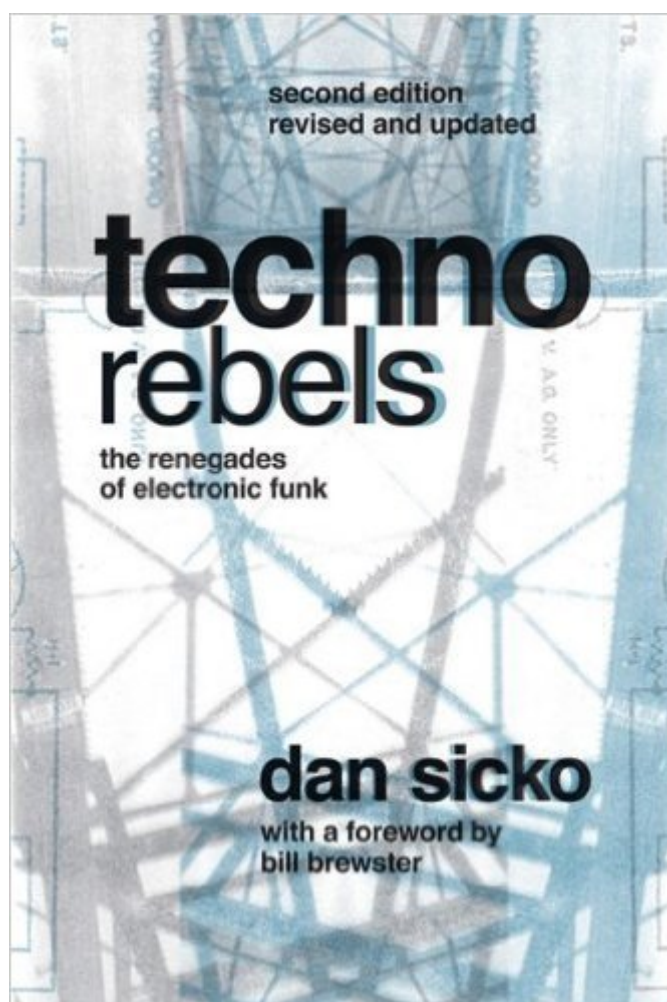


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Techno Rebels (Painted Turtle)



Synopsis

When it was originally published in 1999, *Techno Rebels* became the definitive text on a hard-to-define but vital genre of music. Author Dan Sicko demystified techno's characteristics, influences, and origins and argued that although techno enjoyed its most widespread popularity in Europe, its birthplace and most important incubator was Detroit. In this revised and updated edition, Sicko expands on Detroit's role in the birth of techno and takes readers on an insider's tour of techno's past, present, and future in an enjoyable account filled with firsthand anecdotes, interviews, and artist profiles. *Techno Rebels* begins by examining the underground 1980s party scene in Detroit, where DJs and producers like the Electrifying Mojo, Ken Collier, The Wizard, and Richard Davis were experimenting with music that was a world apart from anything happening in New York or Los Angeles. He details the early days of the "Belleville Three" Juan Atkins, Derrick May, and Kevin Saunderson who created the Detroit techno sound and became famous abroad as the sound spread to the UK and Europe. In this revised edition, Sicko delves deeper into the Detroit story, detailing the evolution of the artists and scene into the mid-1990s, and looks to nearby Ann Arbor to consider topics like the Electrifying Mojo's beginnings, the role of radio station WCBN, and the emergence of record label Ghostly International. Sicko concludes by investigating how Detroit techno functions today after the contrived electronica boom of the late 1990s, through the original artists, new sounds, and Detroit's annual electronic music festival. Ultimately, Sicko argues that techno is rooted in the "collective dreaming" of the city of Detroit "as if its originators wanted to preserve what was great about the city—its machines and its deep soul roots. *Techno Rebels* gives a thorough picture of the music itself and the trailblazing musicians behind it and is a must-read for all fans of techno, popular music, and contemporary culture.

