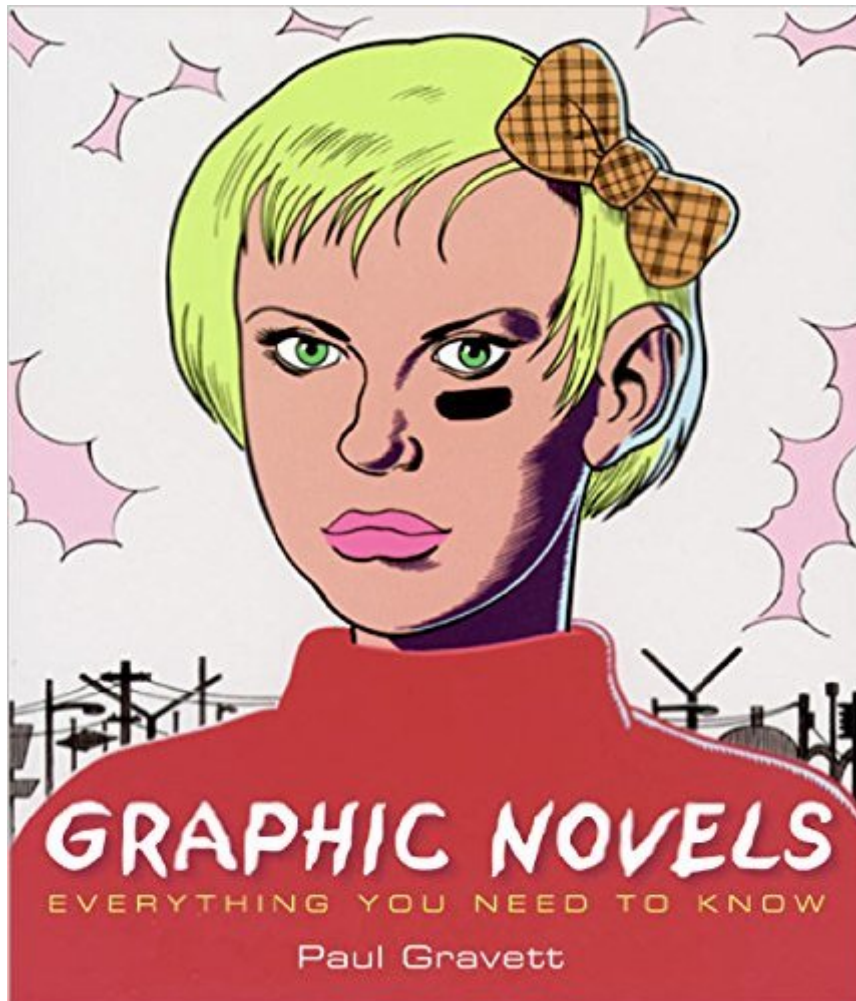# Graphic Novels: Everything You Need To Know

Synopsis

Graphic novels, long stories told in comics format, have enjoyed the fastest-growing sales of any category of book in the U.S. over the last four years. This modern renaissance of comics has produced a library of substantial works, whose subjects are not confined to superheroes or fantasy but are as varied and sophisticated as the best films and literature.Graphic Novels presents an accessible, entertaining, and highly illustrated guide to the diversity of contemporary comics in book form. Featuring striking graphics and explanatory extracts from a wide range of graphic novels, the book examines the specific language of the comics medium; the history and pioneers of the form; recent masterpieces from Art Spiegelman's Maus to Chris Ware's Jimmy Corrigan; the impact of Japanese manga and European albums translated into English; how artists have overcome prejudices towards the genre; and the ambitious range of themes and issues artists are addressing, including childhood, war and survival, politics, the future, sexuality, and the supernatural.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Harper Design (November 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060824255

ISBN-13: 978-0060824259

Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 0.8 x 10.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #351,239 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #110 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Comics & Graphic Novels   #136 inÂ Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > History & Price Guides   #328 inÂ Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Biographies & History Graphic Novels

