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## BOOK★Reviews

### **The Bee Gees: The Biography**

David N Meyer

★★★★

De Capo Press, £17.99

ISBN 9780306820656, 352 pages

**How they got their messages  
to you**

A surprising nugget of information appears in the introduction to Meyer's engrossing account of the life and times of the brothers Gibb. Alone among their 60s peers, they never released a cover version; every single, B-side and album track was

penned either by Barry, Robin, Maurice or the rhythm section of their early line-up.

Yet to this day, the author suggests, the Bee Gees are rarely given the credit their creativity deserves, their rule-breaking approach to song structure overlooked and, after the gargantuan success of *Saturday Night Fever*, their conquering of the disco scene dismissed as faddish folly. He clearly comes to praise the group, not to bury it, but doesn't ignore the friction and sibling rivalry that threatened to destroy them on more than

one occasion.

Eldest brother Barry and his controlling nature looms large (at one point Meyer describes him as "a dick"), and it's convincingly argued that the group would have warranted little more than a footnote in pop history without his drive and ruthlessness. It's an emotive read, celebrating some truly enduring music (a quarter of a billion sales can't lie), while pondering where the band fit into a bigger showbiz picture.

*Terry Staunton*

