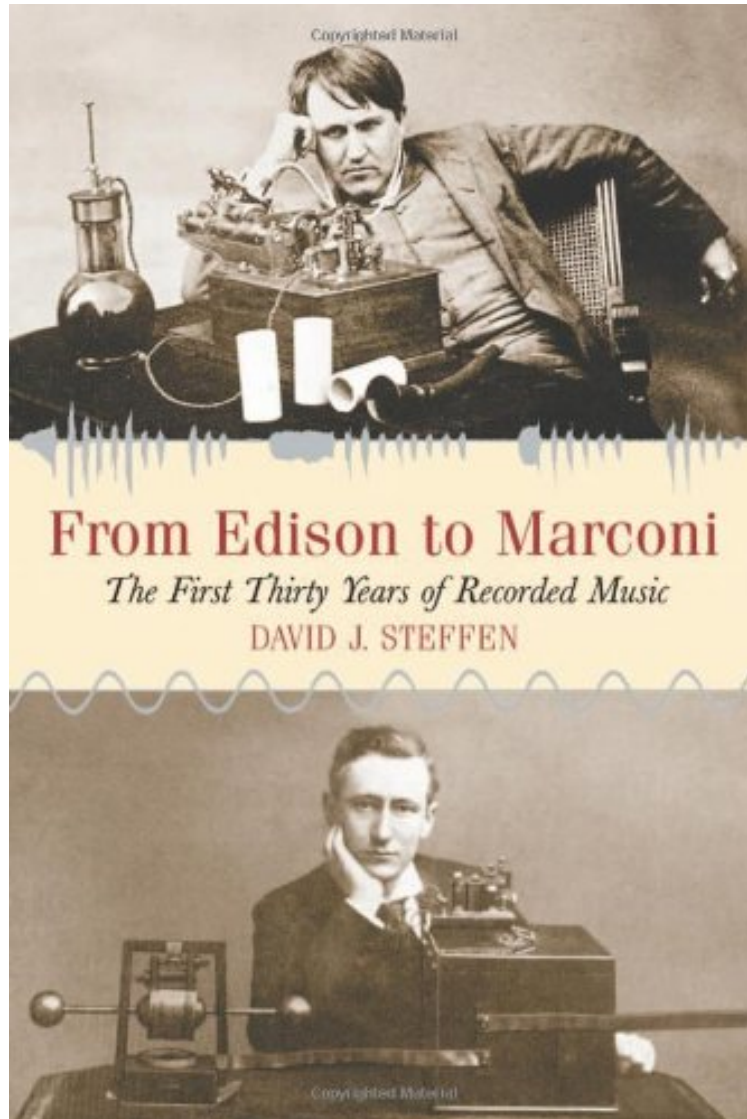


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# From Edison to Marconi: The First Thirty Years of Recorded Music

David J. Steffen

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**David J. Steffen : From Edison to Marconi: The First Thirty Years of Recorded Music** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Edison to Marconi: The First Thirty Years of Recorded Music:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Christmas gift for the serious music historianBy PamelaThis book was on my son-in-law's Christmas list and he was very pleased to receive this book to add to his private book collection and share with his college music students! Glad I found this on !1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A mess.By Michael EngelExtremely disappointing. The title is totally deceptive. I've been a long-time fan of

"roots" music of all kinds, and a modest collector of 78's, especially those issued before 1920. I was looking forward to reading this book to get an idea of the historic development of early recording technology, some discussion of the artists, an idea of how the market for recorded music expanded, phonograph types, and so on. Instead, after a brief discussion of how recording was invented, the author has compiled a series of disconnected short essays on a variety of musical topics--and worst of all, most of it is in no chronological order at all. In fact, a lot of it jumps around through various parts of the whole last century to no apparent purpose--he actually spends time on Dylan, rock 'n roll, and similar topics--and digresses into discussions of the music industry that have nothing to do with the alleged focus of the book. Sometimes it seems that very little of it has to do with the time period indicated in the title. The last sections of the book consist of a singularly uninformative series of lists of recordings sorted by genre. So don't waste your time or money.

Like any profound technological breakthrough, the advent of sound recording ushered in a period of explosive and imaginative experimentation, growth and competition. Between the commercial debut of Edison's talking machine in 1889 and the first commercial radio broadcast three decades later, the recording industry was uncharted territory in terms of both technology and content. This history of the earliest years of sound recording the time between the phonograph's appearance and the licensing of commercial radio examines a newly created technology and industry in search of itself. It follows the story from the earliest efforts to capture sound, to the fight among wire, cylinder and disk recordings for primacy in the market, to the growth and development of musical genres, record companies and business practices that remain current today. The work chronicles the people, events and developments that turned a novel, expensive idea into a highly marketable commodity. Two appendices provide extensive lists of popular genre and ethnic recordings made between 1889 and 1919. A bibliography and index accompany the text.

"highly recommended"--Choice. About the Author David J. Steffen is professor and chair of Music Business at McNally Smith College of Music in Saint Paul, Minnesota. He has spent nearly three decades in the music industry.