

Celebrating Black Music Appreciation Month

Curated by Gerald B. Moore, Branch Manager/Adult Services Librarian

The month of June is recognized as Black Music Appreciation Month. Created by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, this month celebrates the African American musical contributions and influences in our nation's cultural heritage.

Originally called National Black Music Month, this annual celebration and acknowledgement of African American musical offerings to the world's melodious landscape is regularly highlighted by presidential proclamations.

This year in recognition of Black Music Appreciation Month, we are offering a beginner's primer pathfinder on the history of the groundbreaking and barrier shattering Motown Records by highlighting audiobooks, eBooks, print books, audio recordings, and films available from the Charleston County Public Library digital collection and library catalog. Library cardholders are able to access these items freely. With just a few clicks, library users can learn comprehensive information on the history of Motown Records, read detailed biographies about recording artists from its incredibly vast roster of musicians and listen to recordings that helped define the sound of a generation. By reviewing this curated list, library users can learn the stories behind some of the most popular songs as well as experience the Pop and Soul music dubbed as the "Motown sound".

Further Reading Resources

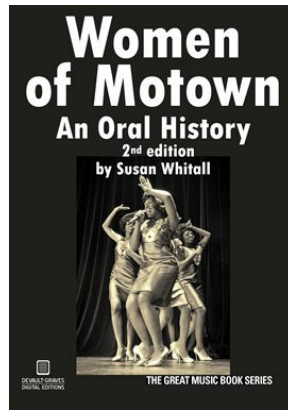
"Celebrating Black Music Month." [National Museum of African American History and Culture, 1 June 2020.](#)

Cochrane, Naima. "Protect, Preserve, and Perpetuate: How Black Music Month Started as a Power Play." [VIBE.com, 10 June 2019.](#)

McCann, Ian. "How Motown Broke Racial Barriers Like No Other Record Label." [Udiscovermusic.com, 21 Feb. 2020.](#)

Young, Danielle. "Why We Need to Recognize and Celebrate Black Music Month This Month." *Essence*, [Essence.com, 6 Dec. 2020.](#)

The MOTOWN PRIMER, Volume One: **Audiobooks, eBooks, Books, DVDs, & Musical Recordings**

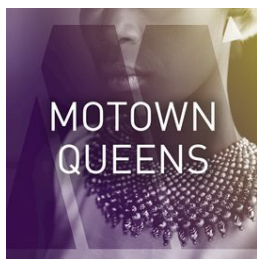


Women of Motown: An Oral History by Susan Whitall

The second edition of Women of Motown by author Susan Whitall contains new chapters and information, updating this critically acclaimed oral history of the ladies who made Motown a sound heard round the world. Originally published to glowing reviews in 1998, the first edition has long been out of print and sought after by collectors. Devault-Graves Digital Editions now brings the public a new updated edition that tells the Motown story from its beginnings with Mable John through the great girl groups such as Martha and the Vandellas and ending with the last iteration of the glorious Supremes after Diana Ross left for superstar status. Author Susan Whitall, an esteemed music writer who is a native of Detroit, expertly interviewed virtually all the women who made Motown explode on the hit charts and lets them tell their stories in all their humor, dishy detail, and the glory of lives spent recording and singing some of the greatest songs ever written. Fans of Motown will not want to miss this chance for the girls to let their hair down and lay it on the line. The stories are not only fun and exciting but give a history of a remarkable company that took African American music from Detroit's housing projects to the White House.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

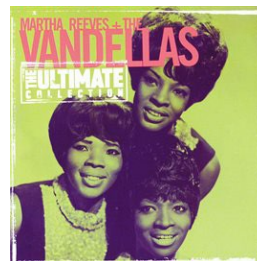
Suggested Audio Recordings by Motown Female Artists Available in Hoopla:



[MOTOWN QUEENS](#)



[The Supremes – GOLD](#)

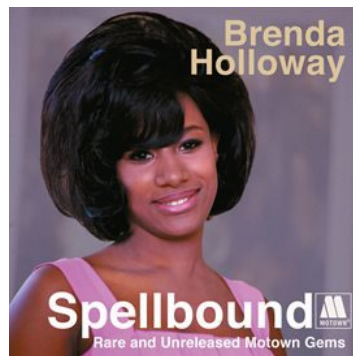


[Martha Reeves & the Vandellas](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Motown Female Artists Available in Hoopla:



[Mary Wilson](#)



[Brenda Holloway](#)



[The Marvelettes](#)



[Syreeta Wright](#)



[Tammi Terrell](#)



[Kim Weston](#)



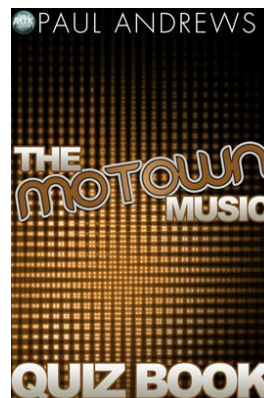
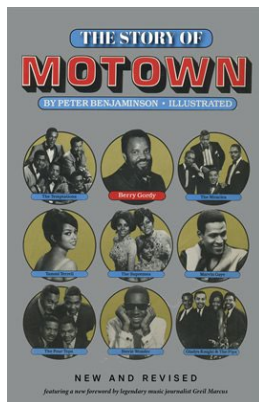
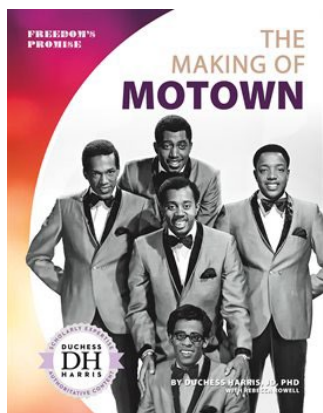
[Mable John](#)



[Bettye LaVette](#)



[Chris Clark](#)



The Making of Motown by Duchess Harris

Motown music emerged in the United States in the 1960s. It launched the careers of many African American musicians. Motown music shaped culture and society during the American civil rights movement. The Making of Motown explores the history and legacy of Motown.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

The Story of Motown by Peter Benjaminson

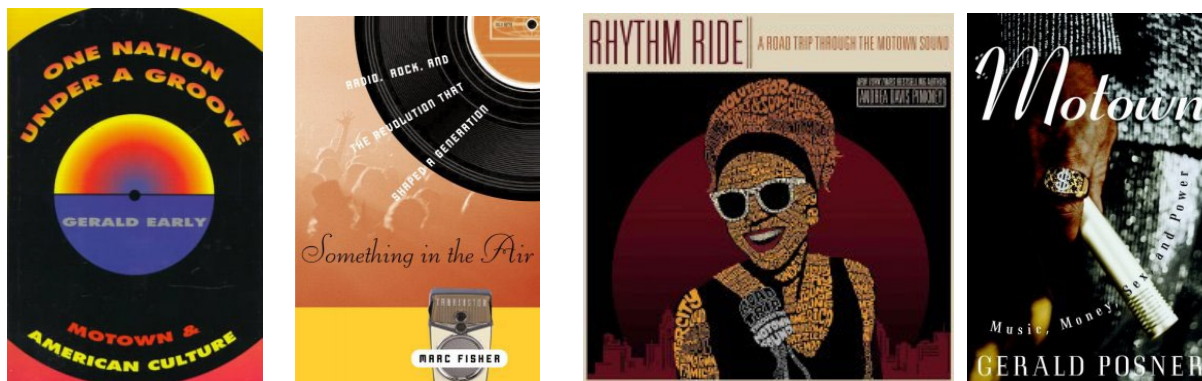
Re-release of the first book ever published in America about the legendary Motown Record Company, with a new foreword by legendary music journalist Greil Marcus! In January 1959, Berry Gordy borrowed \$800 from his family and founded the Detroit-based record company that in less than a decade was to become the largest black-owned business in the United States. It also became one of the most productive and influential producers of popular music anywhere in the world, mainly by combining the best features of black and white American popular music. Even a short list of the recording and performing talent that Gordy recruited, trained, and produced for his company is awesome: Diana Ross, The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, The Temptations, The Four Tops, Smokey Robinson, Marvin Gaye, and Mary Wells. The Story of Motown is the story of Berry Gordy's triumph over powerful, established financial interests, entrenched popular taste, bigotry, and racism. By inventing a sound that appealed to whites as well as blacks, and that was immediately identifiable to an entire generation of listeners, Gordy demonstrated his genius as a producer; by breaking the exploitive practice of "cover" records, he helped black artists control their own music and share in the proceeds of hits; and by the sheer force of his will, courage, and intelligence, he demonstrated that a black man from the urban ghetto could aspire to and conquer the heights of traditional American business, including the movie business. Unfortunately, while doing all of this, he also found new ways to exploit his talented artists and eventually lost many of them to companies that paid them more. The Story of Motown is the story of the rise and fall of one of the most important cultural touchstones in American history.

[Hoopla eBook](#) ; [Hoopla Audio](#)

The Motown Music Quiz Book by Paul Andrews

How well do you know your Motown Music? This Quiz book will test even the most avid fan, with questions that span Motown's bands and songs! Test yourself and your friends with this Motown Music Quiz Book.

[Hoopla eBook](#)



[One Nation Under a Groove: Motown and American Culture](#) by Gerald Early*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

The author of [Tuxedo Junction](#) analyzes the Motown phenomenon and its effect on the relationship of blacks and whites in American culture, the media, and the business world of the sixties and early seventies.

[Something in the Air: Radio, Rock, and the Revolution that Shaped a Generation](#) by Marc Fisher*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

An anecdotal history of radio, set against the backdrop of the rise of America's new youth culture from the 1950s through the 1970s, reveals how the older radio technology survived the onslaught of American television by becoming a key factor in the battle between generations.

[Rhythm Ride: A Road Trip through the Motown Sound](#) by Andrea Davis Pinkney*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

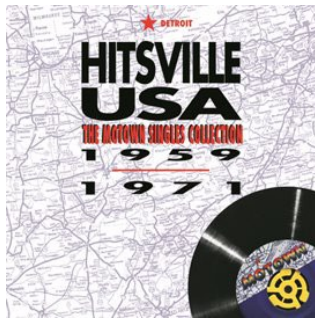
A narrative history of the Motown music label covering the historical context, personalities, and ongoing legacy of the "sound of young America".

[Motown: Music, Money, Sex, and Power](#) by Gerald Posner*

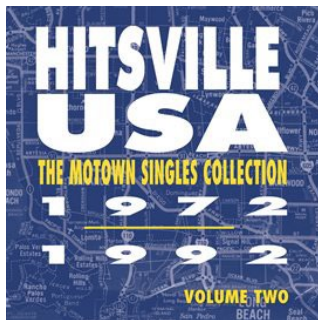
***Available in print from the library catalog**

A history of the legendary music label offers profiles of the artists, many from Detroit's inner-city projects, who achieved fame, detailing their rise to success, the inability of many to handle stardom, and their conflicts.

Suggested Audio Recordings of Motown Records Compilations Available in Hoopla:



[Hitsville USA - The Motown Singles Collection 1959-1971](#)



[Hitsville USA - The Motown Singles Collection 1972 - 1992](#)



[Motown sings Motown Treasures](#)



[A Cellarful of Motown: The Rarest Detroit Grooves](#)

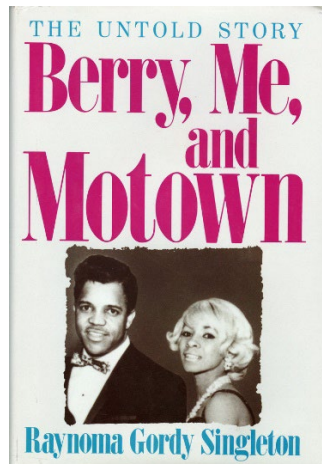
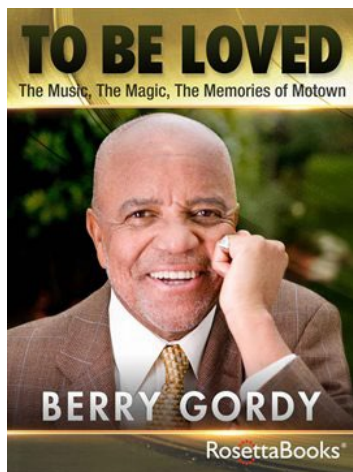


[That Motown Sound](#)



[Motown Year by Year - The Sound of Young America 1987](#)

BERRY GORDY



To Be Loved: The Music, the Magic, the Memories of Motown by Berry Gordy

If you love the music of Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, or Smokey Robinson, you will love Berry Gordy's life story. Founder of Motown, Gordy was instrumental in launching the careers of these and many other popular musicians, singers, and songwriters. In this candid autobiography, Gordy gives an authentic personal account of his career from the inception of his label, founded with \$800 borrowed from his family to the development of an entertainment empire sold to MCA for \$61 million. Along the way, Gordy and his artists faced racism, and both personal and professional challenges and overcame them to leave an indelible mark on American popular culture. To Be Loved is the inspiration for Motown: The Musical, which opened on Broadway in April 2013.

