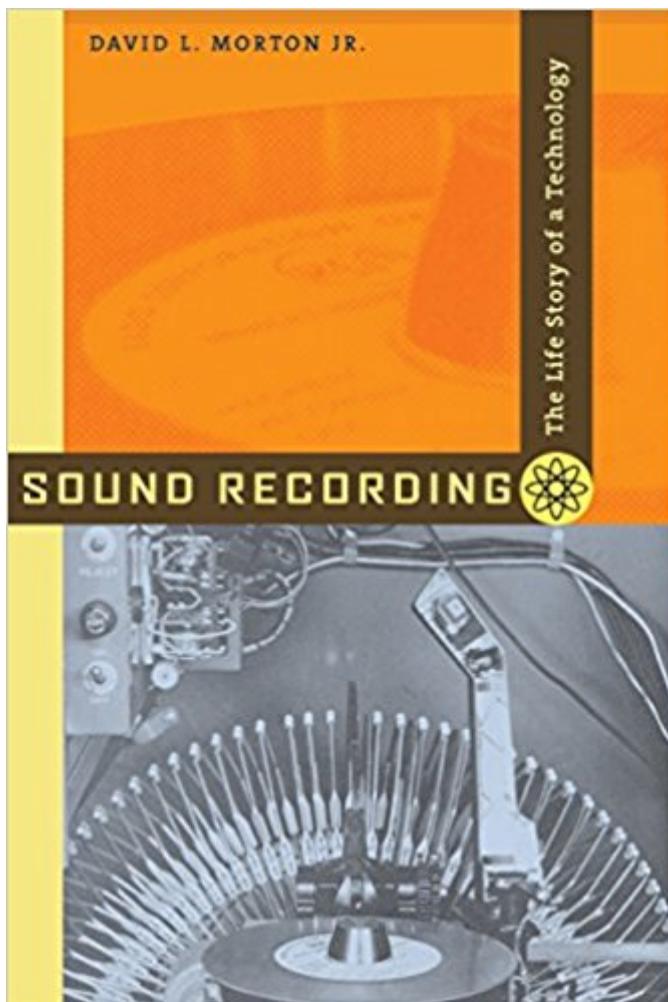


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# Sound Recording: The Life Story Of A Technology



## Synopsis

How did one of the great inventions of the nineteenth century—Thomas Edison's phonograph—eventually lead to one of the most culturally and economically significant technologies of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries? Sound Recording traces the history of the business boom and the cultural revolution that Edison's invention made possible. Recorded sound has pervaded nearly every facet of modern life—not just popular music, but also mundane office dictation machines, radio and television programs, and even telephone answering machines. Just as styles of music have evolved, so too have the formats through which sound has been captured—from 78s to LPs, LPs to cassette tapes, tapes to CDs, and on to electronic formats. The quest for better sound has certainly driven technological change, but according to David L. Morton, so have business strategies, patent battles, and a host of other factors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Traces the development of sound technology in the U.S. and Europe from the first demonstration of the phono-autograph in 1857 to the latest MP3 technology. Morton skillfully blends a basic understanding of the physical principles involved in recording sound waves with an interesting chronological account that examines the cultural and economic issues affecting the development of sound technology... Written in an engaging style for general readers and includes references to primary and scholarly resources for readers who want to learn more." (Choice)

David L. Morton Jr. is a historian of technology with expertise in the history of sound recording, electronics, and electric power. He is the former research historian for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

Some errors were noted

Very informative well written history of sound recording technology. There are many details in the book that I have never heard anywhere else. Morton presents the story in a straight forward prose that is easy to read. I only wish there were more photos and a maybe a few more references.

Good detail but the book doesn't get bogged down with information that is not needed, good all round history book!

Good book overall. However one chapter/section is glaringly flawed. The author explains sound recording/playback for movies historically. He goes into infinite detail about the various attempts to add sound to movies. However, the implication is that until some form of "talkie" was developed films before that time were "silent." This is absolutely untrue. The author mentions attempts using pianos or other instruments. But there is not one word about what filled movie theaters with stunning sound for nearly thirty years. That was the theater pipe organ. This was an extremely sophisticated improvement over the old church organs. Tremendously versatile, able to fill any theater, and consisting of technologies approaching modern computers, the theater organs were loved by the audiences. Every theater in America had its "Mighty Wurlitzer" or one of the many other models built by what was then a major industry. When Wurlitzer installed an organ in a theater the installation was preceded by a parade in the town. But, not a word on this by the author. An oddity; one of the major manufacturers of theater organs was the Robert Morton Organ Company. The author of the book is... a Morton! David Morton Jr. How could he leave that out?

So many things changed on music, since we started to use a tool, to hear music. This tool is the technology of music itself. Changing thru the years, living with mankind, and evolving with it. You will learn a lot of things. I will read it again, perhaps, more than twice.

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