



NOBODY BAD LIKE YOU

I was born in Detroit, almost exactly when MC5's *Kick Out the Jams* peaked in the charts, reminding the world (via John Lee Hooker) that the motor city was, in fact, burning. My family got the fear memo and jumped on the white flight express to a small swampy town just northeast of Detroit. It was about a 45 minute drive (as my dad still worked downtown as an electrician), but felt like 1000 miles away in terms of backwater racist attitudes and the barrier of Lake St. Clair.

Notably, however, where I grew up was only 30 miles from Detroit, as the crow – or, more importantly for the topic at hand, as the electromagnetic spectrum – flies. As

such, not just the lights of Detroit made their way across the lake, but so did the radio stations. This is my personal story of one DJ in particular, really more as an excuse to introduce him to the uninitiated, than explain his effect on me. I am not the only person to have written about this DJ and his influence – not by far. On the back cover is information about finding more material, including many recordings of his shows that fans have transferred to YouTube from cassettes they have held on to for decades. Please have a listen.

In my memories of middle school and high school, The Electrifying Mojo came on every night, late, and was just a part of the fabric of existence. You weren't

To checkout some online
resources about
The Electrifying Mojo, visit
mojo.scribble.com



This zine was inspired by a music-
infused chat at Ace Barbershop in
downtown Albuquerque.
©2024 Jon Pinkos

DON'T SAY DAMN.
SAY WHOA.

Maybe more importantly, he did it while telling us how important we each were. Easing us through our problems with dance and words – again that voice – and inadvertently reminding us how we all were the same in a way. I really do think Mojo loved his listeners and took care of them. I guess that's part of why they seemed to love him back. So that's my personal story about The Electrifying Mojo. It is a little weird to think back and see that Mojo was basically my self-help therapist getting through middle and high school. I am thankful for this and all those nights driving around and staring at the concrete landscape of Detroit being reminded to always dance and, when you find yourself at the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on.

walking you through the whole thing – usually sold people on first listen. Most people who talk about Mojo understandably talk about the music he played. It was a mix of every kind of funk, soul, pop, imports, dance music, and many things beyond. It was one of the few places at the time where listeners were exposed to the likes of Kraftwerk and B-52s, mixed right in with Prince, motown, Parliament-Funkadelic. Soon, he was also exposing us to the exciting music being created by some of his own listeners, such as the famous Belleville Three. I remember the first time I heard *Clear* by Cybotron on his show and tried to fathom why *all* radio didn't sound like this.

But beyond just the music, Mojo talked. More than that, he preached, he advised, he entertained. And he did this while talking to you. Sometimes quite literally directly, with mysterious shoutouts to people by first name. Sometimes to you by *connecting*. Personally – your high school maybe (if you were lucky) or your street. Maybe your car that he could see from the mothership. And, upon reflection on what Mojo meant to me personally, I realize these many years later that this **connecting** was one of the most important things Mojo gave me; and maybe us collectively. He bridged the seemingly huge gap between races and classes and geography, and brought the entire city together, just like he brought together all these kinds of music.