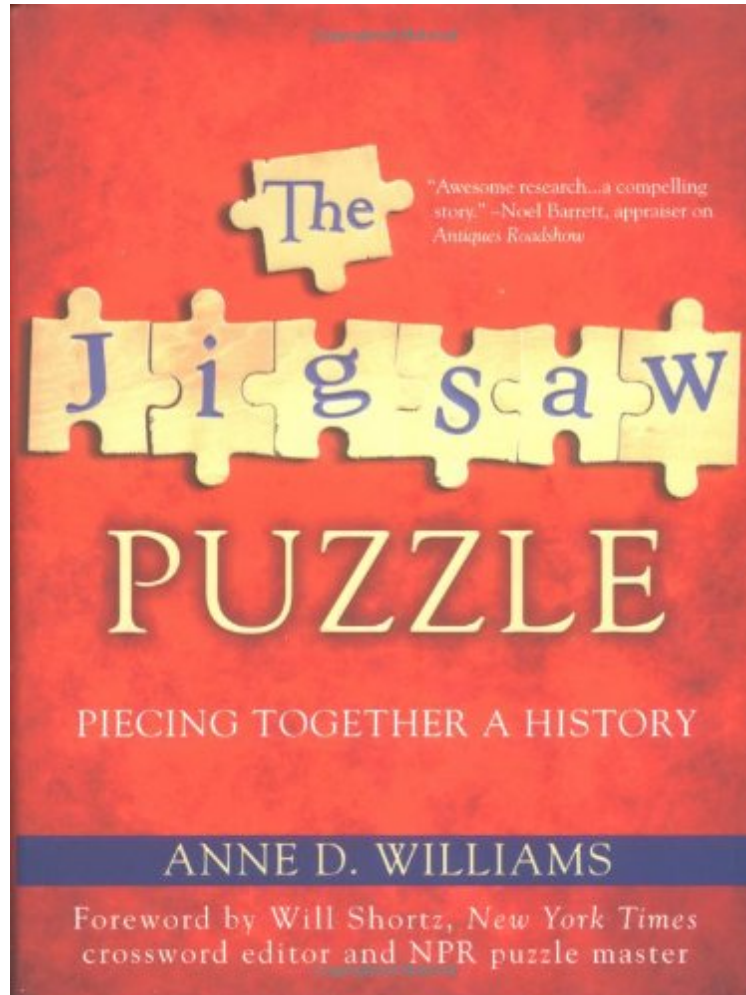


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Anne D. Williams

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[Mobile library] The Jigsaw Puzzle: Piecing Together a History

The Jigsaw Puzzle: Piecing Together a History

Anne D. Williams : The Jigsaw Puzzle: Piecing Together a History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Jigsaw Puzzle: Piecing Together a History:

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deserves 5 stars, but buy the hardcover edition to get the color plates.

Originally created as an educational tool for children in the mid-1700s, jigsaw puzzles developed into a national craze during the Great Depression. Today, the collecting and assembling of jigsaw puzzles continues to challenge new and experienced puzzlers alike with hidden messages, mysteries to solve, and a never-ending stream of challenges to conquer. Assembled by renowned puzzle expert Anne D. Williams, *The Jigsaw Puzzle* pieces together the origins of the beloved pastime that has enthralled people worldwide for centuries. The study also examines the minds of such famous puzzlers as Queen Elizabeth II, Bill Gates, and Stephen King.

From Publishers Weekly Jigsaw puzzle collector and historian Williams covers every aspect of the game's development in this comprehensive history. "The jigsaw puzzle is still going strong as it approaches the 250th anniversary of its birth," the author writes. She then goes on to explain how jigsaws were advocated by the philosopher John Locke as an educational toy, used by Ellis Island physicians to ascertain immigrants' mental capacity and embraced by Americans who took them out of lending libraries to keep their minds off the 1930s economic depression. A particularly interesting time is the 1870s. Then, Williams writes, "two movements came together: women's handicrafts and fretwork." Women began making puzzles with small treadle-powered saws and selling them for profit and for charity; in this way, puzzles became an early catalyst for women's emancipation from the home. Other segments of the book detail puzzle creators and collectors and instruct readers on how to make their own puzzles. Williams's writing, while never pedestrian, is not especially distinctive, and the scope of the book doesn't allow some of the more interesting characters to receive the fuller treatment their lives merit. For puzzle fans and friends, of which Williams convincingly insists there are still millions, this book will be a delightful past-time when an actual puzzle isn't available.

Photos. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Anne D. Williams is the leading American authority on jigsaw puzzles. She has written four books and more than fifty articles about the history, cultural aspects, use, valuation, preservation, and technology of jigsaw puzzles including *Jigsaw Puzzles: An Illustrated History and Price Guide*. Her research has taken her to the Library of Congress, the American Antiquarian Society, the New York and Boston Public Libraries, and the archives of puzzle manufacturers.