



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

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

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

*Addresses the band's 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 band's 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 group's 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.

At the Pennsylvania State University at Altoona, Kenneth Womack is Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and Todd F. Davis is Associate Professor of English. Together they authored *The Critical Response to John Irving and Formalist Criticism and Reader-Response Theory*, and edited *Mapping the Ethical Turn: A Reader in Ethics, Culture, and Literary Theory*. Davis is also the author of *Kurt Vonnegut's Crusade; or, How a Postmodern Harlequin Preached a New Kind of Humanism*, also published by SUNY Press.

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