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The Kinks
A Thoroughly
English Phenomenon

By Carey Fleiner

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"Fleiner, who teaches classical history at the University of Winchester, nicely places the reader into the atmosphere that produced the Kinks, one of the most important bands of the British Invasion. The book veers from their image as teenage rebels into their status as champions of average folk; Fleiner sets the tone early, saying this is 'not a biography of the band,' and focuses on the culture and world that surrounded the Kinks and influenced their music. Arranged chronologically, the book offers an excellent history of postwar Great Britain told through the eyes of the Davies brothers, Ray and Dave, and their bandmates. The author's background as a historian shines through in the book's meticulous research and analytical perspective on the cultural context in which the Kinks wrote their music. Coming out of Britain's working class in the mid-1960s, the Davies experienced a bit of social mobility during the postwar economic boom. The book deftly discusses the influence of their economic perspective on both the sound of their music and the stories they chose to tell."

— Publishers Weekly

The Kinks: A Thoroughly English Phenomenon examines the music and performance of this quintessentially English band and shows how aspects of everyday life such as work, play, buying a house, driving a car, drinking tea, getting drunk, and getting laid, affected and shaped their creative output. Through an investigation of their music, lyrics, and image, Carey Fleiner shows how the Kinks reflected both the ordinary and the absurd, sometimes confronting topics with anger and sometimes with self-deprecating humor. *The Kinks* follows the band's trajectory more or less chronologically and explores themes such as growing up in post-war Britain, the packaging and exploitation of the "British Invasion" bands, satire and self-consciousness, sexuality and gender-bending, social and political pessimism, the comforts of family, and the effects of fame and fandom.

Fleiner's investigation into the influences on and impact of the Kinks' music takes readers on an engaging adventure through the musical culture of the '60s, '70s, and '80s, revealing how the Kinks created an undeniable sound and image that still attracts new followers today.

Carey Fleiner is currently a senior lecturer in classical and early medieval history at the University of Winchester. She has taught classes in both ancient history and the history of rock and roll.

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