

■ Bobby-soxers

Identification Teenage girls who wore heavy white socks with the tops rolled over, and were identified as the screaming fans of crooners such as Frank Sinatra

Although bobby socks had been around since the mid-1930's, they became identified with high school girls who screamed and swooned over stars, especially Frank Sinatra, but also including others such Mickey Rooney and Van Johnson. Socks had slowly replaced stockings by the late 1930's for college and high school women, but by the 1940's they were adopted mostly by high schoolers.

Prior to the 1940's, teens were identified as an age group but were not considered a distinct social group. Bobby-soxers initially were portrayed as fe-

male juvenile delinquents by *Newsweek* in 1944, but the term as used by newspapers and magazines such as *The New York Times* and *Time* magazine came to refer to teenage girls who swooned over their idols (Frank Sinatra in particular). The epithet referred to the bobby socks (or bobby sox) worn by many teenage girls. These thick, ankle-high white cotton socks were worn with the tops rolled over, with cuffed denim pants or skirts (often embroidered with poodles), and with saddle shoes. The socks became popular because at many school dances, students were required to remove their shoes to protect the floor, and bobby socks stood up well to dancing.

Teenagers did not often refer to themselves as bobby-soxers, but Shirley Temple played such a girl, infatuated with an older man, in the 1947 film *The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer*. The look of bobby socks



Bobby-soxer fans of Frank Sinatra eagerly read about him in Modern Screen magazine while waiting for him to appear at a New York nightclub. (Getty Images)

began a trend toward more casual dress, with teens as leaders in the trend. The launch of *Seventeen* magazine in 1944 recognized teenage culture as a profitable market.

Impact The term “bobby-soxer” came to epitomize teenage girls in popular culture. Bobby-soxers were part of an emerging teenage lifestyle that would develop into a consumer demographic of fashion, music, magazines, and cosmetics.

Jane Brodsky Fitzpatrick

Further Reading

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See also Fads; Fashions and clothing; Music: Popular; Nylon stockings; Rooney, Mickey; Sinatra, Frank.

■ Bogart, Humphrey

Identification American film star

Born December 25, 1899; New York, New York

Died January 14, 1957; Hollywood, California

A bit player on stage during the 1920's who became typecast as a B-picture gangster during the 1930's, Bogart rose to prominence during the 1940's, when he became the highest-paid actor in the world and one of the most recognized and respected icons of the silver screen.

The son of a wealthy surgeon, Humphrey Bogart served in the U.S. Navy in World War I before drifting into acting, playing walk-on roles on stage in romantic comedies throughout the 1920's. In 1930, he went to Hollywood, earning a reputation during the decade as a hardworking, reliable second lead capable of playing a variety of roles.

Having served his apprenticeship, Bogart dominated the 1940's like no other male actor of his era. A series of meaty roles showcased his unique talent for portraying tough guys of substance. His expressive eyes, his intensity, and his no-nonsense delivery—accented with a slight lisp as the result of a

scarred lip—combined to make his characters believable. Bogart's incredible run began with *High Sierra* (1941), headlining as a former convict masterminding one last crime. In the same year, he was private eye Sam Spade in the noir-flavored mystery *The Maltese Falcon*. He followed up in 1942 as nightclub owner Rick Blaine in the Oscar-winning wartime drama *Casablanca*, considered one of the greatest movies of all time, for which he was nominated for an Academy Award for best actor. Other patriotic combat dramas featuring Bogart included *Across the Pacific* (1942), *All Through the Night* (1942), *Action in the North Atlantic* (1943), *Sahara* (1943), *Passage to Marseille* (1944), and *To Have and Have Not* (1944). After World War II, Bogart continued his winning ways in a wide range of starring vehicles—as detective, ex-soldier, sympathetic escaped convict, conscience-stricken prospector, or crusading attorney—in such compelling films as *The Big Sleep* (1946), *Dead Reckoning* (1947), *Dark Passage* (1947), *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), *Key Largo* (1948), and *Knock on Any Door* (1949).

The 1940's were meaningful to Bogart in other ways. In 1943 and 1944, he joined United Service Organizations (USO) and war bond tours to Europe and North Africa. He married his fourth wife, youthful actor Lauren Bacall, in 1945, and fathered his only son, Stephen Humphrey Bogart, in 1949. In 1948, he became one of the first actors to establish his own production company, Santana Productions.

Impact Bogart's superior work during the 1940's (of seventy-two films in which he appeared, twenty-seven were released between 1940 and 1949) made him a box-office star, earning \$10,000 per week by 1946. His work also earned him first shot at choice roles throughout the remainder of a career terminated by throat cancer. In 1951, he won his only best actor Oscar, for the *The African Queen*. He was nominated again for his performance in *The Caine Mutiny* (1954), and his last three films—*The Left Hand of God* (1955), *The Desperate Hours* (1955), and *The Harder They Fall* (1956)—are all considered classics of their type.

More than a half century since his death, the image of Bogart in fedora and trench coat, squinting through cigarette smoke, is universally recognized. It is no wonder that in 1999 he was named the American Film Institute's greatest male star of all time.

Jack Ewing