

Compiling a discography of the Beatles is probably among the most difficult of such tasks. Interest in this group is so intense, however, that the enthusiasm of fanhood has propelled many with little discographic experience to compile and publish any number of them, with, as might be expected, variable results. Yet much of the required discographic information is of the most ephemeral nature, "things everybody knows" for which the most accurate source is rumor, so even the more casual attempts can lead to establishing the truth or otherwise of some assertions.

Complicating factors abound. First is the item recorded—proper title, composer credits (often deliberately inaccurate for reasons of high finance), and actual composer. Then there is the recording history—when and where made, on how many tracks, extra personnel.

Next is the information about the recording's dissemination, including sufficient data to establish first edition priorities. Manufacturer, country of issue, label name if different from manufacturer's, issue number (all applicable material from the prefix-body-suffix unit), mode (mono, stereo), format (LP, 45, 4-track 3 3/4 ips open reel, reel size, etc).

Finally comes the packaging. An informed collector willing to purchase a first edition wants the whole item, not only the plastic. The original cover, label, and inner sleeve should be identified and inserts (posters, photos, calendars, etc.) fully described. Certainly those issues with extra or less sound information, or prominent differences in the mix, should be pinpointed.

There have also been quite a number of items counterfeited (some still widely marketed as originals through retail outlets), and means for discerning them should be furnished.

Since there is now an active market in out-of-print records and editions, positive identification is necessary when establishing values. Not only can a dealer then be sure he is offering the genuine article (he is an insider, and probably already knows), it protects the less knowledgeable collector from being preyed upon.

CASTLEMAN, Harry and Walter J. Podrazik. All Together Now: The First Complete Beatles Discography, 1961-1975, Ann Arbor, Mich., The Pierian Press, 1975, xv, 382pp. \$15.00

The first section is a listing of records chronologically by release date. It gives issue number, producer, collection title (if any), content, credited composer, and timing. Each entry is numbered. This sequence includes records by solo Beattle members and important versions of songs written by them but performed by others. Through variations of type the authors differentiate between first and later issues. Photos of various covers are

reproduced preceding the listings for the appropriate year.

The Beatle group items are then indexed by title. The actual composer is identified and lead and backing vocalists, and other musicians listed. Then follows a similar but simplified index for the songs written for others. Next are similarly detailed indices for the recording activities of each individual Beatle, first on his own, then as a participating musician during other artists sessions. The section concludes with references to non-Beatles who appear in earlier listings.

There is a chapter which gives the original artists and records for non-Beatles songs which the Beatles later recorded, a very rough one on bootlegs—unauthorized issues of actual concerts, out-takes, etc., a discography of Mike McGear (Paul McCartney's brother), related stuff conducted by George Martin (their producer for most records), odd things by Pete Best (the original drummer), and other more or less associated records, and a chapter of recordings attributed to the Beatles by rumor, all denied authenticity by the authors (though I still have doubts about the "Futz" item).

Next are the various label listings in which the Beatles have financial interest—Apple, Dark Horse and Ring 'o, then various film appearances, a rough bibliography (excluding magazines and other ephemera), and, finally, chart positions for the U. S. and the U.K. of hits and non-hits.

The contents look rather impressive, as does the book, hardback in white binding, and what it lists is correct as far as it goes. An impressive amount of information is contained herein—as much as you might want to know about some things, far more about others (I'm not sure the whole cover version situation should not be treated more completely elsewhere).

But there are problems of organization, of incompleteness and, most grievously, of deliberately ignoring some tough discographic areas. He who overcomes them will publish a complete Beatles discography, which this is not.

First of all, the main listings are by issue date. This requires those who do not remember in which part of which year a particular item first appeared to consult the index for the proper discography number, and trace on from there. If the author's emphasis was on establishing first edition priorities I would still not agree with this format, though I would be more sympathetic. But since they ignore (as part of the ground rules laid out in the preface) the detailed descriptions of label design, picture sleeve or cover, packaging and sound variants, etc., I fail to understand their motivation for choosing this sequencing. It certainly makes it tough to check a title or to answer the "what record am I holding

in my hand" question. Pertinent information is split between the main listing and at least one index.

Mono records which also came in stereo are ignored—less a problem with the U. S. issues. The U. K. editions are another matter; early mono and stereo numbers are unrelated. In any event, the compilers deliberately ignore differentiating between electronic and true stereo, and some items have appeared in both (after all these years "Penny Lane" has just come out in true stereo in Germany). This is a serious lapse.

The authors choose not to account for sound variation among editions—different introductions, words which appear only when the end groove is played back slowly and backwards, extra measures, etc. These are a major factor in record values, in identifying production techniques for differing markets, in the thing-as-such. The point of discography is to clarify things for the user, not to pass over the difficult parts for the compiler's convenience. The identical criticism applies to the authors' ignoring variations in packaging.

Many songs were written for films, and later appeared on record. These films are the earliest edition of the sound. These should be alluded to in the record lists.

Two vital indices are not supplied—a manufacturer's numerical and a chronological listing of recording sessions (which should include all items recorded, including the unpublished selections—which information is in circulation).

This would certainly have been a better-organized discography if the main entry unit were by alphabetically-arranged song titles, with a separate entry for each recording, sequenced by recording date.