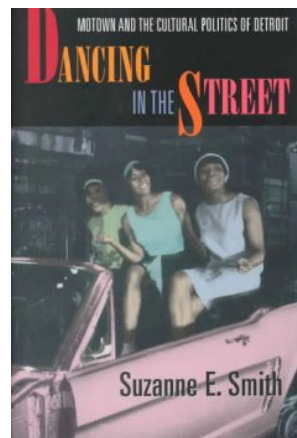
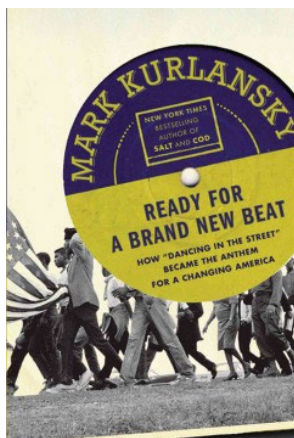
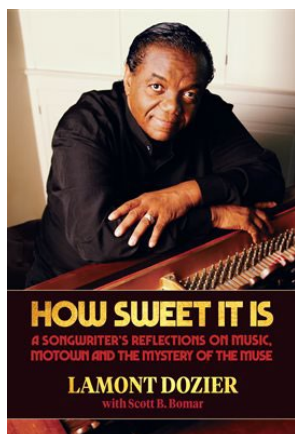
[Hoopla eBook](#)

[Berry, Me, and Motown: The Untold Story](#) by Raynoma Gordy Singleton*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

In the last line of her prologue, Berry Gordy's second wife says of this notably well-written and relentlessly candid memoir, "As God is my witness, every word of it is true." The author's claim will no doubt come to haunt several soulful celebrities as well as her legendary ex-husband who, despite an underlying tone of love, is portrayed in this dishy tell-all as a Jekyll-and-Hyde "thief of dreams" as well as a former pimp and monstrous manipulator. Inspired by a desire to reclaim her rightful place in Motown history, to which her many creative and administrative contributions have been all but erased, the author, who cofounded the company with Gordy some 30 years ago and continued to work there in various capacities until the early 1980s, presents a riveting inside look at how the "Motown Sound" was created and ultimately decimated, and in doing so she tells startling "family" secrets, as well as a funky and finger-snapping story.

Motown Songwriters Holland Dozier Holland & The Motown Sound



How Sweet It Is: A Songwriter's Reflections on Music, Motown, and the Mystery of the Muse by Lamont Dozier with Scott B. Bomar

After leaving Motown, he continued to make his mark as an influential songwriter, artist, and producer with hits such as "Give Me Just a Little More Time," "Band of Gold," and "Two Hearts," a chart-topping Phil Collins single that earned the pair an Academy Award nomination and a Grammy win.

In How Sweet It Is Lamont takes us behind the scenes of the Motown machine, sharing personal stories of his encounters with such icons as Diana Ross, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, and Berry Gordy. He reveals the moments that inspired some of his timeless songs-and pulls back the curtain on the studio secrets that helped him and his colleagues create "the sound of young America."

From his early years of struggle growing up in Detroit to the triumphs and tragedies that have marked his personal and professional path, at the center of Lamont's story is the heart of a true songwriter. Though he's racked up well over 100 Top 10 singles on the Billboard charts, been inducted into Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and has been named among Rolling Stone magazine's "100 Greatest Songwriters of All Time," Lamont continues to write music every day. Having pursued the mystery of the songwriting muse for many years, his stories are interwoven with invaluable insights and wisdom on the art and craft of songwriting that will inspire the creative spark in all of us.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Ready for a Brand-New Beat: How "Dancing in the Street" Became an Anthem for a Changing America by Mark Kurlansky*

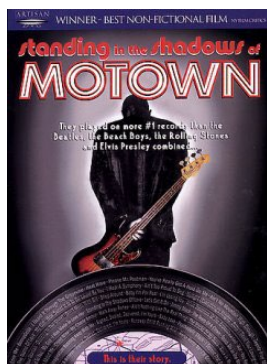
***Available in print from the library catalog**

Can a song change a nation? In 1964, Marvin Gaye, record producer William "Mickey" Stevenson, and Motown songwriter Ivy Jo Hunter wrote "Dancing in the Street." The song was recorded at Motown's Hitsville, USA Studio by Martha and the Vandellas, with lead singer Martha Reeves arranging her own vocals. Released on July 31, the song was supposed to be an upbeat dance recording---a precursor to disco, and a song about the joyousness of dance. But events overtook it, and the song became one of the icons of American pop culture. Told by the writer who is legendary for finding the big story in unlikely places, Ready for a Brand-New Beat chronicles that extraordinary summer of 1964 and showcases the momentous role that a simple song about dancing played in history.

[Dancing in the Street: Motown and Cultural Politics of Detroit](#) by Suzanne E. Smith*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

Detroit in the 1960s was a city with a pulse: people were marching in step with Martin Luther King, Jr., dancing in the street with Martha and the Vandellas, and facing off with city police. Through it all, Motown provided the beat. This book tells the story of Motown--as both musical style and entrepreneurial phenomenon--and of its intrinsic relationship to the politics and culture of Motor Town, USA. As Suzanne Smith traces the evolution of Motown from a small record company firmly rooted in Detroit's black community to an international music industry giant, she gives us a clear look at cultural politics at the grassroots level. Here we see Motown's music not as the mere soundtrack for its historical moment but as an active agent in the politics of the time. In this story, Motown Records had a distinct role to play in the city's black community as that community articulated and promoted its own social, cultural, and political agendas. Smith shows how these local agendas, which reflected the unique concerns of African Americans living in the urban North, both responded to and reconfigured the national civil rights campaign.



[Standing in the Shadows of Motown](#) (DVD)*

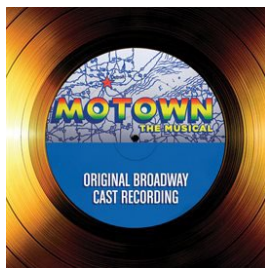
***Available for checkout from the library catalog**

Detroit, Michigan, 1959. Berry Gordy gathers the best musicians in the city's thriving jazz and blues scene for his new record company: Motown. For the next 14 years, these players are the heartbeat on all the hits from Motown's Detroit era. By the end of their phenomenal run, this unheralded group of musicians plays on more Number One hits than the Beach Boys, the Rolling Stones, Elvis Presley, and The Beatles combined, making them the hit machine in the history of popular music. They call themselves the Funk Brothers. But no one knows their names. This is their story. Inspired by the book [Standing in the shadows of Motown](#) by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky.

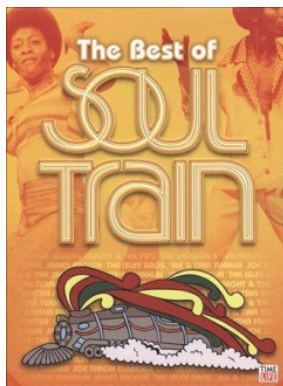
Suggested Audio Recordings that inspired the Motown Musical Available in Hoopla:



[Motown the Musical Originals - 40 Classic Songs That Inspired the Broadway Show](#)



[Motown the Musical – Original Broadway Cast Recording](#)

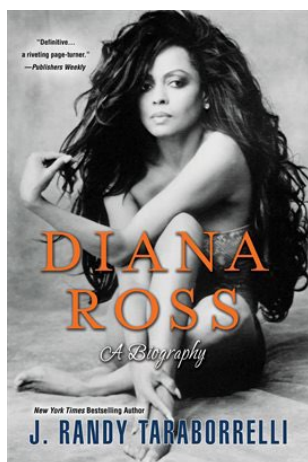


[The Best of Soul Train - Disc 1 & 2*](#)

***Available for checkout from the library catalog**

Features performances from such Motown Artists as the Commodores, Marvin Gaye, Jackson Five, Jermaine Jackson, Gladys Knight & the Pips, Smokey Robinson, and Stevie Wonder

DIANA ROSS



Diana Ross: A Biography by J. Randy Taraborrelli

There is only one Diana Ross. This is her story.

Drawn from hundreds of interviews conducted over four decades, Diana Ross paints an unforgettable picture of an extraordinary and often controversial legend—a pop music goddess, acclaimed actress, loving mother, Civil Rights trailblazer, and consummate entertainer. Beautiful and fascinating, she is her own invention—the definition of a superstar.

First-time revelations abound, from the tough decisions she made while having Berry Gordy's baby and the real reasons behind the break-up of the Supremes to her triumphant recovery after a surprising DUI driving arrest and her gala appearance at the Kennedy Center Honors.

Bestselling biographer J. Randy Taraborrelli boldly explores Diana Ross's troubled relationships and the heartbreak she feels compelled to hide, bringing into focus a complex personality too often obscured by the bright lights of fame. Rich with detail and personal anecdotes, and fully up-to-date, Diana Ross is both definitive and delightful—the ultimate biography that Miss Ross so richly deserves.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Secrets of a Sparrow by Diana Ross*

**Visit a CCPL Location or call to inquire about borrowing this book through our Interlibrary Loan service.*

In an autobiography celebrating the superstar's thirtieth anniversary in show business, Diana Ross focuses on the pain and pleasure of rising to the top and staying there. If anyone performer defines the word "superstar," it's Diana Ross - a pop-music legend and cultural icon who has been at the top of her profession for three fabulous decades. Secrets of a Sparrow, her inspirational and intimate memoir, which takes its title from a favorite spiritual her mother sang to her, focuses on just that: the pain and pleasure of getting to number one and staying there, along with the lessons learned and the lessons taught. Diana Ross's onstage electricity and allure are here transposed to the page. With earthiness and humor, the lady looks back - and she isn't singing the blues. On the contrary, she's writing in a clear, confident voice about the life she's worked so hard to build - the early struggle followed by supreme success, her marriages and five children, the Oscar nomination and countless music honors, the brilliant business acumen. Secrets of a Sparrow gives us the three-dimensional self-portrait of a glamorous woman who prizes her role as wife and mother every bit as much as her spectacular career, to whom love is right up there with fame. Always true to herself, Diana Ross is the ultimate entertainer, aiming to please but

never compromise - and she's not about to start now. Elegantly designed and filled with memorable photographs - many never seen before - [Secrets of a Sparrow](#) is as stunning as Diana Ross herself.

Suggested Audio Recordings by Diana Ross Available in Hoopla:



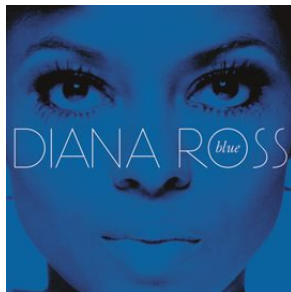
[Diana Ross \(Expanded\)](#)



[Diana Ross & The Supremes](#)



[Surrender](#)



[Blue](#)



[The Boss](#)



[Diana Ross - The Motown Anthology](#)



[Take Me Higher](#)



[To Love Again](#)



[Lady Sings the Blues](#)



[The Force Behind the Power](#)



[Last Time I Saw Him](#)



[Workin' Overtime](#)

MOTOWN produced Feature Films starring Diana Ross

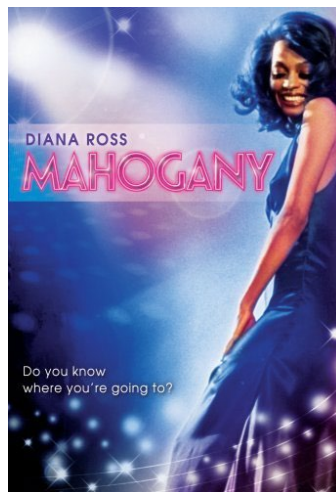
*Available on DVD in CCPL Collection except where otherwise noted



[The Wiz](#)



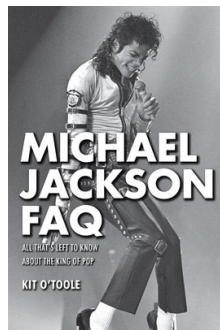
[Lady Sings the Blues](#)



*Mahogany

**See staffer about borrowing this item via our Interlibrary Loan Service*

MICHAEL JACKSON



Michael Jackson: Ultimate Music Legend by Katherine Krohn

Michael Jackson's journey to fame began in 1966 at age eight, when he started singing with his brothers in the Jackson 5. In the early 1970s, he launched a solo career, accumulating a dozen number-one singles. His record-breaking album, *Thriller*, has sold an estimated 110 million copies worldwide. He won seventeen Grammy awards and was introduced into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame twice. In 2009, people of all ages mourned Michael's sudden death. Adored for his music, dancing, and performing-and known for his highly publicized personal life-Michael Jackson remains the ultimate music legend.

