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## Two Hundred Years of the American Circus: From Aba-Daba to the Zoppe-Zavatta Troupe

*Tom Ogden*

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Two Hundred Years of the American Circus: From Aba-Daba to the Zoppe-Zavatta Troupe:

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This reference is a complete A-to-Z guide to the circuses, performers, promoters, animal acts, and terminology that have made the American circus a unique tradition.

From Booklist What are "flatfoots"? What is the "Circus Kirk"? This entertaining encyclopedia of the circus details these facts and other pertinent information for circus aficionados and provides a starting point for researchers of circus history. It covers all aspects of the circus in North America from the performers, animal acts, and owners to circus jargon, publications, and organizations. All the major names are here: Barnum and Bailey, Cirque du Soleil, Willy Hagenbeck, and Jimmy James. There are entries for the four circus museums in the U.S. and for the three circus fan organizations. Author Ogden has selectively put together a great amount of circus history, not just a who's who. Entries vary from a sentence to two pages. Much of the slang used in the circus has found its way into common American usage (e.g., "hold your horses" and "rain or shine"). Cross-references are frequently used to lead readers to related topics, and small capitals within the text indicate that another entry by that name appears elsewhere. Because of conflicting reference materials, "educated guesses" were used for the spelling of some names and important dates. Black-and-white photos of circus acts add interest. An extensive bibliography that includes videos and an index complete the book. The index lists biographies of entertainers by field: animal trainers, clowns, wire walking, etc. While there are many circus histories, no other title is arranged in an accessible reference format as is this one. This interesting resource will fill an information need in public and high school libraries in circulating as well as reference collections.