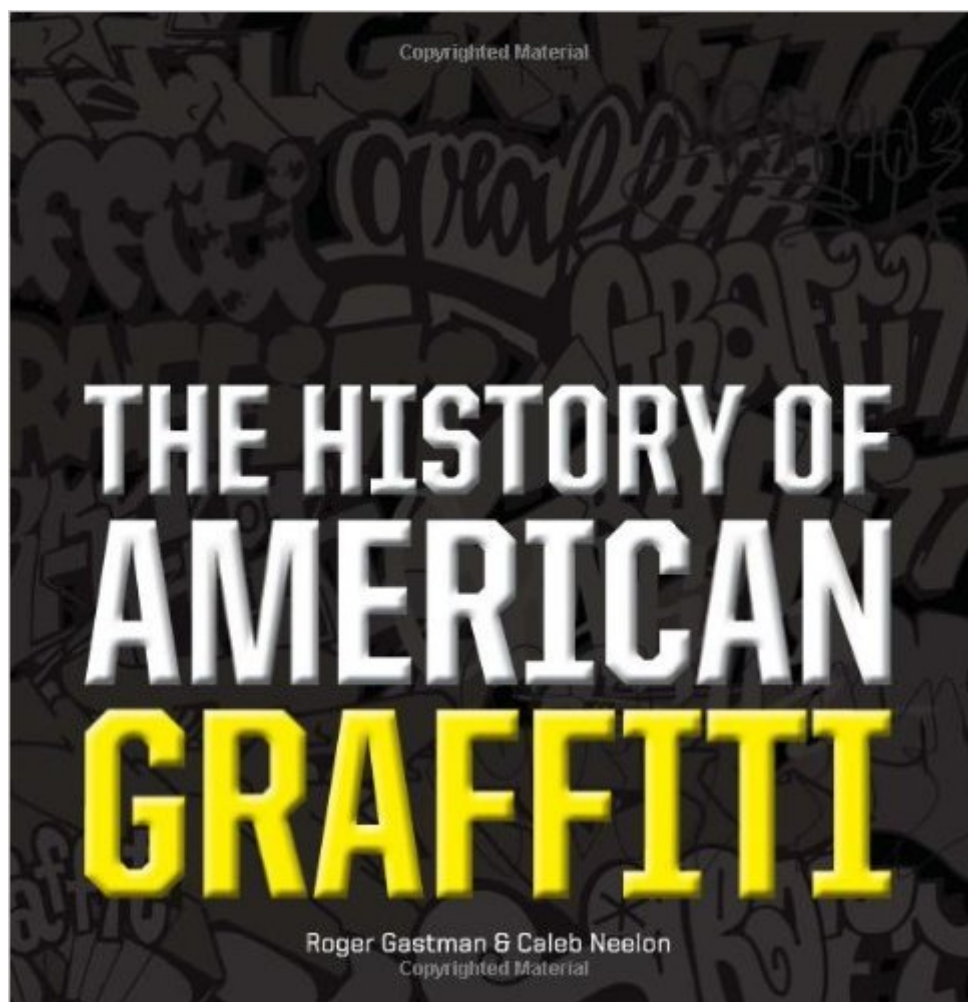


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# The History Of American Graffiti



