



Love Saves the Day: A History of American Dance Music Culture, 1970-1979

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Opening with David Mancuso's seminal "Love Saves the Day" Valentine's party, Tim Lawrence tells the definitive story of American dance music culture in the 1970s—from its subterranean roots in NoHo and Hell's Kitchen to its gaudy blossoming in midtown Manhattan to its wildfire transmission through America's suburbs and urban hotspots such as Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Newark, and Miami. Tales of nocturnal journeys, radical music making, and polymorphous sexuality flow through the arteries of *Love Saves the Day* like hot liquid vinyl. They are interspersed with a detailed examination of the era's most powerful djs, the venues in which they played, and the records they loved to spin—as well as the labels, musicians, vocalists, producers, remixers, party promoters, journalists, and dance crowds that fueled dance music's tireless engine.

Love Saves the Day includes material from over three hundred original interviews with the scene's most influential players, including David Mancuso, Nicky Siano, Tom Moulton, Loleatta Holloway, Giorgio Moroder, Francis Grasso, Frankie Knuckles, and Earl Young. It incorporates more than twenty special dj discographies—listing the favorite records of the most important spinners of the disco decade—and a more general discography cataloging some six hundred releases. *Love Saves the Day* also contains a unique collection of more than seventy rare photos.

Love Saves the Day: A History of American Dance Music Culture, 1970-1979 Details

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From Reader Review Love Saves the Day: A History of American Dance Music Culture, 1970-1979 for online ebook

Samantha says

This book was amazing. Amazingly LONG and jam-packed with information, it was hard to continue sorting through it all and still retain a sense of entertainment while reading. And though at time, it did seem just that opposite, pedantic, like you had to be a true disciple of dance culture's roots, it was ultimately an edifying experience.

Given my recent project of mastering the art of mixing dance music myself, I am infinitesimally grateful to myself that I sat down to learn all this. Thanks to this book, I feel have not only an historical grasp on what the point and the role is of DJs within dance culture, but musically, my world has blossomed. With references to every song ever with a solid four-on-the-floor beat, the mixes and mashes, I am ready to get my hands on it all.

All this because, like any other facet in life for me, I'd rather know the history behind what I'm experiencing and creating, rather than blindly going at it, playing songs for their sheer sensual pleasure. To play a song and know its history, that would be the ultimate goal in this DJing venture...we'll see how it pans out.

Phil Wildcroft says

A fantastic and engrossing dive into (mostly) New York 1970s club culture.

Karl Miller says

Fantastic look at the dual rise of disco and punk in NYC in my personal favorite era of music

Stefanie says

A much-needed academic piece on this time period, and Lawrence really delves into his subject from all angles. My only criticism is that as I read I occasionally got a sense of elitism or preference for the music of this era over what came before or particularly after. Otherwise a fantastic read for people who are interested in tracing the history of dance music and revising the wide (and undeserved) cultural contempt for disco.

Luis says

Really fantastic chronicle of the rise of nightclub culture and the "disco" sound. Disco in quotes because, as this book explains, the sound is much more than a 4/4, strings and cheesy hooks. Commendable in it's breadth, particularly the compilation of playlists for each club/dj/year. And, it's on Duke University Press, but Lawrence keeps the Levi-Strauss references to a bearable minimum.

Sal says

Perhaps my 3 star review is tied to my level of interest in the subject, which truth be told was no match for 400+ exhaustively researched pages. I understand while others might find it essential. Also, the cattiness of many of the interviewees got tiring after awhile. Made it tough to differentiate genuine criticism from petty bickering and/or jealousy

Jonathan Shulman says

Long AF but a great history of disco music. Worth reading for the playlists alone.

Niall O'Conghaile says

Probably my favourite book ever? Non-fiction, definitely. This book appeals to me as a disco nerd, someone who is obsessed with the birth of dance culture and its history as a place for both queer and minority-ethnic expression. Tim Lawrence does an incredible job of shining a light onto one of the most overlooked corners of popular music history, with plenty of trivia and facts to keep disco nerds like me happy. But dry or boring it is most definitely not. Lawrence writes in a brilliant way that is never less than fully engaging and compelling (almost gossipy!) while giving great insights into these incredible, boundary-breaking people, their sacred places and the tumultuous decade in general. Absolutley essential reading for anyone with even a passing interest in this culture, or even just quality music writing in general. Highly recommended.

Owen Daniel says

An essential disco anthropology for anyone who wants to learn more about the original 'back in the day' at Paradise Garage, The Loft, Studio 54 et al. Features the origins of DJ and club culture and the emergence of house, thoughts from pioneers such as David Mancuso, Francois K, Larry Levan, Frankie Knuckles and peppered with frequent discographies throughout...

