



By John McGlasson

I love the response this kind of article brings! This is the first of my personal lists as far as the influence they had on me, they may not all display the best chops or songwriting, but they all had a huge affect on me as far as what inspired me to play as a child, and what I learned from in my formative early years. I tried to put them in more of a chronological order than order of importance, and not necessarily in order of release date, I was slow to discover certain albums! Please comment with your own Top Ten! Thanks for reading!

Tommy - The Who

My earliest memory is playing with my toys in the living room on a Saturday night while my young parents (they were 18 when they had me) were listening to Tommy. When the "See me...Feel me..." part came, my dad made me stop what I was doing, and said "listen, this is the important part." I think subconsciously I've always searched for "the important part" of a song since then. I started playing at age 5, soon after that night.

Kiss-Alive

Even though I started playing at age 5, I lost my desire for a few years while I did normal kid stuff. Guitar was hard! I wasn't being pushed to play, nor was I inspired by any music I was hearing. That is until I heard Kiss. I knew then that I'd play for the rest of my life.

Boston-self titled

Where Kiss seemed so dark and evil to my young mind, Boston was like a party! I didn't know a single girl that liked Kiss, but Boston rocked hard, and chicks dug it! It was what the cool older dudes played in their vans full of chicks! The production gave me a feeling that I still get today when I listen to the first two Boston albums.

Cheap Trick-Live at Budakon

I got this album in the summer between 7th and 8th grades, I loved Rick's playing a lot. I remember being especially happy that summer, and I don't think I took this album off my turntable once, other than to flip it of course!

Van Halen - Women and Children First

Yes, I heard this album first, because of "Everybody Wants Some." I'd heard of VH of course, but I was very young, and kind of isolated living in a very small town in Illinois. The power of Ed made it impossible for me to listen to anything else for a long time, all others seemed so weak compared to Ed and the whole band.

Ozzy Osbourne - Diary of a Madman

After years of listening to happy rock & roll, I was mesmerized by Randy's dark style. He showed me there was life after VH, and life outside the pentatonic scale. I was a huge, huge fan when he died, in fact I was sitting at a friend's house with some other guitar geeks checking out a new Explorer, when they actually broke into a network tv show to announce that Randy had been killed. We couldn't believe it, he was going to make so much more great stuff that we'll never hear.

Iron Maiden - Number of the Beast

More life-after-Van Halen, I was pulled into Iron Maiden right away. The songs always blew my mind, but I tired quickly of Dave Murray's hammers and pulls. But Adrian Smith was so melodic, so cool, I'm still blown away by so many of his solos. But my favorite IM solo of all time is actually Steve Harris' solo in "Number of the Beast", with two guitarists and an amazing drummer backing him up, one of my all-time favorite sections of music!

Dokken - Breaking the Chains

George had a huge affect on me, he played the way I wished I could play, it's that simple. Almost every Dokken album was carried by his playing, and he's still a truly great player today. I always wished he'd step out of the simple rock format and do something more progressive, but hey.

Dio - The Last In Line

I remember the first time I heard this album at my friend's house, he got it from his friend in Chicago, and I knew from my friend's excitement I was in for something big. We were just two of millions of kids doing the same thing at that exact moment; hearing Vivian Campbell for the first time. After years of hearing about Van Halen and Randy Rhoads in the magazines, here comes a 17 year-old out of nowhere to dominate! I still get the same feeling when I hear some tracks off this album. He followed it up with two more great albums with Dio, then traded guitar hero-dom for \$\$\$.

Van Halen - Fair Warning

Although I strayed from Ed for awhile with the above-named guitarists of note, I came back to VH when I heard Fair Warning. To me, it was so far above anything anyone else was doing, not just the guitar playing, but the whole band, it was perfection to me, and I obsessed over this album for a long time, never really trying to learn the licks, just listening.

[John McGlasson](#) *This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it* *This email address is being protected from spam bots, you need Javascript enabled to view it*
is a life-long guitarist, producer, and founder of
[o.i.e. Records, Ltd](#)
., a musician-oriented independent record label based in central Illinois.