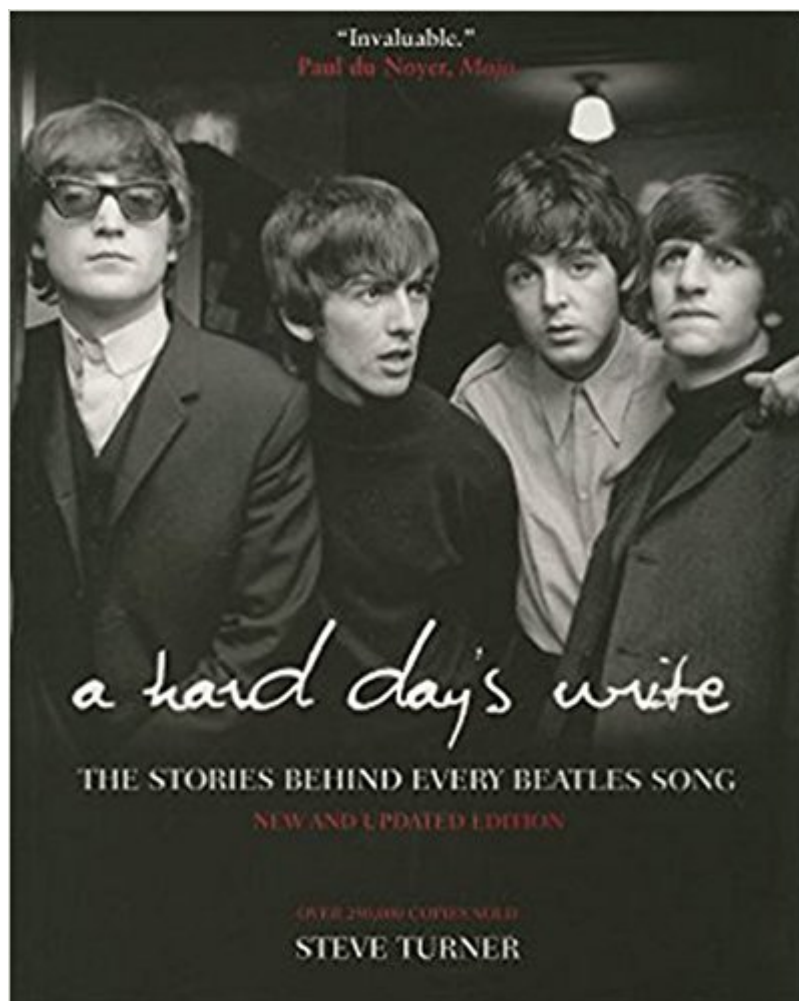




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# A Hard Day's Write: The Stories Behind Every Beatles Song



## Synopsis

A lavishly illustrated, rollicking account of the real people and events that inspired the Beatles' lyrics. Who was "just seventeen" and made Paul's heart go "boom"? Was there really an Eleanor Rigby? Where's Penny Lane? In *A Hard Day's Write*, music journalist Steve Turner shatters many well-worn myths and adds a new dimension to the Fab Four's rich legacy by investigating for the first time the ordinary people and events immortalized in the Beatles' music and now occupying a special niche in popular culture's collective imagination. Arranged chronologically by album, the book breaks new ground by exploring how private incidents influenced the group's writing and how their music evolved. Turner reveals that Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds was really a drawing by Julian Lennon of his childhood friend; Bungalow Bill was an all-American tiger hunter; Doctor Robert was a New York 'speech doctor'; and much more. A longtime Beatles admirer, Turner tracked down and interviewed the real-life subjects of the songs, probed public records and newspaper archives, and spoke in depth to the people closet to the Beatles to unearth tales that have never before been made public. The result is a book that chronicles an untold story of the Beatles themselves. Illustrated with over 200 photographs, *A Hard Day's Write* is a visually alluring and highly entertaining journey to the land stretching just beneath your conscious mind, mapped out with strawberry fields, fool-topped hills, and long and winding roads.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"One of the most readable and illuminating books ever written about The Beatles" Steve Matteo The

Music Paper" --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Steve Turner is the author of *Trouble Man: The Life and Death of Marvin Gaye*, *A Hard Day's Write: The Stories Behind Every Beatles' Song*, *Hungry for Heaven: Rock and Roll and the Search for Redemption*, *Jack Kerouac: Angelheaded Hipster*, and *Van Morrison: Too Late to Stop Now*. His articles have appeared in *Rolling Stone*, *Mojo*, *Q*, and the *London Times*. He lives in London with his wife and two children.