Zeke says

Detailed, but readable count of the origination of NY Disco. Proves that Disco was indeed an organic phenomenon with roots in Motown & Philly soul and underground dance clubs--not a deviant musical aberration or the disposable pop trend that it is often remembered as. The end of the book begins to show how the disco culture traveled to Chicago and morphed into what is known as House. I can't wait for Tim Lawrence's follow-up volume which will delve into the more electronic evolutions of Acid House and Detroit Techno.

Michelle Mccrary says

As a child of four to the floor and an unabashed dance music lover, this book covered a lot of territory about the roots dance culture my younger knees loved so much. If you're not a real dance music fan, it can be a little inside baseball. It's also a great snapshot of how what we know as "disco" emerged and what that looked like to the underground dance scene. It also has some great gems for the Chicago house contingent and for those who remember hearing about the Loft in its heyday in NYC. There are some small fails with regard continually referring to the "tribal" experience of dance and some other weird moments of exotic othering, but aside from that it's a solid work of dance music history.

Bob says

This is a 500-page history of dance music by an Englishman, mainly about New York in the 70s, with particular emphasis on the DJs and where they played, interestingly structured in 10 chapters, one per year of the decade. The cut-off is not abrupt or arbitrary; there is some great stuff about the rise of the Chicago House scene and even Detroit techno is a glimmer in its parents' collective eye.

Covering the earliest underground loft parties to the ascendance of the giant disco club (exemplified by Studio 54) as a worldwide economic juggernaut, the book has all the scholarly apparatus (end-notes, bibliography) of the PhD thesis that it may have been, but is stylistically very accessible.

A certain number of books about this era are somewhat self-serving autobiographies by record company executives (Mel Cheren's *Keep On Dancin'* comes right to mind). This one by contrast is focused on the DJs and clubs. There is plenty of analysis of the evolution of recorded dance music itself, but the innovations of DJs as remixers and live performers is central and the design and aesthetics of the actual clubs has probably never been so well examined. There are certainly points where the welter of detail is a bit overwhelming - the exact type of speakers and amplifiers used at various places, the constantly changing home base of a dozen peripatetic freelancers, and the internal politics of the first couple of DJ record pools.

There's also a useful amount of sociological and economic analysis - DJs as frequently exploited entrepreneurial free agents who displaced the unionized musicians who might have been found in a New York nightspot a decade earlier, plus the uneasy alliances of Italian- and African-Americans, gay and straight crowds and so on.

The book comes with an extensive discography, though a couple of CDs full of the actual music, especially rare remixes, would be fantastic but presumably the copyright licensing hurdles would have been insuperable.

Alexey says

A bit long-winded for my interest in music of the period. Too much ends up being an encyclopedic digest of period publications. Thanks, Tim, for the musical digest though - to get an idea of the less commercial hits of the period.

Gessy Alvarez says

I'm giving this book a high rating because it talks about how DJ-ing was born and how it's evolved in an evocative and compelling manner. It's also a nice, unencumbered history of club culture in NYC. It begins with the conception of one of New York's earliest and most mythologized clubs, The Loft. The art of turning records is told in loving details. My only complaint: I wish this book came with a complementary (not complimentary) cd. I wanted so badly to hear the sounds evolving as I read.

Tina says

As a young club kid going out at the *Paradise Garage* during the summer of 1986 I didn't care two hoots about the deep background of Disco or house or Garage music movement. All I cared about was the music. Anybody who was there will tell you that Larry Levan was one of the best DJs in the business.

One of my most vivid memories was my first night there listening to a song entitled '7 Ways (to make you Jack)' by a guy named Hercules. The song wasn't sung, it was spoken in a deep, husky, almost sibilant hiss. There were 7 directions the dancers were to follow. I'm dancing with my then boyfriend, really freaking out over the music, the sheer numbers of people on the dance floor and the just the whole outrageous vibe of the place. When I notice that next to us was this lesbian couple. They were both tall, gorgeous, wearing black catsuits and following the directions of the song. When Hercules got to number 7 *Lose complete mental control and begin to Jack*, the two women did exactly that. It remains probably the stand-out moment in my young, club going life. And from there I was completely hooked into the Paradise Garage experience.

Now years later, I am older, married and with two children, I see that this book has been written that talks about the back history of not only the whole disco movement but includes its outgrowth into House Music and Garage music. Sadly, the garage closed its doors a year later and Larry Levan has passed away. But it is gratifying to read and learn about the history of the music I adore, the people who were responsible for it and to revisit, through the pages of the book a place and an experience of an entire summer more than 20 years ago when I had probably the best time of my young life.
