

READING THE BEATLES

**CULTURAL STUDIES, LITERARY
CRITICISM, AND THE FAB FOUR**



edited by

KENNETH WOMACK AND TODD F. DAVIS

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For Fred Womack
Tomorrow Never Knows

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INTRODUCTION

“Dear Sir or Madam, Will You Read My Book?”

**KENNETH WOMACK
AND TODD F. DAVIS**

ON A CLOUDY, frigid afternoon in January 1969, the Beatles performed their final, impromptu concert on the rooftop of their London office building. In the ensuing months, they recorded their brilliant swan-song *Abbey Road* (1969), saw their personal relationships dissolve into bitter litigation, and seemingly walked off their considerable global stage forever. Yet in the decades since their disbandment, they have continued to exert a substantial impact on the direction of Western culture. In 2000 alone, the surviving Beatles debuted a restored print of their much-ballyhooed film *A Hard Day's Night* to renewed critical acclaim; published a lavish, best-selling coffee-table book titled *The Beatles Anthology*; and released a compilation of their greatest hits that topped the musical charts in thirty-four countries and vastly outsold contemporary music's other popular boy groups, 'N Sync and the Backstreet Boys. As Edna Gundersen recently observed in *USA Today*, “Though defunct for the past 31 years, the Beatles still deliver the rock of ages—all ages” (E1). Perhaps even more remarkably, the Beatles continue to influence our conceptions of gender dynamics, the nature and direction of popular music, and the increasingly powerful and socially influential constructions of iconicity and celebrity.

The reasons behind the phenomenon of the Beatles and their sustained success are as multifarious and as eminently complex as Western culture itself. Beatlemania emerged on a postwar British landscape pocked with poverty and craters—the literal scars of the socioeconomic havoc wrought by the long

reach of World War II. Vast unemployment and stultifying class disjunction were in the air, but younger Britons had simply had enough. They no longer wanted to hear about the Great Depression or the Blitz. As events would so clearly demonstrate, they wanted to bathe themselves in the sounds of “Please Please Me” and “She Loves You”—and they wanted to hear the words of love and possibility over and over again. Things could not have been more different in the United States, of course, where Americans were winning the peace during one of the nation’s most sustained periods of economic growth and expansion. Clouds were on the horizon, to be sure—the realities of the cold war had been rendered all too clear by the missiles of October 1962. But nothing could have prepared Americans—indeed, the world—for the devastation of the Kennedy assassination and its attendant effects on a nation’s belief in itself and in the possibilities of the future. But then, like a proverbial breath of fresh air, the Fab Four arrived on the scene in February 1964, and a nation in mourning became transfixed by “I Want to Hold Your Hand” and the notion—pleasant relief that it was—of meeting the Beatles.

Their Englishness no doubt played a central role in their initial charm—their North Country accents soaring above a deft blend of Mersey beat music and African-American rhythm and blues. Armed with their ready wit and unflinching smiles, the Beatles were simply too much for Americans to resist. Overstating George Martin’s role in fashioning the sound that first caught the attention of British and American ears, that transformed the Beatles into the stuff of history, is nearly impossible, of course. The A&R (Artists & Repertoire) men at Decca may have genuinely believed that guitar-oriented music was on its last legs, but Martin clearly heard something different in the unpolished, stage-honed thrashings of John, Paul, George, and Ringo. With his guidance, the Beatles dared to experiment with their sound, to revivify it with irony and nostalgia, to adorn it with a string quartet, a full-blown orchestra, and even a sitar. Martin afforded them with the courage and the knowledge to tinker with their sound as far as their artistry would take them. And, as history has shown, their fecund imaginations traversed well beyond the boundaries of their musicality, transmogrifying Western culture’s conceptions of hope, love, and the idea—whimsical as it may seem—of an everlasting peace.

