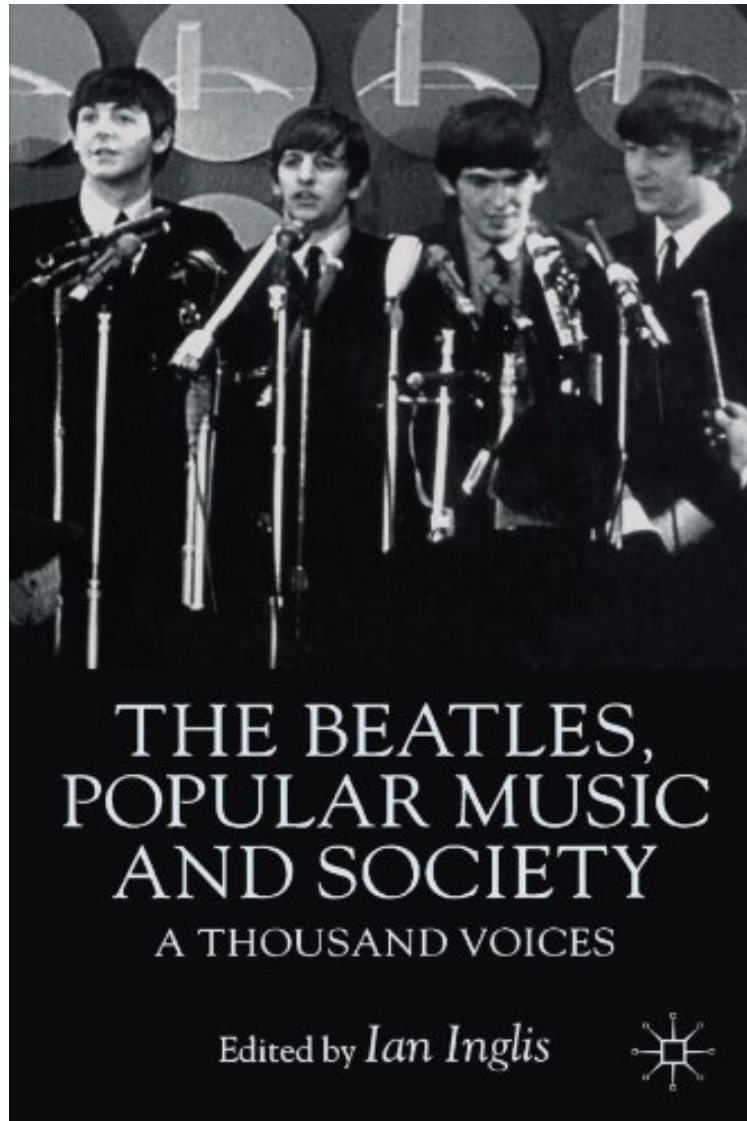


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## The Beatles, Popular Music and Society: A Thousand Voices

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NA NA : **The Beatles, Popular Music and Society: A Thousand Voices** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Beatles, Popular Music and Society: A Thousand Voices:

10 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Beatle AcademiaBy Devon L. StrolovitchSulpy Shweighardt's "Get Back" chronicle and Everett's study of "the Beatles as Musicians" from Revolver onward, have established themselves as bookshelf references on a par with the Lewisohn books. This new collection of writings probably wasn't

aiming for a similar comprehensiveness, but the topics are novel enough to make you smile as you read: from a linguistic comparison of Lennon-McCartney and Jagger-Richards to a deconstruction of the Beatles as the "cutting-edge" of youth culture. Articles with titles like "The Postmodern White Album" are bound to alienate some casual readers, as might the academic language in which they're written -- at least in comparison to the usual hyper-excited tone of Beatle writing. As a graduate student I'm less bothered by this than some apparent albeit minor errors, from attributing the Butcher cover idea to Lennon (who has said in interviews that it was the photographer, Bob Whitaker, who suggested it) to ignoring Harrison's vocal contribution to "Free As A Bird." The book is a load of fun and gives fresh approaches to less-observed topics of Beatledom. But it does suffer from a problem also evident in the "Anthology" videos, where the living Beatles themselves seemed to be telling their story in "3rd person" -- as though they were reciting a compilation of other people's commentary. Befitting its scholarly approach, this book elevates well-known sound bites to citable references of academic research. This can be tricky, given the Clinton-esque obsessions of Lennon and McCartney for their own places in history when being interviewed. As many of the articles point out, all Beatle activity took place in specific contexts too often ignored by previous "research." The same goes for all kinds of writing on the Beatles.

More has been written about the Beatles than any other performing artists of the twentieth century. Accounts of their lives and times have been retold, reproduced and reinvented to the extent that their achievements have passed into contemporary folklore and popular mythology. What has been surprisingly absent, however, is any sustained critical investigation of the numerous debates and issues the group provoked. This book provides that long overdue analysis, by seeking to present the academic study of the Beatles in its appropriate contexts - historical, political, musical and sociological. Consisting entirely of newly commissioned articles and written by an international group of scholars, its contents challenge many of the traditional assumptions about the Beatles and offer fresh and provocative insights into the nature of their success and its continuing influence. It is essential reading for those wishing to understand not only the phenomenon of the Beatles but also the cultural environment within which popular music continues to be practised and studied.

About the Author Ian Inglis is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle upon Tyne.