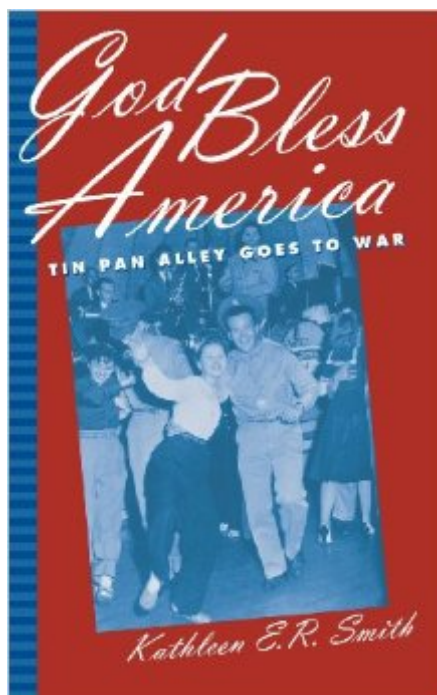


The book was found

God Bless America: Tin Pan Alley Goes To War



Synopsis

After Pearl Harbor, Tin Pan Alley songwriters rushed to write the Great American War Song—a "Over There" for World War II. The most popular songs, however, continued to be romantic ballads, escapist tunes, or novelty songs. To remedy the situation, the federal government created the National Wartime Music Committee, an advisory group of the Office of War Information (OWI), which outlined "proper" war songs, along with tips on how and what to write. The music business also formed its own Music War Committee to promote war songs. Neither group succeeded. The OWI hoped that Tin Pan Alley could be converted from manufacturing love songs to manufacturing war songs just as automobile plants had retooled to assemble planes and tanks. But the OWI failed to comprehend the large extent by which the war effort would be defined by advertisers and merchandisers. Selling merchandise was the first priority of Tin Pan Alley, and the OWI never swayed them from this course. Kathleen E.R. Smith concludes the government's fears of faltering morale did not materialize. Americans did not need such war songs as "Goodbye, Mama, I'm Off To Yokohama", "There Are No Wings On a Foxhole", or even "The Sun Will Soon Be Setting On The Land Of The Rising Sun" to convince them to support the war. The crusade for a "proper" war song was misguided from the beginning, and the music business, then and now, continues to make huge profits selling love—not war—songs.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: University Press of Kentucky (March 28, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0813122562

ISBN-13: 978-0813122564

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,383,084 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Military Marches #3205 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Instruments > Voice #4170 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs & Traditions

Customer Reviews

Despite the efforts of several government agencies, and the willingness of many topflight

songwriters, including Frank Loesser and Irving Berlin, no single song emerged from Tin Pan Alley during World War II that took the war as its subject directly. Berlin's own "God Bless America," which became one of the great hits of the wartime era, was actually written at a time slightly preceding the entrance of the US into World War II. Kathleen Smith, the author of this study, whose name oddly enough suggests that of Kate Smith, the moon-faced and wildly popular radio star who made "God Bless America" a monster sensation, suggests that the reason for this is that, enraptured by swing music, the teenagers who controlled the chart did not want to buy martial tunes. They wanted love songs and they wanted music they could dance to. In this way the era seems oddly close to our own. The book's accompanying promotion materials suggest that a similar situation has transpired today, after 9/11 American musicians wanted to create a hit that would show the Al-Qaeda that we were unbowed, but despite the best efforts of everyone from Paul McCartney to Bruce Springsteen and back around again, from all shadings of the right and left, the song that is most mentioned as a result of the terrorist destruction of the World Trade Center was that country number by Toby Keith about the red, white and blue, with the pugnacious lyric, "You'll be sorry that you messed with the U.S. of A./ 'Cause we'll put a boot in your ass/ It's the American way." Some of the WWII would be hit songs expressed similar sentiments against the "Nips" and "Krauts" of Axis fame. Smith is an okay writer but her book is somewhat padded, and Kentucky should hire a proofreader, it is trying indeed that Melvyn Douglas and Ralph Bunche both have their names misspelled.

One of the best general discussions about popular music during World War II currently available. Her presentation of the tensions between those who wanted a "war song" and those who supported a more evenhanded approach to records and sheet music is thought-provoking and unusual. Highly recommended.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

God Bless America: Tin Pan Alley Goes to War America's Songs: The Stories Behind the Songs of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists (Oxford Paperbacks) Funny, It Doesn't Sound Jewish: How Yiddish Songs and Synagogue Melodies Influenced Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, and Hollywood (SUNY Series in Modern Jewish Literature and Culture) One-Pan Wonders: Fuss-Free Meals for Your Sheet Pan, Dutch Oven, Skillet, Roasting Pan, Casserole, and Slow Cooker (Cook's Country) Let Us Bless The Lord, Year One: Meditations for the Daily Office, Advent Through Holy Week (Let Us Bless the Lord) Walt Disney's Peter Pan (Disney Peter Pan) (Little Golden Book) Peter Pan and Other Plays: The

Admirable Crichton; Peter Pan; When Wendy Grew Up; What Every Woman Knows; Mary Rose (Oxford World's Classics) Irving Berlin's God Bless America & Other Songs for a Better Nation (Piano/Vocal/Guitar Songbook) 236 GOD BLESS AMERICA & OTHER SONGS FOR A BETTER NATION (E-Z Play Today) God Bless the Child (Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Books) God Bless the Child The Berenstain Bears God Bless Our Country (Berenstain Bears/Living Lights) God Bless You and Good Night Post-War Tin Toys: A Collector's Guide Dora Goes to the Doctor/Dora Goes to the Dentist (Dora the Explorer) (Deluxe Pictureback) Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Editorial Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel The Songwriter Goes to War: The Story of Irving Berlin's World War II All-Army Production of This Is the Army Harry Potter: Magical Places from the Films: Hogwarts, Diagon Alley, and Beyond 2016 Coloring Quote Calendar (Doodle Art Alley Books) (Volume 8)

[Dmca](#)