




This first issue of the *Journal of Beatles Studies* shows the importance of Beatles Studies as a major discipline in Popular Music Studies, in a new multidisciplinary research world. There is no doubt that it will impose itself as a central space of cohesion and connection between Beatles scholars and Beatles-related professionals.

Claire Fraysse 

Sorbonne Université, France
claire.fraysse@sorbonne-universite.fr

References

- Everett, W. 1999–2001. *The Beatles as Musicians*, vols 1 and 2 (Oxford, Oxford University Press)
 Julien, O. (ed.) 2008. *Sgt Pepper and the Beatles: It Was Forty Years Ago Today* (London, Routledge)
 O'Grady, T.J. 1983. *The Beatles, a Musical Evolution* (Boston, MA, Twayne)

***Sex and Gender in Pop/Rock Music: the Blues through The Beatles to Beyoncé.* By Walter Everett. London: Bloomsbury, 2023. xii + 260 pp. ISBN: 978-1-5013-4595-1 doi:10.1017/S0261143023000545**

There's an elegant book on this interesting topic by Ann Powers (2017) called, precisely, *Good Booty: Love and Sex, Black and White, Body and Soul in American Music*. Despite a title open and cosily alliterative, this one could be called something more clunky like *How Words and Music in Recorded Song Express Sex, Gender, Sexuality, and 'Erotics' in American Society*.

Walter Everett says that, for his life, no less, 'this book is the capstone' (p. xi). Really? First-name-on-the-team-sheet in any edited collection on The Beatles, and the crucial figure in such popular-music-is-here-to-stay-get-used-to-it music-theory collections as *Understanding Rock* (Covach and Boone 1997) and *Expression in Pop-Rock Music* (2000, 2007), the two editions of which he edited, Everett was wholly absent from the minor industry of edited collections on sex, gender and sexuality in what he calls pop-slash-rock: *Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender* (Whiteley 1997), *Queering the Popular Pitch* (Rycenga and Whiteley 2006), *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Rustin and Tucker 2008), *Oh Boy! Masculinities and Popular Music* (Jarman-Ivens 2007), *The Routledge Research Companion to Popular Music and Gender* (Hawkins 2017), *The Oxford Handbook to Music and Queerness* (Maus et al. 2022), on and on and on. He was a real nowhere man. 'They didn't invite me to contribute, again ... (sigh) ... back to The Beatles'.

Everett's is a challenging work, full of absorbing detail, a lot of listening and a lot of reading. Not only does the book run to 191 pages, followed by 26 pages of bibliography and two most useful indexes, but an accompanying online database adds a further and staggering 108 (online) pages: track, comment, track, comment. From the database in turn, several tables are transferred back to the book, taking up, for example, seven pages of the introduction, or 12 pages of the second chapter. The content then claims swathes of territory: 'physiology, psychology, sociology, gender studies, aesthetics, the parsing of poetic texts, linguistics and music history, criticism, and analysis' (p. viii). Following a too-packed introduction,

there are four chapters, broad in theme, with a single case study fifth and final, 'Land', from Patti Smith's 1975 *Horses*; the four chapters cover sex, gender, sexuality and 'pop/rock erotics' starting with 'good looks' and ending with '(the inevitable) orgasm'. Subdivisions follow: sexuality, for example, covers heterosexuality, same-sex attraction in general, gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, queer. As if the current topics were not enough, a list suggests yet more, 'among them, erogenous zones, specific masturbatory and copulatory behaviours, abstinence and promiscuity, cheating, paraphilia, fetishes, sex toys, pregnancy, sex work, and issues of consent and assault' (p. 155). For ideas and academic literature in long-listed footnotes, certainly, confronted by the student mumbling that they'd like to study 'something to do with sex in pop music', fling the book towards them with a cheery 'off you go'.

The book's central concern, as I read it, however, closer to Everett's expertise as music-analyst, is the relation of words and music in song so that the book, a fox of many examples with the hedgehog of one big case study, might be approached at distinct levels. At one extreme are observations belonging to words alone: many entries in the lengthy table at pp. 113–7, for example – 'songs portraying gay themes' – could arise from prose or page poems (comments: 'homophobic rant on spread of AIDS', 'client wants blowjob from male prostitute'). At the next level, word-painting is everywhere: at p. 137, for example, heat as a 'core component of lust' is expressed through harmony (e.g. The Doors), instrumentation (Rod Stewart), voice (Bruce Springsteen) and rhythm (LL Cool J and Jennifer Lopez). Nearly all of the examples in the table at p. 86, 'songs in which singer quotes member of the "opposite" gender', include changes in voice, as an aspect of musical performance and its recording, but Joni Mitchell's 'Free Man in Paris' is a point about words alone (starting 'he said', the whole song is reported speech). The database's 'comments' column contains very many of these 'glances', rapid and immediate musical manifestations of the sexual theme.