I bought this as a gift for a friend after getting a copy as a gift myself. It's a great book, full of interesting stories of how the Beatles songs came to be. It's full of interesting tidbits like this: the Beatles and the Stones were actually good friends, not the rivals they were portrayed as. In fact the Stones were struggling and having a hard time, and the Beatles wrote a song and gave it to them, a song that basically saved their career. It's a quick, fun read, especially if you're a fan.

If you really want to know nearly everything about Beatles this is a fine read. Great coverage of all the songs origins and true meanings hidden in obfuscated lyrics, which is the way they loved to do.

In the music unit my Popular Culture class we look at the songs of the Beatles, specifically those collected on their "Beatles 1" album. Students write a paper looking at the stages of the group as defined by the songs on that album and sometimes they find things on the Internet that talk about how John Lennon and Paul McCartney (and George Harrison for "Something") came to write their songs. Unfortunately that has little to do with putting these songs into distinct chronological stages, but after reading "A Hard Day's Write" you can see where they would be fascinated by some of these stories and forget to just listen to the songs and decide for themselves what they are about and what makes them work. Steve Turner provides the stories behind every one of the Beatles songs, including "Free As a Bird" and all the songs from "Anthology" and "Live at the BBC" that would not be covered by the other albums. The book is divided into 14 chapters representing 17 albums ("Magical Mystery Tour" and "Yellow Submarine" are combined, as are the three "Anthology" albums). Turner is following the British albums and including those songs that ended up on the two "Masterworks" collections with the albums that were being recorded (e.g., "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "With the Beatles," "Penny Lane" and "Strawberry Field Forever" with "Sgt. Pepper"). It does not include the songs by other writers that the Beatles covered during their early years. Turner makes the point that this is not a book that is attempting to explain what the Beatles

"were really trying to say," but tells us about the ideas and inspirations behind these songs, as well as dispelling some of the popular myths connected to some of these songs. You have probably heard about some of these, such as Peter Fonda telling John Lennon "I know what its like to be dead" leading to "She Said She Said," the Victorian poster about "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" and Julian Lennon's drawing of his friend "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds." But know you can also learn about the real location of not only "Penny Lane" but also "Blue Jay Way," who was the real "Polythene Pam," and what happened when the Beatles mentioned Denis O'Dell in "You Know My Name." Nor does Turner present this book as the definitive one on the subject, since that cannot be written until everything the Beatles have to say about their songs is made public. However, he did track down and interview the real-life subjects of these songs as well as going through public records and newspaper archives, and speaking in depth to some of the people who were closest to the Beatles back in the sixties. Turner also provides a brief introduction to each album that talks about where the Beatles were in their careers at that point, such as how "Revolver" represented a significant development in the Beatles' sound since their music was now being created in the studio with no thought for how it could be played in concert (the album came out during their final tour but none of its 14 songs were ever played on stage by the band). So Turner does pay some attention to things other than the individual songs. The back of the book contains a chronology for the beats from the births of Ringo Starr and John Lennon in 1940 to Paul McCartney filing a suit against the Beatles and Co. to dissolve the partnership, a discography from 1962-1996, a bibliography, and index. There are also over 200 photographs, some in color, many of which are on point with regards to specific songs (e.g., you get to see the gravestone of Eleanor Rigby, the real Bungalow Bill, and the Apple Scruffs who came in through the bathroom window. No matter what level of fan you are of the Beatles you should find plenty of interest and stories you have never heard before. At the very least, you can learn something new about your favorite Beatles songs.

Great fro Beatles' lovers.

Husband loves it, Loves Trivia and grew with the Beatles

Very well written and shines light on the composition of all the fab four's amazing songs, popular and not so popular. Includes great pictures, including Julian Lennon's picture of "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" and quotes from those closest to them as well as the Beatles themselves. Really loved reading it!

Absolutely loved this book! It gives you so many interesting details about songs and the stories behind them! It's fun to find your favorite songs and read about them.

I bought this book for a paper I did my senior year in college about the Beatles -- it is ABSOLUTELY worth the money. Not only did it help me greatly with my research, it's also a very interesting read if you're Beatles fan.

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