[Hoopla eBook](#) ; [Hoopla Audio](#)

Michael Jackson REWIND: The Life and Legacy of Pop Music's King by Daryl Easlea, Ndugu Chanler

Relive the incredible history of the King of Pop - in reverse - with Michael Jackson: Rewind. By the time Michael Jackson passed away in 2009, he had sold an estimated 750 million records worldwide over his career; He had won 26 American Music awards and 13 Grammy awards as well as the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, and was ranked number three, after The Beatles and Elvis Presley, of best-selling music artists. Five years after his death, the net worth of his estate is more than 600 million dollars. He is, without a doubt, one of the most popular - and controversial - artists of all time. Now, for the first time ever, author Daryl Easlea will explore the life and history of Michael Jackson...in reverse. Starting with his tragic death and rewinding to his early hits with the Jackson 5 and life in Gary, Indiana, this is a complete illustrated history of the King of Pop: his genius, his life, and his demons. Loaded with over 300 images, a timeline of his life, and a complete discography.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Michael Jackson FAQ by Kit O'Toole

Michael Jackson may be the King of Pop, but his influence extends much further. From his childhood years with the Jackson 5 through his astonishing solo career, he consistently broke sales records, pioneered the modern music video, and infused dance into rock and pop. While his life story has been well chronicled, Michael Jackson FAQ explores the stories behind his achievements.

Did he play any instruments? How much of his own music did he compose? Who were his greatest influences in both music and dance? His art is his legacy, and Michael Jackson FAQ takes an in-depth look at Jackson's work with the Jackson 5 and the Jacksons in addition to his solo catalog. Learn why current artists such as Justin Timberlake, Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, and countless boy bands still emulate his sound, look, and showmanship. Questions are tackled - such as whether *Off the Wall* or *Thriller* better stands the test of time. From his childhood in Gary, Indiana, through the posthumous albums, this book covers lesser known but important stories such as how Jackson influenced disco and hip-hop, how his singing style transitioned from childhood to adulthood, and how he learned to moonwalk.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

[The Jacksons Legacy](#) by The Jacksons with Fred Bronson

***Available in print via the CCPL catalog**

The only official, behind-the-scenes chronicle of the Jacksons' lives and careers, celebrating 50 years of one of the greatest acts of all time.

The Jacksons: Legacy is the first official book on the Royal Family of Pop. Unrivalled access to the family archives as well as the private collections of Jackie, Marlon and Tito Jackson, combined with 12 days of exclusive interviews with the brothers, reveals the untold, unseen, and utterly unforgettable story behind the legend that is the Jacksons.

The compelling tale unfolds from their childhood days living at 2300 Jackson Street in Gary, Indiana, through the years signed to Motown as the Jackson 5, their radical move to Epic as The Jacksons, the blossoming of their solo careers, the dizzying successes of the Victory tour, right up to the present day. A multitude of never-before-seen images, rarities and personal possessions help tell the story. Photos include intensely personal family pictures; all-angle shots of the first guitars the boys ever held; top photographer Harrison Funk's exclusive coverage of their professional lives; photos of Michael Jackson on tour with his brothers during the release of *Off The Wall* (1979) and the 1982 phenomenon that was *Thriller*—the best-selling album of all time; editions of magazines featuring the family; and official merchandise.

Published to coincide with their 50th anniversary, The Jacksons: Legacy is the definitive behind-the-scenes chronicle of the Jacksons' lives and careers, celebrating 50 years of one of the greatest acts of all time.

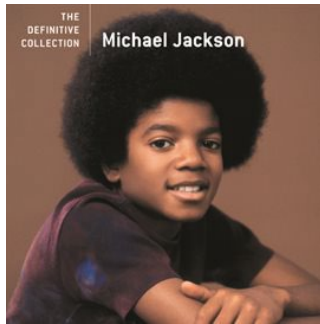
Suggested Audio Recordings by Michael Jackson & the Jackson 5 Available in Hoopla:



[Anthology: Best of Michael Jackson](#)

[The Original Soul of Michael Jackson](#)

[Forever, Michael](#)



[Michael Jackson - The Definition Collection](#)

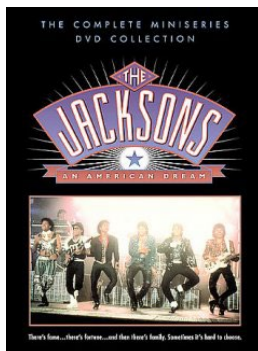
[Michael Jackson - Hello World - The Motown Solo Collection](#)

[Michael Jackson - BEN](#)



[Jackson 5: The Ultimate Collection](#)

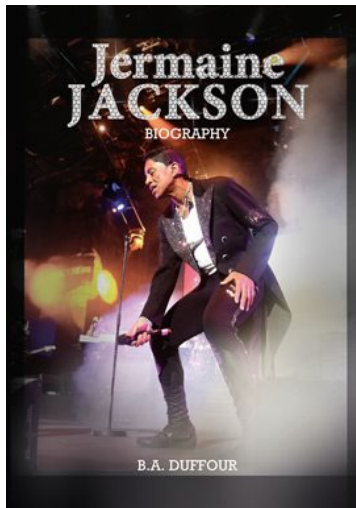
[Anthology: Jackson 5](#)



[The Jacksons: an American Dream \(DVD\)](#)

The miniseries **The Jacksons: An American Dream** begins in the 1940s, when Joseph Jackson (Lawrence Hilton-Jacobs) and Katherine (Angela Bassett) meet and fall in love, and ends in the 1980s, when their sons reunite for the 1983 Victory Tour that brought them back together as the Jacksons. During the first part, "The Early Years," the couple starts a family, and although times are tough, Joseph still finds time to play music on the side. When he discovers that his sons have inherited the same talent, the Jackson 5 are born. They sign with Motown and start churning out the gold records. The second part, "The Success Years," begins in 1970 at the peak of their fame.

JERMAINE JACKSON



Jermaine Jackson: Biography by B.A. Duffour

Discover the amazing life of a member of the most talented musical family: Jermaine Jackson! Eclectic, truly original, and a fully-fledged artist, Jermaine Jackson is the fourth child of the world's most famous musical family. To the same degree as his brothers and sisters, he is an icon of soul music and American pop. A gifted singer, bass player, dancer, author, composer, actor, businessman, and producer, he produced songs for the young Whitney Houston's first album, sales of which have reached more than 30 million copies to this day. He was co-leader of the Jackson 5 with his brother, the legendary Michael, and was the artist with whom Michael most often sang duos. Jermaine was the first member of his family to actively pursue a solo career and remains to this day the only member of the Jackson family to have performed live at the White House, in 1985. For the last 50 years, he has enjoyed a rich and varied artistic career and continues to be involved in a large number of projects. He has fifteen albums to his name, as well, has toured solo throughout the world, and continues to live out his artistic dreams, first conceived in childhood. This biography will shed light on the artist that Michael Jackson referred to as his first important influence and that Barry White would come to call brother: Jermaine Jackson.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

You Are Not Alone, Michael: Through a Brother's Eyes (Abridged) by Jermaine Jackson

Jermaine Jackson, older than Michael by four years, offers a keenly observed memoir tracing his brother's life starting from their shared childhood and extending through the Jackson 5 years, Michael's phenomenal solo career, his loves, his suffering, and his tragic end. It is a sophisticated, no-holds-barred examination of the man, aimed at fostering a true and final understanding of who he was, why he was, and what shaped him. Jermaine knows the real Michael as only a brother can. In this raw, honest, and poignant account, he reveals Michael the private person, not Michael the King of Pop. Jermaine doesn't flinch from tackling the tough issues: the torrid press, the scandals, the allegations, the court cases, the internal politics, the ill-fated *This Is It* tour, and disturbing developments in the days leading up to Michael's death. But where previous works have presented only thin versions of a media construct, he provides a rare glimpse into the complex heart, mind, and soul of a brilliant but sometimes troubled entertainer. As a witness to history on the inside, Jermaine is the only person qualified to deliver the real Michael and reveal what made him tick, his private opinions, and unseen emotions through the most headline-making episodes of his life. Filled with keen insight, rich in anecdotes and behind-the-scenes detail, You Are Not Alone is the book for any true Michael Jackson fan and for anyone trying to make sense of the artist whose death was so premature.

[Hoopla Audio](#)

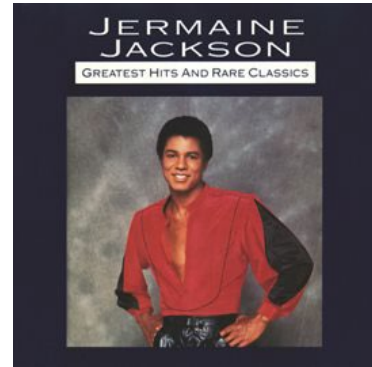
Suggested Audio Recordings by Jermaine Jackson Available in Hoopla:



[Jermaine](#)



[Let's Get Serious](#)



[Greatest Hits and Rare Classics](#)



The Jackson Musical by Jermaine Jackson (Film)

During an evening of music and stories, Jermaine Jackson (Legendary Member of the Jackson Five) tells his family's story from their native city to Michael Jackson's death, with unique archives of pictures and videos.

[Hoopla Films](#)

THE TEMPTATIONS



Temptations by Otis Williams

The Temptations were the most commercially successful and critically lauded male vocal group of the Sixties and early Seventies. Through the years, the group's trademark razor-sharp choreography, finely tuned harmonies, and compelling vocals made them the exemplars of the Motown style. This is the frank, revealing story of the legendary supergroup, told by its founder.

[Hoopla Audio](#)

Ain't Too Proud to Beg: The Troubled Lives and Enduring Soul of the Temptations by Mark Ribowsky

The first and only definitive biography of legendary Motown group, the Temptations. The Temptations are an incomparable soul group, with dozens of chart-topping hits such as *My Girl* and *Papa Was a Rollin Stone*. From the sharp suits, stylish choreography, and distinctive vocals that epitomized their onstage triumphs to the personal failings and psycho-dramas that played out behind the scenes, *Ain't Too Proud to Beg* tells the complete story of this most popular-and tragic-of all Motown super groups. Based on in-depth research and interviews with founding Temptations member Otis Williams and many others, the book reveals the highly individual, even mutually antagonistic, nature of the group's members. Venturing beyond the money and the fame, it shares the compelling tale of these sometime allies, sometime rivals and reveals the unique dynamic of push and pull and give and take that resulted in musical genius. • The first book to tell the whole story of Motown's greatest group, with all-new interviews and previously undiscovered sources and photographs • Gives the last word on enduring Motown mysteries, including the deaths of Paul Williams and David Ruffin and the truth behind Ruffin's tumultuous romance with Tammi Terrell • Reveals the secret "can't miss" formula behind the Temptations' thirty-seven chart hits • Draws on more than one hundred interviews with the group's associates, industry figures, family members, and most importantly, founding Temptation Otis Williams. *Ain't Too Proud to Beg* takes a cohesive and penetrating look at the life and enduring legacy of one of the greatest groups in popular music. It is essential reading for fans of the Temptations, music lovers, and anyone interested in the history of American popular culture over the last fifty years.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by The Temptations Available in Hoopla:



[The Temptations -The Ultimate Collection](#)

[The Temptations - The Definitive Collection](#)

[The Temptations - Together Again](#)



[Legacy](#)

[Milestone](#)

[Reunion](#)

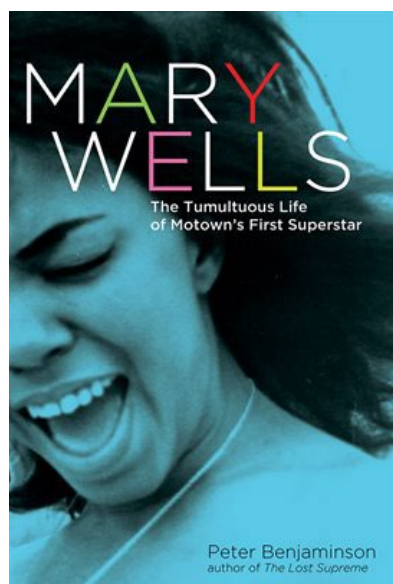


[Give Love At Christmas](#)

