



# All We Are Saying: The Last Major Interview with John Lennon and Yoko Ono

By David Sheff

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Sheff gives a rare and last glimpse of John and Yoko, one that seemed to look beyond the kitchen table to the future of the world with startling premonitions of what was to come.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

John Lennon could be angry, as he is in *Lennon Remembers: The Full Rolling Stone Interviews from 1970*, and nasty, as proven by Albert Goldman's brilliant, scathing *The Lives of John Lennon*.

But he could also be charming, smart, and extraordinarily witty, as he is in his last interview, published in book form as *All We Are Saying*. Co-interviewee Yoko Ono is charm-free but valuable, because she sparks the conversation and brings up fascinating stuff that Lennon wished she hadn't, like their mad plots to kidnap her daughter from her ex-husband. As interviewer David Sheff's tape rolls, John and Yoko's anecdotes flow effortlessly: the joys of making their 1980 comeback album, *Double Fantasy*; the mortifying horrors of John's "lost weekend" in L.A. with Harry Nilsson; John's interestingly twisted family life; John and Yoko and Paul's last get-together, watching *Saturday Night Live* the night producer Lorne Michaels offered the Beatles \$3,200 to reunite on the show (they almost got in a cab and did it!).

Best of all is Lennon's song-by-song account of who wrote which famous tunes and where they came from. "Strawberry Fields" contains an entire childhood memoir, and the production reflects Paul's alleged "sabotage" of Lennon's work. "Please Please Me" was based on a Roy Orbison melody and Bing Crosby's punning song title "Please (Lend an Ear to My Pleas)." The "element'ry penguins" in "I Am the Walrus" refer to idiots like Allen Ginsberg who chant "Hare Krishna" worshipfully. "Hey Jude" was Paul's song comforting John's son Julian when John left his family for Yoko, and Paul's unconscious, reluctant farewell to his writing partner ("go out and get her").

Lennon had been publicly silent and artistically dormant for five years before these interviews, and he was just bursting with the exhilaration of the rebirth of his imagination days before his death. Reading this book is like sharing a day in the life of a very happy man. --*Tim Appelo*

#### From Booklist

As the song goes, it was 20 years ago today . . . when John Lennon sat down in his Dakota home with wife, Yoko, for a *Playboy* interview. It was also just a few months before Lennon was killed. Lennon and Ono touched on many different subjects, including Lennon's disappearance from the public arena for five years to be a househusband; the release of the couple's then-new album, *Double Fantasy*; and more dishy subjects like the Beatles' breakup and John's relationship with Yoko. The interview was a newsmaker at the time, and in retrospect, it is a crucial piece of Beatle history. *Ilene Cooper*

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#### Review

"A fascinating, detailed glimpse into the workings of a musical genius.... A valuable piece of work." -- *New York Times Book Review*

"The interview is lively proof that some of the best Lennon/Ono art was their life." -- *Time Magazine*

"The interview would hardly have been less engrossing and important even if it were not illuminated by tragedy." -- *Los Angeles Times*

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#### Calvin Baker:

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