

Summer 2017

AP/EN 3176 3.0A (S1) COMICS AND CARTOONS I

Course Director: J. Warren
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Delivery Format: Fully On-Line

Time: N/A

Description: From the Yellow Kid to the waning of the superheroes' Golden Age (1900-Cold War) this course explores the growth of comics and cartoons: creative conflicts, contexts and themes (outsiders, war, ethnicity), Bugs Bunny, Superman, superheroes, and Disney, and how they account for their times.

We will learn to read and understand the multi-level visual vocabulary of comics and cartoons (from roughly 1900-1950), beginning with the turn-of-the-century newspaper culture and the proliferation of urban, class-conscious comics. We will consider how comics explored the ideological dimensions of everyday life, experimenting with Cubism and Surrealism, recording the dramas of immigration and assimilation, depicting the squalor, danger, and excitement of the metropolis, and exploiting and channeling the racism, nativism, xenophobia, and crime-addled despair of pulp fiction, hard-boiled prose, and film noir. The course notes major developments in animation (Fleischer Brothers and Walt Disney, especially).

This course will treat the comics and cartoons of the first part of the twentieth century as complex cultural artifacts that make provocative interpretive demands on their audiences. We will explore how comics and cartoons demand their own reading strategies and discover that they constitute a priceless storehouse of fascinating cultural, aesthetic, and political history, complementing and interacting with other representational media and forms.

The course meetings will consist of two online lectures every week (each one approximately two hours long) and two online discussion tutorial forums every week (each one requiring about one hour).

Category: D
Area: N/A
Period: N/A
Historical Requirement: N/A

Requirements: A midterm examination (25%), a 6-7 page essay (25%), and regular, informed contributions to tutorial discussion forums (a minimum of ten 1-page contributions and responses) (50%).

Reading List:

Finger, Bill and Bob Kane. Batman Chronicles. Volume 1. **Kindle Edition**. New York: DC Comics, 2013. ASIN B00BX3XU1O; Gray, Harold. Little Orphan Annie: 1935; Herriman, George. Krazy & Ignatz, 1922–1924: At Last My Drim of Love Has Come True. **Kindle edition**. Seattle: Fantagraphics Books, 2015. ASIN B013XRZNVW; Lichtenstein, Nelson, Susan Strasser, et al., eds. Who Built America: Working People and the Nation's Economy, Politics, Culture, and Society. Volume Two: 1877 to the Present. New York: Worth Publishing, 2000.; McCay, Winsor. Little Nemo in Slumberland. Volume 1: October 15, 1905-January 21, 1906). **Kindle edition**. ASIN B00QEC07Z6; McCloud, Scott. Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art. Northampton, Massachusetts: Kitchen Sink P, 1993. New York: William Morrow Paperback, 1994; Siegel, Jerry and Joe Shuster. The Superman Chronicles Volume 1. **Kindle edition**. New York: DC Comics, 2013. ASIN B00DE2N5KS.

There will often be video presentations to view for class. These and some additional texts will be available via Moodle.

Open To:

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