

# Duly Noted KINKS KOOKS KRAVE KOMEDY

by Callum Beck

The Kinks were formed in 1961, and have been together longer than any other British rock group. They are led by the incomparable Ray Davies, a rather odd sort of fellow but one of the finest and most original song writers in rock, and probably its wittiest lyricist. He has written such delightful lyrics as this, in a song in which a Vicar compares the game of life with the game of cricket:

Line", the album's masterpiece.

This album, like most of the Kinks' albums, from Arthur to Soap Opera, tells a story. On Lola, we hear the story of a runny-nosed, scruffy kid who wants to avoid his fate of being a sweeper of sidewalks or constructor of highways. So he decides to take a shot at being a rock 'n roll star. He manages to make it to the 'top of the pops', only to

find that his money is going around to everyone but himself. Everything starts to go wrong, the Powerman of the record industry has him in a stranglehold, and he's not sure what to do. But he decides he has to be free, to do what he wants. The way to freedom, he feels, is to take his girl and leave the city, thus getting away from all the evil forces that seem to be ruining his life. And then going and

living in the jungle where he'll be an apeman, and she'll be his apeman girl, and they'll live happily ever after. That's the basic plot.

It's a nice sentiment but I doubt it will work, as freedom, I think, is tied up more with attitude than with environment. Nonetheless, it is still a great album, and I highly recommend it.

Some people say that life is a game, well if this is so

I'd like to know the rules on which this game of life is based.

I know of no game more fitting than the age-old game of cricket

It has honour, it has character, and it's British.

Now if you feel this verse is entirely devoid of any humorous qualities, you quite likely won't like the Kinks. But if it strikes you as being rather amusing (you poor soul) then there is a good chance you are on your way to becoming a bonafide Kinks' kook. If so the following two albums are likely the best place to start your collection.

In 1969 the Kinks released Arthur or the Decline and Fall of the British Empire. It was selected as the second best album of the year by Rolling Stone magazine; it should have been first. It is a terrifically enjoyable album, with the music ranging from great rock 'n roll, to beautiful ballads, to such elaborately structured songs as Shangri-La, the album's high point. The lyrics are witty, charming, and quite perceptive, showing a good insight into human nature and British life. It's a great album, a five starrer for sure.

The first Kinks album I heard was Lola Versus the Powerman and the Moneyground and it is still my favorite Kinks album. It may not be quite as enjoyable lyrically as Arthur, but musically it's more inventive, tight, and pleasing and the album as a whole is more homogenous. It contains their big hit "Lola", and the lovely "Get Back in

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