[Phoenix Rising](#)

[60](#)

MARY WELLS



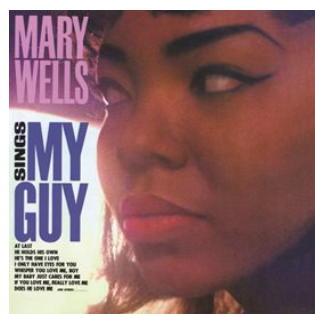
Mary Wells: The Tumultuous Life of Motown's First Superstar by Peter Benjaminson

Complete with never-before-revealed details about the sex, violence, and drugs in her life, this biography reveals the incredibly turbulent life of Motown artist Mary Wells. Based in part on four hours of previously unreleased and unpublicized deathbed interviews with Wells, this account delves deeply into her rapid rise and long fall as a recording artist, her spectacular romantic and family life, the violent incidents in which she was a participant, and her abuse of drugs. From tumultuous affairs, including one with R&B superstar Jackie Wilson, to a courageous battle with throat cancer that climaxed in her gutsiest performance, this history draws upon years of interviews with Wells' friends, lovers, and husband to tell the whole story of a woman whose songs crossed the color line and whose voice captivated the Beatles.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

[Print Copy - CCPL catalog](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Mary Wells Available in Hoopla:



[Mary Wells - Mary Wells Sings My Guy](#)

[Mary Wells - Something New: Motown Lost & Found](#)

[Mary Wells - The Definitive Collection](#)

FLORENCE BALLARD



The Lost Supreme: The Life of Dreamgirl Florence Ballard by Peter Benjaminson

In the months before she died, Florence Ballard, the spunky teenager who founded the most successful female vocal group in history the Supremes told her own side of the story. Recorded on tape, Flo shed light on all areas of her life, including the surprising identity of the man by whom she was raped prior to her entering the music business, the details of her love-hate relationship with Motown Records czar Berry Gordy, her drinking problem and pleas for help, a never-ending desire to be the Supremes lead singer, and her attempts to get her life back on track after being brutally expelled from the group. This is a tumultuous and heartbreaking story of a world-famous performer whose life ended at the age of 32 as a lonely mother of three who had only recently recovered from years of poverty and despair.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Suggested further readings about the Supremes available in Hoopla, print via library catalog, or Interlibrary Loan:



Detroit 67: The Year That Changed Soul by Stuart Cosgrove - [Hoopla eBook](#)

It is the story of Motown, the breakup of The Supremes and the implosion of the most successful African American music label ever. Set against a backdrop of urban riots, escalating war in Vietnam and police corruption, the book weaves its way through a year when soul music came of age, and the underground counterculture flourished.

***The Supremes: A Saga of Motown Dreams, Success, and Betrayal** by Mark Ribowsky.

***Available in print from the Charleston County Library Catalog**

Drawing on intimate recollections from friends, family, and Motown contemporaries, Mark Ribowsky charts the Supremes' meteoric rise and bitter disintegration. He sheds light on Diana Ross's relationship with Berry Gordy and her cutthroat rise to top billing in the group, as well as Florence Ballard's corresponding decline. He also takes us inside the studio, examining how timeless classics were conceived and recorded on the Motown "assembly line," and considers the place of Motown in an era of cultural upheaval, when not being "black enough" became a fierce denunciation within the black music industry

Supreme Glamour by Mary Wilson and Mark Bego*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about how you can borrow a copy of this book through our Interlibrary Loan service (ILL).*

Sumptuously illustrated, engaging, and insightful, Mary Wilson's book charts the glittering story of The Supremes, as it showcases their glamorous and iconic ensembles.

As Motown's leading act in the 1960s, The Supremes became synonymous with glamorous, elegant, coordinated ensembles. Supreme Glamour presents founding member Mary Wilson's unparalleled collection, showcasing thirty-two of the group's most eye-catching gowns, meticulously reassembled and photographed on the Grammy Museum stage. Detailed captions accompany each photograph, providing information about the design, fabric, and embellishments of each ensemble, as well as the occasion on which each was first worn.

In addition to the fashion history of The Supremes, the book chronicles the evolution of the group and celebrates the cultural icons they became. Engaging and insightful narrative text by Mary Wilson and close personal friend Mark Bego is interspersed among hundreds of archival photos. Packed with anecdotes and insights, Mary Wilson tells the complete story of The Supremes, both on- and off- stage, from their founding in Detroit in 1959 as The Primettes to their 1964 breakthrough hit, "Where Did Our Love Go," and from the departure of Diana Ross to The Supremes' disco hits of the 1970s. Supreme Glamour builds a complete picture of the charm, sophistication, and magic of The Supremes.

Dreamgirl: My Life as a Supreme by Mary Wilson*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about borrowing this book through our Interlibrary Loan Service (ILL).*

This autobiography recounts the story of the three girls--Mary Wilson, Florence Ballard, and Diana Ross--who built the musical legacy, the Supremes.

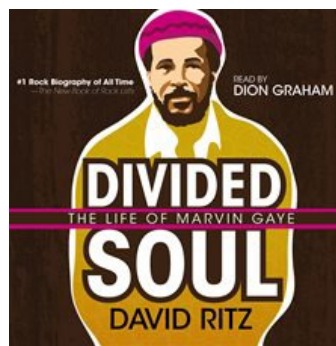
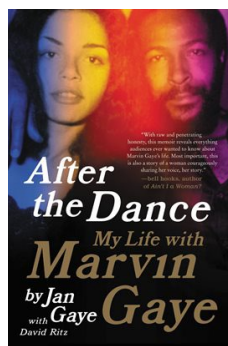
Dreamgirl and Supreme Faith: My Life as a Supreme by Mary Wilson*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about borrowing this book through our Interlibrary Loan Service (ILL).*

This beautiful paperback edition combines the best-selling Dreamgirls: My Life as a Supreme with the sequel, Supreme Faith: Someday We'll Be Together, for the first time in one volume. The new afterword brings Mary's intriguing story up to date with details on:

- The tragic car accident that claimed her son's life
- The death of her mother, Johnnie Mae, and her dear friend, Mary Wells
- Becoming a grandmother
- Making her peace with Berry Gordy and Diana Ross
- Being inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

MARVIN GAYE



Marvin Gaye, My Brother by Frankie Gaye

Marvin Gaye's life and brilliant career were cut tragically short on April 1, 1984 - one day before his 45th birthday - when he was shot and killed by his own father. Now, for the first time ever, Marvin Gaye's story is told in intimate detail by a member of his own family. Frankie and Marvin Gaye were close from childhood until Marvin's death. Frankie was at Marvin's side when he died, and only Frankie heard his deathbed confession. Full of never-before-told personal anecdotes, this book takes you behind the scenes from Marvin's childhood, through his spectacular success at Motown and then Columbia, his stormy relationships with women, and finally to his descent into drugs and despair. The true story of the man behind the beloved music is now available to fans old and new. Includes great photos throughout, a helpful index, and a timeline of important events in Marvin's life.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

After the Dance: My Life with Marvin Gaye by Jan Gaye & David Ritz

A riveting cautionary tale about the ecstasy and dangers of loving Marvin Gaye, a performer passionately pursued by all-and a searing memoir of drugs, sex, and old school R&B from the wife of legendary soul icon Marvin Gaye. After her seventeenth birthday in 1973, Janis Hunter met Marvin Gaye-the soulful prince of Motown with the seductive liquid voice whose chart-topping, socially conscious album *What's Going On* made him a superstar two years earlier. Despite a seventeen-year-age difference and Marvin's marriage to the sister of Berry Gordy, Motown's founder, the enchanted teenager, and the emotionally volatile singer began a scorching relationship. One moment Jan was a high school student; the next she was accompanying Marvin to parties, navigating the intriguing world of 1970s-'80s celebrity; hanging with Don Cornelius on the set of *Soul Train*, and helping to discover new talent like Frankie Beverly. But the burdens of fame, the chaos of dysfunctional families, and the irresistible temptations of drugs complicated their love. Primarily silent since Marvin's tragic death in 1984, Jan at last opens up, sharing the moving, fervently charged story of one of music history's most fabled marriages. Unsparing in its honesty and insight, illustrated with sixteen pages of black-and-white photos, *After the Dance* reveals what it's like to be in love with a creative genius who transformed popular culture and whose artistry continues to be celebrated today.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

[Print Copy - Available in Library Catalog](#)

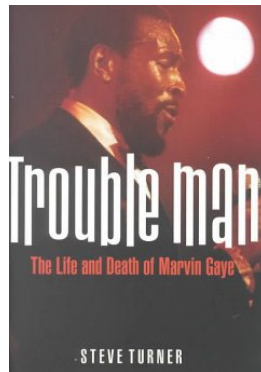
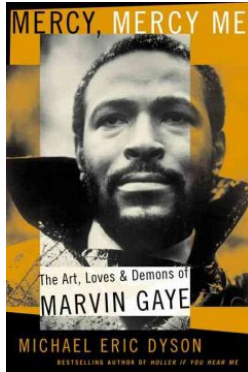
Divided Soul: The Life of Marvin Gaye by David Ritz

In this intimate biography of the Prince of Soul, David Ritz provides a candid look at a star and a friend. Ritz had been collaborating with Marvin Gaye on his story for several years before the singer's tragic death and had conducted a series of extraordinary interviews in which Gaye discussed his deepest secrets. What emerges is a full-scale portrait of a charming but tortured artist, a brilliant singer with a divided soul. Here is Marvin's story, from his early years in the slums of Washington, D.C., to his rise to the top of the Motown industry, his fall from grace, his comeback, and finally his sudden, shocking end at the hands of his own father. But it is also the story of his glorious music and the music of black America over the

past fifty years, an epic tale whose cast of characters includes Diana Ross, Berry Gordy, Smokey Robinson, and Stevie Wonder.

[Hoopla Audio](#)

MARVIN GAYE (continued)



[Mercy, Mercy Me: The Art, Loves, and Demons of Marvin Gaye](#) by Michael Eric Dyson*

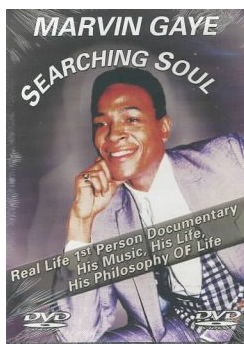
***Available in print from the library catalog**

Traces the life of an American icon to reconstruct a portrait of Gaye as a flawed artist, troubled by addiction and prone to domestic abuse, who nevertheless helped define America in the turbulent 1970s.

[Trouble Man: The Life and Death of Marvin Gaye](#) by Steve Turner*

***Available in print from the library catalog**

A chronicle of the triumphant artistic career and troubled personal life of one of soul music's greatest legends depicts the drug addictions, disturbed relationships, and financial woes that beset Marvin Gaye's life.



[Marvin Gaye: Soul Searching](#) (DVD)*

***Available for checkout from the library catalog**

A musical documentary of the life and singing career of Motown great Marvin Gaye, featuring stock footage of Gaye in performance and other settings.

Suggested Audio Recordings by Marvin Gaye Available in Hoopla:



Every Great Motown Hit



Let's Get It On



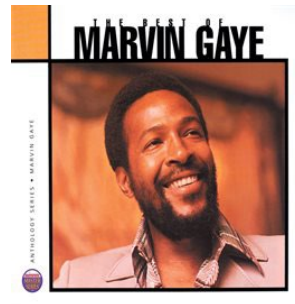
What's Going On



Here, My Dear



I Want You



Anthology: The Best of Marvin Gaye



Live at the Copa



You're the Man



Trouble Man

Suggested Audio Recordings Available in Hoopla – The Marvin Gaye DUET Albums:



[Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell - EASY](#)



[Marvin Gaye & Mary Wells - Together](#)



[Marvin Gaye & Kim Weston - Take Two](#)

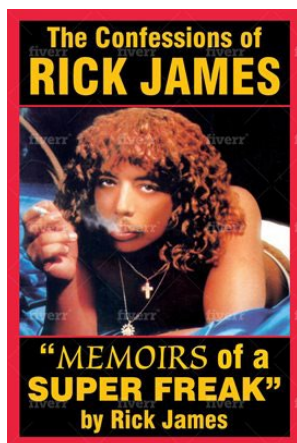


[Marvin Gaye & Diana Ross - Diana & Marvin](#)



[Marvin Gaye & Tammi Terrell - The Complete Duets](#)

RICK JAMES



The Confessions of Rick James: Memoirs of a Superfreak by Rick James

Powerfully written by Rick James this book gives an eye-opening, detailed view into the provocative world of Rick James. Spanning five decades and four continents, beginning with his childhood on into the spotlight of his famous troubled life. Rick James shares a fascinating account of his rise, fall, and rise to international fame and fortune.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Rick James Available in Hoopla:



[Street Songs](#)



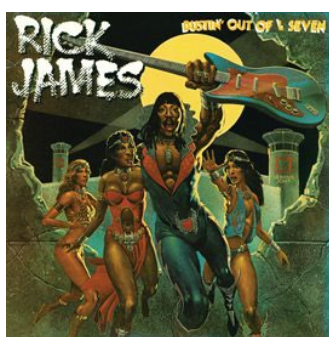
[Cold Blooded](#)



[Come Get It!](#)



[Throwin' Down](#)



[Bustin' Out of L Seven](#)



[Garden of Love](#)

TEENA MARIE



Mary Christine Brockert (March 5, 1956 – December 26, 2010), known professionally as **Teena Marie**, was an American singer-songwriter, musician, composer, arranger, and producer. She was known by her childhood nickname Tina before taking the stage name **Teena Marie** and later acquired the nickname **Lady Tee** (sometimes spelled **Lady T**), given to her by her collaborator and friend, Rick James.

