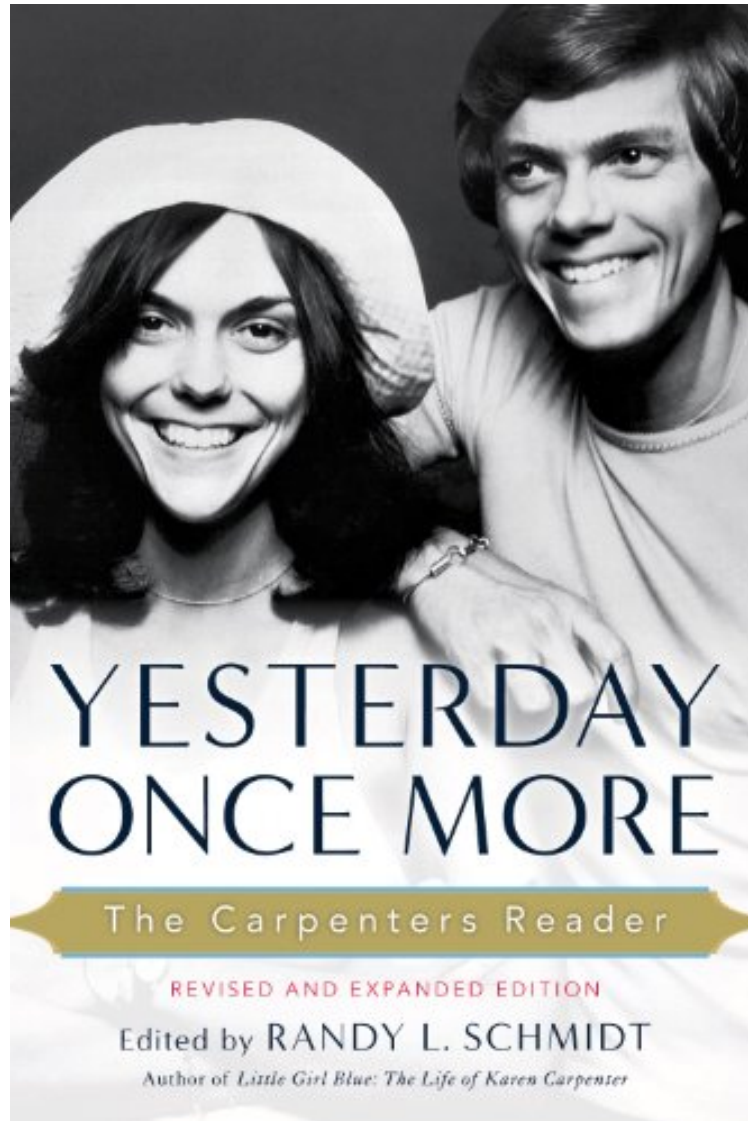


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Yesterday Once More: The Carpenters Reader

Randy L. Schmidt

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Randy L. Schmidt : Yesterday Once More: The Carpenters Reader before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Yesterday Once More: The Carpenters Reader:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Carpenters in Print (a varied collection of press pieces)By WedloeSo this is a collection of reviews and articles used by Mr Schmidt in researching his "Little Girl Blue" bio of Karen Carpenter. Accordingly there are many, many of these press items reprinted here. The Carpenters were heavily publicized, they toured and recorded mercilessly, and the amount of press coverage is and continues to be very large. In this book, there are some very short concert reviews pulled from newspapers, and there are longer reviews of their albums, and there are several interviews of both Karen and Richard, some together, some individual. Quite a few

