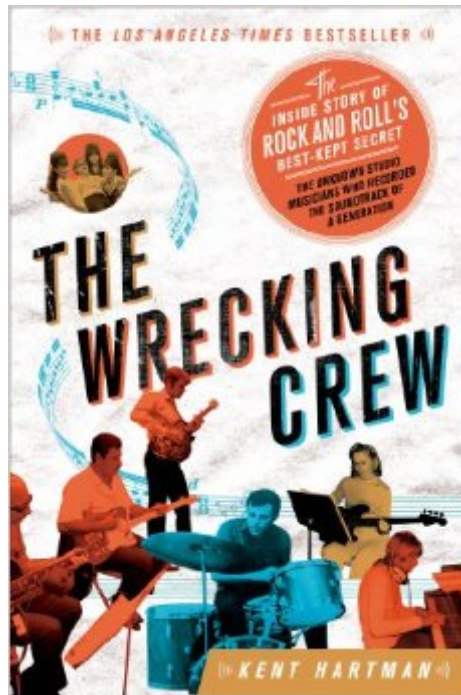


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# The Wrecking Crew: The Inside Story Of Rock And Roll's Best-Kept Secret



## Synopsis

Winner of the Oregon Book Award for General Nonfiction and Los Angeles Times bestseller "It makes good music sound better."-Janet Maslin in The New York Times "A fascinating look into the West Coast recording studio scene of the '60s and the inside story of the music you heard on the radio. If you always assumed the musicians you listened to were the same people you saw onstage, you are in for a big surprise!"-Dusty Street, host of Classic Vinyl on Sirius XM Satellite Radio "If you were a fan of popular music in the 1960s and early '70s, you were a fan of the Wrecking Crew-whether you knew it or not. On hit record after hit record by everyone from the Byrds, the Beach Boys, and the Monkees to the Grass Roots, the 5th Dimension, Sonny & Cher, and Simon & Garfunkel, this collection of West Coast studio musicians from diverse backgrounds established themselves in Los Angeles, California as the driving sound of pop music-sometimes over the objection of actual band members forced to make way for Wrecking Crew members. Industry insider Kent Hartman tells the dramatic, definitive story of the musicians who forged a reputation throughout the business as the secret weapons behind the top recording stars. Mining invaluable interviews, the author follows the careers of such session masters as drummer Hal Blaine and keyboardist Larry Knechtel, as well as trailblazing bassist Carol Kaye-the only female in the bunch-who went on to play in thousands of recording sessions in this rock history. Readers will discover the Wrecking Crew members who would forge careers in their own right, including Glen Campbell and Leon Russell, and learn of the relationship between the Crew and such legends as Phil Spector and Jimmy Webb. Hartman also takes us inside the studio for the legendary sessions that gave us Pet Sounds, Bridge Over Troubled Water, and the rock classic "Layla," which Wrecking Crew drummer Jim Gordon cowrote with Eric Clapton for Derek and the Dominos. And the author recounts priceless scenes such as Mike Nesmith of the Monkees facing off with studio head Don Kirshner, Grass Roots lead guitarist (and future star of The Office) Creed Bratton getting fired from the group, and Michel Rubini unseating Frank Sinatra's pianist for the session in which the iconic singer improvised the hit-making ending to "Strangers in the Night." The Wrecking Crew tells the collective, behind-the-scenes stories of the artists who dominated Top 40 radio during the most exciting time in American popular culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a long time music fan and student of music history, I always have been aware of the studio musicians who played a huge part of the hit making process. With *The Wrecking Crew*, Kent Hartman has put a face on all those musicians who played such a vital role in those hit songs we all loved hearing on the radio. Kent highlights several key players in *The Wrecking Crew* and follows them from childhood to stardom. The Glen Campbell story is especially touching considering all he is going through now...you see what an amazing life he has had. When I started the book I expected a great history lesson and I certainly got that. What I didn't expect was a page turner...it was hard to put down and I finished this in a couple of days. Kent weaves all the interlocking stories in a way that forces you to read "just one more chapter" but then you can't stop. For any real music fan this is a must read. The insights into the musicians and the inside stories of all those songs we all sang along to make this a compelling story. The research is unbelievable and when Kent creates a "scene" (like Sonny Bono writing the lyrics to *I Got You Babe* on a pizza box)...you feel like you are there with the artist. My only complaint: I wanted more and hope one day there is a *Wrecking Crew* #2.

