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Speaker explores the Kennedy-Beatles connection



Aaron Krerowicz delivers his lecture about the Beatles at the Avon Grove Library on Saturday.

Chris Barber — Digital First Media

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0 COMMENTS

West Grove >> The members of the audience at the Avon Grove Library Beatles presentation were clearly people who had come of age in the 1960s and 1970s. They reacted with oohs and ahhs when speaker Aaron Krerowicz played snippets of early Beatles songs, and during the comment period they told stories of their own Beatles memories from that era in their lives.



Speaker Aaron Krerowicz wore a tie he purchased at the Kennedy Library in Boston.

As part of the library's ongoing lecture and arts series, Director Lori Schwabenbauer brought back professional Beatles scholar Krerowicz, who last year presented a talk on the Beatles' road to success. This year he talked about his firm belief that the rise of Baby Boomers and the presidency and death of John F. Kennedy directly affected the popularity of the Beatles in the United States.

At 31, Krerowicz was not around in the heyday of the Beatles' popularity, nor has he ever seen the surviving Beatles, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr, in person.

Still, he is one of the country's foremost experts on the group, having given hundreds of lectures and written several books.



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Krerowicz embraces what he called "The Kennedy Rebound Theory."

In his mind and those of his followers, the emergence of a nation of young Americans and the sequence of events following Kennedy's assassination made way for the rise and enthusiastic embracing of the British quartet.

He outlined his material with videos and explanations.

He hearkened back to late 1963 when President Kennedy was assassinated. At that time, the Beatles had marketed some songs in America unsuccessfully. But in February 1964, after a period of mourning, he said the nation was psychologically ready for something to energize them out of their sadness, and the Beatles' music with its energy and optimism was there to do the job.

"It was almost a relief in February to make the nation happy again," he said.

He also pointed to a growing youth culture that had come with the maturity of the glut of children born in the 1940s, the financial boom that came with the end of World War II, and the appeal of a "new generation" of leadership embodied in the handsome Kennedys.

That youth appeal, he said, was even evident in the Beatles' movie "A Hard Day's Night" in which the older generation was viewed unfavorably, and the younger actors were presented as the heroes.

There was the growing acceptance of television, too.

In the early 1950s, few people had televisions, but a decade later the number had increased exponentially.

Both Kennedy and the Beatles benefitted by that fact — Kennedy looking attractive and performing well in his debates with Richard Nixon running parallel with the Beatles making their wildly and enthusiastically received debut on the Ed Sullivan Show.

Krerowicz went on at length about how Kennedy was a symbol of youth. He was the youngest elected president, he supported the arts and he spoke frequently at high schools.

Krerowicz also drew parallels between Kennedys' appeal to young people and the youthful innocence of the early Beatles songs — songs like "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "She Loves You."

“Hand holding is more important for kids than for old folks,” Krerowicz said.

His lecture was liberally illustrated with photos, video clips and snippets of Beatles songs. That’s when the people in the audience would sigh.

From the beginning, Krerowicz said his Kennedy Rebound Theory was not universally accepted. In fact, even the Beatles’ late John Lennon said he didn’t believe it, and another credit was quoted as saying “Kennedy’s death didn’t make me a Beatles fan.”

Still, Krerowicz had evidence that he has done extensive research even so far as displaying a large collection of his writings and objects. One person from the audience asked if Krerowicz had copies of the original albums, and he said, “In my car. I’ll be right back with the red one and the blue one.”

He even wore a necktie in honor of his theory, one that featured pictures of Kennedy in various poses and at different events. Krerowicz said he bought it at the Kennedy Library in Boston. He then pointed to the Beatles tie clip that held it down. “I got that through Amazon,” he said.

More information on Aaron Krerowicz can be found at his website www.AaronKrerowicz.com/.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Barber is the zone editor of the Avon Grove Sun. She is a lifelong resident of Kennett Square and a graduate of Unionville High School and Carleton College majoring in religion and minoring in astronomy. She is the founder of the Kennett Area YMCA. Reach the author at cbarber@21st-centurymedia.com .

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