## Synopsis

Unprecedented in scope, *The History of American Graffiti* is the definitive story behind the most influential art form of the last one hundred years. Tracing the evolution of the medium from its early freight-train days to its big-city boom on the streets of New York City and Philadelphia, and to its modern-day influences, this volume is a compelling look at the key moments, places, and players in an art form distinctly American in flavor yet global in its reach. Featuring behind-the-scenes stories and profiles gleaned from more than four years' worth of interviews with graffiti's most prominent names, as well as its lesser-known pioneers, authors Roger Gastman and Caleb Neelon provide an insider's perspective on the history of the medium. Not only do they reveal the most popular trends and styles that have dominated the scene for the last fifty years but they also provide a thorough examination of the regional differences among major American hubs—New York, Los Angeles, the Bay Area, Chicago—and under-the-radar scenes in cities like Washington, D.C., Boston, and Miami. All told, more than twenty-five American cities are profiled, making this one of the most comprehensive volumes on the subject. With more than one thousand photographs—the majority of which are seen here for the first time—from more than two hundred photographers, most of whom also created the artwork, *The History of American Graffiti* captures the look and feel of a genuine American art form with exceptional clarity and detail. An instant classic, this book is the ultimate resource to which aficionados of the art form will turn again and again, and which the uninitiated will regard as the definitive tutorial of all that is graffiti.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is comprehensive, insightful, and profound. It takes its place on the top shelf of hip-hop/graffiti books. The chapter on My home town of East Chicago took me by surprise. I knew all those guys! My son grew up in awe of them and carries the torch with UAE & FTR of Chicago. Highly recommended.

Books about graffiti can be hit-or-miss; they vary from the very artistic and beautiful to pop-culture garbage. I'm very happy to say that this book is one of the former. For starters, it's a just over 400 pages long, packed full of pictures and text. While I expect any good graffiti book to have lots of pictures, this one is quite different in that it reads like a history book. That is, it delivers on its title, and this isn't any small feat. It spans the American graffiti world both historically and regionally, including short 2-page articles on most major American cities (the biggest cities, i.e. New York, Philly, LA, etc., have their own chapters). The depth of the information varies, as can be expected by such an endeavor, but the breadth of what the authors undertook is astounding, and far exceeded my expectations and hopes. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is seriously interested in graffiti as the artform that it is.

This book could have been at least 3 or 4 times longer than it actually is but then it would weigh about 15 pounds instead of about 3-4 lbs. I love the thick pages and the colorful pictures and I also loved how detailed the history was. THERE SHOULD BE A CLASS WITH THIS AS THE TEXTBOOK IN EVERY COLLEGE IN THE NATION!!~EVOL

To date, this is the most comprehensive look at the origins of graffiti. The book delves into local lore from the streets of major American cities, giving an accurate account of the birth of the controversial American subculture. Whether you see it as expression or vandalism, this book takes you on a tour of the streets where the "voice of the ghetto" was written on the walls! Hopefully there is a sequel in the works!

This book is a success for one main reason—the fact that it is the first book to attempt to encompass such a comprehensive history of easily one of the most elusive cultures in modern art. The fact that Roger Gastman and Caleb Neelon are/have been part of the graffiti culture [Gastman more than Neelon] for the majority of their careers has proven to be a valuable asset in the investigative part of writing this book. The 5 years of research and writing that made this book happen produced a great deal of valuable information and regional history from east to west coast. In my humble opinion, this

book could have easily been twice the size. While NYC is obviously the Mecca for graffiti and is highly important to the culture's birth and progression, it is not the majority of graffiti's story. While this book is the best attempt so far in touching on all of the specific local graffiti traditions, trends and waves I feel that it could have gone even deeper in digging up information on the culture in less popular and known areas. Some states could easily fill more than two pages with information and imagery yet that is all they were given while a whole 1/4 of the book is devoted to NYC.

Nonetheless, this book is a milestone in graffiti publication and is a must buy for any graff kid or aficionado. Buy it used if you can. I read it cover to cover and still enjoy flipping through it occasionally. I do know enough about the culture though to know that there is still a lot left out.

I purchased this book to use in a class that I am teaching called The Art and History of Graffiti. The introduction and opening chapters are very informative and there are lots of images to keep my high school students engaged.

An incredibly well-researched city-by-city, decade-by-decade guide to graffiti and street art in the U.S. Even if you skim over the exhaustive listings of artists from each scene, you will find a ton of useful detail on the history and culture of graffiti. As an artist and educator I've found this material to be invaluable. Note: co-author Caleb Neelon is an internationally famous street artist in his own right, and lends first-hand experience and credibility to the text.

The first place it busted out to was Newark, NJ in the mid to late 70's. All these "history" books never get into our city, but whatever. Besides that one pretty important detail, it's a decent take on the culture I've been a part of since the late 80's.

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