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## John Lennon: Shoulda Been There

*Jude Southerland Kessler*

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**Jude Southerland Kessler : John Lennon: Shoulda Been There** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Lennon: Shoulda Been There:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wished I WasBy Beatle EdI'm reading Mark Lewisohn's excellent 'early years' bio of the Beatles and I'm cross-referencing some of the sections of that book w/ "Shoulda Been There". Not to confuse, "Shoulda" is not at all on the same level as "Tune IN", vbut they're apples oranges. The opportunity to let your imagination take you inside Lennon's life and be part of his every waking hour practically, is too much to resist. And, of course, there is the other Beatles-Paul, George, Pete, and a bit of Ringo, more of whom will be present

in the succeeding volumes, when they appear. This is not just fiction, there is an overwhelming stream of reality here. Even a lot of the conversations are built from either personal recollections of the Beatles (especially John) themselves, or from people who knew him well. I liked hearing in my head the accent of Liverpool in the dialogue. As one reviewer said, it's just too hard to put down. Ms Kessler walked a tightrope with this book. It would have and could have been very easy for this to turn into a rather sloppy attempt to get caught up in the early world of John Lennon, but no, this book hit its mark and well. "Shoulda Been There", well, I was. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. John Lennon: Shoulda Been There By Kurt Valenta Hey Jude... Love your book. Strenuously researched and footnoted. Jude brings her years of touring the childhood haunts of John Lennon's Liddypool to life. Refreshing, crisp and fun journey. If you love The Beatles and want a "fly on the wall" perspective annotated with facts and historical novel perspectives this is a must read. Jude is wonderfully talented and I look forward to the entire series. 5 STARS! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Barbara Garzo Enjoyed very much. Learned so much about his early life. Jude Kessler really did her research.

The only researched biographical novel on the life of John Lennon. With foreword by Bill Harry, a Scouse glossary, and an encyclopedia of the historical characters in the book, *Shoulda Been There* traces Lennon's life from his birth in 1940 to Dec. 1961 when The Beatles sign a managerial agreement with Brian Epstein. Each chapter is footnoted and includes end note discussions of discrepancies found between Beatle scholars. Written as a novel, this is not a work of fiction, but a "fly on the wall" account of Lennon's life.

*Shoulda Been There* by Jude Southerland Kessler Massive new book that documents John Lennon's life from 1940 to 1961. Nearly 800 pages trace the events that motivated his desire to become a famous rock star, along with the day-by-day activities of the early Beatles. Over 20 years of research and interviews went into the book, which is written with a "factional" approach to effectively recreate events and conversations. The book is finely padded out with a timeline, pictures, a Scouse glossary, and most importantly an indispensable section containing short biographies of the main characters involved in early Beatles history. The book is available at On The Rock Books. --Beatlelinks.net *Shoulda been there*, the first researched historical novel on the life of John Lennon, is truly extraordinary. The book, the first in a promised trilogy of Lennon novels, written by Jude Southerland Kessler, covers John's life from 1940 to 1961, and traces the events that motivated his desire to become a famous rock star and the day-by-day activities of the early Beatles. No less an authority than Bill Harry, founder of *Mersey Beat*, the '60s magazine that documented the Liverpool scene of the time, says in the book's foreword that Kessler got it right. In what Mr. Harry referred to as a "factional" approach, Kessler blends twenty years of research on Lennon with her ability to create authentic Scouse or Liverpudlian dialogue and with an incredible familiarity with the ins and outs of northern England. Jude describes events in Lennon's adolescence as if she were there, as if, as Bill Harry notes, she had been a fly on the wall during these landmark events. In the pages of this remarkable book, you will experience the Quarry Men's first performance and each moment in John's youth and teen years becomes a moment in the reader's own experience. For 795 pages, the reader is John's shadow. Each reader is John's comrade. The accounts are not fiction. Jude documented these events in over twenty years of research including 7 trips to Liverpool and an incredible number of interviews of the people who were actually there and around at the time. The book is footnoted, and Jude's end notes debate the veracity of past non-fiction research, pointing out contradictions where they exist. Beatle myths are exposed, and new truths are suggested. The book, *Shoulda Been There*, works to present John Lennon as he really was, not as we've imagined him to be over the last 40 years. The novel also supplies Beatle enthusiasts with a great deal of documentary material. Jude includes the "Encyclopedia of Real Characters" which provides 125 short biographies of those closest to The Fab Four, and her "Scouse Glossary" gives a necessary insight into the language of Merseyside. There is more at work here than just an extremely good read. The book carefully balances on that tightrope between fact and fiction, plainly telling us when the author leans to one side or the other. Capturing the essence of long-lost, half-remembered conversations is what Jude sets out to do, all while separating fact from fiction with regard to myths and legends that have been handed down for years about Lennon's youth and The Beatles' unimaginable rise. What happens, through the magic of Jude's words, is that readers come to know the younger Lennon and relive his painful childhood. The book is an exhaustive work for the early Lennon years. It captures the imagination, but tells the truth. *Shoulda Been There*. You'll feel like you were. posted by Dave Haber, May, 2005 --daytrippin.com Shoul --whatgoeson.com *Shoulda been there*, the first researched historical novel on the life of John Lennon, is truly extraordinary. The book, the first in a promised trilogy of Lennon novels, written by Jude Southerland Kessler, covers John's life from 1940 to 1961, and traces the events that motivated his desire to become a famous rock star and the day-by-day activities of the early Beatles. No less an authority than Bill Harry, founder of *Mersey Beat*, the '60s magazine that documented the Liverpool scene of the time, says in the book's foreword that Kessler got it right. In what Mr. Harry referred to as a "factional" approach, Kessler blends twenty years of research on Lennon with her ability to create authentic Scouse or Liverpudlian dialogue and with an incredible familiarity with the ins and outs of northern England. Jude describes events in Lennon's adolescence as if she were there, as if, as Bill Harry notes, she had been a fly on the wall during these landmark events. In the

