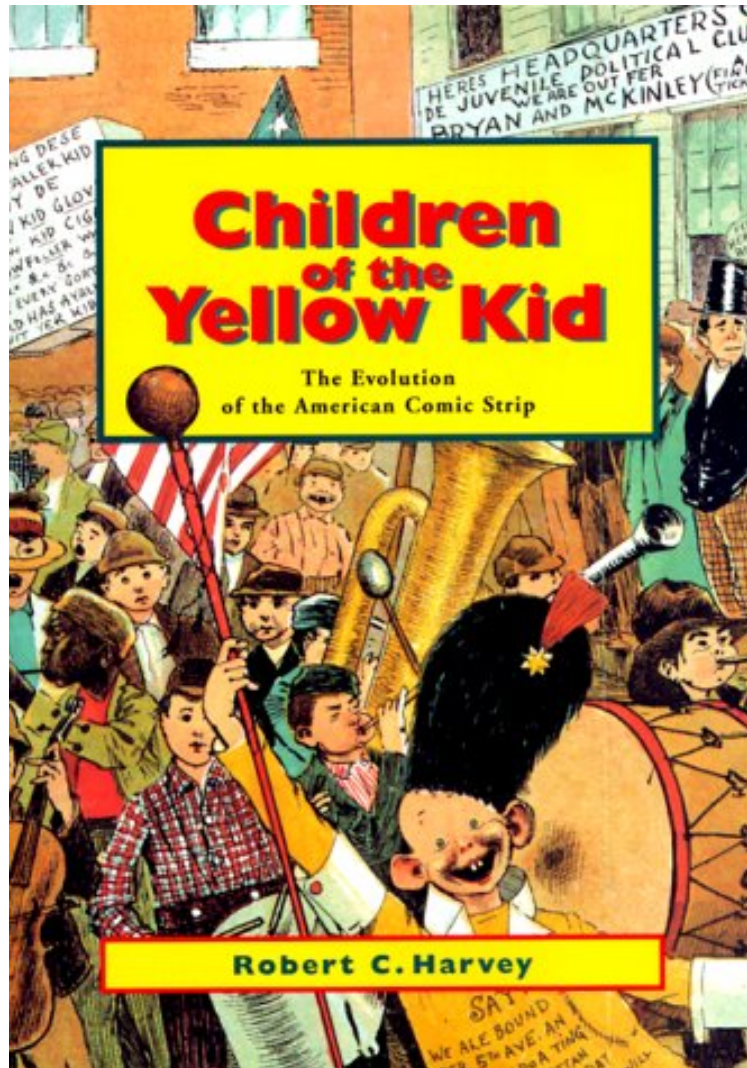


(Library ebook) Children of the Yellow Kid: The Evolution of the American Comic Strip

Children of the Yellow Kid: The Evolution of the American Comic Strip

Robert C. Harvey, Richard V. West, Brian Walker
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Robert C. Harvey, Richard V. West, Brian Walker : Children of the Yellow Kid: The Evolution of the American Comic Strip before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Children of the Yellow Kid: The Evolution of the American Comic Strip:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. The book comics fans have waited a century to read By Rachel Newstead Hard-core comics nerds might be familiar with the writing of Robert C. Harvey through his in-depth (and at times, fascinating) columns in The Comics Journal magazine. That style carries over well to this book. His

