

The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York

Robert W. Snyder

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*

 Download

 Read Online

#2382216 in Books 1989-11-23Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .83 x 5.75l, #File Name: 0195052854244 pages | File size: 61.Mb

Robert W. Snyder : The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Leah RayA fascinating, if sometimes repetitive, account of vaudeville at its center, NYC.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Robert MccraryExcellent short synopsis of the Vaudeville culture in New York. A very entertaining read without being shallow.1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Info GaloreBy cycling gall I am researching my Vaudevillian grand parents McMahan Chappelle and their girl acts. There was a great excerpt about them. Fabulous photos of the major circuit owners. Two of those owners were godfathers to my cousin's parent. Excellent info about the actors union and blackface.

From 1880 to 1930, the vaudeville show reigned as the most popular form of entertainment in America. Vaudeville was a meeting place--an inclusive form of theatre that fostered cultural interaction between New Yorkers. With its daredevils, comics, tear-jerkers, slapstick clowns, and crooners, vaudeville succeeded in presenting as many voices as New York City itself, allowing them to swell together in a chorus rarely in unison, sometimes in harmony, and always as loud, brassy, and quintessentially New York as the sound of the subway train roaring into Times Square. Robert Snyder's entertaining and enlightening book depicts the rise of popular culture in America by brilliantly recapturing the essence and commercial trappings of one of its most vital forms of entertainment--the vaudeville show. Snyder

reconstructs famous acts such as Eddie Cantor, Sophie Tucker, and Weber and Fields; describes the different theaters from Broadway's famous Palace to local Bronx and Brooklyn venues; and demonstrates how entrepreneurs such as B.F. Keith and E.F. Albee created a near monopoly over bookings, theaters, and performers. First exploring the early transformation of the variety theater into a more tasteful form of entertainment for middle-class women, men, and their families, he then introduces us to such influential showmen as Tony Pastor, who took vaudeville out of the Bowery without taking the Bowery completely out of vaudeville. He brings us to the opening of Keith and Albee's theater on Union Square and describes their efforts to make vaudeville a nationwide industry, along the way offering lively descriptions of the performances of Maggie Cline, the lusty-voiced "Irish Queen" of Tony Pastor's theater, Eubie Blake, the ragtime pianist, composer, and son of former slaves, and countless others. He also shows us vaudeville's decline, with the appropriation of vaudeville audiences by musical comedy, radio, and, most importantly, motion pictures, and the Depression and the closing of the Palace--which became a movie house and featured as its first film *The Kid From Spain*, starring one of the kings of vaudeville, Eddie Cantor. Within the vaudeville theater, New Yorkers found celebration and sentiment, freedom and confinement, abundance and exploitation, intimacy and bureaucracy, glitter and meanness; in other words, they found the voice of the city.

From Library Journal
In delineating the complex social and economic factors contributing to the growth of vaudeville, this study makes it clear how these elements interacted in the creation of a universally compelling entertainment for the ethnically diverse and socially stratified milieu of late 19th- and early 20th-century New York City. The book begins by suggesting that we "take a walk in lower Manhattan on an evening in the 1860s to check out the concert saloons," and it proceeds to take us there, vividly showing, as it moves through the decades to the 1930s, how many of our current cultural attitudes and vast portions of our popular culture have flowed from the great merging and leveling influence of vaudeville. A scholarly but highly readable discussion.- Mark Woodhouse, *Elmira Coll.*, N.Y. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. For anyone interested in American entertainment and popular culture, this pioneering history is not only 'must reading' but, like its subject, plenty of fun. (Kathy Peiss)
The most authoritative book on American vaudeville...a remarkably good read, filled with colorful details and incisive commentary on American popular culture. (David Nasaw)
A fascinating and highly readable social history. (Thomas Bender, New York University)
About the Author
About the Author: Robert W. Snyder is a writer and historian. He is currently a Research Fellow at the Gannett Center for Media Studies, Columbia University. Snyder graduated from Livingston College of Rutgers University, and received his M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from New York University, where he won the Bayrd Still Dissertation Prize. He is also a former newspaper reporter, and has taught at Princeton and New York University.