Customer Reviews

Following his success of Manga: Sixty Years of Japanese Comics with another affirmative and considered guide to comics, Gravett now focuses on the phoenix-like return of the "Graphic Novel" that failed to live up to expectations in the early '90s. However, time has moved on and this book reveals how the medium has evolved dramatically over the past ten years. Gravett's masterstroke is to reproduce at least two full pages of sequential artwork, giving readers a real flavour of each title examined. Annotated notes alongside the artwork explain the material in a manner reminiscent of

fine art books. Not only that but the excellent, if initially hard to follow, thematic cross indexing means there are endless ways of making connections between disparate titles such as Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind (Dystopias) leads to Enkil Bilal's Nikopol Trilogy. Follow another link (Nature) and you get Jiro Taniguchi's The Walking Man. It's a close as the Internet on the page as you'll ever get. This book is perfect for librarians and educationalists looking to broaden their, and their students', knowledge and while many comics aficionados will be familiar with the titles, there are still a few surprises and the chapter openers contain many anecdotal nuggets. A perfect present to convert that literary die-hard who'd have to admit that comics haven't just grown up, but are now entering a self-assured and confident middle-age.

This is a terrific resource for anyone looking to get into comics or a comics fan looking for more reading material. Gravett discusses 100 comics, by such greats as Art Spiegelman, Neil Gaiman, and Daniel Clowes. The book is informative, well-written, and has tons of sample excerpts from various graphic novels. Most importantly, it's a lot of fun to read!

This is a great primer on how and why to read graphic literature (traditionally known as "comic books") as well as an excellent catalog of the best works of sequential art (for an enlightening exploration of just what sequential art is and how it works, read Scott McCloud's seminal Understanding Comics). This attractively designed book contains detailed two-page entries on 30 works considered classics by the author (with whom I concur--at least on the ones I've read), and slightly less detailed half page entries on 120 others (see images at the top of item description), all of which provide sample pages and analysis of the storytelling technique employed by the creator(s). (Unfortunately, the text on the half page reproductions is sometimes too small to read without the aid of a magnifying glass.) The book is divided into chapters arranged by subject matter, which begin with a background essay on the history of each genre and contain a sidebar with a brief list of additional recommendations (totaling another 100 in all). The genres covered are Childhood Stories, Life Stories, War, Superheroes (of course), Fantasy/Science Fiction, Horror, Mystery/Crime, Humor/Satire, Historical (fiction and non), and Erotica.While I highly recommend this book for people trying to familiarize themselves with the realm of graphic novels, the subtitle, "Everything You Need to Know," is not entirely accurate. The focus here is on English language comics. For a sampling of graphic literature from around the globe, check out The Essential Guide to World Comics by Tim Pilcher and Brad Brooks.However, my only real disappointment was with the lack of attention given to some creators, and the total absence of others. The most glaring of

these is the cursory mention of Grant Morrison, one of the greatest comic book writers of the past 20 years. Although Animal Man and The Invisibles are mentioned in two of the book's auxiliary sidebar lists, neither these nor any of Morrison's other works--which include Arkham Asylum, Doom Patrol, JLA: Earth 2, and The Mystery Play--are featured in the more in-depth two page or half page formats. (I can excuse the absence of what I think is possibly Morrison's greatest work, WE3, because it came out in graphic novel form after Gravett's book went to press.)Several of the overlooked Morrison works listed above would have been much deserving additions to what I consider the weakest chapter in the book, "The Superhuman Condition." While I understand the author's desire to direct readers' attention to the wealth of non superhero graphic novels out there, this chapter--one of the shortest in the book--failed to mention several of the best examples of superheroic fiction. These would include tales featuring well-established characters, such as JSA: The Golden Age, by James Robinson and Paul Smith, as well as less traditional works like The Authority, a series created by Warren Ellis and Bryan Hitch about an antiestablishment group of superhumans (although in my opinion, it was later writer Mark Millar who more fully developed the revolutionary elements of this series). In general, I think this chapter suffered from a too narrow definition of what defines a superhero story, depriving readers of the full potential of this genre. The addition of Paul Chadwick's Concrete, while not obviously a superhero series, would have shown how superhuman trappings can be used to tell very human stories that address real-world injustices. Similarly, I would have placed in this chapter graphic novels Gravett chose to include elsewhere in his book. Morrison's The Invisibles is mentioned under the heading of science fiction/fantasy; V for Vendetta, by Alan Moore and David Lloyd, is extensively covered in the chapter on mystery/crime, and The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen, by Moore and and Kevin O'Neill, appears under horror. Chronicling the stories of 1) a counterculture cell of secret agents battling extradimensional forces of conformity (The Invisibles); 2) a masked superhuman freedom-fighter seeking to overthrow the fascist government of an Orwellian future (V); and 3) a band of characters from Victorian literature serving on Her Majesty's Secret Service in an alternative version of 19th Century Britain (The League); I believe these works should more fittingly be viewed as innovative takes--postmodern, dystopian, and revisionist, respectively--on the superhero genre.Despite these shortcomings, I still think this book offers an attractive, well-organized, and exciting introduction to the world of graphic literature that is sure to hold many unexpected treasures for long time fans and newcomers alike.[Note: Some of the best recent superhero stories were not included in this book because they were released in graphic novel form while it was already at press. DC: The New Frontier, by Darwyn Cooke, takes a new look at the Silver Age of comics (the 1950s and 60s) that is

