

The Classic Era of American Comics

Nicky Wright

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Nicky Wright : The Classic Era of American Comics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Classic Era of American Comics:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Kinda Bland and printing not well done!By PhotogDogNothing very special about it, kind-a bland... Book was used and in good condition as described... Worth what I paid for it(.84 cents)!Cheers13 of 19 people found the following review helpful. A Classic Book about a Classic EraBy Barry PearlActually, I would like to give this 4.5 stars.The Classic Era of American Comics begins where comic books almost ended. With Fredrick Wertham, "Seduction of the Innocent and the congressional hearings that followed the publication of that book.When writer address the history of a specific character in Comics they briefly go over the history of comics. Mr. Wright and Mr. Kubert take their time and give a much fuller history of the events that created comic books. Also included are many colorful old pictures of comic strips, and later, comic books. Dividing the book into sections, they not only cover the very beginning of comics that we know, but comics that have been forgotten. Also included are sections of Animal comics, Jungle comics with "good girl Art" and many other forms that have come and gone. All with splendid pictures.But the most important aspect of this book was context. Often glossed over,

Mr. Wright emphasizes the role Fredrick Wertham had in ending an era of comics. In his book, "Seduction of the Innocent" published in 1955, Mr. Wertham contended that comic books were evil. He claimed Superman was a Nazi. He also claimed that Batman and Robin were gay and just reading about them caused children to become gay. Most important, he claimed that reading comics caused Juvenile Delinquency. A major target, of course, was the EC horror comics. In this very balanced book, Mr. Wright and Mr. Kubert show some of the artwork that should have been aimed for an adult audience. Soon, congressional hearings were held and congress forced the industry to censor itself. The censorship was so heavy it almost destroyed the industry. Rather than just going after ghouls and goblins, or giving a rating system that would put adult comics out of the reach of children, the new Comic Code went after ideas such as civil rights, anti war sentiments and the evils of drug use. It took 15 years before an anti drug theme could return to comics. It certainly ended an era. I had two, small disappointments with the book. Often the author would refer to specific covers or events but not reprint them. Basil Wolverton's Mad covers and Mac Raboy's Captain Marvel Jr. covers are two examples. Also, much of the artwork did not give creative credit to the artists who drew them and sometimes the year was left out. These should be considered minor points. If you do like this book my I suggest that you also read Jim Steranko's The History of Comics Volume I and II. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mediocre Text By Demian This book is written by a comic book fan. It covers 1930-50s. The best part of the book are the many larger reproductions of comic book covers and art. I would have appreciated reading more scholarly information about an art form that encompasses world history, economics, and culture. I'd recommend, instead, this other book, which has in-depth historical and biographical information, and is written with style and grace: Comics, Comix Graphic Novels: A History of Comic Art by Roger Sabin

In terms of both words and images, the American comic book had a tremendous impact on popular culture. Comics could be funny and cute, or they could be bizarre, morbid, risqué (acute accent), violent, and bursting with the subconscious desires of youth culture. The Classic Era of American Comics is a celebration of the golden era of American comics and the wonderful art and stories it produced. This volume takes a look at the pioneers of the comic book and the industry's founding connections with sleazy pulp magazines; the campaign for censorship in the fifties; the unstable and oftentimes unfair relationship between artists and publishers--how comic artists' work wasn't considered art at the time; and, of course, the exciting comics themselves. The Classic Era of American Comics covers all of the genres--superheroes, westerns, crime, horror, war, science fiction, girl comics, animal characters, and more. It is vibrantly illustrated with more than 400 stunning color images and includes a foreword by Joe Kubert, editor of Sgt. Rock, illustrator of Hawkman, and producer of Fax from Sarajevo.

From Library Journal Whether he is discussing how one company's failure became another's success, reviewing how the House UnAmerican Activities Committee destroyed EC Comics, or revealing the underlying bondage themes of early Wonder Woman adventures, Wright is well informed. And he tackles such central themes as funny animals, clowns, superheroes, girls (both good and bad), horror, crime, war, and romance. He does all this adequately. But he does not rise above the adequate, rivet the reader, or seem to offer information that has not been heard before. The layout often veers into the garish, which doesn't help. This book is recommended for public libraries that have an extensive collection of comics-related material. Other libraries would do better with The World Encyclopedia of Comics (LJ 11/198). DChris Ryan, New Milford, NJ Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Nicky Wright collected comics all his life and wrote for American Comic magazine. He was principally known as an award-winning writer and photographer of books on American cars. He lived for most of the last 15 years of his life in Michigan, but died in 2000 in England, home of his birth.