Motown/Stax DJs, with a quick nod to the Jamacian "Sound System" approach before taking you thru Northern Soul and the NY Gay Disco trend-setting dual-turntable "mixing" innovators. With many "choice" classic cuts pointed out along the way, there's a myriad of names you will undoubtedly recognize from their many remixes in the dance/house/diva-pop genre. On a personal note it was thrilling to see both Robbie Leslise (Studio 54, The Saint) and Shep Pettibone

(Mastermix remix/Productions too many to list, and co-author of Vogue & many other Madonna hits,) mentioned in the book. Not only do I have the utmost honor of being a resident DJ in Shep's amazing "Paradise" niteclub, but I also just had the privilege to spin alongside Robbie on a recent RSVP Caribbean Cruise. Living Legends both, and sweetheart gents to boot! (by dj Mick Hale, 2013)

Except for the latent sexism throughout the whole thing, this book is a well of knowledge, professionally compiled and WELL written. With sexism I mean the authors seemingly adore the macho antics of DJ circles and try to make jokes about them which I guess is meant to make the text more readable/enjoyable. If the authors made more fun of themselves then perhaps it would be ok, but like this it distracts me from the otherwise pretty good & reliable DJ history.

Being a DJ myself since the mid-80's, it was an immense pleasure to remember a lot from scene that I lived my youth in, partied and played and followed since then. But it was even better to LEARN a HUGE lot about the history and development of this art before I fell in love with dance music and DJing. The book shows an enormous amount of research and data, names, tracks, labels, clubs and everything. And it's cleverly written, in such a way you feel like following a novel. It goes well into advancing through the time, showing all the different, multiple and sometimes parallel scenes that took place in sometimes far away places, connecting the dots and highlighting influences, as they happened in fact. Today, with internet and iTunes and online music stores one can read the book and go search for the artists, DJs and the music playlisted in the book while reading it, making up for an amazing "timeline" soundtrack that encompasses a great part of modern life. I did exactly that of course, and had such a good time discovering new stuff as well as "crate digging" my collection of records, most listed on the book, But even if you don't I certainly recomend you look around and hear every track as you read the book, it's a lesson and I'm sure you'll have lots of fun while learning a lot too. DJing is no longer a "career" for me, though I still play clubs, gigs and radio shows frequently. I guess you love music and that's it, you can't leave it or get left by it if you really love playing. This book shows why, the people who love finding new music, people who are daring, creative, passionate about discovering new sounds and showing to people to make them dance, that's such an amazing craft. Though the book sometimes lack depth about specifics (I'd like to have read more about some important tunes, artists, scenes or clubs), that's more on a personal note than a "fail" as it would have been impossible to tell everything about everything. DJing and all that it means is such a broad, wide and deep scene that it would take

many books (they exist, even from the authors) but this one is very special and reaches a high standard in all aspects. It's mandatory for music lovers, society researchers, marketers and of course, DJs. Just read it!

I'm glad my friend recommended this book to me. I was floored at the red thread that ran through my musical tastes not like a string, but like the mighty Mississippi River. From rock & roll allnighters, the mod scene of northern soul (myself an avid scooterist), the beautiful disaster of disco giving rise to early house music, and of course the hiphop scene of the almighty grandmasters of the Bronx DJ culture, I lived some of it, and I am part of it now myself as I bring all that music together at parties and basements today. It is the most awakening musical journey.

I gave this to A DJ as a gift and he loved it. The book is pretty big and has some really fascinating info. This would be cool for any music lover really.

Covering the evolution of DJ based music from reggae to northern soul to disco and how it all blended into what the modern DJs do. It is a great way to find more about the past, and all the songs that created what we have today. I never knew about northern soul before this book.

Very educational. A must read for dj's.

I tend to prefer more academic/historiographical histories, but this book satisfied my craving for something about the DJ culture. It takes you through familiar and unfamiliar territory, beginning with the first record playing technology and moving into Northern Soul. The book bounces back and forth between nations and their influence on dance music. The book actually helped me find one of the original pressings of the first 12" ever made, "So Much For Love." If you are into dance music, clubbing, or just enjoy history, this is a great book to pick up. Anyone who DJs these days I think should understand where the house clubs came from and the meaning they held for their patron-dancers.

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