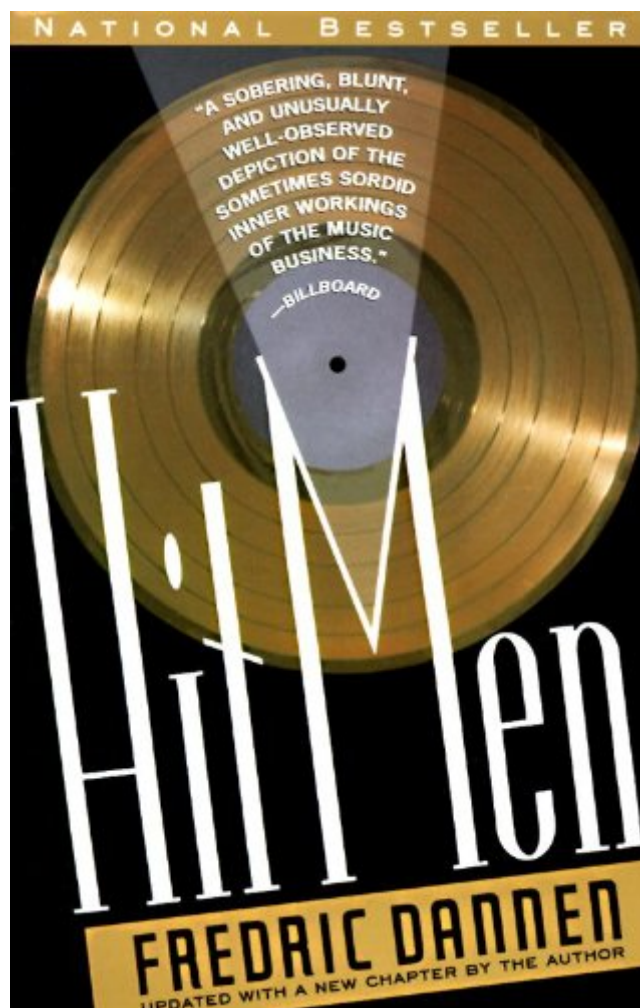


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# Hit Men: Power Brokers And Fast Money Inside The Music Business



## Synopsis

Copiously researched and documented, *Hit Men* is the highly controversial portrait of the pop music industry in all its wild, ruthless glory: the insatiable greed and ambition; the enormous egos; the fierce struggles for profits and power; the vendettas, rivalries, shakedowns, and payoffs. Chronicling the evolution of America's largest music labels from the Tin Pan Alley days to the present day, Fredric Dannen examines in depth the often venal, sometimes illegal dealings among the assorted hustlers and kingpins who rule over this multi-billion-dollar business. Updated with a new last chapter by the author.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Wow. If only you knew how treacherous the music business is. Read this and you'll know. "Hit Men" confirms what many music lovers saddened by the boring state of commercial rock radio already suspected: hit records are bought and paid for by the promoters, not made by the fans. Don't allow yourself for one second to believe ever again that radio stations are pushing songs into heavy rotation because they are responding to what their listeners want. They are doing so because someone is paying a LOT of money to cram those songs down your throat. As bad as this was in decades past, I dare say it is even worse now (in 2010). "Hit Men" pulls back the curtain on the

major players and activities in the record business over a period of several decades and reveals some extremely ugly and disheartening truths about how that business operates. I doubt anyone reading this book will regard the music business or the radio business with anything other than contempt from now on. Want to know why certain songs become hits? It's because someone paid for it to happen. It has nothing at all to do with consumer preference. Well, at least not primarily. Are you a fan of The Who? Want to know the REAL reason their 1981 album "Face Dances" tanked? Read this book. Want to know the REAL reason artists on certain labels get massive amounts of airplay while artists on other labels struggle to get heard? Read this book. But here's a hint -- it has nothing to do with the quality of the music. Educated readers will probably make the logical assumption that there are a great many industries that operate as the music business has and does. Welcome to the real world, folks. It's all about the money. In any battle between commerce and art, commerce has the advantage. Get used to it. Fascinating, fascinating reading. Just as relevant today as it was when it was published in 1990.

The music business is more about mob association than it is music... What a terrible state it's in today...and now I clearly understand why we keep hearing the same damn 10 songs that I hate over and over again

Dannen hit such a home run with this thoroughly researched book that he was honored from within the music industry (Ralph J. Gleason award) and without (national bestseller list). The topic here is unwholesome practices within the music industry, but the most passionate subtopic of Dannen's research is the system of independent promotion through which singles are "added" to radio station playlists and then moved through the charts. I almost think HIT MEN should be considered a must read for anyone in the music industry: artist, manager, songwriter or publisher. Since Dannen reports his quotes exactly as they come down, you will not find the dialog exactly suitable for Sunday School. The second edition covers events up to and including 1991 and contains a follow-up chapter not in the original 1990 hardback edition. Now, some years after its original introduction, HIT MEN is still gripping and relevant. Aspects of the described litigation still tend to resurface from time to time, and many of the key players identified and profiled by Dannen are still suited up and swinging on the music-business diamond. Ron Simpson, School of Music, Brigham Young University. Author of MASTERING THE MUSIC BUSINESS.

Record producers and record executives make boxing promoters look like priests in comparison.

What these thieves did to the recording artists was terrible and it's unreal that all of them were not locked up. A terrific book for any young musician or recording artist--a must-read before signing on the dotted line with anyone in the music business.

Great book, the history of the music business. More specifically the story of CBS records (the most powerful label back in the days), and its interactions with artists, lawyers, mafiosi, other records labels, detectives, etc) from the 50's through the 80's. Lots of very interesting info about the inner workings of the industry along with its shady practices. Once you read it, go see Walter Yetnikoff's reaction to this book, It's worth watching it lol

Having grown up during the period this book covers and being a huge music fan, I thought I knew a little something about the music industry. Wrong again! This book is a fascinating read into the inner workings of the business - particularly "independent promotion". I always suspected there was a fair amount of shady characters but not quite to the extent that there really were (and perhaps still are?). The author's research appears to be thorough and solid. This is not an easy read - there are a lot of names to keep track of and that I often had to go back and reread some sections but it was worth it. If you are a music fan, particularly of the 60's - 90's you will probably find this book extremely captivating. Don't expect to read about artists (to these guys they were "product to sell" - this book focuses on the people behind the music - and does it very well.

This is a long book, but very informative. You learn more about the record industry than you ever want to really know. Some of it will make you think twice about how some of the music industry's biggest success stories really became so famous and why others flopped. Again, a lot of reading, but well worth the investment.

While bringing a new understanding to the music industry and why you read and hear all the negative things

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