



Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide

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Available again for a whole new generation of readers, the original 1950s popularity guide that was the inspiration for teen author Maya Van Wagenen's memoir *Popular: Vintage Wisdom for a Modern Geek!*

Filled with fun tips and vintage wisdom, *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* offers advice and guidance for teens who want to be poised, self-confident, and "shiny bright." Betty covers topics ranging from "Figure Problems," "Good Grooming," and "What to Wear Where" to hints on dating, hosting a great party, and becoming "the most popular girl in your set!"

Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide Details

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Author : Betty Cornell

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From Reader Review Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide for online ebook

Jaelyn says

It was a great read providing insight into the lives of young women two generations ago.

Liss Capello says

I always read old books like this as a sort of anthropology experiment - it's fascinating to look at the snapshot of the era and compare and contrast the advice that's given with current thinking. This teen-age popularity guide stands up moderately well to a modern audience - lots of the general suggestions about how to overcome shyness, interact with boys, and follow the crowd while being your own trendsetter are still totally applicable. The interesting parts for me, though, are the parts where it becomes completely out of date, and the things that are left unsaid. Teen-aged sex is not even mentioned (okay, there is a brief comment about 'petting'). The diet suggestions are fascinating from a historical perspective but pretty useless to anyone trying to slim down on modern American food. Feminism cried some, although Cornell has lots of pleasant things to say about the freedom that women enjoy 'nowadays.' And some of the cultural norms that Cornell takes for granted, things like all the girls in your 'crowd' dating the same boys in a regular cycle, are so passé that they seem weirdly impossible to a modern eye. Also, the exercises in the appendix are hilariously pointless, but hey. I read this in preparation to read *Popular* (actually this one just came in from the library first), so I'm really looking forward to reading that other book and hearing about how its author actualized these suggestions in her daily life circa 2010. Should be fun!

Jessica says

I absolutely love retro books. I find them to be so fascinating. Some parts of this book were outdated (obviously) but other parts still rang true today. The best chapter is the last one on personality. I liked how she talked about the dangers of the "crowd."

Side note: I haven't read *Popular*, the memoir that was inspired by this book.

Alissa says

On the heels of reading *Popular*, the book that was inspired by this one, I just had to check it out! Some of the advice was pretty dated (Only Marcia Brady brushes her hair *that* much), but other stuff was timeless. A fun read. If you liked Maya's book, you'll get a kick out of this one.

Alyssa Haverfield says

For a vintage book I was pretty surprised by the liberalism that peeked out every now and then. While fun to

read as more of a quirky history lesson, some of the advice still holds up while some is irrelevant to today's teenagers.

Maria says

This retro book of rules on how to become popular for teenagers is still pretty accurate. Yes, technology has changed some things but the rules are pretty much still the same in the way we should dress, behave and overall live. Great advice for pretty much all occasions. If you have a young girl, this would be nice to read and discuss together...both might learn a thing or two.

Lisa Urso says

Read this ahead of reading Maya Van Wagenen's book. Curious to see how much of Betty's advice she followed.

While much of this content is outdated, some advice--especially the chapter about personality--still resonates strongly today.

Emily Savige says

I really enjoyed this book! It's got great, timeless advice for teenage girls, even 50 years after publication. It's vintage charm adds to the lovely feel of this book and I would definitely recommend.

Johanna Black says

Very interesting. Happy I read it before reading "Popular"

Eustacia Tan says

I wouldn't follow its advice now (ok, maybe just the fashion and beauty stuff), but it was an interesting read.

Alyse says

This book really does have some great advice on not just teen-age popularity but on good manners that I think everyone should follow. While some of the advice is a little outdated, (when is the last time you went to a college prom out-of-town and needed to make sure you had outfits for both a picnic/tennis and the formal?), but the other advice has stood the test of time.

For example, the proper girl "adapts herself to what is new. When hair is short, so is hers, but cut to become her, not cut to look like a recent fashion ad. Still, Jane, in trying not to look like others, does not carry

the attempt too far. She strives to strike a happy medium. She keeps in fashion, but she also keeps on looking like herself. She has developed what is known as her own sense of style, for style is merely the sum total of what you wear and the wear it" (P. 121). This is still true today that style should be a happy medium of finding what looks good on you and not to just wear it because the models are wearing it or because your friends look good in it.

While this book does have serious advice there were some pretty funny moments I had to mention...

For the skinny girls trying to gain weight. "If you don't know what foods are fattening, ask your chubby friends they will know. The strange irony of the whole figure problem is that so often it is the thin girls who don't drink the double malted milks, while the chubbies just dote on them" (P. 12).

"Be sure to nibble between meals, and not on carrot sticks like your unhappier sisters, but on peanut-butter-and-jelly concoctions" (P. 12-13).

On standing tall..."Someone once told me to stand as if I wore a beautiful jewel that I wanted to show off at my bosom" (P. 36).

Angel says

Fascinating in an anthropology sort of way. Also many of her tips are still applicable I think, if quite male-centric.

Lucinda says

I was surprised really at just how much stuff in here was sensible, a bit of the info is dated but that's pretty much just the cosmetic side of things, and even that is just that there were less options for stuff back then. This was actually pretty fun to read, as she seemed to write like a scolding but helpful older sister.

Aja says

This book was bloody effing exhausting. It's only 100 some pages but it took me a flippin month to finish because I found it so tiring. ALL THESE RULES FOR WOMEN. So much anticipation of what a boy likes and doesn't like. Also people of color don't exist (I mean they didn't then, let's be frank). I honestly don't know why I torture myself by not putting down books once I start them. But I finished goddammit and I think I deserve some sort of medal.

Jennifer says

It was fascinating to read the advice given by a former model to teenage girls in the 1950s... especially knowing that this was the book that inspired Maya Van Wagenen's social experiment and book, POPULAR.
