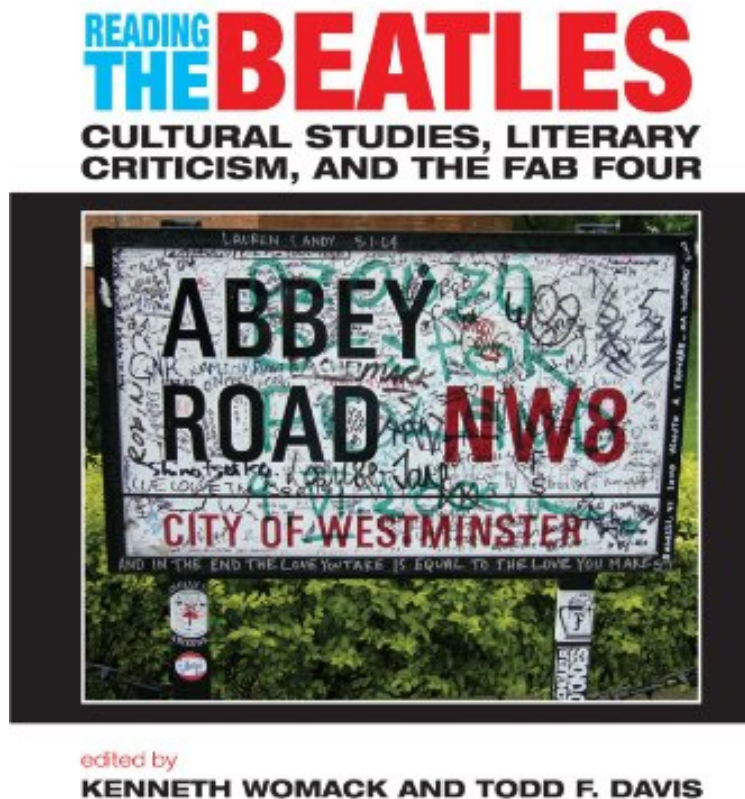


# Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, And the Fab Four

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12 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Beatle Thesis by a Beatle Scholar By BeatleBangs1964 This is the work of a scholar. This book reads like a well written, well researched thesis and readers are treated to a plethora of

Beatle information and insights. I like the way this author provides his own personal Beatle preferences and interpretations. A book that will certainly compliment the intelligence of its readers, this scholarly work rates highly among the Beatle Literati.

Addresses the bands resounding impact on how we think about gender, popular culture, and the formal and poetic qualities of music. Despite the enormous amount of writing devoted to the Beatles during the last few decades, the bands abiding intellectual and cultural significance has received scant attention. Using various modes of literary, musicological, and cultural criticism, the essays in *Reading the Beatles* firmly establish the Beatles as a locus of serious academic and cultural study. Exploring the groups resounding impact on how we think about gender, popular culture, and the formal and poetic qualities of music, the contributors trace not only the literary and musicological qualities of selected Beatles songs but also the development of the Beatles artistry in their films and the ways in which the band has functioned as a cultural, historical, and economic product. In a poignant afterword, Jane Tompkins offers an autobiographical account of the ways in which the Beatles afforded her with the self-actualizing means to become less alienated from popular culture, gender expectations, and even herself during the early 1960s. This book addresses many of the most significant aspects of the Beatles their music and their social and cultural influence and contexts. It finds a balance between specialist knowledge (i.e., musicology) and more general interest, and it covers the full breadth of the Beatles output. The Beatles effected a significant and irreversible epoch in popular music, and for this reason deserve a sound academic study of the many aspects of their arrival, their dominance, their challenges, and their legacy. Such a study is provided here in a diverse and inventive collection of engaging essays. Julian Wolfreys, author of *Occasional Deconstructions* The variety of approaches and issues in this book provides a useful survey of the possibilities of academic approaches to popular music in general, while remaining accessible to music fans. The book is not hagiography; there is an interesting trajectory, from positive appraisals of the Beatles practices in their heyday to more negative assessments of recent efforts to construct their legacy. Neil Nehring, author of *Popular Music, Gender, and Postmodernism: Anger Is an Energy* Contributors include John Covach, Todd F. Davis, James M. Decker, Walter Everett, Paul Gleed, John Kimsey, Ian Marshall, Kevin McCarron, William M. Northcutt, Russell Reising, Jeffrey Roessner, Jane Tompkins, Sheila Whiteley, and Kenneth Womack.

From Publishers Weekly While John, Paul, George and Ringo have been (deservedly) deconstructed more than any other rock band, and an academic look at them is welcome, many of the observations made in this collection will leave fans asking, "So what?" In the opening essay, Penn State English professor Ian Marshall carefully explores the band's lyrics. He points out the confessional poetics of Lennon songs like "Nowhere Man," but isn't original when he compares that tune's themes of self-doubt to Thoreau's "mass of men [who] lead lives of quiet desperation." A more intriguing assertion is Marshall's point that *The White Album* is a work of "post-modernity" that reflects the fracturing of the band's media image as four lovable mop-tops and a "rebuttal" to the earlier Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. Far more remarkable is William M. Northcutt's essay, which studies "death, loss, and the crowd" on Sgt. Pepper. Northcutt, who teaches cultural studies at Germany's University of Wuppertal, introduces the idea that the album's cover, with its famous portrait of the Beatles surrounded by cultural icons, reveals the band's distance from the crowd and its conflicted feelings toward fame. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "This book addresses many of the most significant aspects of the Beatles--their music and their social and cultural influence and contexts. It finds a balance between specialist knowledge (i.e., musicology) and more general interest, and it covers the full breadth of the Beatles' output. The Beatles effected a significant and irreversible epoch in popular music, and for this reason deserve a sound academic study of the many aspects of their arrival, their dominance, their challenges, and their legacy. Such a study is provided here in a diverse and inventive collection of engaging essays." From the Back Cover Despite the enormous amount of writing devoted to the Beatles during the last few decades, the bands abiding intellectual and cultural significance has received scant attention. Using various modes of literary, musicological, and cultural criticism, the essays in *Reading the Beatles* firmly establish the Beatles as a locus of serious academic and cultural study. Exploring the groups resounding impact on how we think about gender, popular culture, and the formal and poetic qualities of music, the contributors trace not only the literary and musicological qualities of selected Beatles songs but also the development of the Beatles artistry in their films and the ways in which the band has functioned as a cultural, historical, and economic product. In a poignant afterword, Jane Tompkins offers an autobiographical account of the ways in which the Beatles afforded her with the self-actualizing means to become less alienated from popular culture, gender expectations, and even herself during the early 1960s. "This book addresses many of the most significant aspects of the Beatles their music and their social and cultural influence and contexts. It finds a balance between specialist knowledge (i.e., musicology) and more general interest, and it covers the full breadth of the Beatles output. The Beatles effected a significant and irreversible epoch in popular music, and for this reason deserve a sound academic study of the many aspects of their arrival, their dominance, their challenges, and their legacy. Such a study is provided here in a diverse and inventive collection of engaging essays." Julian Wolfreys, author of *Occasional Deconstructions* "The variety of approaches and issues in this

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