She was known for her distinctive soprano vocals which caused many listeners to believe she was black. Her success in Rhythm & Blues (R&B) and Soul music, and her loyalty to these genres would earn her the title ***Ivory Queen of Soul***. She played rhythm guitar, keyboards, and congas. Teena Marie was a three-time Grammy nominee.

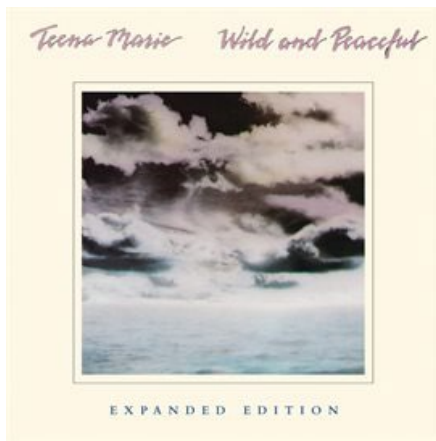
She signed with **Motown Records** and became of protégée of Rick James, then one of the label's biggest new stars. Teena Marie's first album, "Wild and Peaceful," with James as a producer and the chief songwriter – and his Stone City Band backing her up – was released on Motown's Gordy imprint in 1979.

From the start, race was ambiguous in her music. She was not pictured on the cover of "Wild and Peaceful," which was promoted to black radio stations. With an earthy voice that pierced with power in its high registers, she was highly credible as an R&B singer, and many listeners learned that she was white only when they saw her portrait on her second album, "Lady T," in 1980.

Sisario, B. (2010, December 17). *Teena Marie, 1980s R&B Hitmaker Dies at 54*.

Use your library card number and PIN number to log-into [Gale in Context: Biography](#) to [see this article](#).

Suggested Audio Recordings by Teena Marie Available in Hoopla:



[Wild & Peaceful](#)



[Lady T](#)



[Irons in the Fire](#)



[It Must Be Magic](#)



[First Class Love: Rare Tee](#)



[La Dona](#)

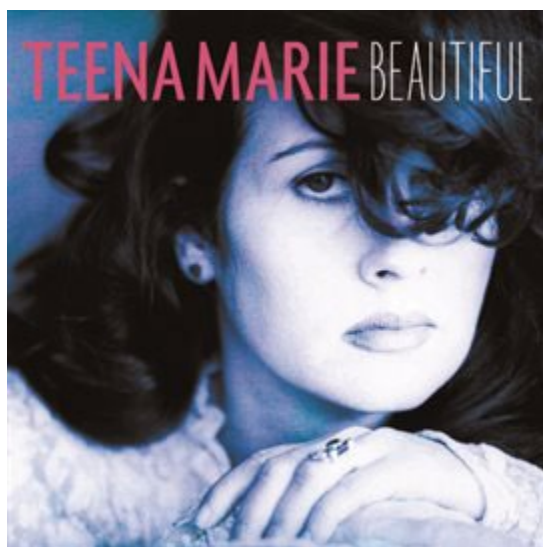
Suggested Audio Recordings by Teena Marie Available in Hoopla:



[Sapphire](#)

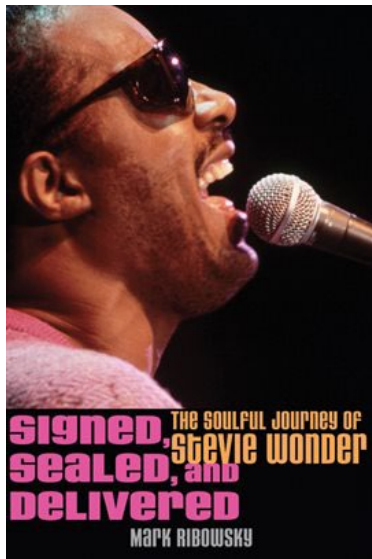


[Congo Square](#)



[Beautiful](#)

STEVIE WONDER



Signed, Sealed, and Delivered: The Soulful Journey of Stevie Wonder by Mark Ribowsky

The first definitive biography of music legend Stevie Wonder.

Stevie Wonder's achievements as a singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and producer are extraordinary. During a career that has spanned almost fifty years, he has earned more than thirty Top 10 hits, twenty-six Grammy Awards, and a place in both the Rock and Roll and Songwriter Halls of Fame, and he's not finished yet. In his early seventies, he is still composing, still touring, and still attracting dedicated fans around the world. For the first time, **Signed, Sealed, and Delivered** takes an in-depth look at Stevie Wonder's life and his evolution from kid-soul pop star into a mature artist whose music helped lay the groundwork for the evolution of hip hop and rap.

- Explores the life, achievements, and influence of one of America's biggest musical icons, set against the history of Motown and the last fifty years of popular music
- Based on extensive interviews with Motown producers, music executives, songwriters, and musicians, including founding Temptation Otis Williams, Mickey Stevenson, surviving Funk Brother Eddie Willis, synthesizer genius Malcolm Cecil, guitar legend Michael Sembello, and many others
- Traces Stevie's personal and musical development through the decades, from the early 1960s R&B of "Fingertips" to the social and political themes of "Living for the City" and other 1970s classics, through periods of musical and personal confusion, uncertainty, and, later, renewal.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

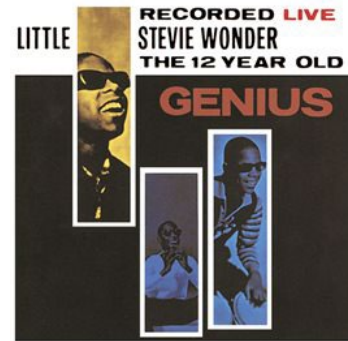
Suggested Audio Recordings by Stevie Wonder Available in Hoopla:



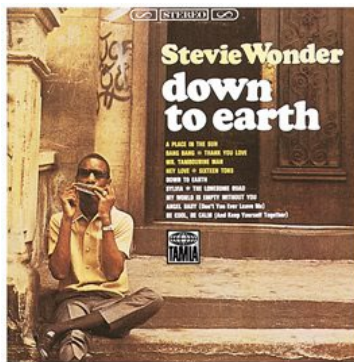
[Stevie Wonder Live](#)



[With A Song in My Heart](#)



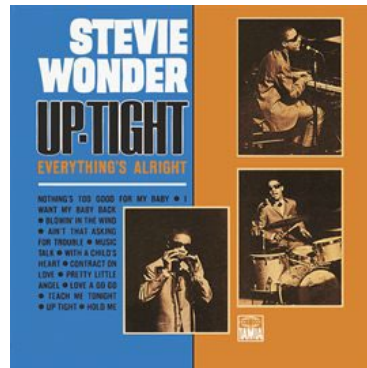
[12 Year-Old Genius](#)



[Down to Earth](#)



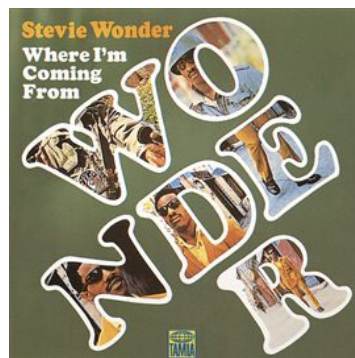
[I Was Made to Love Her](#)



[Up-Tight](#)



[Signed Sealed and Delivered](#)

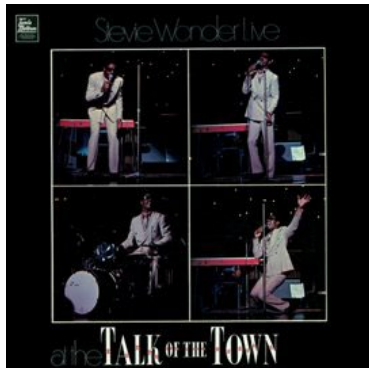


[Where I'm Coming From](#)



[My Cherie Amour](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Stevie Wonder Available in Hoopla:



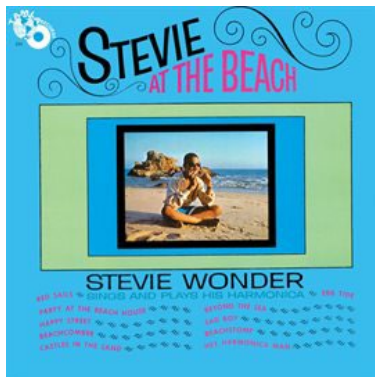
[Live at Talk of the Town](#)



[For Once In My Life](#)



[Jazz Soul of Little Stevie Wonder](#)



[Stevie at the Beach](#)



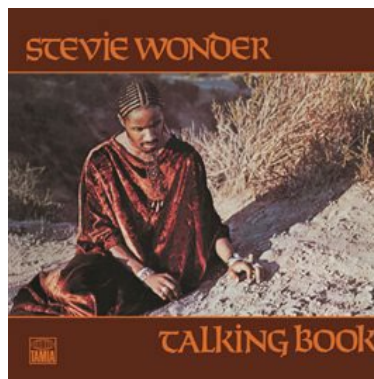
[Tribute to Uncle Ray](#)



[Mono Singles](#)



[Music of My Mind](#)

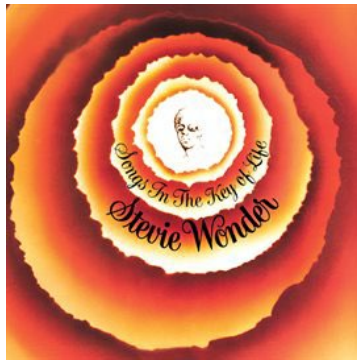


[Talking Book](#)

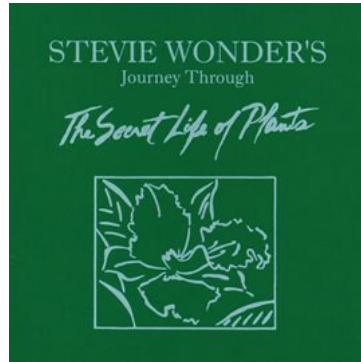


[Fulfillingness' First Finale](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Stevie Wonder Available in Hoopla:



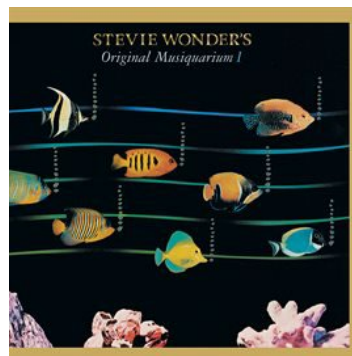
[Songs in the Key of Life](#)



[Journey through the Secret Life of Plants](#)



[Hotter Than July](#)



[Original Musiquarium](#)

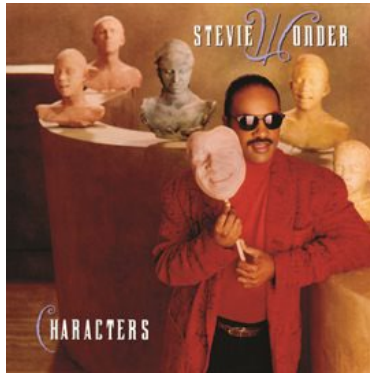


[The Woman In Red Soundtrack](#)



[In Square Circle](#)

