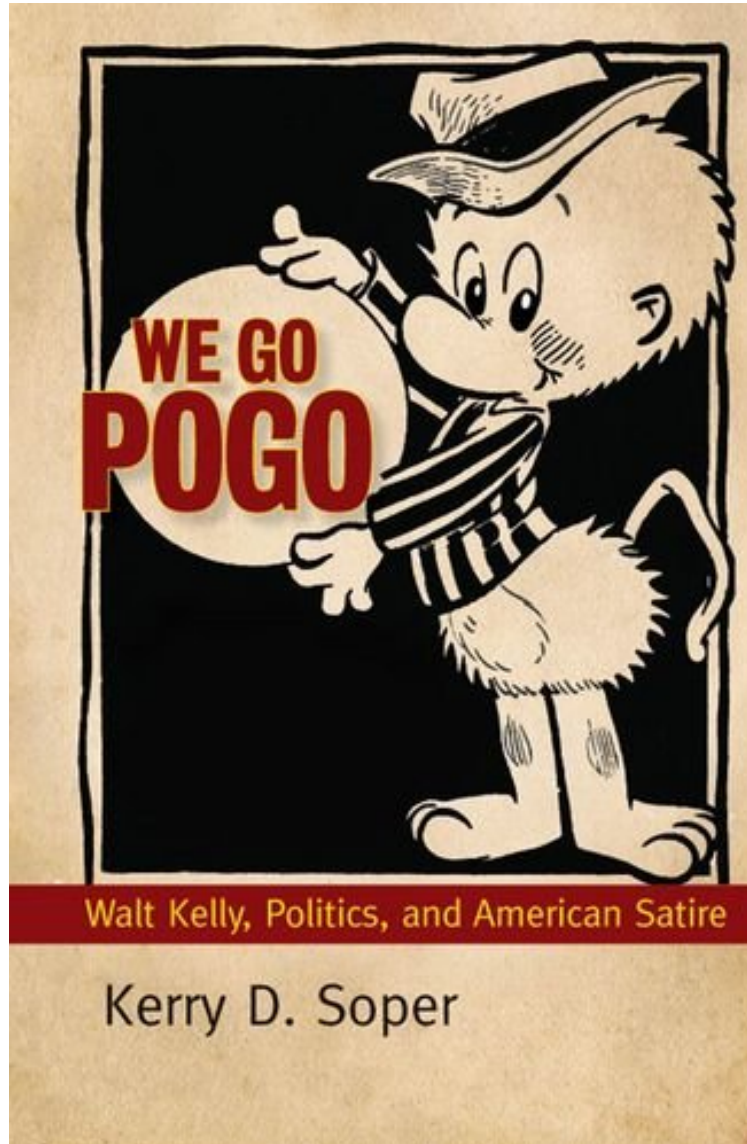


[Read free] We Go Pogo: Walt Kelly, Politics, and American Satire (Great Comics Artists Series)

We Go Pogo: Walt Kelly, Politics, and American Satire (Great Comics Artists Series)

Kerry D. Soper

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Kerry D. Soper : We Go Pogo: Walt Kelly, Politics, and American Satire (Great Comics Artists Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised We Go Pogo: Walt Kelly, Politics, and American Satire (Great Comics Artists Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. No comicsBy David RidgwayI had hoped to find some actual

