



Appetite for Self-Destruction: The Spectacular Crash of the Record Industry in the Digital Age

Steve Knopper

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For the first time, *Appetite for Self-Destruction* recounts the epic story of the precipitous rise and fall of the recording industry over the past three decades, when the incredible success of the CD turned the music business into one of the most glamorous, high-profile industries in the world -- and the advent of file sharing brought it to its knees. In a comprehensive, fast-paced account full of larger-than-life personalities, *Rolling Stone* contributing editor Steve Knopper shows that, after the incredible wealth and excess of the '80s and '90s, Sony, Warner, and the other big players brought about their own downfall through years of denial and bad decisions in the face of dramatic advances in technology.

Big Music has been asleep at the wheel ever since Napster revolutionized the way music was distributed in the 1990s. Now, because powerful people like Doug Morris and Tommy Mottola failed to recognize the incredible potential of file-sharing technology, the labels are in danger of becoming completely obsolete. Knopper, who has been writing about the industry for more than ten years, has unparalleled access to those intimately involved in the music world's highs and lows. Based on interviews with more than two hundred music industry sources -- from Warner Music chairman Edgar Bronfman Jr. to renegade Napster creator Shawn Fanning -- Knopper is the first to offer such a detailed and sweeping contemporary history of the industry's wild ride through the past three decades. From the birth of the compact disc, through the explosion of CD sales in the '80s and '90s, the emergence of Napster, and the secret talks that led to iTunes, to the current collapse of the industry as CD sales plummet, Knopper takes us inside the boardrooms, recording studios, private estates, garage computer labs, company jets, corporate infighting, and secret deals of the big names and behind-the-scenes players who made it all happen.

With unforgettable portraits of the music world's mighty and formerly mighty; detailed accounts of both brilliant and stupid ideas brought to fruition or left on the cutting-room floor; the dish on backroom schemes, negotiations, and brawls; and several previously unreported stories, *Appetite for Self-Destruction* is a riveting, informative, and highly entertaining read. It offers a broad perspective on the current state of Big Music, how it got into these dire straits, and where it's going from here -- and a cautionary tale for the digital age.

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