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Abstract
More than fifty years have elapsed since the popular television program American Bandstand first appeared in homes across the United States, and still mere mention of the show continues to conjure images of teenagers, black and white, boppin' to the sounds of emerging musical talents from Jackie Wilson to Dusty Springfield. This very image, and the potent memory of a racially integrated youth demographic dancing together in harmony, Matthew F. Delmont argues in The Nicest Kids in Town American Bandstand, Rock 'n' Roll, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in 1950s Philadelphia is precisely the problem. Contrary to the recollections of Bandstand's celebrated host, Dick Clark, whose praise of the show as a powerful force resisting segregationist pressures is often cited in popular histories of the program, Delmont argues that the reality of 1950s Philadelphia was considerably more complex. As Delmont states, "Rather than being a fully integrated program that welcomed black youth, American Bandstand continued to discriminate against black teens throughout the show's Philadelphia years" (2). Simply, American Bandstand was hardly the bastion of racial integration Clark purported it to be.

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