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Magic Circles: The Beatles in Dream and History

Devin McKinney

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#1823721 in Books Harvard University Press 2003-10-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.47 x 6.42 x 9.481, #File Name: 067401202X432 pages | File size: 58.Mb

Devin McKinney : Magic Circles: The Beatles in Dream and History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Magic Circles: The Beatles in Dream and History:

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating prose style By DSJump When reading this I was reminded of Norman Mailer in books like "Of a Fire on the Moon" or "Armies of the Night." I was really drawn in by

the captivating prose. Unfortunately, I think you have to be a Norman Mailer to get away with this kind of writerly self-indulgence, and not even Mailer always did. It seems to me that when one wants to read about The Beatles, the book at hand had darn well better focus on The Beatles and not on the writer's existentially impressionistic take on The Beatles. Still, the stylish prose merits the book a unique place among your collection of Beatlandia. 1 of 9 people found the following review helpful. [climb in the back with your head in the clouds are you're gone](#) By [wordnate](#) McKinney deftly -- and fearlessly -- punctures holes (enough of them to fill the Albert Hall) in the bloated blimp of Celebrity, then digs through the pockets of the Crabalocker fishwives and pornographic priestesses that litter the crash site. There were no survivors -- except Paul, of course. Goo goo g'joob! 11 of 19 people found the following review helpful. [Intellectualized nonsense](#) By [Paperback Writer](#) I was game for a fresh look at The Beatles. I've read more than 40 books on the greatest act in the history of entertainment, and thought this might be something unique. Well, it is. But that doesn't make it good. Note that the author wasn't alive during his subject's existence. Perhaps that's why he overextends himself with a lot of overanalysis. McCartney describes The Beatles as "a great little band." That's way too simplistic, of course, but it's closer to the truth than what this guy tries to pass off. He lost me when he included his note-to-self from long ago that the collarless jackets were a castration symbol. Oh, geez.

No one expressed the heart and soul of the Sixties as powerfully as the Beatles did through the words, images, and rhythms of their music. In *Magic Circles* Devin McKinney uncovers the secret history of a generation and a pivotal moment in twentieth-century culture. He reveals how the Beatles enacted the dream life of their time and shows how they embodied a kaleidoscope of desire and anguish for all who listened--hippies or reactionaries, teenage fans or harried parents, Bob Dylan or Charles Manson. The reader who dares to re-enter the vortex that was the Sixties will appreciate, perhaps for the first time, much of what lay beneath the social trauma of the day. Delving into concerts and interviews, films and music, outtakes and bootlegs, Devin McKinney brings to bear the insights of history, aesthetics, sociology, psychology, and mythology to account for the depth and resonance of the Beatles' impact. His book is also a uniquely multifaceted appreciation of the group's artistic achievement, exploring their music as both timeless expression and visceral response to their historical moment. Starting in the cellars of Liverpool and Hamburg, and continuing through the triumph of Beatlemania, the groundbreaking studio albums, and the last brutal, sorrowful thrust of the *White Album*, *Magic Circles* captures both the dream and the reality of four extraordinary musicians and their substance as artists. At once an entrancing narrative and an analytical montage, the book follows the drama, comedy, mystery, irony, and curious off-ramps of investigation and inquiry that contributed to one of the most amazing odysseys in pop culture.

"Indispensable ... inspirational, insanely ambitious." -- Nicholas Lezard, *The Guardian* "Brilliant." -- Jon Savage, *The Guardian* "This looks to be the standard-setting meditation on the Beatles by a devoted, visionary fan too young to have known Beatlemania first-hand ... Nobody has chronicled missing out on the '60s--and yearning for them--more vividly, or demonstrated how international superstars can become part of your personal history even if they were already history when you discovered them. McKinney's analyses and reflections are never sober and reliable--which is the only way they can be so Fab." -- Milo Miles "The best book on the Beatles." -- Greil Marcus, *The History of Rock 'n' Roll in Ten Songs* "A beautifully written examination of the Beatles' story - which becomes stranger and stranger as the years pass - and their enduring mythology. ... Makes the familiar unfamiliar and allows the necessary element of puzzlement and wonder." -- Jon Savage, "Musicians and writers choose their favourite book about music," *The Guardian* I believe *Magic Circles* quickly will be recognized as one of a handful of classic rock texts. This is simply a wonderful book, and I mean that quite literally - a book full of wonder. It filled me with the joy of intellectual discovery, challenged hard-set conventional notions I'd long harbored, and perhaps most surprising for a book of this kind, filled me with joy to read: it is a joyous book. (Kevin Dettmar, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale) About the Author Devin McKinney is an independent scholar living in Brooklyn.