



Rock She Wrote: Women Write About Rock, Pop, and Rap

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From London to Los Angeles, from the pages of *New Musical Express* to *Rolling Stone*, women have been writing about rock and pop music for more than 30 years. *Rock She Wrote* collects the best of women's writing on music from the 1960s to the present, from the days when women were only tolerated as screaming groupies behind the scenes to the day they took center stage as performers and critics in their own right. These vibrant, subversive, irreverent and often brilliant voices on the music of then and now tell the sidelined history of women in rock. Patti Smith (on Bob Dylan as a sex symbol) Marianne Faithfull, Caroline Coons (on The Sex Pistols) Patricia Kennealy Morrison (*Rock around the Cock: My Life With and Without Jim Morrison*), Kim Gordon (*Boys Are Smelly: Sonic Youth Tour Diary*), Riot Grrrls; just a few of the names who turn rock 'n' roll on its head in this provocative collection. The articles in *Rock She Wrote* bring together feminism and rock 'n' roll, the music of female self-discovery, the beats of liberation and power, and the intimate details of popular culture.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Rock She Wrote is a remarkably diverse collection of 62 articles, scholarly essays and personal journal excerpts by women about rock, pop, and rap, with contributions from columnists, academics, and the musicians themselves, including Marianne Faithful, Patti Smith, Kim Gordon, and Donna Dresch. Don't buy this--or, alternatively, dismiss it--thinking that it deals solely with the "women in rock" "issue." Do buy it because this is a great collection of music journalism that will be central in breaking down barriers that made any of us--men or women--think that it ever was an issue.

From Publishers Weekly

This intelligently compiled, wide-ranging volume provides exciting evidence of women writers' inroads made over the past three decades into the still male-dominated field of popular music criticism. Pioneers such as 1960s New Yorker columnist Ellen Willis and Jazz & Pop editor Patricia Kennealy-Morrison (better known, tellingly, for her marriage to rock icon Jim) are grouped with younger counterparts, from novelist Mary Gaitskill to cultural critic bell hooks in sections broken down loosely by topic. In "I Am the Band," female performers such as Sonic Youth bassist Kim Gordon, offer touring testimony; critic Jaan Uhelszki, meanwhile, finds herself onstage with Kiss, makeup and all, for a 1975 Creem magazine assignment. The latter instance points up one of the book's most fascinating aspects: in a rock-and-roll world where boys wear lipstick and girls increasingly get to make lots of noise, the effects of gender on both performer and listener are far from straightforward. Many of *Rock She Wrote*'s strongest pieces?Joan Morgan's story on her love/hate relationship with Ice Cube's misogynist rap; Lori Twersky's musings on familiar images of the "female teenage audience" as screechy and sex-crazed?find their writers at the intersection of conflicting reactions to the subjects at hand. A remarkable collection, *Rock She Wrote* makes clear both the difference women writers have brought to music writing and the impossibility of any attempt to nail that difference down once and for all.

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From Library Journal

Editors Powers (*Village Voice*) and McDonnell (*Rolling Stone*, *Spin*), accurately noting an absence of collected rock music criticism by women, proffer as remedy this compilation of alert, alive, and insightful commentaries. Sixty-three essays are corralled into seven proposed relationships of women to rock: participant, muse, midwife, boy-watcher, challenger, creatrix, and theorist. While the writings are almost without exception excellent, the contribution by working musicians is quite limited: Marianne Faithfull, Patti Smith, and Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon are, in fact, the only readily identifiable artists. Thus, libraries specifically seeking first-person insider perceptions will prefer Liz Evans's somewhat more extensive interview collection, *Women, Sex, and Rock'n' Roll: In Their Own Words* (Routledge, 1995). And both Gillian Gaar's *She's a Rebel: The History of Women in Rock & Roll* (Seal Pr., 1992) and *The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion, & Rock & Roll* (LJ 5/1/95) offer clear historical analyses of the female force within rock. Filling a less identifiable niche, *Rock She Wrote* nevertheless remains a unique gathering of critical voices and is recommended for cultural studies, women's studies, and larger popular music collections.?Bill Piekarski, Southwestern Coll. Lib., Chula Vista, Cal.

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Users Review

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Joan McCorkle:

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