Reading the Beatles: Cultural Studies, Literary Criticism, and the Fab Four addresses the enduring nature of the band’s many sociocultural achievements. But the volume also pointedly examines the Beatles’ considerable *literary* accomplishments. And why not? Little argument exists among musicologists and literary critics alike about the Beatles’ inherent literary qualities. After all, their songs—like our greatest works of literature—almost exclusively concern themselves with the human condition and the dilemmas that confront us regarding the interpersonal relationships that mark our lives. The Beatles’ albums offer a range of decidedly literary characters, from Mean Mr. Mustard, Eleanor Rigby, and Polythene Pam to Billy Shears, Bungalow Bill, and Rocky

Raccoon. These personages, in addition to the psychological dimensions of the band members' personalities themselves, imbue their works with a particularly literary texture. "The Beatles treated the album as a journey from one place to another," Tim Riley observes. "They built cornerstones into their records by positioning their songs in relation to one another: beginnings and endings of sides can sum up, contradict, qualify, or cast a shadow over the songs they introduce or follow" (29–30). For this reason, one can hardly imagine hearing the final a cappella chords of "Because" without anticipating "You Never Give Me Your Money" and the bittersweet nostalgia of the symphonic suite that punctuates the end of the band's career on *Abbey Road*. Similarly, the manner in which "Drive My Car" and "Taxman" introduce *Rubber Soul* (1965) and *Revolver* (1966), respectively, not only signals us about the musical direction of various stages of the band's development, but also becomes inextricably bound up in our successive "listensings" (or readings) of those recordings. In short, the positioning of the Beatles' songs on their albums underscores the ways in which the band intended for us to receive—indeed, to interpret—their artistic output. Who could conceive, for example, of listening to the beginning of the *White Album* (*The Beatles*; 1968) and not hearing the soaring jet engines that announce the familiar opening strains of "Back in the U.S.S.R."?

Perhaps the band's abiding self-consciousness about the overall production, design, and presentation of their art invites us to read (and reread) the Beatles in the first place. From their heyday as recording artists from 1962 through 1969, the Beatles enjoyed a staggering musical and lyrical leap that takes them from their first album *Please Please Me* (1963), which they recorded in a mere sixteen hours, to *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), the *White Album*, and *Abbey Road*, which took literally hundreds of hours to complete. Paul McCartney astutely recognized the artistic integrity of their musical oeuvre when he recently spoke of their albums as a singular and sacrosanct "body of work." When considered in this fashion, the Beatles' corpus reveals itself to be a collection of musical and lyrical impressions evolving toward an aesthetic unity that appears to reach its artistic heights during the late 1960s and the band's studio years. Numerous music critics echo McCartney's sentiments, including Ian MacDonald, who notes that "so obviously dazzling was the Beatles' achievement that few have questioned it." Their recordings, he adds, comprise "not only an outstanding repository of popular art but a cultural document of permanent significance" (1, 33). Riley similarly describes their canon as a "very intricate art. . . . The Beatles are our first recording artists," he writes, "and they remain our best" (9, 26; emphasis added). The chapters herein, with their emphasis on the literary, musicological, and ideological components of the band's phenomenal success, tell us why.

Divided into three parts, *Reading the Beatles* traces the sociocultural impact of the Beatles via their music's interdisciplinary connections with various modes of literary, musicological, and cultural criticism. The chapters in

part one, titled “Speaking words of wisdom: The Beatles’ Poetics,” examine the literary and musicological qualities of selected Beatles songs in relation to their social and cultural ramifications. In “‘I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together’: Bakhtin and the Beatles,” Ian Marshall draws on Mikhail M. Bakhtin’s wide-ranging theories of dialogism in a reading of the formal structures inherent in the Beatles’ poetics. In addition to applying Bakhtinian concepts such as novelization, chronotope, carnival, and genre blending to the Beatles’ musical corpus, Marshall discusses the qualities of open-endedness and irresolution, in Bakhtin’s phraseology, that characterize the band’s evolving artistic legacy. In “From ‘Craft’ to ‘Art’: Formal Structure in the Music of the Beatles,” John Covach demonstrates the ways in which early John Lennon–Paul McCartney compositions are closely dependent on models drawn from American music of the 1950s and early 1960s. Using models such as “From Me to You” and “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” Covach chronicles the Beatles’ musical development from “craft” to “rock” and suggests that such analysis forces us to rethink conventional accounts of rock style and its development—a point that extends well beyond the music of the Beatles in specific and rock music of the 1960s in general. Sheila Whiteley’s “‘Love, love, love’: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Selected Songs by the Beatles” explores the ways in which sex plays an integral role in the fanatic adoration of the Beatles by young, predominantly white girls caught up in the throes of Beatlemania. Drawing on recent insights in cultural subjectivity, sexuality, and gender, Whiteley investigates the relationship among musical, narrative, and lyrical focuses in representative songs throughout the Beatles’ career. In “Painting Their Room in a Colorful Way: The Beatles’ Exploration of Timbre,” Walter Everett argues that the Beatles’ recordings provide their listeners with vivid means for encountering both the inner and outer worlds of the human imagination. Everett highlights the band’s use of tonal color, or timbre, as the mechanism via which the Beatles revived the brilliant sensory world of their lyrics in their music.