I was totally mis-quoted in this wrong skewered and silly book. Quotes from me are totally wrong and un-true, and I'm sure with others also. Our group of 350-400 1960s-70s studio musicians were never known by this Hal Blaine 1990-invented term, invented by someone who wanted to be famous - this book is full of slander also. The person who invented that clownish term never was good enough to be a movie film musician, so the fine movie-TV-film studio musicians are slandered...they never said that, they complimented us.....I know, I was there doing 100s of movie scores 1,000s of record date with them. No-one ever said "wrecking" at all, that's all invented by a jealous musician...Please don't buy this phony book by a "writer" who made false promises of the

"truth" (for a magazine article, never a book!) he changed my words, and others' words too, to fit his own needs for \$\$\$ -- he wanted to be in "our studio business" etc. This is another bad poorly written wrong phony book, please don't buy. CAROL KAYE 1st Call Bassist All Hollywood Studios, 1960s-1970s, author & leading educator, over 30 courses and tutors.

I'll never hear Simon and Garfunkel's "The Boxer" the same ever again since reading *The Wrecking Crew* by Kent Hartman. And the same goes for other huge hits such as "Good Vibrations" by the Beach Boys, "The Beat Goes On" by Sonny and Cher, "Dream a Little Dream of Me" by the Mamas & the Papas, "MacArthur Park" by Richard Harris and many, many more. This book is filled with detailed behind-the-scenes stories about so many classic music hits from the 1960s and '70s---and about the "anonymous" musicians (i.e. members of the "Wrecking Crew") who were really playing the musical instruments on those records. It was never what I thought I was listening to! And one of the musicians was a woman...brave Carol Kaye. Hartman's book is so much fun to read and savor. Every single time I read a chapter I needed...desperately...to hear the songs again that he writes about. Classic songs I thought I'd heard a hundred times before are made even MORE special. So much fun to read!

Congratulations to Kent Hartman for delivering a fine book on a heretofore under examined aspect of sixties pop music: the rise and dominance of the studio session player. Beginning with the migration of Glen Campbell, Carol Kaye and Hal Blaine to Southern California and early work done for Phil Spector, passing through the story of the Monkees, the Grass Roots, the Union Gap, the Mamas and the Papas and other bands and ending with the rise of the multi-track era and the tragic story of Jim Gordon, this is a well written, concise and highly readable volume. I stop short of all five stars for one reason: the ending is quite abrupt in a you-can-almost-smell-the-brakes sort of way. I would have loved to hear a little about what these great talents are doing today, perhaps a few final looking-back-on-it-all valedictory thoughts from those who are still around. Still, anyone with any interest in the subject should enjoy this brisk and informative book. Now, after reading it, I've got to break out my old vinyl 45s and get reacquainted with the music!

This book took me by complete surprise in a couple of ways. First, I learned that apparently much of the music that I know and love from the 1960s was actually played by other people than the bands themselves. What??? Second, the background stories here are fascinating. Especially the ones about the Byrds, the Mamas & the Papas, and the Grass Roots. Though it is classified as a

nonfiction title, this book, to me anyway, reads more like a novel or something, with one dramatic behind-the-scenes thing happening after another. And I sure never knew that Glen Campbell and Leon Russell started their careers as part of the Wrecking Crew. Really a great book. Gonna have to fire up my iPod now and listen to what I've just been reading about.

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