as retro as it is modern, and the critically-acclaimed Ex Machina, by Brian K. Vaughan and Tony Harris, is about a superhero who hangs up his costume after 9/11 to become the mayor of New York City.]

I was looking for something to give me a firm history of this "new" genre of fiction and this proved very useful. The author seems to have a firm understanding of how the reader's eye moves about (especially comic book readers) and keeps his format as true to his subject matter as possible. He allows the reader to skip ahead, and around; dig deep in the subject matter, or theme; run rampant around the page. I couldn't recommend this book more for those who are unfamiliar with graphic novels, aspire to write one, or just plain enjoy the history. I loved the way that the author stuck to mature subject matter/ writers as well.Fantastic!

This book is a marvelous and very thorough reference book for graphic novels published in the US market. I am grateful since I needed a "taxonomy" of sorts for the newly available works, and the differently-themed chapters seem to group the various works into categories.While the tradition of the graphic novel has been strong in europe in the sixties and seventies, many of those works have never been translated into english, and thus references to them are not included in this book.I was pleased to see Hugo Pratt's "The ballad of the salted sea", a revered classic among european readers. I must conclude that the only reason it got included in this book is because it is now available in english.I noticed Persepolis got included as well. That work as been "cinematized" recently, and shown at this year's Cannes Film Festival. [btw, the english set is half the price of the french set if you were to buy it in france, proof that the english-based publishing world dominates the world...]Great book. Great resource. Great reference.

Download to continue reading...

Everything You Need to Know About Snakes (Everything You Need Know) Graphic Novels: Everything You Need to Know Everything You Need To Know About Geography Homework (Evertything You Need To Know..) The Chicken Whisperer's Guide to Keeping Chickens: Everything You Need to Know . . . and Didn't Know You Needed to Know About Backyard and Urban Chickens Everything You Need to Know about Std's (Need to Know Library) Everything You Need to Know about Down Syndrome (Need to Know Library) Graphic Classics Volume 4: H. P. Lovecraft - 2nd Edition (Graphic Classics (Graphic Novels)) Don't Know Much About History, Anniversary Edition: Everything You Need to Know About American History but Never Learned (Don't Know Much About Series) NCLEX-RN Drug Guide: 300 Medications You Need to Know for

the Exam (Kaplan Nclex Rn Medications You Need to Know for the Exam) 50 Physics Ideas You Really Need to Know (50 Ideas You Really Need to Know Series) by Baker, Joanne (2007) The Reel Truth: Everything You Didn't Know You Need to Know About Making an Independent Film Writing and Illustrating the Graphic Novel: Everything You Need to Know to Create Great Work and Get It Published Pilgrim Tips & Packing List Camino de Santiago: What you need to know beforehand, what you need to take, and what you can leave at home. Don't Know Much About the Universe: Everything You Need to Know About the Cosmos Don't Know Much about the Universe: Everything You Need to Know about the Cosmos but Never Learned The Wright Brothers: A Graphic Novel (Campfire Graphic Novels) The Adventures of Tom Sawyer: The Graphic Novel (Campfire Graphic Novels) Harry Houdini: A Graphic Novel (Campfire Graphic Novels) The Call of the Wild: The Graphic Novel (Campfire Graphic Novels) The Driving Book: Everything New Drivers Need to Know but Don't Know to Ask