However, consistent with a broad anti-essentialism – 'we reject essentialist, monolithic considerations that bind discourse to a particular sex or gender' (p. 32, Everett often casting himself as first-person plural) – there's an interesting limit to the tying-together of theme and music, word-painting as far as it goes, refusing: an inherently gendered aspect to instrumentation (the 'masculine' synthesiser at p. 61), an idea inherently musical ('nothing inherently lesbianic' at p. 155), or 'queering' (pp. 108–10, p. 127). Of the latter, Everett insists that 'deviance from norms' is a principle of 'all tonal music' (p. 109): music first. This results in one of the book's doughtiest labourers, Stan Hawkins, being gently chided in a footnote at p. 109.

Back to the levels, and a small series of more extended discussions occupying a paragraph or two, such as Lou Christie (p. 33–4), Helen Reddy (pp. 67–8), Kanye West (pp. 72–3), Frank Ocean (pp. 110–1) and Jane Siberry (pp. 154–5): one would trade a number of the 'glances' for these slower considerations. Next are two tracks analysed as voice-leading graphs: 'Love Child' by The Supremes at pp. 47–8 and Lorraine Feather's 'The Girl with the Lazy Eye' at pp. 36–7. Accompanied by a page of Lacan-derived commentary, the latter graph is rich in detail, albeit with two foreground glitches and a howler in the *Umlinie*. Even given Everett's muscular view of authorship where, as a rule, only the recording artist is identified, mention should be made of this great song's composer, Russell Ferrante. Curiously, Labelle's 'Lady Marmalade' is granted a sudden carnival of social authorship at p. 152, with singers, composers, instrumentalists, producer all listed: if

composition-by-men-for-women is interesting, as indeed it is, then so is Lou Christie's co-writing 'Lightning Strikes' with Twyla Herbert.


Finally, 'Land'. As a preface to this, for all Everett's generous and heroic inclusivity of literature, one regrets the absence of Richard Middleton's 2006 *Voicing the Popular*, not least since its chapter, 'Appropriating the Phallus? Female Voices and the Law-of-the-Father' discusses, at pp. 98–109, 'Gloria' from Patti Smith's *Horses*. For Everett's proliferating, no-end-in-sight examples, Middleton's are limited to five: Smith, Nina Simone, Diamanda Galás, Michael Jackson and Dana International. Smith is examined by 'three shrinks', Freud, Lacan (a more complex Lacan than the one at Everett's reading of Lorraine Feather) and Žižek, with each method carefully moving forward in history. Voice is Middleton's titular concern; also punctiliously attentive to vocalisation (as in Everett 2000, 2007 and 2009), Everett is more reluctant to grapple with voice as cultural or psychological trace in a way that so energises Middleton. On Smith's 2007 cover-version collection, *Twelve*, with 11 songs originally by men for the table at Everett's pp. 83–6, the voice of her 'Changing of the Guards', sonorous and serious, immediately transforms Dylan's original. Everett's 'Land' is rich in attention to literary influence (Williams Blake and Burroughs) and presents a robust case for the track as a 'witnessed masturbatory fantasy' (p. 178), summarised in five parts at p. 161 and six parts at pp 190–1. Learning much from that, I still hear 'Land' as an arresting and economical 70 seconds, 60 seconds of vivacious cover-version then, with 'double-plagal' chords repeated 126 times, five-way-too-long minutes of poetry-into-music.

More than Middleton, I surmise, Everett's view of the topic is 'permissive' (*OED*, adjective 2(b): 'tolerant, liberal, allowing freedom especially in sexual matters'), for example: 'Perhaps the postmodern West is slowly transitioning (despite reactionary steps backward) into an age where orientation and sexual behaviours, gender and embodiment of sex – much of it not linked to reproduction – is to be freely flexible and so openly celebrated without eliciting moral judgement' (p. 130). No sooner do Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin air their 'sex-wars' opposition to pornography at p. 77 than they're answered by Gayle Rubin and Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick and four female musicians as 'empowered critiquing subjects': Madonna, Lady Gaga, Miley Cyrus and Nicki Minaj. The book attends to recent developments, but #MeToo is absent, and Powers more consistently ministers to what Bruce Johnson and Martin Cloonan (2009) termed the 'dark side of the tune'. Often featured in Everett's book, Frank Zappa is in this context more hindrance than help.