The contributions in part two, “A splendid time is guaranteed for all’: Theorizing the Beatles,” trace the development of the Beatles’ artistry from their filmic efforts through classic works such as *Revolver*, *Sgt. Pepper*, and the *White Album*. Kenneth Womack and Todd F. Davis’s “Mythology, Remythology, and Demythology: The Beatles on Film” examines the manner in which the band appropriated the power of Beatlemania and self-consciously established a cultural mythology to ensure their commercial and popular dominion. Womack and Davis discuss the infancy, maturity, and ultimate disillusionment the band experienced during the production of their four feature films—*A Hard Day’s Night* (1964), *Help!* (1965), *Yellow Submarine* (1968), and *Let It Be* (1970)—as well as their television movie, *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967). In “*Vacio Luminoso*: ‘Tomorrow Never Knows’ and the Coherence of the Impossible,” Russell Reising argues that *Revolver*’s final track, the psychedelic

"Tomorrow Never Knows," affords the album with a sense of musical coherence by incorporating all of the album's major themes in a single song. Reising contends that the album's wide-ranging musical styles come together in a truly revolutionary fashion through the oscillating rhythms and themes inherent in "Tomorrow Never Knows." In "The Spectacle of Alienation: Death, Loss, and the Crowd in *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*," William M. Northcutt discusses the Beatles' vastly influential album in terms of its overarching themes of sociocultural detachment and alienation. Northcutt devotes particular attention to the work's inherent "political unconscious," especially in terms of the ways in which *Sgt. Pepper* impinges on salient issues regarding class consciousness and class conflict. Jeffrey Roessner's "We All Want to Change the World: Postmodern Politics and the Beatles' *White Album*" illustrates the manner in which the album's radical eclecticism and self-reflexivity function as the band's attempt to adorn their work with a scathing political commentary. Roessner argues that the Beatles employed postmodern notions of pastiche and parody on the *White Album* in an effort to challenge the commodification of popular music and our larger assumptions about what constitutes political relevance during the late 1960s and beyond.

The chapters in part three, "We can work it out': The Beatles and Culture," explore the ways in which the band functions as a cultural, historical, and economic product that both adheres to and challenges established ideological norms. Paul Gleed's "'The rest of you, if you'll just rattle your jewelry': The Beatles and Questions of Mass and High Culture" investigates the many ways in which the Beatles' musical accomplishments blur existing distinctions between what constitute high and low forms of culture. In addition to demonstrating that the Beatles—through a process of "double-coding"—self-consciously merged divergent genres of musical expression such as classical and Eastern music, Gleed contends that this inventive and original approach to their art resulted in the band's virtual remapping of prevailing cultural value systems. In "A Universal Childhood: Tourism, Pilgrimage, and the Beatles," Kevin McCarron discusses the Fab Four's vaunted place in contemporary British tourism, especially in terms of the manner in which it serves to maintain their iconoclastic image and the myths associated with the story of Beatlemania. McCarron devotes particular attention to the quasi-religious dimensions of the band's legacy, as well as to England's Beatles shrines and the Beatles "pilgrims" who annually visit them. James M. Decker's "'Baby You're a Rich Man': The Beatles, Ideology, and the Cultural Moment" dissects the ideological and economic imperatives behind the band's dramatic resurgence in popularity during the late 1990s and the early years of the new century. In addition to investigating McCartney's considerable role in engineering the Beatles' revival, Decker highlights the ways in which McCartney, Ono, Harrison, and Starr marketed the band's artistic output for consumption by new generations of fans. In "Spinning the Historical Record: Lennon, McCartney,

and Museum Politics,” John Kimsey examines the recent museum exhibition, “Lennon: His Life and Work,” along with McCartney’s contemporaneous public activities in the light of an ongoing struggle over the meaning of, and the power to configure, the Beatles’ historical legacy. Kimsey argues that the Lennon exhibition can be seen as working officially to confirm Lennon’s status as cultural icon and martyr—to canonize him, in effect, as a pop-culture saint—while rewriting the popular narrative that depicts Lennon’s Beatles work as the finest of his career and by reframing McCartney not as Lennon’s greatest collaborator/rival, but as a relatively marginal figure in his artistic life. Finally, Jane Tompkins’s Afterword, “I Want to Hold Your Hand,” offers a poignant autobiographical account about the ways in which the Beatles afforded her with the self-actualizing means to become less alienated from popular culture, gender expectations, and herself during the early 1960s.

