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# The Record Men: The Chess Brothers And The Birth Of Rock & Roll (Enterprise)



## Synopsis

"Brilliant; the best book I have ever read about the recording industry; a classic."--Larry King On the south side of Chicago in the late 1940s, two immigrants; one a Jew born in Russia, the other a black blues singer from Mississippi; met and changed the course of musical history. Muddy Waters electrified the blues, and Leonard Chess recorded it. Soon Bo Diddly and Chuck Berry added a dose of pulsating rhythm, and Chess Records captured that, too. Rock & roll had arrived, and an industry was born. In a book as vibrantly and exuberantly written as the music and people it portrays, Rich Cohen tells the engrossing story of how Leonard Chess, with the other record men, made this new sound into a multi-billion-dollar business; aggressively acquiring artists, hard-selling distributors, riding the crest of a wave that would crash over a whole generation. Originally published in hardcover as *Machers and Rockers*. About the series: Enterprise pairs distinguished writers with stories of the economic forces that have shaped the modern worlds; the institutions, the entrepreneurs, the ideas. Enterprise introduces a new genre; the business book as literature. 12 illustrations

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Cohen does a great job of capturing the intensity of upstart record men like Chess who were catalysts in a cultural revolution, forging a bond with black singers across the chasm of race and class."

Rich Cohen is the author of Tough Jews, The Avengers, and Lake Effect. He lives in New York City.

Very insightful..Lots of inside info. and a quick read!

Great book, perhaps the author could have organized it better. Aside from jumping around a lot, this is a good read and would recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about the roots of rock n' roll, the music industry in America and the injustices which surround it.

Rich Cohen has become one of my favorite writers. Enjoyed this book a lot and will be looking for his other titles. Great story and well written.

Great book. very interesting if you are interested in the roots of rock and roll. fun to learn that all of the rock bands of the 60's and 70's were paying tribute to these bluesmen who really did not get recognized in their own right.

This book reads like fiction. It describes the ins and outs of the relationship between Jews and African Americans in the music business during the blues and rock and roll years. The character descriptions are compelling and the feel you get for these key players makes you wish the book never ends.

This book was a little strange. Lots of good information, but a lot of irrelevant filler, too. You really had to pay attention. This book got better as it went on. Slow start, hang in there though - it gets better.

Nicely done, short and to the point. Quick read with much to learn.

This is an enjoyable read, but if you're the type of person who likes to read excellent liner notes from the Chess reissues thru Hip-O-Select, you'll find very little of value here. Some jaw-dropping errors regarding Chuck Berry. Chuck was not "just out of high school" when he went to Chess Records in 1955. He was born in October, 1926, which means he was over 28 when he recorded Maybellene in June of 1955. The flip of Maybellene was Wee Wee Hours NOT You Can't Catch Me. As stated by a previous reviewer, Behind Blue Eyes was on The Who's 1971 LP Who Next NOT the 1977 LP Who

Are You. The story the author tells is good enough. The book is thankfully a quick read, but it is far a "the story of Chess Records". I would consider it a companion piece to the film Cadillac Records. It's "history-lite" with a fair amount of mistakes. Lastly, Larry King is the LAST person I would ever consider as someone I would want an endorsement from regarding music. Enjoyable, short, inaccurate, etc.

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