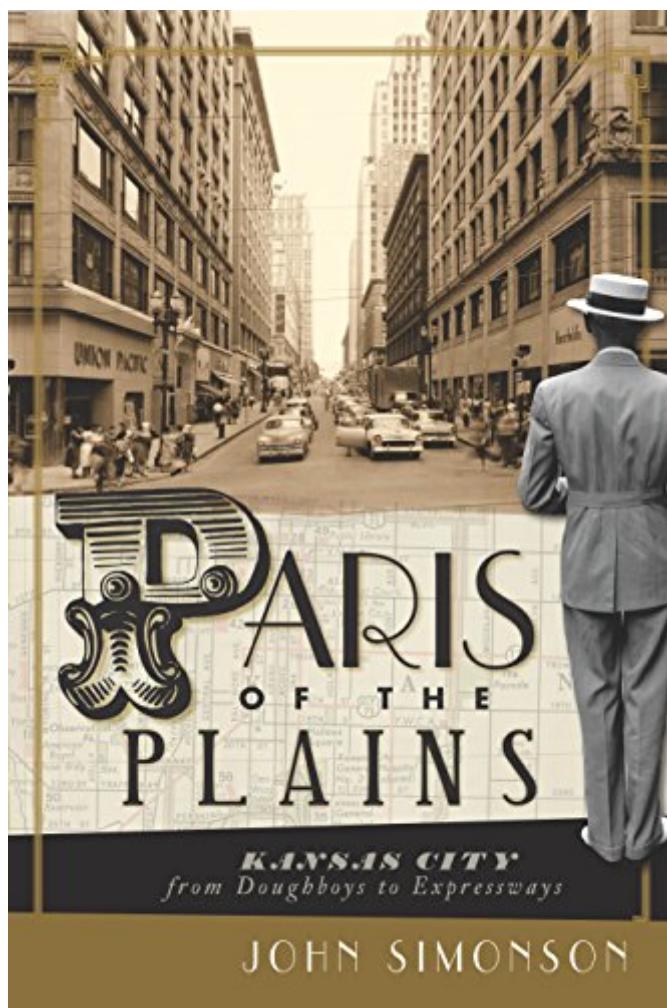


The book was found

Paris Of The Plains: Kansas City From Doughboys To Expressways



Synopsis

From the end of the Great War to the final years of the 1950s, Kansas Citians lived in a manner worthy of a place called Paris of the Plains. The title did more than nod to the perfumed ladies who shopped at Harzfeld's Parisian or the one-thousand-foot television antenna nicknamed the "Eye-full Tower." It spoke to the character of a town that worked for Boss Tom and danced for Count Basie but transcended both the Pendergast era and the Jazz Age. Author John Simonson introduces readers to a town of vaudeville shows and screened-in porches, where fleets of cream-and-black streetcars passed beneath a canopy of elms. This is a history that smells equally of lilacs and stockyards and bursts with the clamor of gunshots, radio baseball and the distant whistle of a night train.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This small, short, sweet book is a collection of essays, with a stream-of-consciousness feel to each chapter. One gets a sense of the writer's efforts to express a deeper feeling for Kansas City and the people who lived, died, or just passed through. There are passages that remind me of William Least

Heat Moon or John McPhee, hints of the long hours of research and how to express or speculate on a story, based on a ticket stub for a certain night of an unknown year, for example. If you're looking for any sort of in-depth insight into the way of life of a city that was, before the automobile and the crushing sameness that has smothered the USA post-interstate, post-corporate America, you will not find it here. If you're seeking a comprehensive timeline or overview of Kansas City history, you won't find it here. Read this for the quirky concept of the random photograph as a touchstone for musing about what may have been. It's a good read for an afternoon, on a sunporch, with a cool drink and some good jazz music playing. The essays will give you a taste of the writer's style and quite possibly leave you hopeful that he will continue writing for a long, long time.

If you are at all interested in the history and personality of Kansas City, this book is an utter pleasure to read. Simonson's tour through the first five decades of the twentieth century provide a colorful, non-academic (but still informative), thoroughly human history that is a quick and easy read while neither being simplistic or insulting. I'm going to recommend this to everyone I know from KC, new to KC, or remotely curious about the town.

I worked in Kansas City for a week recently and wanted to know more about it. This book captured the city's charm and I am looking forward to my return visit.

Antidotes galore.

The book title leads the reader to the guts of the book. The book delivers very well. The story of KC, like the good and the bad people who built it over the decades, is incredible. Richard W. Ellison[...]

A must read, learn the lesser known history of Kansas City. A history that likely only native Kansas City, Missourians would be familiar with.

Kansas City has always been one of my favorite cities to visit!! I love reading books about this time period, and better yet, books about Kansas City during its heyday.

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