PART I

**“Speaking words
of wisdom”**

The Beatles’ Poetics

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CHAPTER 1

**“I am he as you are he
as you are me and we
are all together”**

Bakhtin and the Beatles

IAN MARSHALL

AT FIRST, my favorite Beatle was Ringo, a fact that surprises me now. I was young, and I had watched the Beatles on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, and I think (now) that maybe Ringo was the first to make an individual impression. I mean, the concept of Beatles meant long hair, electric guitar, and Liverpool accent. John, Paul, and George ran together in my young mind (they are common names), but Ringo stood out—the name, the rings, the only one playing something other than guitar. Obviously, I was not alone in being quick to identify a favorite Beatle. Everyone did. Is it too much to say that your favorite Beatle was a teen and preteen version of a Rorschach test? It spoke volumes about who we were.

My Ringo phase did not last long. The appeal must have been his goofiness, and his grin, which were all a nine-year-old could hope to aspire to in terms of being cool. For a while after that it was John and Paul together—after all, they wrote the songs. That lasted through my first purchase of an album, *Sgt. Pepper*. After that it was George, and by that time it was becoming clearer to me what the appeal was. George was the unrecognized talent, the lead guitarist who was not the leader, writing great songs (by then) that nobody seemed to recognize as great songs, the one who was dealing with the really important stuff, such as the state of one's soul. He was like Superman springing from

Clark Kent, another “quiet one,” and that was me, too, in my mind, a quiet one concerning myself with the spiritual essence of life, whose genius nobody yet recognized. In college, on my way to becoming an English major (and becoming interested in changing the world and finding out about the milder forms of mind alteration), my allegiances shifted to John. I admired his way with words, his intelligence, his social conscience, and his passion.

I imagine neither that my shifting identifications are universal, nor that my reasons for the identifications are unique, but I am struck, in the wake of George Harrison’s death, by the numerous media references to George as the “quiet Beatle,” the “spiritual one,” or the mystical or soulful Beatle. John, of course, was the intellectual, the wordsmith, the activist. Paul was the cute one, the source of mellow melody to accompany John’s hard-hitting rhythms and words, playing the role of heart to John’s mind and George’s soul. Ringo was the genial goofball with the easygoing, tolerant, accepting nature. A clear tendency exists to see the Beatles as distinct personality types or as different aspects of the self. Maybe a fully integrated self, or a functioning society, contains all of these, or allows for the interplay of these aspects. And perhaps it is that sort of interplay that accounts for some of the enduring appeal of Beatlemusic—and Beatlelyrics, too.



Literary theorist Mikhail M. Bakhtin suggested that the magic of the novel derives from what he calls “dialogics.” His claim is that the novel, above all other literary forms, is more open to various sorts of dialogue than other literary forms.

I must interrupt myself here: I have the Beatles playing in the background. My plan is to play all of their records (*Please Please Me* through *Abbey Road*) from start to finish as I write, so that I, too, engage in a kind of dialogue with the Beatles. “Chains,” they are singing now, “my baby’s got me locked up in chains.” Bakhtin sees poetry as a literary form bound in chains. It is an inherently limited form notable for its lack of dialogue. What we generally get in poetry, says Bakhtin (and this would hold true for song lyrics as well) is the poet/songwriter’s monologic voice—his worldview, his distinctive character, his thoughts expressed in his own voice. In the novel, by way of contrast, the author allows in other voices and language styles, the voices and language styles of the narrator and of all the other characters, each with their own worldviews implicit in their speech. But Bakhtin is not speaking of actual dialogue where characters speak within quotation marks. He shows that the narrator’s voice takes on the inflections of other characters as the narrator moves in and out of different “character zones.” In the novel, we have this constant interplay of voices and worldviews interacting with other voices and worldviews, as well as an openness to that sort of interplay.