Powers's title points to the necessity of a qualifying 'American' or 'in the USA'. Music-theory's familiar universality of musical example appears uncertain in a political and historical context American through and through. For example, a brief history of gay rights (pp. 98–9) in the USA is followed by Mancunian Morrissey's avoiding marriage in 1987, in between The Smiths and *Viva Hate*. That said, as author of 'The Queen is Dead', Morrissey would approve of Everett's entertaining, spirit-of-'76 swipe at the British monarchy in a footnote at p. 57. Welcome wit sometimes appears: 'I got dark brown stains in my underwear', observed Grand Funk Railroad. Everett, p. 58: 'Really'.

Here's another capstone for his work. *Selected Essays*: a section of Beatles, a section of mainly-1970s (Steely Dan, Paul Simon, Billy Joel). A final section, on music theory in general ('dispatches from the battlefield?'), containing a

methodology for how musical analysis balances song's text, context, and subject-matter. Including this interesting topic.

Dai Griffiths 

Independent scholar, Oxford, UK.

daigriffiths60@gmail.com

References

- Covach, J., and Boone, G.M. (eds), 1997. *Understanding Rock: Essays in Musical Analysis* (New York, Oxford University Press)
- Everett W. (ed.) 2000. *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: a Collection of Critical and Analytical Essays* (New York, Garland)
- Everett, W. (ed.) 2007. *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: Critical and Analytical Essays* (New York, Oxford University Press)
- Everett, W. 2009. *Foundations of Rock: from 'Blue Suede Shoes' to 'Suite: Judy Blue Eyes'* (New York, Oxford University Press)
- Hawkins, S. (ed.) 2017. *The Routledge Research Companion to Popular Music and Gender* (Abingdon, Routledge)
- Jarman-Ivens, F. (ed.) 2007. *Oh Boy! Masculinities in Popular Music* (New York, Routledge)
- Johnson B., and Cloonan M. 2009. *Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence* (Farnham, Ashgate)
- Maus, F.E., and S. Whiteley, with T. Nyong'o and Z. Sherinian (eds). 2022. *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Queerness* (New York, Oxford University Press)
- Middleton, R. 2006. *Voicing the Popular: on the Subjects of Popular Music* (Abingdon, Routledge)
- Powers, A. 2017. *Good Booty: Love and Sex, Black and White, Body and Soul in American Music* (New York, Dey Street)
- Rustin, N. and S. Tucker (eds). 2008. *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press)
- Rycenga, J., and S. Whiteley (eds). 2006. *Queering the Popular Pitch* (New York, Routledge)
- Whiteley, S. (ed.) 1997. *Sexing the Groove. Popular Music and Gender* (London, Routledge)

***Living from Music in Salvador: Professional Musicians and the Capital of Afro-Brazil.* By Jeff Packman. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2021. 320 pp. ISBN: 978-0-819-58048-1**

doi:10.1017/S0261143023000211

Jeff Packman's fascinating ethnographic study, conducted in Salvador de Bahía in the northeast of Brazil, via multiple trips over 16 years, takes up music-making as a collective activity within the capitalist gig economy, in informal environments that rarely reach the professional studio. Packman emphasises music as a site where race, gender, social prestige and human relationships to technology converge; music-making is an exaggerated case of the flexibility associated with precarious labour conditions. Packman writes from his own experience as a drummer in Los Angeles, where just as in Bahía, musicians insist they are working, not playing, a crucial distinction given that music can be seen as a 'blurring of work and "leisure" activities' (p. 17). Packman's method is to attend performances and rehearsals, and participate in the lives of collaborators he happens to meet, which grants him a lively, if partial, look at what his musicians call 'the Scenes'.

In the context of Salvador, entrenched precarity across labour sectors is 'compounded by particular sedimented constructions of racialized social inequity' (p. 10). As Packman argues, stereotypes of 'pleasure-seeking labor-avoiding baianos who readily sing and dance are conceived in enduring notions of layabout,