pages of this remarkable book, you will experience the Quarry Men's first performance at The Roseberry Street Festival and The Beatles days in Hamburg, you'll walk with John into Liverpool College of Art as a freshman in 1957, and you'll stand beside John at his mother's funeral in 1958. Each moment in John's youth and teen years becomes a moment in the reader's own experience. For 795 pages, the reader is John's shadow. Each reader is John's comrade. As vivid as these are recounted, the accounts are not fiction. Jude documented these events in over twenty years of research including 7 trips to Liverpool and an incredible number of interviews of the people who were actually there and around at the time. The book is footnoted, and Jude's end notes debate the veracity of past non-fiction research, pointing out contradictions where they exist. Beatle myths are exposed, and new truths are suggested. The book, *Shoulda Been There*, works to present John Lennon as he really was, not as we've imagined him to be over the last 40 years. The novel also supplies Beatle enthusiasts with a great deal of documentary material. Jude includes the "Encyclopedia of Real Characters" which provides 125 short biographies of those closest to The Fab Four, and her "Scouse Glossary" gives a necessary insight into the language of Merseyside. There is more at work here than just an extremely good read. The book carefully balances on that tightrope between fact and fiction, plainly telling us when the author leans to one side or the other. Capturing the essence of long-lost, half-remembered conversations is what Jude sets out to do, all while separating fact from fiction with regard to myths and legends that have been handed down for years about Lennon's youth and The Beatles' unimaginable rise. What happens, through the magic of Jude's words, is that readers come to know the younger Lennon and relive his painful childhood. The book is an exhaustive work for the early Lennon years. It captures the imagination, but tells the truth. *Shoulda Been There*. You'll feel like you were. posted by Dave Haber, May, 2005 --daytrippin.com

*Shoulda Been There* by Jude Southerland Kessler

Massive new book that documents John Lennon's life from 1940 to 1961. Nearly 800 pages trace the events that motivated his desire to become a famous rock star, along with the day-by-day activities of the early Beatles. Over 20 years of research and interviews went into the book, which is written with a "factional" approach to effectively recreate events and conversations. The book is finely padded out with a timeline, pictures, a Scouse glossary, and most importantly an indispensable section containing short biographies of the main characters involved in early Beatles history. The book is available at [On The Rock Books](#). --[Beatlelinks.net](#)

About the Author: Jude Kessler has lectured on The Beatles nationwide and contributed to numerous Beatle newsletters. She has spent many years in Liverpool and London interviewing and researching Beatle history, and has spent over 15 years researching the truth behind Beatle myths. She has taught English on the college level and has contributed to literary magazines and journals as well as multiple Beatle websites. She has been a featured author at many Fests for Beatles Fans.