



Demanding Respect: The Evolution of the American Comic Book

Paul Lopes

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How is it that comic books—the once reviled form of lowbrow popular culture—are now the rage for Hollywood blockbusters, the basis for bestselling video games, and the inspiration for literary graphic novels? In *Demanding Respect*, Paul Lopes immerses himself in the discourse and practices of this art and subculture to provide a social history of the American comic book over the last 75 years.

Lopes analyzes the cultural production, reception, and consumption of American comic books throughout American history. He charts the rise of superheroes, the proliferation of serials, and the emergence of graphic novels. *Demanding Respect* explores how comic books born in the 1930s were perceived as a “menace” in the 1950s, only to later become collectors’ items and eventually “hip” fiction in the 1980s through today.

Using a theoretical framework to examine the construction of comic book culture—the artists, publishers, readers and fans—Lopes explains how and why comic books have captured the public’s imagination and gained a fanatic cult following.



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