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Popular Culture: 1920-1939 (A History Of Popular Culture)



Synopsis

Who were the flappers? What were the "talkies"? What was the Harlem Renaissance? Covers the effect of prohibition and the newfound freedom of women on the popular culture of the era. The effects of the Great Depression, as well as the rise of communism and fascism is also discussed in terms of their impact on popular culture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 5-7-These books highlight the TV, movies, music, fashion, art, and major events of each decade of the 20th century. Unfortunately, they are dotted with pesky problems. Stilted, weak writing produces silly euphemisms (such as James Bond "found time to date many beautiful women"), and the set's design is uninspired. "Yuppie" is wrongly defined as "young upwardly mobile professional

Jane Bingham is an experienced writer for young adults. She has written over 100 nonfiction books on a variety of topics. Jane has a first class degree in English Literature and an M. Phil in History of Art and is currently a Royal Literary Fund Fellow at Oxford Brookes University. She has two sons and three stepsons and lives in Oxford, England.

Popular Culture: 1920-1939, From flappers and jazz to King Kong and big bands by Jane Bingham is an okay book for its intended juvenile readers but it could be much better. As the title describes, Bingham covers the essential popular culture influences in the United States (and a little from

England). She does a wonderful job of citing her sources as well as mentioning books, websites and places in a "Find Out More" section. A colorful layout, a multitude of images and well-organized chapters make this an easy and entertaining read that adults can enjoy. The book is a handy compendium. It would be more complete if it included such things as goldfish swallowing, raccoon coats and the writing of "smart" words/phrases on jalopies. A few examples of Dorothy Parker's writing would also be appropriate and entertaining. Some things could be explained a little more fully. For example, the paragraph on famous outlaws such as Bonnie and Clyde are described as glamorous figures after they died and were widely admired for their daring and skill. Actually, they presented a glamorous appearance while they were alive and committing crimes. They sent photos and comments to newspapers. But left unwritten was that much of the gangsters' (not limited to the duo) appeal during the Great Depression was due to the public's disillusionment and outright hatred of banks and investors who were believed to have caused the turmoil. The otherwise law-abiding everyman could identify with the robbers taking money from financial institutions. Several dozen words are set in bold type and detailed in a glossary at the back of the book. Most of the terms are well chosen and defined, but some are not such as "chrome, very shiny silver-colored metal" or "soloist, player of a musical instrument who often plays alone." Including "flapper" with an explanation of the term's origin would be useful here. My three star rating indicates an average grade. Four stars would be an "A" and a five star rating is reserved for that rare thing that is so outstanding it needs to be recognized as such. Like a standing ovation at a concert, that top acclamation for superior work should be very rarely granted.

These are very nice history/fun books about the way life was, back around the dates they are written about. My 13 year old is enjoying them.

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