



Buzz Poole

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PLAYING CARDS

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Buzz Poole : Playing Cards before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Playing Cards:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Terrific gift !By Just NanI received my copy of this book a year ago for my birthday. The book "touched me" on several levels - as an avid Bridge player who loves cards and from a nostalgic perspective - a kid in the '40s and '50s who collected and "traded" cards. This book, filled with card history and illustrations, is the perfect gift for my relocating Bridge friend. In addition to being a beautiful product, the vendor is a pleasure to work with. They responded the very next day to my shipping questions and assured me that I would have the gift in time for my friend's departure. I will order from Ralston again in the future.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Attractive designs that may elicit some nostalgiaBy Dennis LittrellIra Pearlstein writes an engaging introduction in which he recounts buying at a country estate auction in August 1995 two albums of playing cards for \$17.50. The cards were displayed on the pages of the albums backside up so that the colorful designs--many of which would be described as "art deco"--might delight the collector's eye. He realized that the cards were probably from the 20s, 30s, and 40s. This book is the result of that fortunate find. Here the cards are reproduced life size in brilliant color so that four cards fit attractively on a page. The book itself measures an artful twelve by four and seven-eighths by three-quarters inches. The first cards displayed have symmetrical patterned backs mostly in reds and blues. Then come some backs that are also patterned but not symmetrical. Here the colors begin to become more garish and ornate with purples, yellows and other colors appearing. Then come many cards with daring asymmetry, little works of art reflecting in some cases ideas from Fauvism and Cubism. There are some cards with commercial logos on the back, one for "ABC Oil Burners," another for "Bert Green, Conservative Clothes." Then come the stylized dogs, often in black and white pairs. Also displayed are cards with cats, bears, deer, birds, etc., on their backs, some geometrically designed. Designs showing people in their houses, at play, courting in fine costumes, dancing, holding hands, in silhouette by moonlight, pretty girls in pensive moods, etc.; nature scenes, still art, sailboats, gondolas, and clipper ships; "Unorthodox color treatments, oddly matched patterns and figures and perplexing subject matter" adorn more of the cards. Cartoon figures and clowns--all of these designs and more appeared on the backs of pasteboard cards created to augment the experience of the social player at bridge or poker or the lonely hearts at solitaire. I was disappointed not to see some representative fronts of the cards with the pips and the symmetrical kings, queens and jacks. Although the designs on the front would perforce be more standard, nonetheless there would undoubtedly be subtleties of design that card fanciers would appreciate. However the next to last section of the book shows some of the jokers, which I found most interesting. I had a moment or two of nostalgia while recognizing some of the designs from long ago. Buzz Poole provides a little history of card manufacture and design in a short essay and some textual comment to grace the display of the cards.

The varied graphic styles of playing cards from the 1930s and 1940s reveal aspects of culture, and the culture of design.