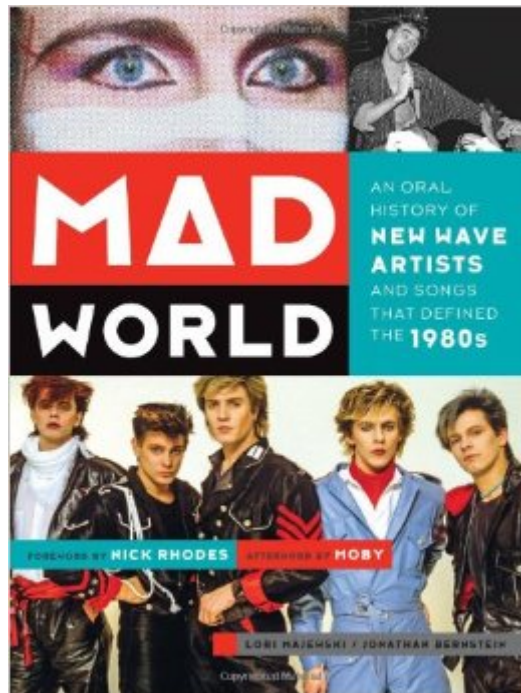


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Mad World: An Oral History Of New Wave Artists And Songs That Defined The 1980s



Synopsis

Mad World is a highly entertaining oral history that celebrates the New Wave music phenomenon of the 1980s via new interviews with 35 of the most notable artists of the period. Each chapter begins with a discussion of their most popular song but leads to stories of their history and place in the scene, ultimately painting a vivid picture of this colorful, idiosyncratic time. Mixtape suggestions, fashion sidebars, and quotes from famous contemporary admirers help fill out the fun. Participants include members of Duran Duran, New Order, The Smiths, Tears for Fears, Adam Ant, Echo and the Bunnymen, Devo, ABC, Spandau Ballet, A Flock of Seagulls, Thompson Twins, and INXS.

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Customer Reviews

I was honored to be given an advanced copy of MAD WORLD, and I wasn't disappointed. MAD WORLD is more than a mixtape for a generation—it's the story of a period of musical innovation, told by the musicians themselves and put into perspective by two of many whose lives were set to its soundtrack. Lori Majewski and Jonathan Bernstein perfectly blend credibility, humor, style, and nostalgia as they present over thirty songs that changed the pop musical landscape in the early-mid 1980s. Each song is accompanied by first-person reflections from the artists who made them, including their origins, triumphs and tragedies, and present-day contexts. Better yet, Majewski and Bernstein provide the reader with recommended playlists to accompany each song (like pairing the best wines with each course of a meal), which will have readers scrambling to their iTunes or dusting off their vinyl records. By the end of each chapter of MAD WORLD, the songs stuck in my

head, and in a good way. One mention of WLIR (from Duran Duran's Nick Rhodes, no less!) sent me back to my bedroom on Long Island, where I had kept my stereo programmed to the radio station mostly responsible for introducing me to many of these bands (MTV and my friends did the rest). As the sister of professional musicians, I appreciate the elite production, the breakthrough synthesizer technology, and the musical influences that proceeded them, ranging from the Beatles to Bowie to Chic to the Sex Pistols. They still serve as the soundtrack to my life, and especially to my writing. The visual presentation of MAD WORLD is just as appealing as its textual content. Complete with classic photos and bold colors representative of the times, readers will feel like they are flipping through a scrapbook, and they will happily reminisce as they read. MAD WORLD is also a terrific conversation piece. Readers may not agree with Majewski's and Bernstein's song selections. They may argue over which artists were more (or less) influential. But that's all part of the book's appeal—there's something for everyone: music lovers, musicians, pop culture historians, and, undoubtedly, Generation X. And what better way to pass down our favorite songs for the new generation, who, undoubtedly, will incorporate these songs into their lives and their world as their predecessors did. I love this book. It's the kind of book I'll pore over again and again, and get something new out of it each time. It's also the next best thing to being fourteen and listening to WLIR again. (Plus, no teenage angst or acne!) Seriously, though. You'll love it. ~Elisa Lorello
Author of Friends of Mine: Thirty Years in the Life of a Duran Duran Fan (a memoir) and the best-selling novels Faking It and Ordinary World

I received the book yesterday and ended up losing sleep last night due to reading half the book. i.e. I couldn't put it down. It's an interesting read and well done. Great job to the authors! It is not sugarcoated and full of self-deprecating and sarcastic comments, along with praise to the artist as well. I like it. I'm in a 80s New Wave cover band (velcrolove.com) and it was interesting to see the original artist comments on the songs. We all have our own interpretations of the music of 80s new wave and those who were in the dance clubs and listened to college radio during that time knew this style of music has staying power. Great job again on publishing this book. I recommend it.

This book is a well written "compilation" of some of the best 80's new wave singles. The authors made a smart decision to avoid a broad history of new wave, and instead provided "snapshots" of some of the best songs of its genre. Some of the songs were one-hit wonders, others were the most recognizable tracks in the artist's careers. Although there were a few questionable song choices

("Being Boiled" instead of "Don't You want Me",, and Depeche Mode's "New Life"), this was obviously due to certain artists being unavailable (or declining) to be interviewed. There were also some notable absences like The Cure, Alphaville, and Siouxsie & the Banshees. With that said, the book brought back many fond memories for this former WLIR listener. I'm hoping that this is the first book in a series!

I can't believe how much I am so thoroughly enjoying this book. Each chapter is just such a pleasure to read, and the chapters on the groups I don't care for are often the most interesting. The book is like a box of assorted chocolates: you know you're gonna eat 'em all, so you pick 'em greedily one at a time. "I think I'll try Howard Jones. Mmmm! Let's see, how about The Normal next? Delicious!" Each chapter is filled with just such interesting material; Lori M. really outdid herself. Her interviews whisk you into the culture, jar you at times, and above all, compel you to run to your nearest media player so you can listen to the songs being discussed. If you enjoy this era of music, you will enjoy this book. It's that simple. I was having lunch in a cafe the other day reading the Tears for Fears chapter, and Corey Hart "Never Surrender" came on the radio. Between the book's layout, the chapter I was reading, and the music in the room, I swear I was suddenly 14 again, reading a "new, 1985" 300pg. issue of Smash Hits.

I love this book. I saw the advertisement on the Adam Ant facebook fan page and thought "Had to have it". I got the book on tuesday and almost done with it today (Friday). This book covers the era and music that i grew up with in High School. And the World Famous KROQ is the station i listened to in Southern Cali. Excellent book.

Overall I like it, but there are definitely places where it feels rushed and details are a limited. There were some insights into the business end of the 80s music scene that I enjoyed reading. There were a few inter-band connections I had never made before I read this so I liked that. Many of the "who inspired who" insights interested me a lot. For example, David Bowie was an obvious inspiration for many, but I never realized how inspirational The Cure had been. There are some points where the sentences, especially the quotes, don't make a lot of sense and I had to re-read a few times to try to decipher what was being said (particularly the chapters related to Adam Ant). I did not find any "juicy" info I was hoping to find but it was a nice look at the songwriting process behind some of my favorite tunes. I also liked the brief glimpse into the frantic life of mad touring and/or instant fame and the aftermath of that.

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