A few literary critics have demonstrated that Bakhtin's generalizations about poetry's tendency toward the monologic voice are open to challenge. David B. Morris, for instance, in "Burns and Heteroglossia," has shown that Robert Burns blends the language styles of both Scots vernacular speech and the formal diction of the English poetic tradition. And Patrick Murphy, in "Reclaiming the Power: Robinson Jeffers's Verse Novels," contends that verse narratives, such as those by Robinson Jeffers, often take on novelistic and dialogic qualities.

My claim is that the Beatles also give voice to dialogic impulses, and that constitutes part of the appeal of their songs.



What I am not talking about is the fact that Lennon and McCartney cowrote many of the Beatles songs. As we now know, and as was in fact quite clear at the time, the later songs were not cowritten at all: they were Lennon songs and McCartney songs. And when John and Paul were actually writing together, in the early days, the result was the most insipid—and least dialogic—of their songs. It is a stretch even to call those early songs *monologic* since lyrically not much of a distinctive voice at all lies behind the utterances. There is an "I" who pines after a "you," with the characters identified only by pronouns and little to distinguish the speaker from every other pining lover of pop rock, then and now.

But even as I write, I hear hints of more interesting ideas:

There's a place where I can go
When I feel low, when I feel blue
And it's my mind, and there's no time
When I'm alone.

The lyrics of "There's a Place" anticipate some of the later introspection of John, an investigation into personal pain and emptiness. So a dialogue is at work here: this voice out of the desert place of the soul meets the pop tradition's stock celebration of love:

In my mind there's no sorrow,
Don't you know that it's so,
There'll be no sad tomorrow
Don't you know that it's so.

In a few songs, conversations move beyond the uttered plea of the lover to the beloved. In "She Loves You," a third party serves as mediator in the relationship, convincing the lover that his case is not hopeless. It is a slightly more

complex situation than is typical of the pop tradition, and a new voice, that of the helpfully interceding friend. Perhaps this song echoes some of the shared confidences of the Beatles during the Hamburg days, when their friendships were as tight as they would ever be.

But for the most part in these early songs, lyrically at least, we have just the monologic voice of the pop tradition's preoccupation with the idea of love, the idea, that is, and not a real love at all because neither the lover nor the beloved is distinguished by any hint of a developed character, nor is the romantic relationship distinguished by any particulars. I am also struck by the frequent use of the imperative in these early songs as well: "Please Please Me," "Love Me Do," "Don't Bother Me," and "Hold Me Tight." Such commands seem the essence of the monologic as the speaker seeks to assert the primacy of his wishes—and his worldview—through the agency of the compliant addressee.

So lyrically not much evidence of the possibilities of dialogism is seen in the early Beatles. But the music is another story. Think of the understated and tasteful restraint of George's lead guitar or Ringo's drums. I once heard folksinger Mike Cross talk about the purposes of different kinds of music. The purpose of bluegrass, he said, is to play everything as fast as you can ("A good bluegrass picker can take a three-minute song and get it over with in about fifteen seconds"). Jazz is about justifying your mistakes: you keep returning to the discordant notes as if you meant to put them there. And rock 'n' roll, says Cross, is all about finding excuses for totally irrelevant guitar solos and totally irrelevant drum solos. That is all too true of all too many rock 'n' roll bands, but not of the Beatles. We find no guitar and drum solos (not until "The End," at least)—nothing that is not integrated into the song. The lead guitar riffs are never allowed to go on long enough to take over the song or to dominate it. Nor are the drums just keeping the beat. Interesting things are often happening on the offbeat in Beatles songs. Nor does Paul's bass simply keep beat. It is a very melodic bass, which Paul once attributed to the light weight of his violin-shaped Höfner bass, which he said had a "liberating effect . . . because it's so light you treat it more like a guitar. I found I became more melodic on bass than other bass-players because I could do lots of high stuff on the twelfth fret. Being melodic in my writing, it was good not always to have to play the root notes" (*Anthology* 80).

In addition to the guitars and drums, of course, we hear the distinctive voices of John and Paul. Musically, then, even in the early Beatles, instruments and voices with recognizable personalities blend in a kind of conversation, none of them dominating. But the lyrics were not yet very distinctive—or dialogic.

Help! and (even more so) *Rubber Soul* marked the beginnings of the most striking Beatles innovations, and many of those can be understood in terms of Bakhtin's dialogics. Specific Bakhtinian ideas evident in the songs of the Beatles from *Help!* forward are genre blending, novelization, intertextuality, open-endedness, carnival, the chronotope, and character zones. Let us consider these Bakhtinian concepts one at a time.

