



American History in Song: Lyrics From 1900 to 1945

Diane Holloway

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Songwriters dramatically captured the details of how Americans lived, thought and changed in the first half of the twentieth century. This book examines 1033 songs about WWI and WWII wars, presidents, Womens Suffrage, Prohibition, the Great Depression, immigration, minority stereotypes, new modes of transportation, inventions, and the changing roles of men and women. America invited immigrants and went to war to ensure democracy but within its borders, lyrics display intolerant attitudes toward women, blacks, and ethnic groups. Songs covered labor strikes, communism, lynchings, women voting and working, love, sex, airships, radio, telephones, the lure of movies and new movie star role models, drugs, smoking, and the atom bomb. History books cannot match the humor, poignancy, poetry and thrill of lyrics in describing the essence of American life as we moved from a rural white male dominated society toward an urban democracy that finally included women and minorities.



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