commentary is refreshingly brief, preferring instead to let the work of a century's worth of creative genius speak for itself. Rather than give us a straightforward, linear (hence boring) history of comics, Harvey treats them as the masterpieces of art they are--just as there are various fine art "movements" (Surrealism, Cubism, etc.) the same holds true for the comic strip. Harvey divides comic-strip history into five such movements--the formative years, standardization of genres, the adventure strip, the gag strip, and the socially conscious strips of today. We learn some things that may seem surprising at first, but on reflection are perfectly logical. First, even the most talented 'toonists weren't perfect--we see the strips in their original form--pasteovers, glue stains, pencil marks, and blobs of white-out litter the work. It's akin to seeing an X-ray of a painting by a Renaissance master--even Leonardo and Michaelangelo made corrections, sometimes painting over whole figures. Second, the supposed decline of the quality of comics (and the rise of artistically bankrupt strips like "Dilbert") isn't the fault of the artists or the syndicates. (Despite sentiments to the contrary by "Calvin and Hobbes" cartoonist Bill Watterson, whose scathing diatribe against modern comics is reprinted in the book). Paper shortages during the Second World War, Harvey tells us, forced editors to cut the size of newspaper pages to save newsprint, which in turn shrank the comic strip. The advent of television immediately afterward forced newspapers to stick to the wartime standard permanently--and they have shrunk even more since. Such developments spelled the end of the lavishly drawn adventure-continuity strips (the detail could no longer be seen) and paved the way for strips like "Peanuts". Harvey doesn't talk about the role of the computer in perhaps reversing this trend, which is one of this book's few flaws. Harvey, like other fans, pleads for the acceptance of comics as a "legitimate" art form, but does so without attributing to them any more significance than they deserve. No overintellectualized Freudian interpretations about what the comics "mean"--to Harvey, they are a unique form of art, driven as much by commerce as aesthetics. They are a throwaway medium for the general public, but as he shows us, that's more than OK. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By M. Shane Faires Good read, very interesting. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Glue Stains and All By Simulacrum Curated, with helpful annotations, by a leading expert, this is a beautifully produced exhibition catalog of the original art for American comic strips since 1896. Especially wonderful is the reproduction of cartoon originals in full color (not just black and white line art) so that preliminary blue pencil drawings, glue stains, and pasted-over changes are all clearly visible. (Copyright by Roy R. Behrens from Ballast Quarterly Review, Vol. 14, No. 3, Spring 1999.)

Traces the development of the comic strip since its birth at the turn of the century. The reproductions of vintage strips are strikingly pristine, due to the use of original artwork rather than published versions in the production of the volume. The author, a seasoned writer and scholar of the subje

From Library Journal Harvey, a comics historian (*The Art of the Comic Book*) and a regular columnist for the *Comics Journal*, briskly recounts the history of the American comic strip, just over a century old. He ably discusses the major stylists, from Alex Raymond (*Flash Gordon*) to Brian Bassett (*Adam*), and notes in passing how comics have reflected both the newspaper wars and reigning social mores. Harvey is aided in his discussion by fellow comics scholar Brian Walker, the son of Mort (*Beetle Bailey*) Walker. Harvey's most interesting subject is cartoonist Walt Kelly, and the discussion of the satirical uses of the comic strip *Pogo* is sharp. Most of the rest of the history presented here is not new, but this reviewer can't recall when it has been presented between two covers before. The selection of illustrations is inviting, and although the information presented is a bit sketchy, it does give the reader a feel for American comics of the last century. A Stephen Weiner, Maynard P.L., MA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The catalog of a 1998 exhibition at Seattle's Frye Art Museum traces the 100-year evolution of American newspaper comics through 130 examples of vintage and recent strips. What distinguishes it from other historical collections of comic art is that nearly all its illustrations are reproductions of artists' original drawings--a few of them at full size--that reveal the pencil sketches underneath, corrections, and artists' notations. These examples show how the art form developed, from primitive efforts like *The Yellow Kid* and *Happy Hooligan* to *Dick Tracy*, *Terry and the Pirates*, and other adventure strips of the 1930s to the visually simple but otherwise sophisticated efforts that dominate the medium today, such as *Dilbert* and *FoxTrot*. An out-of-chronology chapter documents "socially conscious" strips ranging from *Little Orphan Annie* and *Pogo* to *Doonesbury*. Although the illustrations are, appropriately, the main attraction, comics scholar Harvey's informative text could stand alone as perhaps the most knowledgeable succinct history of the medium ever written. Gordon Flagg The catalogue of a 1998 exhibition at Seattle's Frye Art Museum traces the 100-year evolution of American newspaper comics through 130 examples of vintage and recent strips. What distinguishes it from other historical collections of comic art is that nearly all its illustrations are reproductions of artists' original drawings--a few of them at full size--that reveal the pencil sketches underneath, corrections, and artists' notations . . . Although the illustrations are, appropriately, the main~ validation-form-field.review1_0001: ~ attraction, comics scholar Harvey's informative text could stand alone as perhaps the most knowledgeable succinct history of the medium ever written. -- Booklist, September 1, 1999