A certain logic presents itself under this scheme. The creation itself is treated first—proper title, then actual composer (and credited composer, if different). Next, it's performance data: date and place of recording, personnel, timing, and if the information is obtainable, original tape format (mono, 8 track, etc.). In some cases, fade up and fade downs appear at different points and are of different durations on various editions. Parameters should be set up where necessary to obtain uniform timing between fixed points as well. This is particularly helpful with bootlegs, though the best means of identifying takes is to play them simultaneously, synchronized one against the other. Last are the various disseminations on record tape and film (if appropriate) of this specific recording event, which would include side and band. This means tapes as well as records—each is equally descended from the master. I know this creates a confusion of numbers. Since tapes are usually the same as an album in content and sequence (though not always), perhaps these can be listed in the next section, which is a list

by manufacturer's number.

In this section should go the collection title, full content, referenced to the title section, a description of the original label and packaging, and later changes. Since most records are treated as accounting units by manufacturers, the contents of a given album title is usually the same, at least within the international copyright convention, so issue numbers with identical titles issued in different countries can be listed here also, noting variant album titles and packaging. This should be followed by a guide to all manufacturers' numbers. All other desirable indices can then be done in compressed form, referring back to the appropriate discographic entries.

Sample entries for the U. S. single issue of "Ticket to Ride":

From "All Together Now":

117. Apr 9, 1965 (UK) Parlophone R 5265
Apr 19, 1965 (US) Capitol 5407
Recorded: Feb. 1965
by The Beatles. Prod. George Martin
A: Ticket to Ride--3:03
B: Yes it is--2:40

Entry in the index:

Ticket To Ride (J) John (Paul) 117, 122, 123, 160,
Paul: Lead Guitar 346

Suggested main entry:

195. TICKET TO RIDE (J. Lennon) (cred. J. Lennon--P. McCartney)
(from film, "Help")

Recorded: Feb. 1965 Prod: George Martin 3:03

J. Lennon, lead; P. McCartney, supporting vocal. (P.

McCartney, lead guitar)

Parl	(UK)	R-5265 (m)	(45)	A	Apr 9, 1965
Cap	(US)	5407 (m)	(45)	A	Apr 19, 1965
Parl	(UK)	PMC-1255 (m),	(LP)	A-7	Aug 6, 1965
		PCS-3071 (s)			
Cap	(US)	MAS-2386 (m),	(LP)	B-3	Aug 13, 1965
		SMAS-2386 (s)			
Parl	(UK)	PMC-7016 (m),	(LP)	B-5	Dec 10, 1966
		PCS-7016 (s)			
Apple	(US)	SKBO-3403 (s)	(2 LPs)	B-5	Apr 2, 1973
Apple	(UK)	PCSP-717 (s)	(2 LPs)	B-5	Apr 20, 1973

Suggested entry in manufacturers' numerical, under "Capitol":

45 rpm discs

5407 (m)

 Ticket to Ride (discog. 195) A side

 Yes it is (discog. 217) B side

Original label: orange and yellow swirl. Later labels:
solid red, Apple

Original cover: picture sleeve (it is still necessary to research how long this record was supplied in this way. Later editions came in a standard Capitol sleeve with die-cut center hole).

Note: Capitol pressings of this record state both selections are "from the United Artist's release, "Eight Arms to Hold You", the preliminary title of "Help".

In doing research there are always some loose ends. My notes include a few conflicts which are worth mentioning, hoping someone can resolve them:

IN MY LIFE. The authors credit John Lennon as composer, but in the new "In His Own Words—Paul McCartney (as told to Paul Gambaccini) (Omnibus Press, 112 pp.), McCartney claims credit for the tune, and says Lennon did the words. (The discography in this book is cursory).

LADY MADONNA. I am told by a friend in the jazz world that three sax players in addition to the credited Ronnie Scott did this session.

LOVE ME DO. The two published versions had different drummers. Which features Ringo is anyone's guess—McCartney says he's on the album cut, but Hunter, Castleman, and Podrazik give Starr the 45, Andy White the LP. In Davies' book, he is supposed to be on the 45 version. The drumming is tighter on the album, somewhat flaccid on the single. Can anyone supply more than hearsay?

THE POLYDOR SESSIONS. What was the first number for the first record? I have both 46-422 (Castleman & Podrazik) and 24-673 (a source I can't find right now). Were none of the other 8 sides made on this date released in Germany as singles? Or in England? Was the first French issue an EP in 1962? This area needs a lot more research.

The Castleman and Podrazik discography is so chock full of useful information, it's a shame it isn't better organized or more complete. The authors show no signs of having consulted some of the excellent discographies which have been published in other fields—Clough and Cuming's World Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. In the classical area, any of Brian Rust's works in the popular and jazz categories. The subject is records, and how the information concerning them can be most clearly presented. There is no reason Rock has to go through the same growing pains older discographic fields did. A little less isolationism, a little more cross-culturation would have made this a better book. Most of the desired information is there, but as of now, the reader has to put it all together himself.

CARR, Roy and Tony Tyler. The Beatles: An Illustrated Record. New York, 1975. Harmony Books, 128 pp. softbound, \$6.95.

Together with Richard De Lello's "The Longest Cocktail Party", this is the best of the Beatle books, and is certainly the most lavishly produced. Not only are many photos in color, they are sharply reproduced on coated stock and well chosen. The text concerns the evolving Beatles with both positive and negative criticisms of the

songs, the records, and the policies of the recording companies. The personalities of four men growing up under enormous pressure are sympathetically portrayed. Each record is discussed in light of the artists' changing style, the public reaction to them (which makes sense of placing them in issue order), and is essentially a series of retrospective reviews. The book is 12" by 12" and fits neatly among the LP's. All pertinent information concerning the English releases is worked into the text, and the discographic pages at the back supplement it with a list of American issues and numbers, a couple of pages on bootlegs, and four more on other associated records, all of little more than checklist value. But the text is full of excellent source material. The authors write in comfortable style, and the whole is a most readable and look-at-able joy, real gear.

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