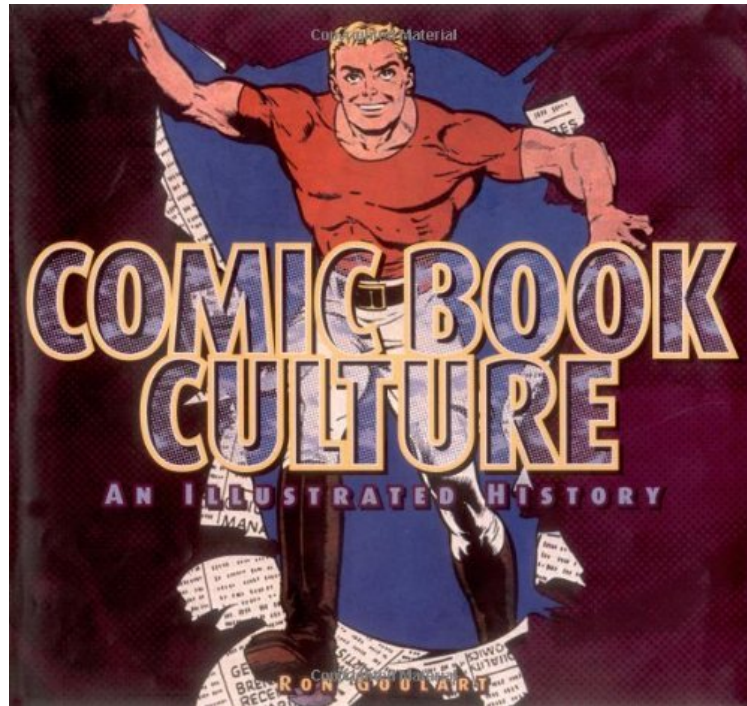


Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History

Ron Goulart

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Ron Goulart : Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By William K. Ron Goulart delivers again. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Colorful Coverage of the Comic Book Golden Age By P. Ryan Anthony "COMIC BOOK CULTURE is basically a picture book," writes noted pop-culture authority and novelist Ron Goulart in his introduction. He has selected from thousands of covers from the Golden Age of Comic Books, assembling over 400 entertaining images that were intended to advertise and sell the contents behind them. Magazine publishers had learned in the years before the advent of comics that readers do indeed judge a book by its cover, so comics covers came to resemble circus posters in their sheer vibrancy and energetic lettering, as evidenced by the beautiful examples in this tome, which features the output of star artists and lesser-known talents. The well-researched text offers an informative history of the comics industry, from its awkward origins to its lucrative successes during World War II. But COMIC BOOK CULTURE is primarily about the colorful pictures, and it is recommended for art lovers as well as classic comics fans. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. BRILLIANT COVERS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE By Tim Janson I'm as much a fan of comic book history as I am of comic books themselves. The history is absolutely fascinating as one delves into just how the business started and some of the real-life unusual characters who are largely responsible for comic books as we know them today. Ron Goulart's "Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History" has just been released again by Collector's Press and it should be required reading for comic fans, especially younger fans who are not familiar with over eighty year history of the business. Most people associate

the start of the comic book era with the release of Action Comics #1 in 1938 that featured the introduction of Superman in a thirteen-page story. But the fact is that comic books had been around for many years before Superman came along. Heck, Action Comics was not even the first title put out by National Comics/National Periodical Publications, which would later become DC. National's first book was New Fun Comics in 1935, which would later change its name to More Fun Comics, and introduce characters such as The Spectre and Doctor Fate. Comic Book Culture takes fans back to the earliest days of the bound comic, which originally just collected popular newspaper strips of the day and reprinted them. Detective Comics #1 actually preceded Action Comics #1 by over a year, making its debut in March 1937. Detective Comics was heavily influenced by detective pulp magazines of the 30's which were among the most popular pulps of the day. Another early National title that would thrive for years would be Adventure Comics, also debuting in 1935. One of the great pioneers of the Golden Age of Comics was M.C. Gaines. Gaines headed up All-American Publications, the sister company to National. All-American would introduce such characters as the Golden Age Green Lantern, The Flash, Wonder Woman, as well as the Justice Society of America. But before you think this book is all about DC and Marvel, think again. I was pleasantly surprised at how much coverage was given to companies, titles, and characters long lost to the sands of time. There was Mystic Comics featuring The Destroyer and Dynamo Man, Mystery Men Comics featuring the Blue Beetle, Wonder World Comics featuring The Flame, Hit Comics featuring Hercules, and countless others. Of course, the other major players of the Golden Age are covered in full with sections devoted to Captain Marvel and the whole Marvel family, and Timely Comics. Goulart also devotes sections to the "Old Masters" of the day such as Jack Kirby and Alex Schomburg, presenting dozens of examples of their cover art. And in the end, the biggest attraction of Comic Book Culture is the hundreds of cover reprints from the most famous to the most obscure of the Golden Age. You'll feel like a kid browsing in a toy store exclaiming, "Oh! I want that! And I want that one, too!" The covers are beautifully reprinted and one has to imagine that it was no small task finding covers that were still in good enough shape to reprint. This is a gorgeous book, filled with long-forgotten nostalgia and brimming over with a wealth of information about comic's Golden Age. Reviewed by Tim Janson

This colorful sequel to the 1998 "Pop Culture Book of the Year," Comic Book Culture, is a visual journey through the most incredible graphic covers of the golden age of comic books. Lavishly illustrated, this volume features the most popular and collectible comic-book covers ever published, including famous figures like Superman, Batman, and Captain America.

From Library Journal Comic Book Culture: An Illustrated History is a misleading title for this visual celebration of comics' Golden Age (mid-1930s through the 1940s) as it is neither an overview of comic book history nor a study of its culture. In the introduction, Goulart states that this is "basically a picture book," and as such, it is tons of fun. More than 400 covers feature an overwhelming array of both still-beloved and long-forgotten heroes, as well as luridly drawn, often racist villains, gorgeous damsels in distress, and even, occasionally, a jungle queen. The art is often striking and the colors brilliant, much of it by legends in the field that include Jack Kirby, Joe Simon, Lou Fine, Jack Cole, Alex Schomburg, and Bill Everett. Goulart, the author of over 160 books, including 50 sf and 20 mystery novels, has written more comprehensively on comic book history with The Encyclopedia of American Comics (LJ 1/91). Likewise, The World Encyclopedia of Comics (LJ 11/1/98) does a better job detailing comics' evolution. However, Goulart more than meets his goal here, offering intriguing details of a rich period that, sadly, comic books will never enjoy again. DChris Ryan, New Milford, NJ Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist With some 400 well-chosen examples, this lavish volume details the mid-1930s to late 1940s golden age of the comic book by showcasing the flamboyant covers that captured the era's newsstand browsers' attention. The comic book debuted early in the century and at first reprinted newspaper strips. The shift to original content accelerated with the 1938 debut of Superman, which touched off a craze for the costumed heroes who have dominated comics to this day. The book's gallery features still-familiar figures like Batman and such now obscure ones as Dynamic Man and Captain Future. Other chapters focus on genres--funny comics, for instance, and "good girl art"--and on master cartoonists. Using the comics' covers to evoke the era, rather than reprinting the stories, proves effective, since their posterlike design and bold drawing often outshone the comparatively crude artwork within. Goulart's knowledgeable text complements the covers, and the volume in toto works as both a coffee-table showcase and a history of a publishing phenomenon. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "This book, like the others this company publishes, is an instant collector's item." -- Alan Caruba, Bookviews, June 2000