"Pogo" comics on . This book was disappointing to me. s choice of Walt Kelly's work was a big crash from my perspective.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I was a Pogo FanBy Lynn PenaVery interesting book about the life and experiences of Walt Kelly that led him to develop Pogo. It contains illustrations of his strips. I believe this is a worthwhile book if you ever were a fan of Pogo.37 of 43 people found the following review helpful. Dry as a Bone...By Mike Fontanelli"Humor can be dissected as a frog can," E.B. White once wrote, "but the thing dies in the process, and the innards are discouraging to all but the purely scientific mind." Walt Kelly gets the full-blown analytical treatment in WE GO POGO by Kerry D. Soper, and the results can be essentially summed up as 239 pages of "dead frog." The author, unfortunately, comes across as one of those eagerly-offended academics who sees "racism" and "sexism" lurking behind every nook and cranny of Golden Age pop culture. Artlessly bland modern comic strips, by the author's comparison, are NOT racist or sexist. (Nor are they funny, memorable or professionally drawn, but that seems to be beside the point.) The author doesn't appear to appreciate "low" burlesque comedy (despite it being Kelly's forte,) or the traditionally broad, iconic archetypes associated with it. It never occurred to him that cartoons, broadly speaking, ARE stereotypes (or more accurately, caricatures: exaggerated simplifications) by definition, never intended to be taken literally. Indeed, he often doesn't seem to "get" the joke at all. In paraphrasing gags from POGO and other classic strips, he mangles them beyond recognition. (Pogo is a "wily trickster"? Indeed?) He can't even transcribe an acronym accurately, as when he bungles the meaning (and spelling) of "S.W.I.N.E." on page 214, killing both the pun and the point.Pronouncing vintage comedy racist or misogynistic because it doesn't retroactively conform to today's absurdly hypersensitive standards is both unfair and pointless. The wholesale sacrifice of visual humor for "correct" political posturing didn't occur on the comics page in Kelly's day, (for which we can be thankful. That dubious achievement belongs to a later era, and graphically-barren strips like DOONESBURY, DILBERT, CATHY and BOONDOCKS.) I'm tired of the righteous implication that ALL humor needs to be gentle - nor was all of Kelly's humor gentle. The new, rewritten "rules" of "correct" satire to which the author ascribes, incidentally, would necessarily exclude Swift, W.S. Gilbert and Sacha Baron Cohen from its ranks. Another vintage strip which the author cites often, LI'L ABNER, is deemed "sexist" for its ubiquitous sultry females. (Why aren't fine artists like Renoir ever condemned for portraying sexy women, I wonder?) Somehow Mr. Soper missed the pre-Feminist subtext of Dogpatch, in which women are very much in charge, and never even mentions Mammy Yokum's central role as a positive, dynamic, superhuman matriarch. He also tells the true story of Hilda Terry's integration into the formerly all-male National Cartoonists Society in 1950 - but carefully leaves out Al Capp's role in it, because that wouldn't fit his preconceived storyline. (Here and elsewhere, the author crosses the line from forgivably sloppy scholarship to selective revisionism and subtle dishonesty.)I don't blame anyone for misinterpreting dated satire - but there's no excuse for selective research, or for anally nitpicking comic material you've no real affinity for. The author is also guilty of the "long stretch" (Kelly's wide cast of animals represent diverse ethnicities?), subjective politicizing, quote-mining for dark intent when the speaker was obviously kidding, and a kind of humorless pomposity that seems to pervade much of the book. There may be a good analytical treatment waiting to be written on POGO, but this isn't it. (Update 8/14/2016: I've just finished James Eric Black's recent WALT KELLY AND POGO: THE ART OF THE POLITICAL SWAMP [McFarland, 2015]. It corrects nearly all Mr. Soper's missteps, and is a more sober and comprehensive study in every way.) As it is, the book is heavy on opinion and subjective analysis, with some factual information thrown in. (It delves into Kelly's personal private life, for instance, which is neither flattering nor particularly necessary.) Frankly, Kelly deserves better. With the recent publication of an official Walt Kelly biography available, as well as the ongoing reissue of POGO in its entirety, true fans might be better served saving up their time and money for those volumes instead.POSTSCRIPT: The author has replied to this review, making some interesting points. Readers are encouraged not to skip Kerry Soper's response, by clicking on the "Comments" link below.

Walt Kelly (1913-1973) is one of the most respected and innovative American cartoonists of the twentieth century. His long-running Pogo newspaper strip has been cited by modern comics artists and scholars as one of the best ever. Cartoonists Bill Watterson (Calvin and Hobbes), Jeff Smith (Bone), and Frank Cho (Liberty Meadows) have all cited Kelly as a major influence on their work. Alongside Uncle Scrooges Carl Barks and Krazy Kats George Herriman, Kelly is recognized as a genius of funny animal comics.We Go Pogo is the first comprehensive study of Kelly's cartoon art and his larger career in the comics business. Author Kerry D. Soper examines all aspects of Kelly's career--- from his high school drawings; his work on such animated Disney movies as Dumbo, Pinocchio, and Fantasia; and his 1930s editorial cartoons for Life, and the New York Herald Tribune. Soper taps Kelly's extensive personal and professional correspondence and interviews with family members, friends, and cartoonists to create a complex portrait of one of the art form's true geniuses.From Pogos inception in 1948 until Kellys death, the artist combined remarkable draftsmanship, slapstick humor, fierce social satire, and inventive dialogue and dialects. He used the adventures of his animalsall denizens of the Okefenokee Swampas a means to comment on American and international politics and cultural mores. The strip lampooned Senator Joseph McCarthy during the height of McCarthyism, the John Birch Society during the 1960s, Fidel Castro during the Bay of Pigs fiasco, and many others.

This is the real deal! Comprehensive, serious, and full of juicy tidbits on Kelly's life and career--some that I didn't know, and I'm the #1 Walt Kelly fan in the universe!" Jeff Smith, creator of the comic books BONE and RASL

From the Inside Flap: A critical appreciation of the life's work of a great comic strip artist

From the Back Cover: "This is the real deal! Comprehensive, serious, and full of juicy tidbits on Kelly's life and career--some that I didn't know, and I'm the #1 Walt Kelly fan in the universe!" Jeff Smith, creator of the comic books Bone and RASL