



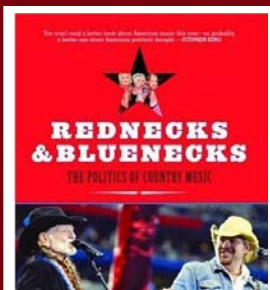
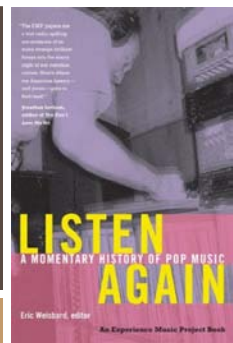
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# The Death of the Critic

Wednesday, September 24th, 2008



"The death of the critic" has become a catchphrase in discussing how the Internet has affected arts writing, nowhere more so than in music journalism. The avalanche of blogs written by everyone from veteran writers to neophytes has called into question the need for professional music writers. The availability of music on the Internet challenges the old idea that criticism is at heart about description and assessment: why would a reader need someone else's words about a song when she can just listen herself? And the shrinking availability of space in print publications, combined with the widespread belief that readers online have the attention spans of toddlers, has made it hard to justify long-form essays on music or anything else.

Yet music writing continues to have an important presence in the culture, and arguably is a primary pioneering form, allowing for writers to experiment with the new frameworks the Internet demands. At the same time, more great music books are being published than ever, and general interest publications are publishing more writers on pop music.

So is music criticism dying or being reborn? A panel of professional critics and writers will discuss the perils and possibilities. Participants include:

Oliver Wang (Souldsides.com, Cal State Long Beach)  
Tim Page (USC Annenberg)  
Natalie Nichols (*City Beat*, hipspinster.com)  
Ayala Ben-Yehuda (*Billboard*)  
Ernest Hardy (*LA Weekly*)  
Chris Willman (*Entertainment Weekly*)  
Lorraine Ali (*Newsweek*)  
Randall Roberts (*LA Weekly*)  
Eric Weisbard, organizer of the Experience Music Project "Pop Conference"

To view a collection of recent articles on the topic, please visit <http://www.learcenter.org/html/projects/?cm=pmp/powers>. Led by Ann Powers, pop music critic of *The Los Angeles Times* and 2008 Resident of The Popular Music Project. Must RSVP to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, September 24, 2008 @ 7:30PM  
Annenberg Building Room 207  
Please RSVP to [enter@usc.edu](mailto:enter@usc.edu)

The Popular Music Project (PMP) is a one-stop home for the interdisciplinary study and analysis of popular music. For more information about PMP, visit [www.usc.edu/pmp](http://www.usc.edu/pmp).

For more information about the USC Norman Lear Center and its projects, visit us at [www.learcenter.org](http://www.learcenter.org) or email us at [enter@usc.edu](mailto:enter@usc.edu).