

<<Oops: 20 Life Lesson>>

图书基本信息

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作者：Martin J. Smith

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内容概要

Although its composition seems occasionally arbitrary, this addition to the weird history subgenre is as informative as it is entertaining. Smith and Kiger (Poplorica) take 20 of American history's biggest "flops, goofs, misjudgments, and fiascoes" (mainly from the 20th century) and attempt to extract a "meaningful lesson" from each, the latter more difficult than simply telling an embarrassing story. For instance, "Beware Solutions That Create New Problems" profiles Thomas Midgeley, the innovator who added poisonous lead to gasoline and invented ozone-killing CFCs, which made him responsible for more atmospheric damage than any other man in history. Most enjoyable are the chapters on jaw-droppingly ridiculous decisions, such as Jimi Hendrix opening for the Monkees in 1967 or the 1974 Cleveland Indians' 10-cent beer night that turned into one of pro sports' ugliest riots. Some subjects seem more like misguided incidents than fiascoes (e.g., inventors' unending quest for a flying car, the Y2K scare), but there are plenty of corkers, like the hubristic flameout that was the football-wrestling hybrid XFL. A "bonus" chapter crams in other goodies for a nice finish, from the well known (e.g., the CIA's Castro assassination plots) to the obscure (e.g., equine sushi ice cream). (Mar.)

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