

American Culture American Tastes

*Social Change and the
20th Century*



Michael Kammen



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539. Michael Kammen
American Culture, American Tastes
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What does it mean
longest running Broadway
show CATS - based on T.S.
Eliot's book of poems.
What did Alexis de Tocqueville
find about culture in 1831

When was Entertainment
Democratized?
Why is culture so often
poor what the public likes

Alexis de Tocqueville P¹⁶¹
a truly democratic culture
could be readily afflicted
by mediocrity.

Russell Lynds
1949 essay on Haysia
P¹³⁰ 1976 "Wast Land"

Why do you dwell on
Robert Mussteni - the
critic - Robert Hughes
Althe Ploger

Cornell since 1965

Participation
intellectual

Legs?

- popular

mass

passive

Culture

P22

Birth of mass culture 1911-1929

Paid nation - after WW II

My suggestion - 1905-1935 - inter of newspaper and radio reproduction

National Zoo - 1888 - transformation from science to entertainment P:7

TV - dumb down 60's -

I don't believe it is always passive - pro civil rights
opposed - Vietnam

We are witnessing a decline of cultural authority, P259
populist source of authority, instead of cultural critics
opinion polls.

TV ratings.

published statistics on movie attendance.

political preference polls.

You say the Golden Age never was.

Chapter 9 - Highbrow/Middlebrow/Lowbrow - Life mag chart
Lusell Lynes p-95

The age of the Two Waters/Walter Winchell and Walter Lippman

George Gallup - started Polls in 1930's

H.L. Mencken/George Jean Nathan (P 39)

Tocqueville - why do cite him so often?

Historians and Popular Culture P219

Ken Burns Oliver Stone
The History Channel
Disney Channel

Robert Hughes Enola Gay - Revisionism
Peter Kraggs Kiss's Sunbaths
Hilton Kramer Walter Lippmann

What does it mean that average time spent in
American History Museum is 30 minutes

Bum success - no actors - it's authentic

Internet - most international version of mass culture

Mass Culture in more recent times

Andy Warhol
Television - what impact has Sesame Street had.

Advertising
passivity - The more they watch they are likely then
out to vote

ALSO BY MICHAEL KAMMEN

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P160 Cultural mean less than they used to.

American Culture American Tastes

popular culture - prime - 1885-1935

- ① growth in leisure time
- ② commercialization of organized entertainment
- ③ innovations in transportation helped reach an audience
- ④ Victorian age over

popular
mass } culture

Highbrow
Middlebrow
Lowbrow

S. J. Perelman

Writing for Grouchos & S.

The New Yorker

Fantasies was a feature
for Walt Disney in 1980

P.T. Barnum (mass or popular)

Billy Sunday / Billy Graham

Photo play (1911) first movie fan mag.

BOOKNOTES
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First Edition

1911 What was George Reed Committee on Public Inf.

White Castle

World War II - great influence
on transition from proto-mass culture
to "the real thing" p 57

Arnold Johnson

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Amos N. Kennedy
Word of the Week

Pocket Books (1939)

Daniel Boorstin - Consumption Communities

"Eddie Bernays
man in the street" - 1920's

Russell Lyner - 1949 repr. ed. of Harpers
Highbrow - Lowbrow - middlebrow p 95

Academics - most influence 3 decades after war

Margaret Macdonald The Great Debate on mass culture in 50's
Vance Packard
Lionel Tullin 1922-29
George Gallup 1935

Gilbert Seldes
Walter Lippmann
George Jean Nathan
The New Yorker
Reader Digest

Irving Kristol - there must be someone to decide
questions of moral and cultural value p 147

Stewart Alsop - worried about loss of W.A.P. style

Coney Island
Partisan Review
Jiving Home
T.S. Eliot
Daniel Bell
River's Club (1950 first)
suburban movie houses
after WW II 400 rec'd. later
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proto-mass culture (PMC)
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Life Magazine
mass. culture (MC)