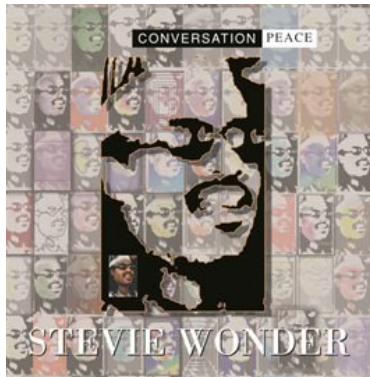
Suggested Audio Recordings by Stevie Wonder Available in Hoopla:



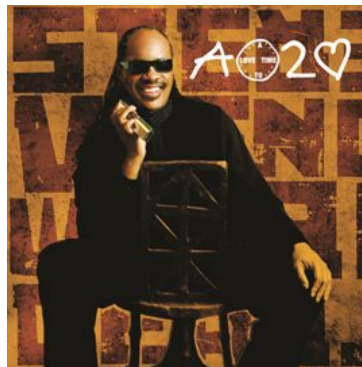
[Characters](#)



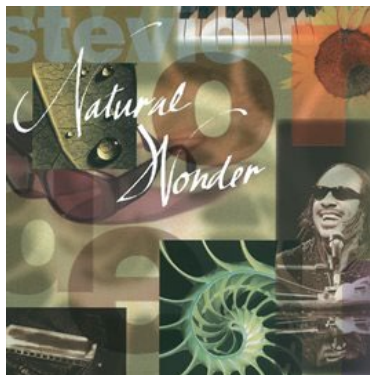
[Jungle Fever Soundtrack](#)



[Conversation Peace](#)

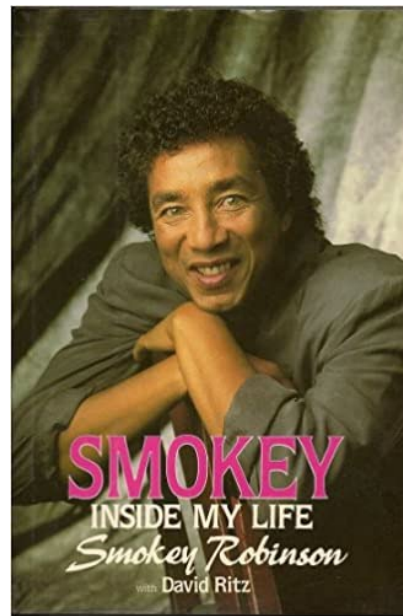


[A Time to Love](#)



[Natural Wonder](#)

SMOKEY ROBINSON



Smokey: Inside My Life by Smokey Robinson and David Ritz*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about how you can borrow this book through our Interlibrary Loan service (ILL).*

Traces the fabled career of the legendary singer over a thirty-year period, from his beginnings with the Miracles and his songwriting and production work as well as his often-difficult personal life.

Biography

Motown star Smokey Robinson (born 1940), cofounder of the Tamla record label, has been a composer and performer for more than 30 years. Smokey Robinson, the "poet laureate of soul music," has been composing and singing rhythm and blues hits for more than three decades. As the lead singer of the Miracles, Robinson, who moved to SBK Records later in his career, helped to put Detroit and its Motown Records on the music map; his solo performances have netted Grammy Awards and praise from pundits who usually shun the pop genre. *People* contributor Gail Buchalter labeled Robinson "one of the smoothest tenors in soul music," a romantic idol whose 60 million-plus in record sales "helped turn Motown into the largest black-owned corporation in the world."

According to Jay Cocks in *Time*, Robinson has written, produced, and performed "some of the most enduring rhythm and blues [songs] ever made. The church kept easy company with the street corner in his rich melodies, and his lyrics had a shimmering, reflective grace that, at his pleasure, could challenge or seduce. With the Miracles, Smokey helped make a kind of soul music that balanced ghetto pride and middle-class ambition. Some of the group's best tunes ... stayed true to the R & B roots even as they beckoned, and found, a larger pop audience." In *Rolling Stone*, Steve Pond concluded that Robinson has written "some 4000 songs and recorded hundreds that have made him a true poet of the soul and a voice of the soul, too."

The Miracles' Success Spawned Motown Records

William "Smokey Joe" Robinson, Jr., not only rose from obscurity, he brought along a number of other now-famous black recording stars when he began to find success. He was born and raised in Detroit, in the rough Brewster ghetto, where, as he recalled in *People*, "you were either in a [music] group or a gang

or both." Young Smokey grew up listening to his mother's records, including the works of B. B. King, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Sarah Vaughan, and Billy Eckstine. These black artists, he commented in *Rolling Stone*, were "the first inspirational thing I had." When Robinson was ten, his mother died, and his sister Geraldine took him in, raising him along with her ten children. The family was poor but close-knit, and Robinson spent his youth writing songs and singing in local bands.

Robinson would not consider a professional career until he graduated from high school, and even then, he tried barber school and courses in dentistry before giving his full attention to music. In 1954 he formed a rhythm and blues group called the Matadors; the name was changed to the Miracles three years later to accommodate a female singer, Claudette Rogers, who married Robinson in 1959. At first the members of the Miracles—who were each paid five dollars per week by their agent, Berry Gordy—found the music business difficult. "For a while," Claudette Robinson related in *Essence*, "we lived basically in one bedroom. But we didn't stay in that house very long. Fortunately, the music started to happen."

Robinson was lucky to have encountered Berry Gordy during an audition for another agent; Gordy, then a fledgling music producer on a shoestring budget, was equally fortunate to have found Robinson. Gordy began to produce the Miracles' singles in 1958, collaborating with Robinson on lyrics and tunes. Their first release, "*Got a Job*"—an answer to The Silhouettes' number one hit "*Get a Job*"—hit Number 93 on the nationwide Billboard Top 100 chart. The debut was encouraging, but nothing prepared Gordy and Robinson for the limelight they would attain in 1960. Late in that year they released an upbeat single, "*Shop Around*," that became a chart-topping million-seller. The Miracles subsequently became a national phenomenon, and Gordy was able to launch Motown Records, a landmark production company that introduced such talents as Diana Ross and the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, and the Temptations.

Became a Sought-After Songwriter

Robinson and the Miracles were Gordy's first star-quality group, and they continued their association with Motown as the company gained prestige. Indeed, Robinson wrote hit songs not only for his group but for other Motown headliners as well. He explained the Motown philosophy in *Rolling Stone*: "We set out to make music for people of all races and nationalities. Not to make black music—we just wanted to make good music that would be acceptable in all circles.... All we were doing, man, was just putting good songs on good tracks, songs that anybody could relate to. We had good, solid songs that would fit your particular life situation if you were white or Oriental or Chicano or whatever you happened to be. And that made a world of difference."

Throughout the 1960s, especially in the latter half of the decade, the Motown sound competed with the music of the British invasion for popularity among the young. Robinson and the Miracles were favorites among the Motown personnel, earning more than six gold records containing such hits as "*The Tracks of My Tears*," "*You've Really Got a Hold on Me*," "*I Second That Emotion*," and "*Ooh Baby Baby*." Still, Robinson was on the verge of quitting the group in 1968 when his son Berry was born. He reconsidered almost immediately, however, when the Miracles single, "*Tears of a Clown*," became a Number One hit, first in England and then in the United States. Robinson noted in *Rolling Stone* that "*Tears of a Clown*" became the biggest record we ever had. It catapulted us into another financial echelon as far as what we made on dates, and I felt that the band was entitled to reap the benefits." The Miracles, a model group in terms of road behavior, endured until 1972, when Robinson quit.

For a time after leaving the Miracles, Robinson concentrated on his business duties as vice-president of Motown Records. He soon returned to recording, however, this time as a solo artist. His solo albums are, on the whole, more reflective and mellow than his work with the Miracles. All of them highlight the singer's particular talent—the creation and performance of meaningful love songs at a time when many erstwhile romantics have become jaded cynics. Stephen Holden summed up the reason for the immense popularity of Robinson's music in *Rolling Stone*: "Smokey Robinson is that rare pop singer whose rhapsodic lyricism hasn't diminished with approaching middle age. Indeed, time has added a metaphysical depth to his art.... Smokey Robinson's faith in the redemptive power of erotic love continues unabated. In

Robinson's musical world, sexual happiness isn't the product of spiritual equilibrium but its source.... Don't think, however, that Robinson's songs aren't filled with sex. They are. But in this man's art, sex isn't a fast roll in the hay, its sweet manna shared during a leisurely stroll into paradise. Smokey Robinson creates that paradise every time he opens his mouth to sing."

Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

Robinson's records of the late 1980s, when he was well into his third decade in the music business, continued to garner popularity and the approval of critics. A *People* magazine reviewer found that on his 1986 album *Smoke Signals*, for example, the singer "remains a uniquely resilient performer." His 1987's album entitled *One Heartbeat* was termed "another winning package of sharp, sophisticated soul" by a reviewer from *Rolling Stone*. Robinson hits like "*Cruisin'*," "*Just to See Her*"--a Grammy Award winner--and "*Being With You*" became both rhythm-and-blues and pop hits and were rendered in a voice *Essence* contributor Jack Slater hailed as "a hypnotic, airy aphrodisiac that puts tens of thousands in the mood for love." Coupled with his success with the Miracles and as a prolific Motown songwriter, Robinson's solo achievements in the music industry led to his 1986 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and in 1989 he was named a Grammy Living Legend.

Coping with such enormous fame has not always been easy for Robinson. He chronicles his personal struggles in his 1989 collaboration with David Ritz, *Smokey: Inside My Life*. *Musician* contributor Jon Young remarked that the autobiography "documents everything from [Robinson's] family history and the early days of the Miracles to his extramarital affairs and, most striking, a graphic account of two years in thrall to cocaine in the mid-'80s." When asked why he chose to provide such candid details about his drug addiction, Robinson responded to Young, "I wrote it because it was God's will.... I was saved from drugs in 1986 when my pastor prayed for me. I never went to rehab or to a doctor. It was a miracle healing from God, so that I could carry the message about the perils of drugs. At the time I was saved, I was already dead. You are now speaking to Lazarus."

Left Motown for SBK Records

With the onset of the 1990s, Robinson's contract with Motown Records expired, and after a long and productive career with the record company, he moved to SBK Records. According to Gary Graff of the *Detroit Free Press*, the singer said simply, "My contract with Motown was up, and I was just out of there." He also pointed to the sale of Motown Records to MCA and Boston Ventures in 1988 as one of the reasons for his departure. "After we sold the company," he continued to Graff, "it was never really quite the same for me." With SBK Records, Robinson released a well-received LP he co-produced and recorded in less than six weeks, 1991's *Double Good Everything*. "It feels like a new day or something, man," he divulged to Graff. "This is the first thing I've ever done outside of Motown; that's a big deal to me.... I feel like a new artist, almost."

Also, in 1991, Robinson ventured into previously uncharted areas of the music world, considering an album of country-western tunes, and penning the score for a Broadway musical titled *Hoops*, which presents the history of the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team. "I've written 22 pieces so far," Robinson told Young in February of 1992. "I want this to be like [the Broadway musical] *South Pacific* and produce several hits. The title track is a funk thing that I can envision being a halftime song for the NBA [National Basketball Association]." Robinson plans to continue his often-hectic schedule of performing, composing, and recording. "If the world lasts until the twenty-second century," the enduring singer-songwriter declared to Young, "I hope they're still playing my music."

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Born William Robinson, Jr., February 19, 1940, in Detroit, MI; married Claudette Rogers (a singer), November 7, 1959 (divorced); children; Berry William, Tamla Claudette. **Addresses:** *Home*--Los Angeles, CA. *Agent*--Michael Roshkind, 6255 Sunset Blvd., 18th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90028. *Record company*--SBK Records, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104.

AWARDS:

Grammy Award nomination for best rhythm and blues song, 1979, for "Cruisin"; inducted into Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Songwriters Hall of Fame, both 1986; Grammy Award for best male rhythm and blues vocal performance, 1987, for "Just to See Her"; lifetime achievement award, Motor City Music Awards, 1992.

"Smokey Robinson." *Encyclopedia of World Biography Online*, Gale, 1998.

Use your library card and PIN number to log into [Gale in Context: Biography](#) to see this article.

"Selected Websites on Smokey Robinson's Life and Works." *Gale Biography Online Collection*, Gale, 2008.

Use your library card and PIN number to log into [Gale in Context: Biography](#) to see this article.

