

How is culture made? In a readable style, this book argues that the development of American culture in the twentieth century was the result of a cacophony of influences with a large sociological sweep, from the role of immigrants as a new audience to the intimate circles of artists who forged connections through neighborhoods, popular pubs, and lovers—heterosexual and homosexual—all contributing to an intellectual ferment that was open to new ideas. Patricia Bradley examines how some of these forces impacted the evolution of popular cultural forms such as vaudeville, song, and early film as well as the emergence of modern art, dance, and literary productions. All of these forms were a product of their times and were fueled by the ambition of artists looking to be part of the American success story.