



Popular Ideologies: Mass Culture at Mid-Century

By Susan Smulyan

University of Pennsylvania Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Popular Ideologies: Mass Culture at Mid-Century, Susan Smulyan, In Popular Ideologies, Susan Smulyan demonstrates that popular culture represented more than just escape during the twentieth century's formative period. Far from providing an ideology-free zone, popular products and entertainments served (and continue to serve) as an arena where producers attempt to impose notions of race, class, gender, and nationhood, and consumers react to such impositions. From popular minstrel skits performed by middle-class families, to women rioting to experience the technological wonder of nylons, to Hollywood-starved post-World War II Japanese film fans eager to see American screen stars, to dissatisfied advertising men who wrote best-selling novels, people used mid-century popular culture to reinforce their status while claiming their place in a newly commodified and increasingly mass-produced world of leisure activities. Smulyan also tracks the ways popular culture, over time, became less and less open to audience input and more an expression of powerful institutions. Today, despite the lack of audience control over the mass media, contemporary college students use marginal forms like Japanese anime and campus cultural shows to make sense of their own lives--much as did mid-century amateur minstrels, stocking buyers,...

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