Suggested Audio Recordings by The Miracles Available in Hoopla:



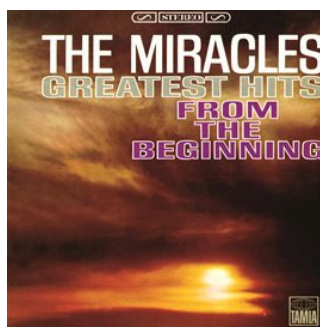
[The Fabulous Miracles](#)



[Cookin' with The Miracles](#)



[Hi We're The Miracles](#)



[Greatest Hits: From the Beginning](#)

Suggested Recordings by The Miracles Available in Hoopla:



[I'll Try Something New](#)



[Ooo Baby Baby: The Anthology](#)



[Four in Blue](#)

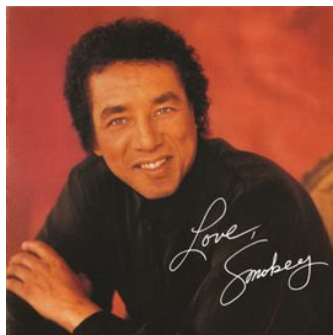


[The Definitive Collection](#)

Suggested Solo Audio Recordings by Smokey Robinson Available in Hoopla:



[Pure Smokey](#)

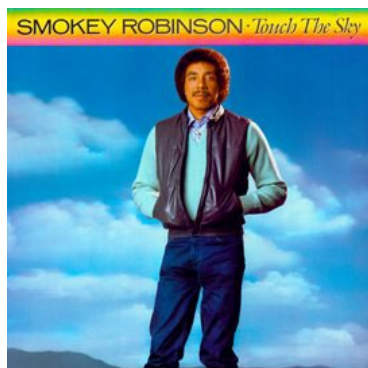


[Love, Smokey](#)

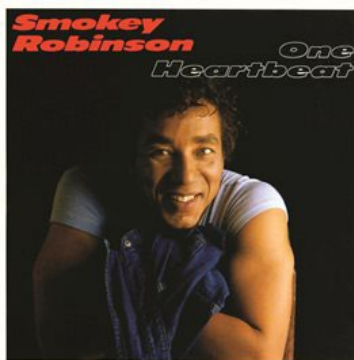


[Smokin'](#)

Suggested Solo Audio Recordings by Smokey Robinson Available in Hoopla:



[Touch the Sky](#)



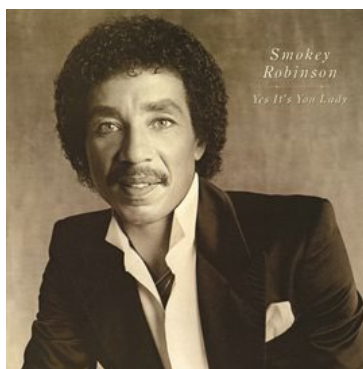
[One Heartbeat](#)



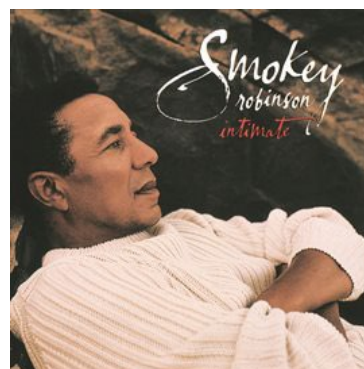
[Love Breeze](#)



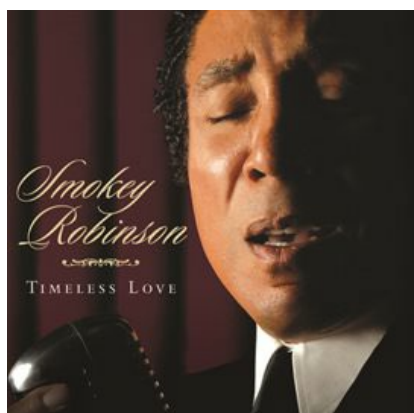
[Double Good Everything](#)



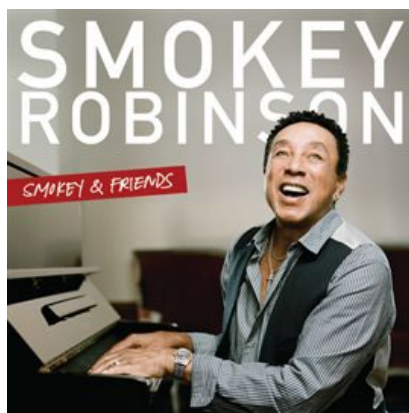
[Yes, It's You Lady](#)



[Intimate](#)

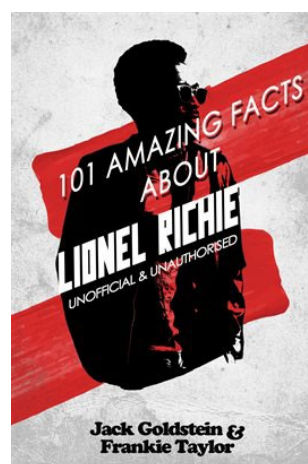


[Timeless Kiss](#)



[Smokey & Friends](#)

LIONEL RICHIE & The COMMODORES



101 Amazing Facts About Lionel Richie by Jack Goldstein & Frankie Taylor

Are you the world's biggest Lionel Richie fan? Or do you want to find out everything there is to know about the former Commodores lead vocalist and one of the world's best-loved singer-songwriters? If so, then this is the book for you! Contained within are 101 amazing facts about how Lionel got started in the music industry, the numerous awards he has won, his family and much, much more. The book is easily organized into sections so you can find the information you want fast and is the perfect addition to any fan's bookshelf.

[Hoopla eBook](#)



Lionel Richie: Hello (Popular Music History) by Sharon Davis*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about how you can borrow this book through our Interlibrary Loan service (ILL).*

For nearly thirty years Lionel Richie has never looked back as a performer. From fronting his group, the Commodores - the premier R&B pop unit of the seventies - he became the most popular singer/songwriter in the world by the eighties. A decade later he was the ultimate star entertainer with a 'nice guy' image. The Lionel Richie story is about a five-time Grammy winner who has sold more than 100 million albums

worldwide. For nine consecutive years he had no. 1 singles in America, a feat matched only by Irving Berlin. It is also the story of two broken marriages, personal insecurities, near-death experiences, and an insight into the man behind a success story that broke the rules. Lionel Richie is the first book written about Lionel Richie and the Commodores and draws on Sharon Davis' unique access to the Motown archive, her numerous in-depth interviews with Richie, as well as her time as the Commodores' publicist.

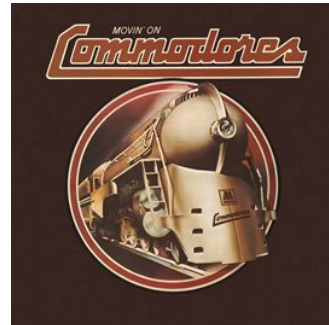
Suggested Audio Recording by The Commodores Available in Hoopla:



[Machine Gun](#)



[Caught In the Act](#)



[Movin' On](#)



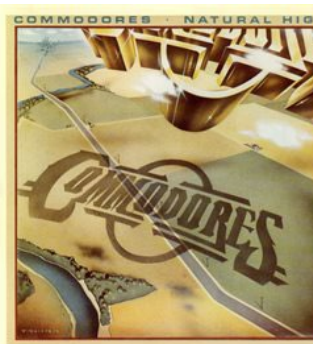
[Hot On the Tracks](#)



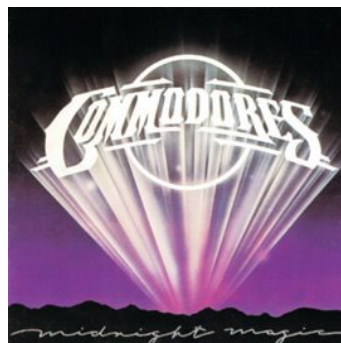
[Commodores](#)



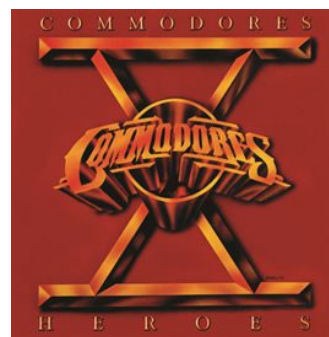
[Live!](#)



[Natural High](#)



[Midnight Magic](#)

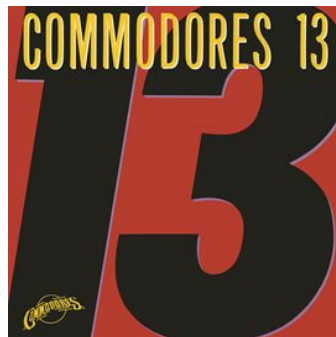


[Heroes](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by The Commodores Available in Hoopla:



[In the Pocket](#)

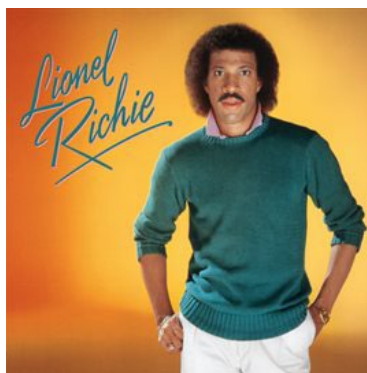


[13](#)



[Gold](#)

Suggested Solo Audio Recordings by Lionel Richie Available in Hoopla:



[Lionel Richie](#)



[Can't Slow Down](#)



[Dancing On the Ceiling](#)



[Truly: The Love Songs](#)

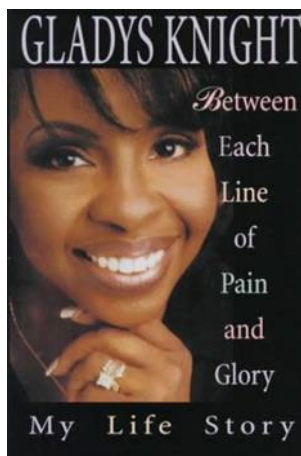


[Best of Lionel Richie](#)



[The Definitive Collection](#)

GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS



Between Each Line of Pain and Glory: My Life Story by Gladys Knight *

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about borrowing this book through our Interlibrary Loan Service (ILL).*

This immensely inspiring autobiography tells the whole, true story of Gladys Knight, a four-time Grammy winner, whose life has been rich in music, faith, love, and immense hardships. Knight, of pop's Pips, offers an event-packed autobiography--from child gospel sensation through '70s superstardom to Vegas diva hood--earnestly but with little verve. First achieving national attention at age eight, in 1952, on Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour, the Atlanta-born Knight was very soon thereafter singing on the "Chitlin' Circuit" of black nightclubs with an early incarnation of the Pips (all siblings and cousins). The Pips toured throughout the '50s with the likes of Jackie Wilson and Joe Tex, recording only briefly and unsuccessfully. Knight's first marriage, to her high-school sweetheart, collapsed because of his drug use; her father descended into mental illness and left the family. She indicates that by 1963 the Pips were big enough to have performances at the White House, but it wasn't until the mid-'60s that they signed with Motown, finally breaking through in 1967 with "I Heard It Through the Grapevine." Knight is good on the subject of Motown's feudal business practices: Second-tier groups like the Pips would seldom get a crack at the in-house songwriters' best songs, and naive performers accepted company "gifts" that in fact were advances against royalties, keeping the artists in debt (and thus servitude) to Motown. Only on leaving Motown did the Pips achieve top stardom with a succession of hits. On the crises in her life--including a gambling addiction and two more failed marriages, most recently to the motivational speaker Les Brown--Knight is so intent on gleaning lessons that she usually fails to render the experiences themselves particularly vividly.

Suggested Audio Recordings by Gladys Knight & the Pips Available in Hoopla:



[Everybody Needs Love](#)



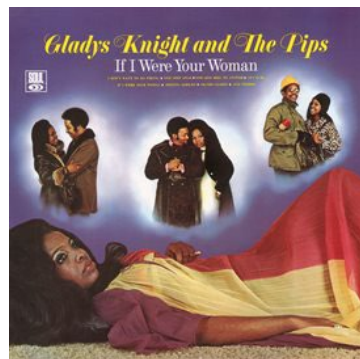
[Feelin' Bluesy](#)



[Silk N'Soul](#)



[Nitty Gritty](#)



[If I Were Your Woman](#)



[Standing Ovation](#)



[Neither One of Us](#)



[All I Need Is Time](#)



[Knight Time](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by Gladys Knight & the Pips Available in Hoopla:



[All Our Love](#)



[Ultimate Collection](#)



[Best of Gladys Knight & the Pips](#)

Suggested Solo Audio Recordings by Gladys Knight Available in Hoopla:



[Good Woman](#)



[Many Different Roads](#)



[Just For You](#)



[Before Me](#)



[At Last](#)

MOTOWN ARTISTS – 80's & 90's

With some of its icons still making hits, and a new breed of R&B star rising through the ranks, Motown continued to dominate the charts in the 80s and 90s. But the company no longer possessed a particular personality. Its classic sound was exploited as a retro, nostalgic matter, but when it came to making new music, Motown in the 80s was not remotely in love with the grooves of the past. This was a problem for Motown. It had not signed the equivalent of its classic artists who could deliver hit after hit, and cutting-edge African American music. The record company was more focused on hip-hop, modern R&B, and house than the soul Motown had helped forge. Thus entered family groups like DeBarge modeled after the Jackson 5, soulful balladeers like Johnny Gill, songstresses Staci Lattisaw and Shanice, Rick James' proteges the Mary Jane Girls, the Dazz Band (which Motown hoped would be another Commodores) harmonizing Popstar boy band groups like Boyz II Men, and Hip-Hop artists Queen Latifah.

