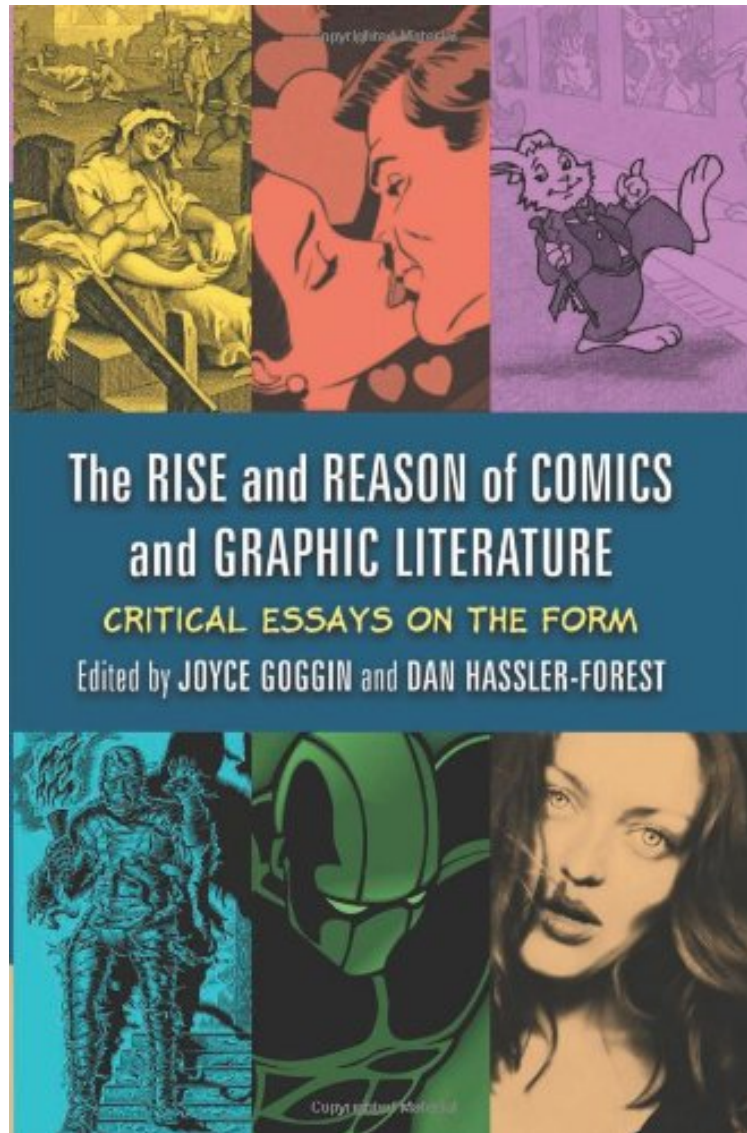


The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature: Critical Essays on the Form

Joyce Goggin

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Joyce Goggin : The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature: Critical Essays on the Form before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature: Critical Essays on the Form:

4 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A collection of current scholarship on Comic Books aimed at

academic readers

By G. Steirer

Published in 2010, *The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature* aims to be a series of snapshots of the current state of the discipline of Comic Book Studies. The 15 articles that make up this anthology are thus written by academics for academics and reflect primarily academic concerns. The articles are grouped into five sections: the history and development of the genre, comic book theory and terminology, comics and adaptations, superheroes, and nonfiction in comics. As for the articles themselves, they are a mixed bag but do offer a fairly good representation of the kind of scholarly work being written on comic books these days. Some, such as Daniel Yezbick's piece on *Jingle Jangle Comics* and Joyce Goggin's on William Hogarth, are smart, informative pieces of well-executed research whose subject matter will nevertheless likely fail to interest most non-academic readers. Others, such as Karin Kukkonen's analysis of *Planetray* and Julia Round's "Barthesian" reading of *From Hell* are compelling close readings of individual series and may interest non-academic fans of those series. The worst here, however, are quite bad and will likely please no one. An article on "superhero crossovers" with the graphic novel, for instance, even gets basic publication facts wrong (*Watchmen* was originally published as a 12-issue series, not a graphic novel). Overall, this is a decent enough collection that is worth checking out if you're a comic book scholar, but it does nothing to advance or even help standardize the field. If you're not a scholar, however, it's definitely not worth your money. Pick up *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture* instead--it makes for a better-researched and more comprehensive read.

These 15 essays investigate comic books and graphic novels, beginning with the early development of these media. The essays also place the work in a cultural context, addressing theory and terminology, adaptations of comic books, the superhero genre, and comic books and graphic novels that deal with history and nonfiction. By addressing the topic from a wide range of perspectives, the book offers readers a nuanced and comprehensive picture of current scholarship in the subject area.

About the Author

Joyce Goggin teaches literature, film and new media at the University of Amsterdam, where she is currently the acting chair of the English literature. Dan Hassler-Forest teaches media studies and English literature at the University of Amsterdam, where he is currently finishing his dissertation on superheroes in post-9/11 popular culture.