Bobby Socks Encyclopedia Article

Bobby Socks

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Bobby Socks

Bobby socks (or bobby sox) are ankle-length socks, usually cotton, worn since the 1930s by children, teens, and adult women. By 1935, many teenage girls wore them to school with saddle shoes (two-tones) or loafers, and stores marketed them as campus fashion. They gained widespread fame in 1943 when national media equated them with teenage girls, especially screaming fans of Frank Sinatra, and claimed that ordinary ankle socks instantly became bobby sox when teenagers bought them. *Newsweek* initially defined "bobby soxers" as female juvenile delinquents with loose morals, but the prevailing stereotype declared them silly, uncontrolled swooners who loved to gab on the phone and buy the latest records and fashions. Teenage girls continued to wear the socks, but did not define themselves as "bobby soxers."

Further Reading:

"Combating the Victory Girl." *Newsweek.* March 6, 1944, 88, 91.

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Palladino, Grace. *Teenagers: An American History.* New York, Basic, 1996.

"What Is a Bobby Sock?" *New York Times Magazine.* March 5,1944, 23.