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Customer Reviews

I think the reviewer above who complains about Sicko's lack of information on hardcore and trance has somewhat missed the point. This book exists, as the author stated above, to show the ignorant American that techno was, in fact, a music indigenous to his/her country. Techno isn't trance and it isn't hardcore. If you want to read about trance there's all too many books. If you want to read about techno there are very few. All credit to Sicko for trying to rectify that.

Techno Rebels has its facts right, but beyond the content it's incredibly well-written. So the facts come alive -- you come to understand the personalities and philosophies of a youth movement out of Detroit, and it's compelling to see that movement expand throughout the world. This book gives a story and a soul to music so often characterized as "mechanical" or "artificial." I highly recommend this to fans not only of techno, but anyone interested in any kind of music, movement, or the evolution of a culture.

As a book on the artists behind techno, Sicko's work is quite good. It is packed with names, dates, albums, tunes, clubs, and so forth, as one would expect from a music journalist. But as a work on techno, the art, I found the book to have some glaring holes. He does not discuss the technology of techno, he does not discuss the techniques developed by techno artists, and he does not really explore the question of what really aesthetically distinguishes techno from other music forms (I would expect a chapter devoted to each subject). But this book did not set out to answer these questions, I don't think -- an indication perhaps that the critical thinking on techno is still in its infancy.

Most will not understand this book, esp the rich little newbie suburbans who only know moby and

oakenfold types. Take a time machine back in time to early 80's chicao (south side) , detroit (inner city) , Newyork (Bronxs) and grow up a under priviliged minority and you will understand where techno funk really came from. if you can't get in that state of mind then stay away from this book. because names like Ron hardy, Derrick May ,juan atkins, etc will mean nothing to you, because you were not part of the struggle, so all those who say it is boring because it does not reflect a big Ibiza rave or love parade. you will go to grave never knowing where it all started. Techno is no different then any style that has been badly emulated and shaped by cultures who bring to it there own exeperience and have the capital to make it go pop and ruin what use to be a very funky underground style. the same will eventually happen to Hip Hop. and to the reviewer who said your professor gave you this to read, Her mind is totally on a different level then yours.and also books like this dont explain gear no reason to, you want to know gear go buy some magazines. the soul makes the music not the machines, there just brushes to paint what you are saying from your subconciuous.Black and Gifted making electronic music.

Dan Sicko deserves credit here for being the first person to attempt to put together a definitive history of techno as a musical genre. Being from Detroit, his strength is his encyclopedic knowledge of the evolution of the techno scene in the Motor City. Although the ultimate relevance of some of the early material about dance parties and such is never adequately explained, Sicko reveals the early development of Detroit techno skillfully and thoroughly. For some other aspects of the history of techno, perhaps a second book by someone else will be necessary. For one thing, once Sicko reaches the point in his narrative where techno becomes a "world-wide" phenomenon, his survey of its proliferation and evolution is sketchy at best, and misleading and partial at worst. With the exception of some acknowledgment of the seventies techno-pop act Kraftwerk, he shortchanges throughout the significant contributions by Germans (e.g., no mention of Sven Vath, Paul van Dyk, or Oliver Lieb, and in his discussion of current and future directions in techno, including offshoots into new musical genres, some unknown artists (undoubtedly of Sicko's acquaintance) are featured prominently, whereas important styles such as trance and progressive house are ignored completely. He also has difficulty conveying what the music is actually like. I realize that expressing the essence of one artistic medium in terms of another is difficult, but someone who has never heard techno would finish the book with no clearer idea of what "techno" actually is than when he or she started. Exactly what techno fans "listen for" in this music and the role that techno plays within their lives/subculture are also important, but never discussed adequately. Still, Sicko is a pioneer here, and deserves credit for what he accomplished in this first attempt at a "history of techno."

At times this book reads like a thesis, but Sicko does his best to present a lot of information in an easy-to-follow and cohesive manner as possible. No matter how familiar the reader is with the Detroit (and beyond) Techno scene, I would suspect he or she will discover at least some new insights herein. Congrats to Sicko - he's done a terrific job!

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