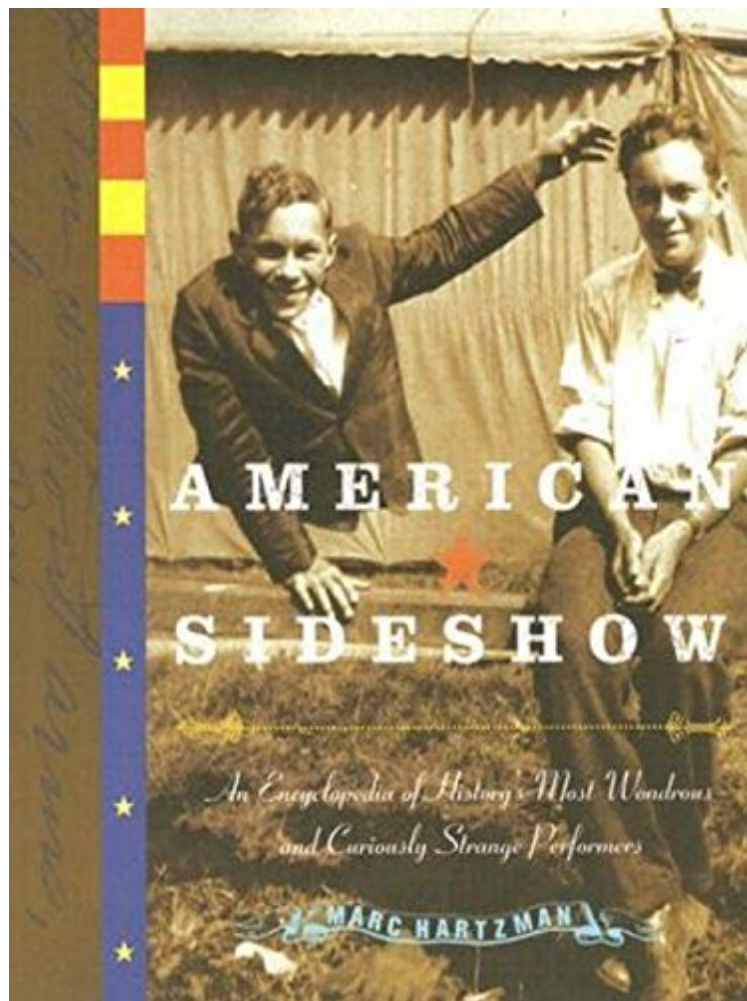


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American Sideshow: An Encyclopedia of History's Most Wondrous and Curiously Strange Performers

Marc Hartzman

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Marc Hartzman : American Sideshow: An Encyclopedia of History's Most Wondrous and Curiously Strange Performers before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Sideshow: An Encyclopedia of History's Most Wondrous and Curiously Strange Performers:

A fascinating look into the history of the American sideshow and its performers. Learn what's real, what's fake, and what's just downright bizarre. You've probably heard of Tom Thumb. The Elephant Man. Perhaps even Chang and Eng, the original Siamese twins. But what about Eli Bowen, the legless acrobat? Or Prince Randian, the human torso?

These were just a few of the many stars that shone during the heyday of the American sideshow, from 1840 to 1950. *American Sideshow* chronicles the lives of truly amazing performers, examining these brave and extraordinary curiosities not just as sideshow performers but as people, delving into the lives they led and the ways they were able to triumph over and even benefit from their abnormalities. *American Sideshow* discusses the rise and fall of the original sideshows and their subsequent replacement by today's self-made freaks. With the progress of modern medicine, technological advancements, and the wonderful world of body modification, abnormalities are being overcome, treated and even prevented: Siamese twins can now be separated, and in addition to this, tongues can be forked, horns surgically implanted, and earlobes removed. There are also, of course, modern-day giants, fire eaters, sword swallows, glass eaters, human blockheads, and oh, so much more. These fascinating personalities are celebrated through intimate biographies paired with stunning photographs. Approximately two hundred performers from the past one hundred and sixty years are featured, giving readers a comprehensive and sometimes astonishing look into the history of the American sideshow