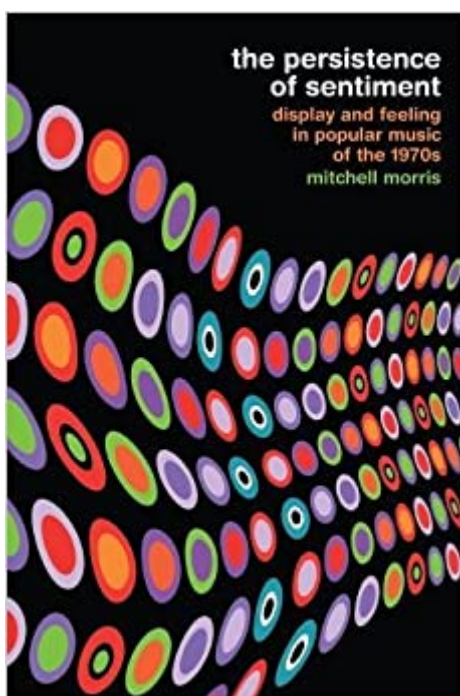


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# The Persistence Of Sentiment: Display And Feeling In Popular Music Of The 1970s



## Synopsis

How can we account for the persistent appeal of glossy commercial pop music? Why do certain performers have such emotional power, even though their music is considered vulgar or second rate? In *The Persistence of Sentiment*, Mitchell Morris gives a critical account of a group of American popular music performers who have dedicated fan bases and considerable commercial success despite the critical disdain they have endured. Morris examines the specific musical features of some exemplary pop songs and draws attention to the social contexts that contributed to their popularity as well as their dismissal. These artists were all members of more or less disadvantaged social categories: members of racial or sexual minorities, victims of class and gender prejudices, advocates of populations excluded from the mainstream. The complicated commercial world of pop music in the 1970s allowed the greater promulgation of musical styles and idioms that spoke to and for exactly those stigmatized audiences. In more recent years, beginning with the 'Seventies Revival' of the early 1990s, additional perspectives and layers of interpretation have allowed not only a deeper understanding of these songs' function than when they were first popular, but also an appreciation of how their significance has shifted for American listeners in the succeeding three decades.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An engaging exploration of dedicated music fan bases that emerged in the 1970s. . . . Highly recommended." (M. Goldsmith CHOICE 2013-10-01)"Rather than building on the extant discourse

of sentimentality, Morris boldly charts a new path... an admirable achievement." (Journal of the Society for American Music)

Who can resist the self-indulgent pleasures of Barry White's Love Theme, Cher's Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves, or the Carpenters' Rainy Days and Mondays? In richly evocative prose, Mitchell Morris explores the enduring affective force of the opulent and excessive 1970s sonic palette and its context of television shows, movies, popular literature, and later nostalgic-ironic revivals. Engaging critical issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality, this groundbreaking and intrepid study of pure pop speaks to cultural historians and theorists as well as music scholars and fans. Judith A. Peraino, author of *Listening to the Sirens: Musical Technologies of Queer Identity from Homer to Hedwig*; Immensely learned but full of demotic wisdom, *The Persistence of Sentiment* immediately takes its place in the fistful of the essential books of popular music studies. Robert Walser, author of *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*

The title is misleading since the author cannot hope to capture the profound topic of sentiment or the music of a decade in a slim volume. It reads like a PhD and subsequent journal articles in its narrow content and the linking mechanism (gender) is not fully teased out or supplemented with a more thorough analysis - actually aching for more analysis because this guy is definitely onto the topic. What is analysed within the narrow scope is done very well and is erudite and compulsive reading. Morris, in reaching out to other disciplines for analytical content is to be commended, and he is someone to watch. I look forward to his next book. In sum, this book is undoubtedly fully worth buying if you have an interest in the topic.

One to think on once read.

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