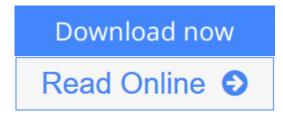


The Beatles: The Biography

By Bob Spitz



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As soon as The Beatles became famous, the spin machine began to construct a myth--one that has continued to this day. But the truth is much more interesting, much more exciting, and much more moving. In this bestselling book, Bob Spitz has written the biography for which Beatles fans have long waited. 32 pages of b/w photos.



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The Beatles: The Biography By Bob Spitz Bibliography

• Sales Rank: #185309 in Books

• Brand: Spitz, Bob

Published on: 2006-10-10Original language: English

• Number of items: 1

• Dimensions: 9.13" h x 1.63" w x 6.00" l, 2.73 pounds

• Binding: Paperback

• 992 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. With this massive opus, veteran music journalist Spitz (Dylan: A Biography) tells the definitive story of the band that sparked a cultural revolution. Calling on books, articles, radio programs and primary interviews, Spitz follows the band from each member's family origins in working-class Liverpool to the band's agonizing final days. Spitz's unflinching biography reveals that not only did the Beatles pioneer a new era of rock but they also were on the cutting edge of rock star excess, from their 1961 amphetaminefueled sets in the clubs of Hamburg to their eventual appetites for stronger drugs, including marijuana, LSD, cocaine and, eventually for John Lennon, heroin. Sex was also part of the equation; in 1962, when the band cut its first audition for Sir George Martin, all four members had a venereal disease, and both John's and Paul McCartney's girlfriends were pregnant. Spitz details the tangled web of bad business deals that flowed from novice manager Brian Epstein (though the heavily conflicted Epstein can be forgiven since he was in uncharted territory). Although this is a hefty volume steeped in research, Spitz writes economically, and with flair, letting the facts and characters speak for themselves. In doing so, he captures an ironic sadness that accompanied the Beatles' runaway success—how their dreams of stardom, once realized, became a prison, forcing the band to spend large parts of their youth in hotel rooms to avoid mobs and to stage elaborate escapes from literally life-threatening situations after appearances. As with all great history writing, Spitz both captures a moment in time and humanizes his subjects. While some will blanch at the unsettling dark sides of the Beatles, most will come to appreciate the band even more for knowing the incredible personal odysseys they endured. 32 pages of b&w photos.

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From Bookmarks Magazine

Edited down from a staggering 2,700 pages, *The Beatles* took eight years of research and writing. But with some 500 books chronicling their lives, loves, and legacy, one would think The Beatles' story had been adequately told. Adequate isn't authoritative, however, and most critics believe that Spitz, a former manager for Bruce Springsteen and author of *Dylan: The Biography*, has synthesized his subject masterfully. Though some would prefer hagiography (Charles Taylor of *Newsday* seems particularly aggrieved the biography doesn't live up to the Beatles' artistic standard—but what has?), the general consensus is that if it's popculture history you desire, *The Beatles* tops the charts.

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From **Booklist**

In just under 1,000 pages, Spitz offers a fresh, terrifically entertaining perspective on the world's most famous rock group. The book is packed with details and anecdotes that bring the Fab Four to life. Immensely talented but humanly flawed, they created remarkable music during an extraordinary time and were often caught up in events and circumstances beyond their control. At first amused by Beatlemania, their attitudes changed to horror when the roar of the crowds came to include death threats, and obligations became unrelenting. Spitz retells many familiar stories: when John met Paul, the triumph in America, the infamous "butcher cover" of *Yesterday and Today*, the debacle in Manila where the Beatles unintentionally jilted First Lady Imelda Marcos, the Beatles-are-more-popular-than-Jesus comment, the remarkable response to *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, manager Brian Epstein's death, and the breakup. Good though less well known is the meeting with Elvis in the King's rented house in Bel Air, California; the Beatles, nervous in the presence of a boyhood idol, were unsure about how to act and resorted to embarrassing silence. Spitz's group portrait should now be considered the definitive Beatles biography, especially for new generations of Beatles

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Users Review

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