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# All American Ads Of The 20's (Midi Series)



## Synopsis

The dawn of American consumerism Prohibition made liquor illegal and all the more fun to drink. Speakeasies, luxury cars, women's liberation, bathtub gin and a booming economy kept the country's mood on the up-and-up. Women sheared off their locks and taped their chests, donning flapper dresses and dancing the Charleston until their legs gave out. Gangsters flourished in big cities and gangster movies flourished in Hollywood. It was the roaring twenties in America: a singular time in history, a lull between two world wars and the last gas before the nation's descent into the Great Depression. Forging the way into the future like a modern streamliner in a sea of antiquity, advertising in the 20s sought to bring avant-garde into the mainstream -- which it did with great success.

## Book Information

Series: Midi Series

Paperback: 512 pages

Publisher: Taschen; First edition (October 1, 2004)

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Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 1.7 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #135,103 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in Books > Arts & Photography > Graphic Design > Commercial > Advertising #356 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Pop Culture > Art #42609 in Books > Textbooks

## Customer Reviews

Taschen's legendary decade-by-decade chronicle of American advertising hits a high point in the book on the 1920s. Its hundreds of coruscatingly colorful Jazz Age advertisements, superbly reproduced on practically bulletproof paper, add up to an irresistible question: why stay this side of paradise when the new consumer culture can send you to heaven right now? Just look up: apple-cheeked cherubs bear steaming flapjacks to a beaming sleeper; fluffy, angel-like Michelin tire men ply the skies; the Certainteed building-supplies giant (a sort of Australopithecus Jolly Green Giant) throws his head back against billowing cumulonimbus clouds. Cecil B. de Mille's poster for his 1933 tsunami-disaster film *The Deluge* can't match the grandiosity of some of these ads for

the humblest household products. After a short but sweet introductory essay by New York Times designer Steven Heller, editor Jim Heimann organizes the ads by subject: consumer products, fashion and beauty, entertainment, travel, etc. It's gripping to watch sex and status try to outdo each other in selling 1920s cars: the snooty Pierce Arrow associates itself with wealthy Century Club types, while the Ford Model T stresses the populist \$660 price and the flapper struggling to keep the wind from whipping her perilously brief hem over her head. High art rears its lovely head in ads for the Marmon Big 8 racer, powered by a 125-horsepower engine and a lightninglike look derived from Futurist art. Most ads range in a safer esthetic region bounded by retro-Currier & Ives, zesty art deco, and the funny papers. Fear is a great motivator: hunky Marvin loses the girls to halitosis; classy dames subtly judge each other on the quality of the Scott Tissue in the bathroom: "Women sense it immediately!" The ads featuring black people fascinatingly demonstrate that even the era's most talented artists couldn't draw blacks because they literally could not see them when they looked at them. This book is a must for any serious student of pop culture or anybody out for a graphic good time. --Tim Appelo

Jim Helmann is a resident of Los Angeles, a graphic designer, writer, historian, and instructor at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California. He is the author of numerous books on architecture, popular culture, and Hollywood history, and serves as a consultant to the entertainment industry.

great

Lots of hand drawn type. The pictures are happier and more whimsical than the 30's or 40's. If you're into copying type, don't bother with the 60's -- the type is really boring. The 20's has one has everything from campy to elegant type... I'm looking forward to the release of the 00's-10's (turn of the century).

excellent condition - excellent book

Very typical of this series, plenty of fascinating glossy magazine ads that capture the period as well as anything can. A really impressive series; I've got just about all of them. This one is more foreign than the others since it's period is now bordering on history, rather than just nostalgia.

I love it

At that time photography was not used in commercials. Beautifully illustrated and full in text this book a real back to American Life Style in the 20's, through products that made that age.

This is the final title in Taschen's beautiful six-volume All-American ads series. Despite the contents being at least seventy years old there is plenty to enjoy in the six hundred plus pages. Unlike the other volumes the most noticeable thing is the lack of color photos, illustrations provided the imagery and this is why I found the book so interesting, the range of styles is amazing. The ninety-four car ad pages show the product in precise (though exaggerated) detail, the hundred pages of Fashion and Beauty ads range from hard, flat graphics to pure whimsy and the Food and Beverage pages, where most of the ads have a package somewhere which had to be painted. No color photo pack-shots here. I did find two color photos, least I assume they are, for Buick (page 132) and Agfa (page 314) and imagine they must have been some of the very earliest examples of commercial color photography. Predictably most of the ads are rather staid in their design, small headlines, plenty of copy and a picture but this throws up several eye-catching ads, Marmon cars, Celotex building products, Hart Schaffner and Marx clothing or the very graphic designs for the National Association of Book Publishers. If you like to read copy you'll be pleased to see the famous 1923 Jordan cars ad 'Somewhere West of Laramie' which ran in the June 23 Saturday Evening Post and at the time made quite an impact on the public. The book is beautifully printed and illustrators, in particular, will really enjoy the range of styles in these ads. Other buyers will want this last edition to complete the set. The six books (weighing in at thirty-two pounds with 4758 pages) probably have well over five thousand ads and show a fascinating history of American consumer culture.

I finally caved in and bought this volume in the All-American Ads series, and now I'm going to have to buy the others. I'm doomed. I'm in love with this book, and there's a lot to love about it. The production values are outstanding--the colors are brilliant, the images as crisp as they can be, and the selection of ads is wonderfully varied. It's a visual treat--Taschen has done it again. If I do have one complaint, it is that the emphasis is on full-page, full-color ads. While I am a painter and find this book a visual delight (the colors! Oh, joy!), I'm also a geeky cultural historian. I've looked at a lot of magazines from the period--enough to know that some of the most telling ads about the anxieties, attitudes and preoccupations of the time aren't the largest, most sophisticated, or visually striking

ones. But since this book has been produced primarily as a showcase for graphic design of the period, and not by hopeless history nerds, I have no trouble giving it five stars.

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