



Taxi Marketing / Images continued. . .

The massive online archive of Matchcover Collector has no category for cartoon humor, and yet it has [more than 300 examples](#) of hillbilly matchbooks. See also "[Hillbillies](#)" by Mike Prero on the Matchpro.org web site, which identifies several hillbilly series.

The popularity of hillbilly cartoons may owe something to Al Capp's comic strip [Li'l Abner](#) which ran from 1934 to 1977. Other influences may have been Walt Kelly's comic strip [Pogo](#) which ran from 1948 to 1975, and the comedy of [Minnie Pearl](#) and other [Grand Ole Opry](#) performers.

The hillbilly matchbook cartoons, which uniformly denigrate part of the U.S. population as unkempt, uneducated and uncouth, are certainly examples of classism if not racism.

In fact our gallery of matchbooks contains only two examples of outright racism, in matchbooks that offer to provide customers with white drivers (pages [74](#) and [75](#)).

Considering the unbridled racist propaganda, jokes and cartoons that permeated the popular media prior to World War II, it is hard to imagine that racist individuals and organizations did not use matchbooks to spread their message.

However, it is important to remember that the selection of matchbooks that we now see on the web represent only those that vendors and collectors are willing to put on view, or that facilitators like ebay are willing to allow.



Additional Notes

Telephones. Cab companies began to employ the telephone almost as soon as it appeared. Winnipeg was typical of other North American cities. In 1881 cab owner [Dave Storey](#) had three direct telephone lines even before the first telephone exchange was established.

Taxicab companies soon came to rely on the telephone and used direct-line stations to spread their fleets over their service areas to provide faster response times (pages [15](#), [79](#) and [94](#)).

They also tried to bar competitors from hotels, railway stations and other profitable venues by purchasing exclusive permission to park there and install direct telephone lines.

An extreme example is a full-page [1928 Los Angeles Times ad](#) for Yellow Cab which lists 180 direct-line stations ranging from train bus and subway terminals, hotels, theatres and hospitals down to cafes and drug stores. The direct lines allowed customers to summon a cab if one was not parked at the station.

Two-way radio, which cab companies quickly adopted, ultimately removed the need to set up and maintain direct-line stations.

Jitneys. About 1914, Model T Ford drivers all over North America discovered that they could make a nice

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