different music critics' articles are also included. Towards the end of the book, there are some 'process pieces' where behind-the-music information is presented, usually interviews with Richard where he talks about how their tunes were selected, arranged, produced, recorded, etc. For me personally, these process pieces were by far the most interesting parts, and I flew through them, but they will not be for everyone. Honestly, it took me a while to get through the rest of this book, as I found my interest sort of coming and going. Even so, I salute Mr Schmidt's efforts, as I have learned so much about the Carpenters through his research. Thanks, Randy. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An Eclectic Collection of Essays and Articles By Jeannie Randy Schmidt does a fantastic job collecting and editing press releases, interviews, and other articles written about the Carpenters so that the reader will gain a broader perspective on Richard and Karen Carpenter as people, not just celebrities. This is an excellent companion to Schmidt's biography, "Little Girl Blue," which chronicles the life of Karen Carpenter from birth to death in fresh and honest disclosure. Like Karen herself, Schmidt is sincere in both of these works, but "Yesterday Once More" is a lighter and more eclectic conglomeration of anything from recipes to detailed analyses of Richard's musical compositions. Some essays are a paragraph, while others are pages long. The reader will also realize quickly the varying opinions on music writers as they relay their experiences and views on all things Carpenter. This is a must-have for the die-hard Carpenters fan, especially since it contains many never-before been published articles. 34 of 36 people found the following review helpful. The Perfect Companion to Schmidt's Brilliant Karen Biography, Little Girl Blue, Yet With A Twist By Greg New York City Okay, if you still believe you don't like the Carpenters OR have no interest whatsoever in the music industry or what stardom and its pressure means or in the creation and arrangements and production of recording itself, why are you even reading this review? Now that we've cleared a few people from the room, Schmidt's Yesterday Once More (and there are some minor caveats below) is absolutely essential reading. Schmidt's brilliant and honest penning of Little Girl Blue: The Life Of Karen Carpenter has already been well established - through sales, through critical claim, and the author's meticulous approach to the subject. This volume, with only the briefest of editorializing, takes a different tact altogether -- namely, it's a compendium of previously published reviews, interviews, op/ed pieces - even a musicologist's analysis of the arrangement of Richard's Superstar. There are many crucial pieces here -- the Rolling Stone pieces (Lester Bangs, and in particular. Tom Nolan's invaluable, revelatory "Up From Downey" piece, along with writings from Robert Hilburn of the LA Times, Digby Diehl, and Ray Coleman (Coleman, writing truthfully and analytically before the Carpenter Family Monster buried him with their control over him in the first Carpenters biography). Schmidt's choices, time-line wise, run very much from the start to finish of the Carpenters' career. What's important here, and which bears out the not-pretty lives of the Carpenters (yes, Agnes, as always, does everything yet wield an ax with her quotes, is that the realities of Karen and Richard's incredibly complicated relationship comes through like a beacon, much of it in subtext (i.e., what they truly mean and yet won't say is a potent as what their actual quotes are). Even in the PR-arranged "puff pieces", the underlying competitiveness, jealousies, and hurt is incredibly palpable (and, as mentioned, there is Agnes hovering throughout like an older Mommie Dearest -- Harold must have been mowing the lawn a lot). Many things become apparent, but not the least of which is how incredibly young Karen was, singing with that incredible voice, creating hit after hit at age 20, 21, 22, 23, and then you hit an article where she's 26 and there's already this sense of where are we going wrong, this total fatalism, this sense of perfection that was impossible to handle with a jealous (yet crucially important and talented) brother. These same themes resonate throughout, and it's not one biographer's take on the duo, but many different perspectives. It's the perfect companion to LITTLE GIRL BLUE and, if your focus is on the music, perhaps even more necessary. Okay, the caveats -- there are some missing pieces to the puzzle, perhaps because of not being to get the republication rights. Robert Hilburn's review of PASSAGE (and similarly, Stereo Review's review of PASSAGE, where (I think it was) Peter Reilly actually made PASSAGE a "Recommended Album of the Month". Missing is the New York Times Magazine's article about Karen's Solo album upon its final release - a long, truthful piece which, with credence, demonstrated that Alpert's and Richard's reaction to Karen's solo release was essentially ripping the IV nourishing drip from her arm. I believe Paul Grein of Billboard wrote a wonderful piece on Karen, not present here. And, because, it's what interests me the most, I wanted more "the making of" x or y or z album (followed by thoughtful - pro or con - articles about the work. Perhaps that's the next installment, but then there's Richard, and so many crucial players/production team have been dying off, so that's unlikely and not the focus of this volume. The stickler of course are those music rights -- but this is a story for the big screen and if done truthfully and well, whomever is cast as Karen could make room on her mantelpiece for the Oscar (the tv movie, well, it just doesn't even count).

With a string of number-one hits showcasing Karen Carpenter's warm and distinctive vocals and Richard Carpenter's sophisticated compositions and arrangements, the Carpenters were responsible for some of the most popular music of the 1970s, and this compendium collects more than 50 articles, interviews, essays, reviews, and reassessments that chronicle the lives and career of this brother-sister musical team. Writings from pop journalists and historians such as Daniel J. Levitin, John Tobler, Digby Diehl, Ray Coleman, Robert Hilburn, and Lester Bangs provide insight into the music and personalities of the duo who produced such timeless pop music. From serious musical analyses of the

Carpenters' arrangements to lighter pieces in which Karen and Richard discuss dating, cars, and high school, this new edition has been revised and expanded to include nearly a dozen additional pieces, some of which have never been published.

"Unquestionably, the definitive historical recalling of the Carpenters . . . Like the Carpenters' music, Schmidt's book about them delivers brilliantly, combining the talents of a gifted editor, the dedication of a devoted fan, and the admirable work of the writers he chose." —New England Entertainment Digest