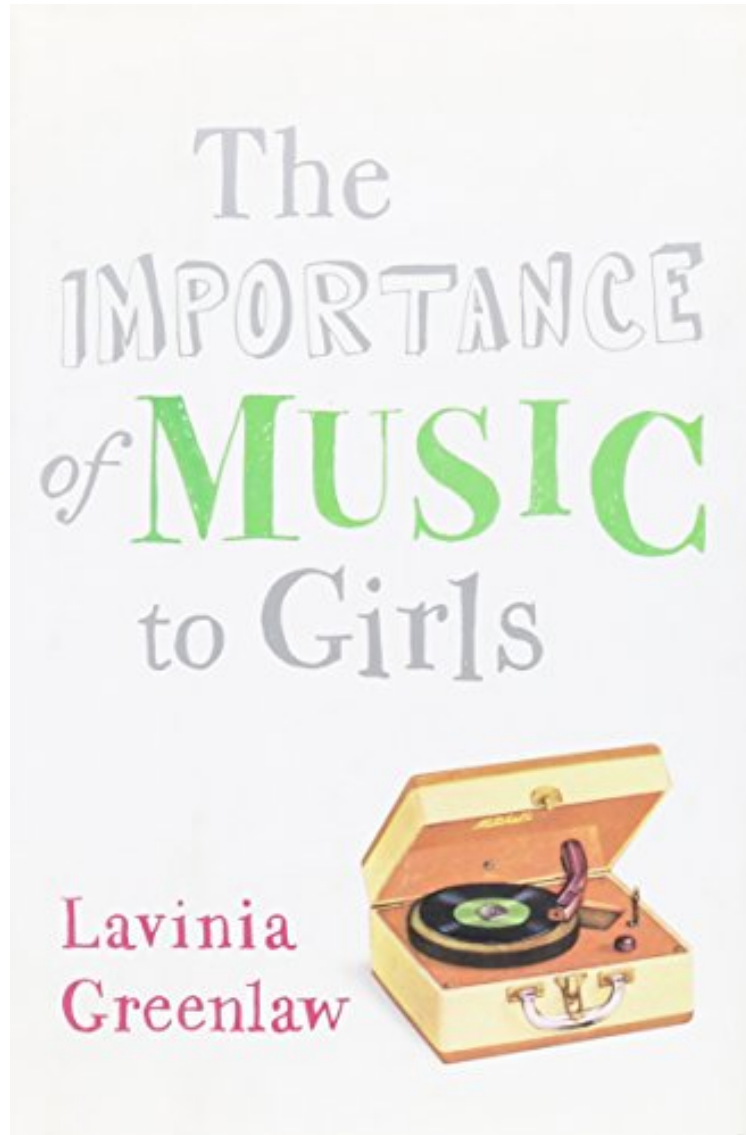


## The Importance of Music to Girls

*Lavinia Greenlaw*

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**Lavinia Greenlaw : The Importance of Music to Girls** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Importance of Music to Girls:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wasn't what I expectedBy Asiah ThomasIt was really good,it just took me longer to get into it than I expected. Overall it was a good book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Interesting Read, Good InspirationBy S. G. LakeThis is an interesting little book,a quick read, and it will inspire you to explore your own life through the music you've known throughout your life.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. F\*\*\* art, let's dance.By T. A. ParkerThe Importance of Music to Girls, by Lavinia Greenlaw

is a memoir not so much of childhood and adolescence, but of her developing relationship with music in 1970s Britain. There are plenty of reviews out there, and they're generally mixed. *The Importance of Music to Girls* made Salon.com's Summer Reads; but was skewered in London's *The Independent*. My reflections do not diverge much from this farraginous example. I had a dickens of a time maintaining my interest at the outset of the memoir. I'm not sure if that's entirely Greenlaw's fault or my own. Her storytelling certainly became more clear, coherent and less ethereal as her remembered-self ages. The book is divided into more than fifty chapters; constituent essays on a theme. Each essay is prefaced by a quote, some more esoteric ("very good") than others. Part of me wonders whether she meant them ironically (Roland Barthes? Bullfinch's Mythology?), or if that was the effect of having read her teenage-punk self's preoccupation with irony in the latter portion of the book. A creative writing professor and poet, Greenlaw is very much a writer I would like to know more about. So, I read her slender memoir with a critical eye towards form and function. Effect was lovely if not muted, which surprised me. For one having written a memoir about her journey through the landscape of dance hall discos and London punk, Greenlaw's tone is surprisingly subdued. I understand, from a writer's perspective, the urge to not draw the world too deeply into the wounds, scars, and dissymmetries of one's experience. Alternately, perhaps she wished to exude the post-modern detachment she experienced as a confused adolescent who depended so heavily on album cover art to interpret which mode of femininity was acceptable. But with a title that makes such a sweeping statement that promises, de facto, to give a glimpse into, well, the importance of music to girls, I found myself wanting the words which may help me access the synaesthesia, angst, and release, and acceptance Greenlaw experienced through music. Perhaps no words can fit that bill. Her writing is beautiful, though. Despite the failures of the *The Importance of Music to Girls*, I enjoyed reading it. And, I learned something stylistically. At the end of the day, that's enough for me.