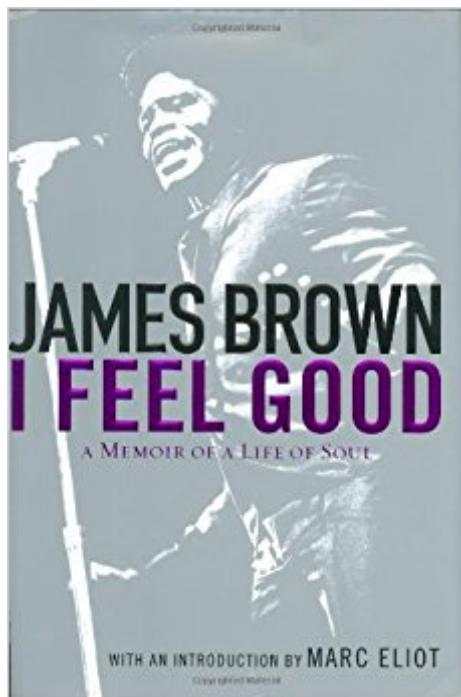


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I Feel Good: A Memoir Of A Life Of Soul



Synopsis

James Brown has always been a fascinating, controversial figure. From his humble childhood in Georgia, he went on to change the face of American music with hit after hit on the R&B charts. And while he was a courageous public figure in a time of national strife and adversity, his personal life took many destructive turns, leaving a long and difficult path of redemption ahead of him. For the first time in well over a decade, he speaks candidly and at length about his tumultuous, incredible journey. James Brown moves beyond his music and his much-publicized legal troubles to delve deeply into the highs and lows of his life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read several memoirs of famous people and this one has been the best! Marc Eliot provides an awesome 37 page introduction that covers Mr. Brown's life and career. It is obvious that Marc Eliot has much admiration and respect for this complex, yet extra talented "Man's Man" (a term that Mr. Brown uses in the book that was meant to be a compliment). I have always been a fan of James Brown, but had never known much about his personal life. Once the disconsolate news of his death hit the media on December 25, 2006, the television and papers were chock-full of positive and negative things about Mr. Brown. His fourth wife or companion rushed pell-mell to the media upon his death and caused an embarrassing blitz which has happened to him before and in this book, Mr. Brown provides a logical and probably factual explanation for the previous incidents. Mr. Brown was the first singer to own his personal private jet and record a live album with no separation of tracks.

Life's lessons taught him that the one in power is the one who makes the money and that is usually one who works for himself. The lesson learned is "power" not "rich". James Brown states in the book that Elvis got 75% of his style from him (p. 50). Little Richard discovered James Brown and his Famous Flames and is also responsible for his success. This memoir contains so much personal and professional information. Mr. Brown gives the reader an inside look into "the good, bad, and ugly" of the music business. The indept overview of the music business that kept most artist broke, the payola scandal, and his radio station ownership experience. Things that he discussed in this book was probably quotidian for his inner circle.

This book still does not address many areas I find interesting in James Brown's career but I find it a natural companion to the three other JB books in my collection: Cynthia Rose's "Living In America: The Soul Saga Of James Brown"; Geoff Brown's biography "James Brown"; and ofcourse, the Brown/Tucker "The Godfather Of Soul - James Brown". All three dig deep into this metaphysical musician's mind but this one has a stronger narrative, a bit less guarded: his late '80s fall is described in a more contrite way, for example. His scientific study of his audience is perhaps something new in his dialogue - but he broaches the subject of how music motivates women in a different way than it does men, then immediately moves on to the next thought. This subject should have been expanded upon (especially for those studious fans who remark that even by 2005 standards his live albums contain some of the most overt sexuality, obviously directed at the female fans, ever recorded), but he drops it like he does "Mother Popcorn" on stage these days - the audience sits forward to enjoy something very unusual, one of his most engaging opuses rarely revisited, then falls back after about 45 seconds. Similarly, his admonitions to contemporary rap/hip-hop artists are eloquent but must be deemed a bit self-righteous: there is a lot of rough, "adult" content in his catalogue which can't be explained away as "art". However, fans can trace his development into more "cerebral" music, with more and more sensitive ballads and socially-conscious tunes being produced from the late '60s on.

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