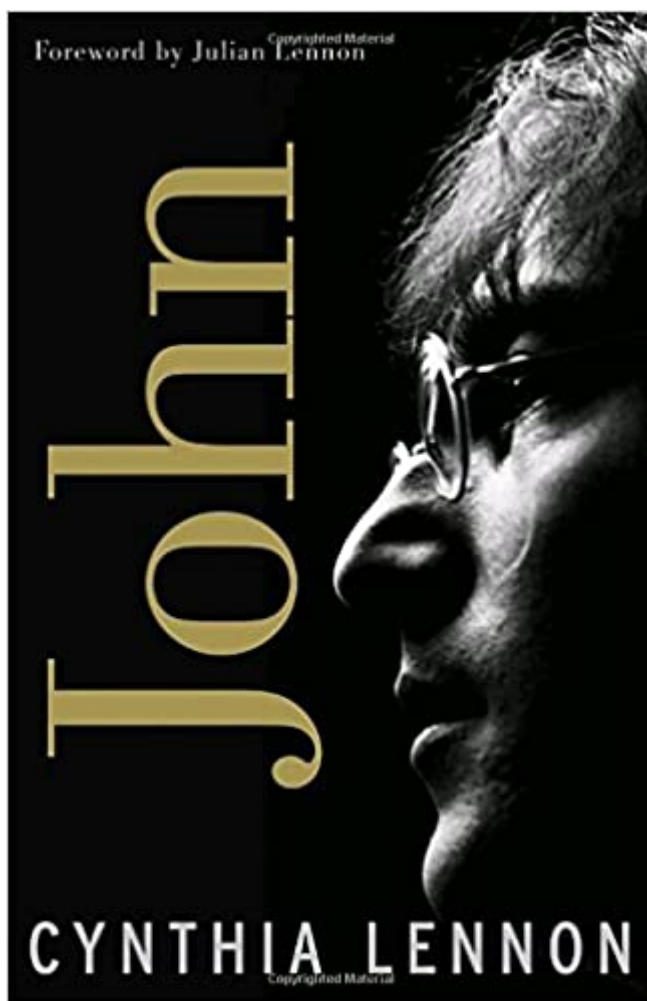


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John



Synopsis

Now in paperback, the New York Times bestselling exposé of the real John Lennon. The time has come when I feel ready to tell the truth about John and me, our years together and the years since his death. There is so much that I have never said, so many incidents I have never spoken of and so many feelings I have never expressed: great love on one hand; pain, torment, and humiliation on the other. Only I know what really happened between us, why we stayed together, why we parted, and the price I have paid for being John's wife. —From the Introduction

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Customer Reviews

This isn't Cynthia Lennon's first book about her legendary ex-husband. A Twist of Lennon--a slim volume that John tried to suppress on grounds of libel--came out in 1978. But now, 25 years after his death, she finally feels ready to tell the "full and truthful story" of their life together. Why? In his foreword, son Julian writes of their being "dismissed or at best treated as insignificant bit players" in the story of John's life; it's Cynthia's goal, with John, to set the record straight. She does make a case for being more than just "the impressionable young girl who fell for him, then trapped him into marriage," and it's moving to read, in his own words, of John's love for his son. And while there's nothing new in her account of the Fab Four's rise to fame, as the greatest success story of the rock era, it's a legend that bears retelling. But most salient of all are Cynthia's sketches of pain, regret, and intimidation. John was indeed a brilliant, loving man, but he was also "passionately jealous," "verbally cutting," sometimes abusive, and often neglectful. (It is hinted that his behavior may have

paralleled that of the woman who raised him, his Aunt Mimi.) Unfortunately, Cynthia's "response to John's provocative and cruel behavior was to stick by him more solidly than ever...[feeling] that if he could trust me and believe that I loved him he might soften." It's not this dysfunction, however, but rather John's use of LSD, on which she blames the emotional "chasm" that led to the failure of their marriage. And though the Lennons' divorce comes relatively late in the book, the pages that follow are by far the saddest, as they chronicle John's increasing distance from and neglect of his former family--especially Julian, who would only see his father three times after he moved to New York in 1971. It's no surprise that Cynthia lays much of the blame for this at the feet of Yoko Ono, who is described as controlling and insensitive, especially in the wake of John's murder. But even though there's a lot of bitterness and resentment in these pages, it's not overwhelming, being offset by Cynthia's fierce love for her son and her continuing affection for her ex-husband. A full picture of John Lennon's life will never exist as long as Ono judges herself unable to write about their time together, but John goes a long way toward improving the situation. --Benjamin Lukoff --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Cynthia Lennon, John Lennon's oft-overlooked first wife, is so soft-spoken, her voice threatens to trail off at times. But Lennon's voice of experience taps a well of feeling no audio actor could truly access. From teenage love to Beatlemania to spiritual pursuits in India, Lennon successfully conveys the excitement and trauma of an intimate life with one of pop culture's most cherished figures. She also uncorks opinions on rival Yoko Ono, often in bitter tones. This straight-from-the-horse's-mouth narrative is lovingly introduced by Julian, Cynthia and John's only child, and should capture the imagination of even the most casual fan. It's disappointing that Random House decided on an abridgment since this is a never-before-heard take on a well-worn subject. The production is capped off with a brief, artificial-sounding author interview with wooden questions and Lennon's rehearsed answers. But fans of Lennon and the Beatles, as well as those interested in 1960s and 1970s popular culture, should find this a satisfying, albeit abbreviated, listen. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I only give three stars as the other editions, and previous released versions had a different cover. I thought this was more updated because of the date, but very, very disappointed that there were no photographs in the KINDLE edition. It seemed as if the other versions did have pictures. I may be wrong, however. John and Cynthia each had their issues, but I was pretty surprised to read how

