



Historical Dictionary of African-American Television (Historical Dictionaries of Literature and the Arts)

By Kathleen Fearn-Banks

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From *Amos 'n' Andy* to *The Jeffersons* to *Family Matters* to *Chappelle's Show*, this volume covers it all with entries on all different genres?animation, documentaries, sitcoms, sports, talk shows, and variety shows?and performers such as Muhammad Ali, Louis Armstrong, Bill Cosby, and Oprah Winfrey. Additionally, information can be found on general issues, ranging from African American audiences and stereotypes through the related networks and organizations.

This book has hundreds of cross-referenced entries, from A to Z, in the dictionary and a list of acronyms with their corresponding definitions. The extensive chronology shows who did what and when and the introduction traces the often difficult circumstances African American performers faced compared to the more satisfactory present situation. Finally, the bibliography is useful to those readers who want to know more about specific topics or persons.

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Editorial Review

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When people consider the beginnings of television, they may not realize that African American performers were present and played a role in the early days of this industry. This volume covers in alphabetical order performers, programs, and different genres (news, sports, documentaries, movies) from the 1950s to 2004. There are also brief entries on topics such as *Biracial characters*, Domestic workers in the 1950s (followed by entries treating the '60s, '70s, '80s, and '90s), and *Music veejays*. Although the coverage is not exhaustive, an attempt was made to list as many performers as possible, but behind-the-camera personnel could not be included.

The volume opens with a list of acronyms and abbreviations and a chronology covering the period from 1923 (early network radio) to 2004. The introduction provides information about the development of blacks on television and black TV through different time periods: 1950s-1964, 1965-1979, 1980-1999, and the new millennium. Appendixes include "Series Rankings and Ratings," a list of black Emmy Award winners, and a classified bibliography that includes Web sites. A few photographs reflect the different time periods.

This resource enables both researcher and fan to find information on the struggles of black performers or on favorite and little-known vehicles. Patrons in both public and academic libraries would find this volume interesting and helpful. *Patricia Hogan*

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Review

...a handy guide for beginning researchers in the field...This work is recommended for all media and black studies collections. (*American Reference Books Annual*)

This resource enables both researcher and fan to find information on the struggles of black performers or on favorite and little-known vehicles. Patrons in both public and academic libraries would find this volume interesting and helpful. (*Booklist*, 4/15/2006)

...an invaluable tool for anyone researching this area of expertise. (*The Afro American Newspaper*)

This encyclopedic treatment includes thousands of facts and analyses on "events" that flowed past our eyes on television in the past 50 years. Here's where to find information on, for example, the number of Hooks family members who have appeared on television, interracial romances and marriages in the 1990s, television specials made by Diana Ross, and reality shows and African-Americans. Fearn-Banks (communications, U. of Washington) provides a valuable service with her comprehensive entries on people, shows, and issues across the era of TV, which has not-so-coincidentally spanned a good portion of the era of the fight for civil rights as well. (*Reference and Research Book News*)

About the Author

Kathleen Fearn-Banks, a tenured associate professor, joined the faculty of the School of Communications, University of Washington at Seattle in 1990 after more than twenty five years in the communications profession. In addition to being a feature writer at the Los Angeles Times and a news-writer, a producer, and a reporter for a Los Angeles network affiliated television station, she also headed, for more than twenty years, nationwide publicity campaigns for NBC Television Network series, specials, and movies.

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