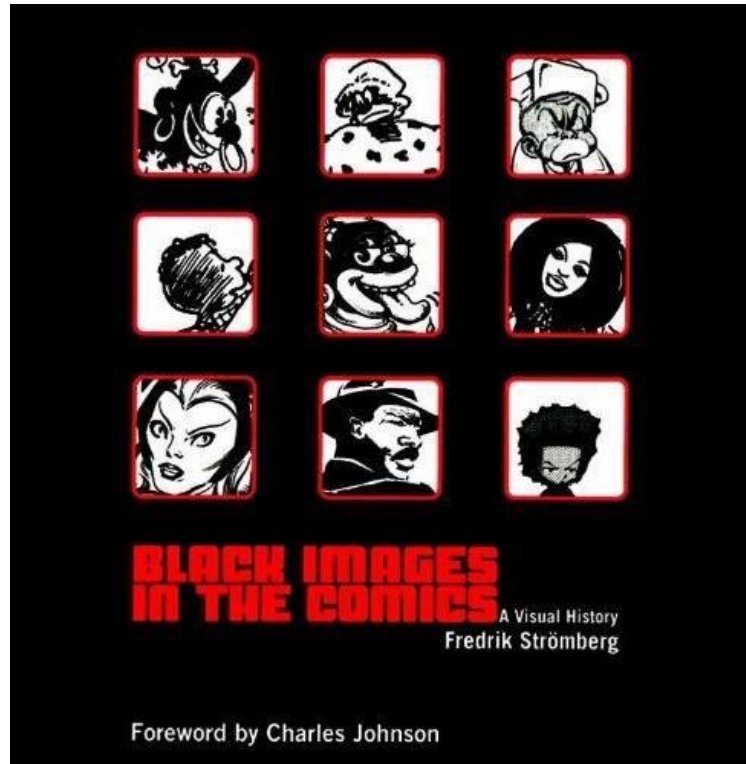


(Download free ebook) Black Images in the Comics

Black Images in the Comics

Fredrik Stromberg

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Fredrik Stromberg : Black Images in the Comics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Images in the Comics:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy PpNice but stereotypical0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Three StarsBy barbara ann day3 star.8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. mind-numbing, chilling and importantBy doc petersonIn showing the portrayal of Blacks (the book shows how people of African descent are illustrated not only in America, but in Asia and Europe as well) in comics, Stromberg intentionally shows " what white audiences approved and felt comfortable with in pop culture." It is both uncomfortable and embarrassing to see not just the stereotypical images and roles of Blacks, but for how long these images were acceptable. The messages these images convey is also troubling, as Stromberg identifies seven basic stereotypes (the child-savage "native", the servile "tom", the "comedic rogue", the "piccaninny," the usually female "tragic mulatto", the "mammy", and the "buck.") - and while they occur less frequently today, their impact remains in the portrayal of Blacks in popular culture.In his analysis of these images, we see the evolution of white America's (and Asia and Europe) attitudes towards Blacks, colonialism, racism and social class. For example, in the comics following the Second World War, Blacks fight racism, sexism, even environmental hazzards (as with "Torchy Brown", or in "Judgement Day" - a comic that was published in a 1957 issue of "Weird Fantasy".) As the Civil Rights movement picked up speed and began to gain national attention, Charles Schultz introduced "Franklin" (in 1968), and Mort Walker introduced "Lt. Jack Flap" (in 1970) - both, however, more telling by their lack of personality (in Franklin's

case), or as a stereotype of Black resistance (in Walker's.) Hope is held out as towards the end of the 20th century (and the beginning of the 21st) we begin to see Black characters less unique for their "Blackness" - Miles Morales (half Puerto Rican, half Black) as Spiderman, for example. As Charles Johnson writes in the introduction, "I wait for the day when ... a character who just happens to be Black is the emblematic, archetypal figure in which we - *all* of us - invest our dreams, imaginings, and sense of adventure about what the vast possibilities for what humans can be and do ..." Looking back, we've come a way, but we've a long way to go. As uncomfortable as it was to read and see these portrayals, it was an enlightening read. In his introduction, Charles Johnson reminds us that comics in the early 20th century offered "equally repulsive and fantastic portraits of ... Jewish immigrants, ... clownish Irishmen, ... Chinese and Japanese (characters)." True - but

Endlessly browsable illustrated journey through comics' history of radical portrayals both good and bad, now in softcover. This book spotlights over 100 comic strips, comic books, and graphic novels to feature black characters from all over the world over the last century, and the result is a fascinating journey to, if not enlightenment, then at least away from the horrendous caricatures of yore. The book begins with the habitually appalling images of blacks as ignorant coons in the earliest syndicated strips (Happy Hooligan, Moon Mullins, and The Katzenjammer Kids); continues with the almost-quaint colonialist images of the often-suppressed Tintin album Tintin in the Congo and such ambiguous figures as Mandrake the Magician's noble savage assistant Lothar in the 30s (not to mention Torchy Brown, the first syndicated black character), moving on to such oddities as the offensive Ebony character in Will Eisner's otherwise classic *The Spirit* from the 40s and 50s. We then continue into the often earnest attempts at 60s integration in such strips as *Peanuts* (and comic books such as the *Fantastic Four*), as well as the first wave of black strips like *Wee Pals*, juxtaposed with the shocking satire of underground comics such as R. Crumb's incendiary *Angefood McSpade*. Also investigated is the increased use of blacks in super-hero comic books as well as syndicated strips. *Black Images in the Comics* wraps up from the 80s to now, with the increased visibility of blacks, often in works actually produced by blacks, all the way to the South African strip *Madam Eve*, Aaron McGruder's pointed daily *The Boondocks*, and more including over a dozen new entries added to the out-of-print hardcover edition. Each strip, comic, or graphic novel is spotlighted via a compact but instructive 200-word essay and a representative illustration. The book is augmented by a context-setting introduction, an extensive source list and bibliography, and a foreword by Charles R. Johnson, the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation fellowship and winner of the National Book Award for his 1990 novel *Middle Passage*. Black white throughout

The book presents a unique look at the evolution of comics, but it also proves comics to be an effective and sobering lens for viewing the history of racism toward blacks. - School Library Journal
About the Author
Fredrik Strmberg was born in 1968 in the South of Sweden. He is the editor of *Bild Bubbla*, Scandinavia's largest magazine about comics, writes regularly about comics, heads a school for comic artists and sits on the editorial board for the *International Journal of Comics Art*. He lives in Sweden.