cruel John and Yoko were to his first wife Cynthia and their son Julian. I will have to keep John Lennon's memory in my love of his music only, as this was a real eye-opener as to how he treated his family and other people in general. While it could have been slanted with a bitter break-up, it doesn't read that way. I am surprised at how much Cynthia moved, changed careers and married so easily. She seemed to be constantly running to anything that would change her life. It never felt like she ever was comfortable with who she was and had great difficulty in establishing a really stable life for Julian. She seemed lost too, but in a very different way than John. I do admit to being a Beatles fan, and was not a fan of Yoko Ono. I'm still not, after reading this book. The other Beatles had "long and winding roads" too, but I was pretty stunned at John's extensive drug abuse in New York (geez he beat the drug deportation by the U.S., take much for granted???), his abuse of people and the constant alienation with Julian. You do wish Cynthia had more ability to stand up for what she believed in, but it always seemed to be about pleasing John, not upsetting John and trying to create a calm atmosphere for him outside of Beatlemania. In the end, those things clearly didn't matter to John - he just went off and did what he wanted. It is still painful to walk by the Dakota and Strawberry Fields, but now I will appreciate the man's talent, the sorrow of a life lost too soon, but with perspective of how he lived his life. I appreciate Cynthia's candor of her misjudgements as well as tell us what it was really like with John. It was also interesting to read her thoughts on the other Beatles, their partners and how their lives changed post-Beatles. You can only wish Julian the best for the rest of his life after reading this book, and now losing his mother who loved him dearly.

I have been a Beatles fan all my life. I even saw all 4 of them in concert in Chicago. I've loved their music, and I loved John's visions of peace and love. (He was my favorite Beatle -- yes, you had to pick one!) There have been a gazillion books written about these guys, but only one has been written by John's first wife, the late Cynthia Lennon. No one in the world could know her experience of being a part of their world and all its craziness. Since none of the wives went on to have literary careers, I was prepared to read a simplistic story of life being married to John Lennon. I was very pleasantly surprised. This is a well written book with fascinating insights into the early days of her life with John and their baby Julian. I always wondered about her and Patti and Maureen and Jane. I had read Patti Boyd's book, which I also recommend, but I highly recommend this book for Beatles fans of all ages.

I've read quite a few 'biographies' of John Lennon over the years, but this one was by far the most honest and, at times, heartwrenching. Cynthia, God rest her beautiful soul, painted one of the truest

pictures of John that has been portrayed. Through it all she still loved him, even if he didn't deserve that love. He was pretty cruel to her, and treated his son Julian abominably. He was a talented songwriter, yes, and had many good points, but he had an undiagnosed, untreated bipolar personality. You can see why he went for Yoko though - she was manipulative and controlling, (like his Aunt Mimi) and deviously cut him off from his family and friends. She turned him into her little puppet - it is a commentary on his troubled mind that he found this kind of relationship attractive. He gave up a beautiful, caring wife for Rasputin. How he could lavish affection and attention on Sean and completely ignore Julian shows you how screwed up he really was, celebrity or not. Compare him to Paul McCartney, who raised 4 normal children with Linda in a 2 bedroom farmhouse in Scotland, and was uber involved in his children's lives - now there's a good father for you. After reading this book, I felt very sorry for John that he never got the help he needed, and just when he was waking up he was killed.

I enjoyed this book. I always liked Cynthia. She described in detail, her struggle with John from within the kindness and love she and Julian have toward one another and as people. She believed that loving John deeply was all she needed to provide him in order to hold him. She also wrote that she continued to love him after their divorce. What she was missing was the understanding that many great artists, contributors, thinkers and flawed-genius types often have disastrous personal lives for that very reason. There had to be more than just deep love to keep him. John needed a seeker like he was, and Cynthia was the opposite of everything John was. She seemed completely incapable of becoming anything more than what she already was. Cynthia visualized a future of picket fences, quiet 1950's British lifestyles like her parents had, tea at 4:00pm with the Billingham's, gardening their country estate, a day-job husband. She never wrote that she `had sex.` Rather, she only `made love.` She was squeamish about everything that was not traditional. While John visualized societies breaking traditional bonds, trampling boundaries, people expanding toward their boundless creativity, mass artistic expression, not to mention in-town living. Opposite ends to be sure. How sad it became that John couldn't visualize these great things in himself. And the ghastly result of Cynthia's doomed formula? John extolled peace and love (and died trying to get it), while his relationship with Cynthia and Julian was anything but peaceful and loving. Rest in Peace, Cynthia.

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