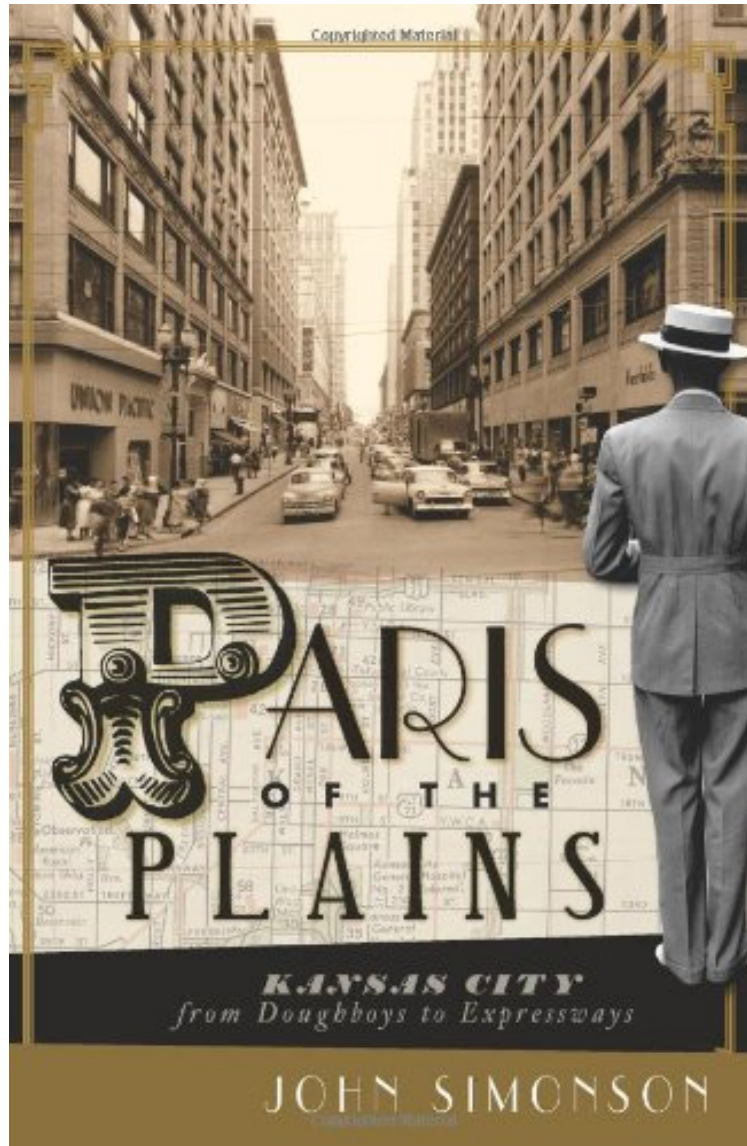


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Paris of the Plains: Kansas City from Doughboys to Expressways

John Simonson

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John Simonson : Paris of the Plains: Kansas City from Doughboys to Expressways before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Paris of the Plains: Kansas City from Doughboys to Expressways:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Meaningful if you already love KCBy Happy CustomerThis

small, short, sweet book is a collection of essays, with a stream-of-consciousness feel to each chapter. One gets a sense of the writer's efforts to express a deeper feeling for Kansas City and the people who lived, died, or just passed through. There are passages that remind me of William Least Heat Moon or John McPhee, hints of the long hours of research and how to express or speculate on a story, based on a ticket stub for a certain night of an unknown year, for example. If you're looking for any sort of in-depth insight into the way of life of a city that was, before the automobile and the crushing sameness that has smothered the USA post-interstate, post-corporate America, you will not find it here. If you're seeking a comprehensive timeline or overview of Kansas City history, you won't find it here. Read this for the quirky concept of the random photograph as a touchstone for musing about what may have been. It's a good read for an afternoon, on a sunporch, with a cool drink and some good jazz music playing. The essays will give you a taste of the writer's style and quite possibly leave you hopeful that he will continue writing for a long, long time. 12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. An Absolute Pleasure By Katie S. If you are at all interested in the history and personality of Kansas City, this book is an utter pleasure to read. Simonson's tour through the first five decades of the twentieth century provide a colorful, non-academic (but still informative), thoroughly human history that is a quick and easy read while neither being simplistic or insulting. I'm going to recommend this to everyone I know from KC, new to KC, or remotely curious about the town. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I worked in Kansas City for a week recently and ... By Customer I worked in Kansas City for a week recently and wanted to know more about it. This book captured the city's charm and I am looking forward to my return visit.

From the end of the Great War to the final years of the 1950s, Kansas Citians lived in a manner worthy of a place called Paris of the Plains. The title did more than nod to the perfumed ladies who shopped at Harzfeld's Parisian or the one-thousand-foot television antenna nicknamed the "Eye-full Tower." It spoke to the character of a town that worked for Boss Tom and danced for Count Basie but transcended both the Pendergast era and the Jazz Age. Author John Simonson introduces readers to a town of vaudeville shows and screened-in porches, where fleets of cream-and-black streetcars passed beneath a canopy of elms. This is a history that smells equally of lilacs and stockyards and bursts with the clamor of gunshots, radio baseball and the distant whistle of a night train.

About the Author John Simonson is an independent writer and editor. His work has appeared in local newspapers, magazines, websites, corporate publications, museum exhibits, jazz recordings and beyond. He lives in Kansas City, Missouri.