GENRE BLENDING

Bakhtin's admiration for the dialogics of the novel is based in large part on its elasticity in absorbing or incorporating other literary genres. The Beatles did something similar with the popular song. Of course, rock 'n' roll has always had some genre blending, growing, as it has, out of the rhythm-and-blues tradition. But the Beatles did more than anyone before (or since) to blend other traditions with rock 'n' roll.

Perhaps this is the most striking element of Beatles dialogics: their openness to musical genres and the language styles associated with those genres. Although the Beatles' first few albums were solidly in the context of the pop tradition, later albums are marked by a wide range of explorations into other musical genres, as well as a massive incorporation of them into rock 'n' roll. On songs such as "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away"—the acoustic guitar, the tone of a line such as "Gather round all you clowns"—we can hear the influence of Bob Dylan. Perhaps we also hear Dylan's influence in John's early expressions of soul searching and personal pain in "I'm a Loser" and "Help!" It was revolutionary in the mid-1960s for rock music to look inward so searchingly, to express emotions such as self-doubt, self-loathing, ennui—to express anything beyond love, yearning, recrimination, or misery. Of course, this may seem anything but dialogic (more like the height of monologism to deal with ego as John does), but he is bringing this self-searching into contact with the rock tradition. There is the dialogue—confessional poetry meets rock 'n' roll. One of John's early ventures in this vein, "Nowhere Man," can in fact be read (or heard) as a complaint about the constraints of the monologic. The Nowhere Man, kin to one of Thoreau's "mass of men [who] lead lives of quiet desperation," according to John's critique of conformity, "Just sees what he wants to see," or worse, "Doesn't have a point of view." John's songwriting voice would become increasingly expressive of a particular point of view, and increasingly it would attempt to encompass seeing things from other viewpoints. "Nowhere Man, please listen," sings John. "You don't know what you're missing." What he is missing is the sound of other voices, an awareness of other points of view.

In acknowledging Dylan's influence on "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away," John said it "was written in my Dylan days for the film *Help!* I am like

a chameleon, influenced by everything that's going [on]" (qtd. in Giuliano 1999, 56). George says something similar about all the Beatles songwriters (meaning himself and Paul as well as John). Referring to the days circa *Sgt. Pepper*, George said, "We were all opening our minds to different areas, and then we'd come together and share it all with each other. It was exciting, because there was a lot of cross-fertilization" (*Anthology* 241).

George's intellectual exploration, of course, led him to the East. In John's "Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)" (*Rubber Soul*), we have an introduction to Indian music and a blending of that music with Western traditions, an intergenre dialogue that would continue in greater depth on later albums. Here, George plays the sitar as if it were a lead guitar, using the Western chromatic scale, but it is certainly a new voice being brought into conversation with pop music. On later albums, the dialogue with the Indian musical tradition would deepen with George's acquaintance with that tradition. On "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" (*Sgt. Pepper*), George has said that he was imitating "an instrument called a sarangi, which sounds like the human voice." George wanted to incorporate the practice of the sarangi playing in unison with the vocalist, "but because I'm not a sarangi player I played it on the guitar. In the middle eight of the song you can hear the guitar playing along with John's voice. I was trying to copy Indian classical music" (*Anthology* 243). In "Within You Without You," George and musicians from the Eastern Music Circle of London do play Indian instruments—tambouras, tabla, bowed dilruba, sitar—and they share acoustic space with violins and cellos. The raga meets Western classical music—on a rock 'n' roll record.

Obviously, plenty of other Beatle songs incorporated Indian instruments and techniques, but the influence was more than just musical. A whole worldview associated with transcendental meditation, and a language associated with it as well, became an integral component of Beatles music. Consider the reference to maya (the illusion of what we take to be reality) in these lines from "Within You Without You":

We were talking about the space between us all
And the people who hide themselves behind a wall of illusion,
Never glimpse the truth.

But the dialogue continued even beyond the songs incorporating Indian sounds and techniques. After bringing Eastern ideas and values into contact with the musical (and cultural) traditions of the West, a time came when the Beatles, or at least John, challenged those ideas and values. And so we have the harsh rejection of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in "Sexy Sadie," a scornful and angry response to what John saw as the Maharishi's hypocrisy. During their extended stay with the Maharishi, while he preached otherworldliness and the life of spirit during the day, he was hitting on the women traveling with the