McCann, Ian. "Millennial Motown: The Sound of Young America in the 80s and 90s."

Udiscovermusic.Com, 5 Nov. 2021, [Udiscovermusic.com](https://www.udiscovermusic.com).

Suggested Audio Recordings by other Motown Artists Available in Hoopla:

ROCKWELL



[Somebody's Watching Me](#)

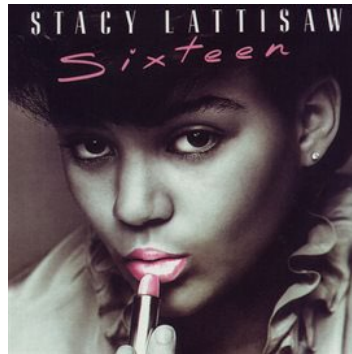


[Captured](#)

STACY LATTISAW



[Very Best Of](#)



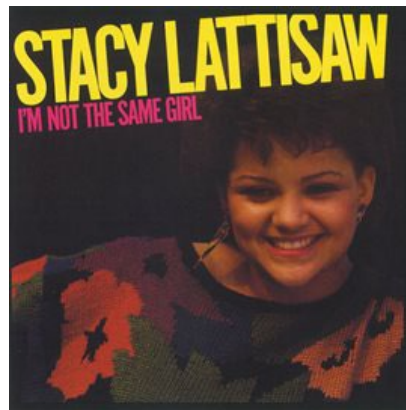
[Sixteen](#)



[Perfect Combination](#)

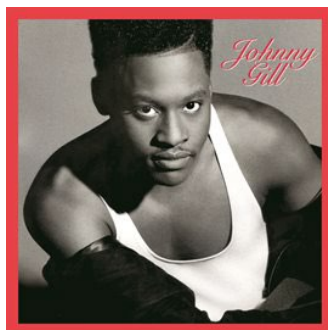


[Take Me All the Way](#)



[I'm Not the Same Girl](#)

JOHNNY GILL



[Johnny Gill](#)



[Provocative](#)



[Let's Get the Mood Right](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by other Motown Artists Available in Hoopla:

DeBARGE



[The DeBarges](#)



[In A Special Way](#)



[Rhythm of the Night](#)



[All This Love](#)

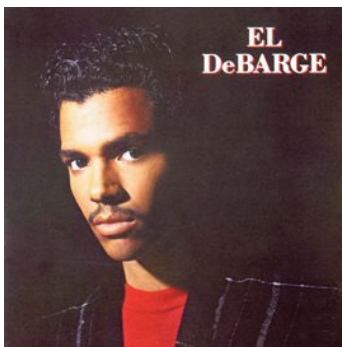


[Ultimate Collection](#)

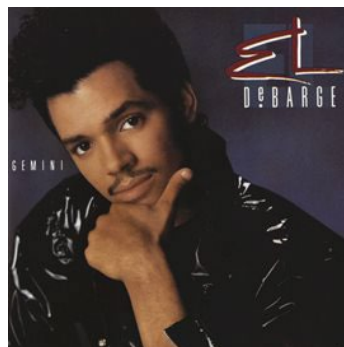


[Time Will Reveal: Complete Motown Albums](#)

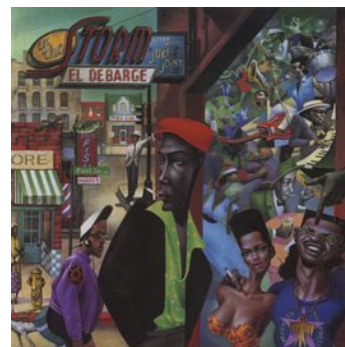
EL DeBARGE



[EL DeBarge](#)



[Gemini](#)



[Into the Storm](#)

EL DeBarge (continued)



[Heart, Mind & Soul](#)

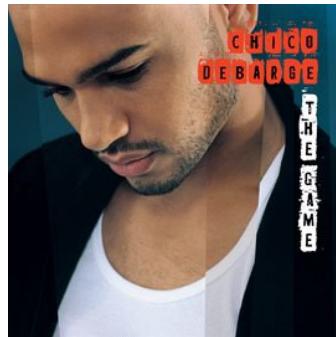


[Second Chance \(Deluxe\)](#)

CHICO DeBARGE



[Long Time No See](#)



[The Game](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by other Motown Artists Available in Hoopla:

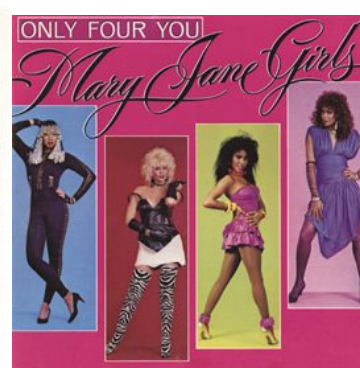
MARY JANE GIRLS



[In My House](#)



[Mary Jane Girls](#)



[Only Four You](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by other Motown Artists Available in Hoopla:

DAZZ BAND



[Let the Music Play](#)



[Double Exposure](#)

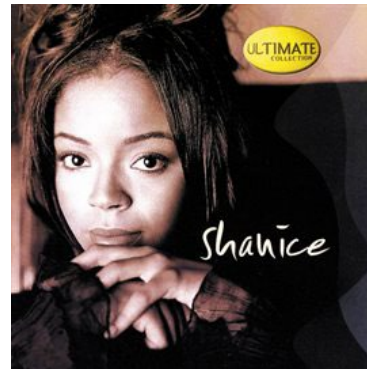


[Keep It Live \(Expanded Edition\)](#)

SHANICE



[Inner Child](#)



[Ultimate Collection: Shanice](#)

BOYZ II MEN



[CooleyHighHarmony](#)



[II](#)



[Evolution](#)

Suggested Audio Recordings by other Motown Available in Hoopla:

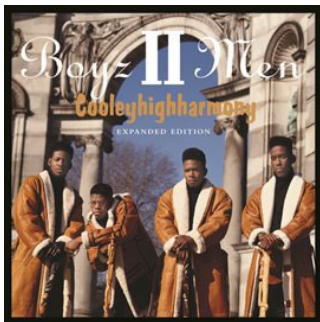
BOYZ II MEN (continued)



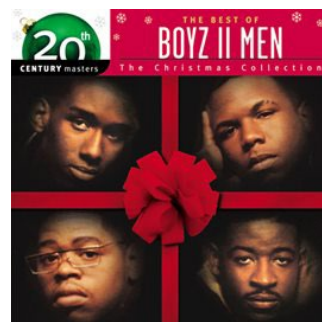
[Motown: Journey through Hitsville, USA](#)



[Legacy](#)

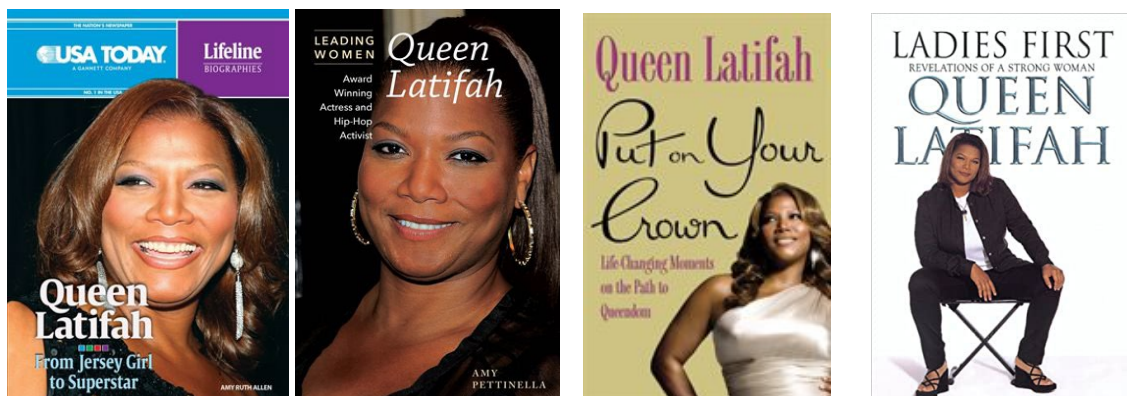


[CooleyHighHarmony \(Expanded\)](#)



[The Christmas Collection](#)

QUEEN LATIFAH



Queen Latifah: From Jersey Girl to Superstar by Amy Ruth Allen

Part of the USA Today **Lifeline Biographies** Series

People who knew Queen Latifah as a kid in Newark, New Jersey, would never have guessed at the fame in her future. But Latifah always dreamed big. Her dreams-and hard work-paid off. While still a teenager, Latifah became the first female solo rapper to sign with a major label and earn widespread popularity. She crafted a unique style full of positive messages, completely changing the rap landscape. That was just the beginning. Since 1989 Queen Latifah has made eight albums and thirty movies, starred in a top TV sitcom, hosted a talk show, launched business and charitable ventures, and won several prestigious awards. As USA TODAY, the Nation's No. 1 Newspaper, reports, it's ordinary people who inspire Queen Latifah: "A stranger once told me how much I meant to her and to women of color, and women in general. When I hear that, I know that I'm doing the right thing."

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Queen Latifah: Award-Winning and Hip-Hop Activist by Amy Pettinella

Part of the **Leading Women** Series

Queen Latifah is the critically acclaimed hip-hop artist and actor. Learn about her life, from her childhood in Newark, NJ, to the present day, and how she used music to fight racism and sexism.

[Hoopla eBook](#)

Put on Your Crown: Life Changing Moments on the Path to Queendom by Queen Latifah

With Put on Your Crown, Queen Latifah hopes to help young women build a strong sense of self-esteem. A US Dept. of Justice survey found that females ages 16-24 are more vulnerable to partner violence than any other group, almost triple the national average. Cases like Chris Brown's assault on pop star Rihanna showed an ugly side of adolescent life. However, Queen Latifah has always been a shining example of a woman happy with herself and unwilling to compromise to fit into the "Hollywood ideal" of what a confident beautiful woman should look like. The result: She's one of the biggest A-list celebrities in Hollywood.

[Hoopla Audio](#)

[Print Copy - Library Catalog](#)

Ladies First: Revelations of a Strong Woman by Queen Latifah by Queen Latifah*

**Visit a CCPL location or call to inquire about borrowing this book through our Interlibrary Loan Service (ILL).*

Queen Latifah is a sensation.

At nineteen, she was the first female solo rapper to have a major record deal. Four years later she had become a top television actress and movie star. She earned a Grammy, started a record label, and became the president of her own company. Today she is rap music's most enduring female force. But how did Dana Owens, a young girl from Newark, New Jersey, become Queen Latifah and make it to the top of the charts? The most powerful voice in rap has always been quiet about her life.

At once autobiographical and inspirational, Ladies First is the story of a young woman, making tough decisions and terrible mistakes -- about sex and drugs and about who was real and who wasn't -- before she was old enough to drive. It is about the reign of depression that descended on her after her brother's tragic death and how she found a sustaining love in God when it seemed the world was trying to break her. Ladies First is about being confident and sensual in a big, strong body and about blocking out the junk to let in the good. It is about how anyone -- whether from the poorest means or the richest -- can hold her head high in a world full of attitude. In a queen's universe, each experience is a lesson. Keeping it real and making no excuses, Queen Latifah shares her truth about what's important in life. Full of wisdom and revelations, Ladies First will instill in you the same self-esteem, respect, and courage that brought Queen Latifah peace and her independent edge.

Suggested Audio Recordings by Queen Latifah Available in Hoopla:



[Black Reign](#) PA



[Order in the Court](#) PA



[Nature of a Sista](#)

PA – PARENTAL ADVISORY



[Persona](#)



[Ladies First](#)