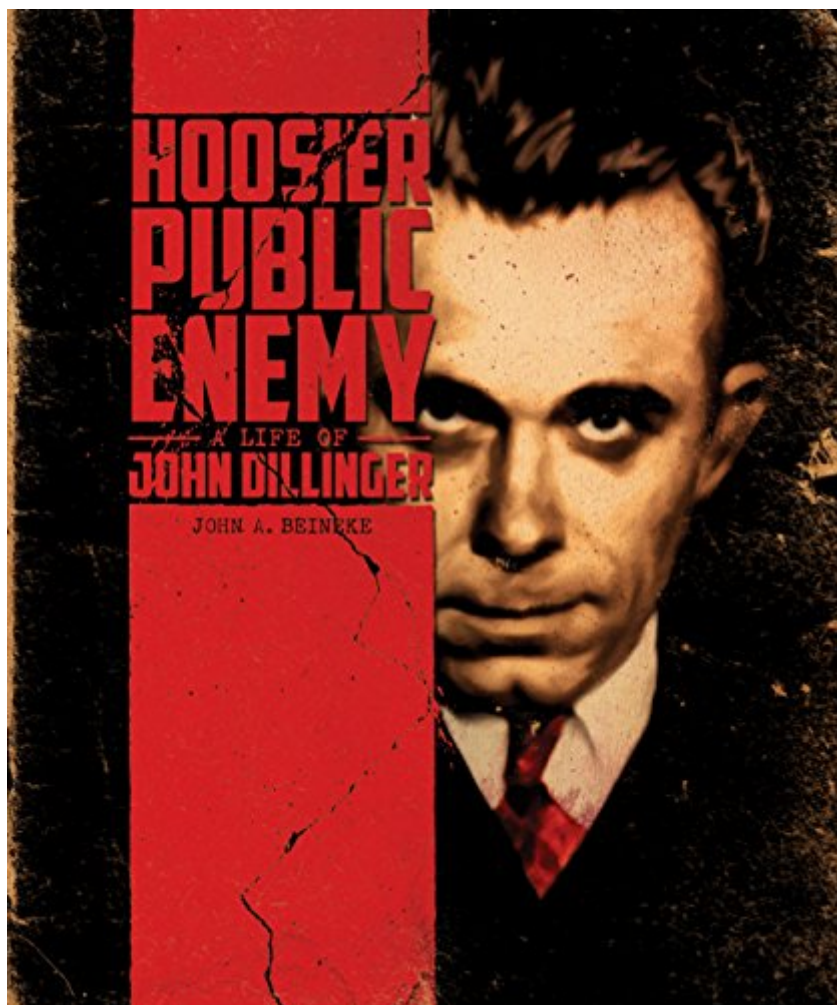


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Hoosier Public Enemy: A Life Of John Dillinger



Synopsis

During the bleak days of the Great Depression, news of economic hardship often took a backseat to articles on the exploits of an outlaw from Indiana—John Dillinger. For a period of fourteen months during 1933 and 1934 Dillinger became the most famous bandit in American history, and no criminal since has matched him for his celebrity and notoriety. Dillinger won public attention not only for his robberies, but his many escapes from the law. The escapes he made from jails or tight spots, when it seemed law officials had him cornered, became the stuff of legends. While the public would never admit that they wanted the bad guy to win, many could not help but root for the man who appeared to be an underdog. Although his crime wave took place in the last century, the name Dillinger has never left the public imagination.

Book Information

File Size: 7840 KB

Print Length: 281 pages

Publisher: Indiana Historical Society Press (September 18, 2014)

Publication Date: September 18, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00NQQGP47O

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #625,302 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #48

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > History > United States > State & Local

#413 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Children's Nonfiction > History > United

States #425 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States >

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Customer Reviews

John Beineke's well researched book about the first Public Enemy #1 is well researched and well written. Since I grew up in Indiana and was raised very close to many of the banks Dillinger robbed I was fascinated by the book. My home town of Marion is even mentioned. The story is a sad one as it

shows how Dillinger spent time in a jail for wayward boys when he was very young. He came out bitter and claimed if he had not had to serve so many years he might not have struck out against the system. Facts I often wondered about are clarified in this book. Anyone interested in the lives of criminals and how they got started on the wrong track and how they ended up will enjoy this account of John Dillinger. Norman Jones, Ed. D. author of *Main St. vs. Wall St.: Wake-up Calls for America's Leaders*

A fine well-written synthesis of John Dillinger's life and criminal career, with discussion of certain controversial issues. Indiana native Beineke's report of the chaotic Little Bohemia raid in Wisconsin is especially riveting, even though you already know the outcome. His roundup of the principal participants, following Dillinger's death, is a satisfying ending, along with a summary of how Dillinger's persona has influenced the culture over the years, in films, cartoons, and writings. In all, it opens a window onto a portion of Depression-era America that serves as background to Dillinger's brief, dramatic life. A good selection of photographs spread generously through the book further enhances this well-published book that exudes quality from its good paper and type to its captivating cover.

Hoosier Public Enemy: A Life of John Dillinger gets my best rating because it is engaging. The author has reported events in the sequence they occurred and, instead of putting his own spin on them he has used a journalistic style and reported them as they appeared in the newspapers. This is important because it captures the unique culture of the time. This style frees the readers to put their own interpretations on each event. I found myself questioning my own bases for judging not just Dillinger's values but my own values and the basis that society uses to judge others. I believe it would be impossible to read this book without learning about the culture of America and the nature of humanity. Because the book is action-packed, once a reader begins reading it, it is difficult to put down.

You may have heard Frederick Raphael put it, "Fiction is truer than facts." But that is because it takes integrity, conviction, and a grasp of tautology (a formula which is true in every possible interpretation) to write something that gives the reader every opportunity to comprehend the truth about someone of recent history. John Beineke brilliantly succeeds with all this by giving the reader facts that read as exciting as great fiction but they know it is not. *Hoosier Public Enemy: The life of John Dillinger* focuses on his few years of notability as one of most notorious criminals in US history.

I knew the basics of the man (how terrible he must have been) but after reading this work, which held my interest continually, I came out with more balanced sense of the reality of the times. A great combination of facts and fun reading seldom experienced with history. I suggest it for anyone with an interest of our history but highly recommend it for any school curriculum.

I haven't started reading this book yet but I've always had an interest in John Dillinger & Bonnie & Clyde for that fact. Glancing through the book I believe I can say I made a good decision ordering this book!!!

Living in NW Indiana, we have a museum with Dillinger's life and deeds!!!! I got this book to future read of his escapades and him personally. Very good read.

I highly recommend this well-written and easy to read bio of Dillinger. It is hard to give a fresh account of Dillinger's life because so much has been written about him, but Beineke has done so. I like his opinions about what Dillinger may have done. Jeff King

The book brings you back to that time era in vivid detail. I would recommend it for any great depression buffs.

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