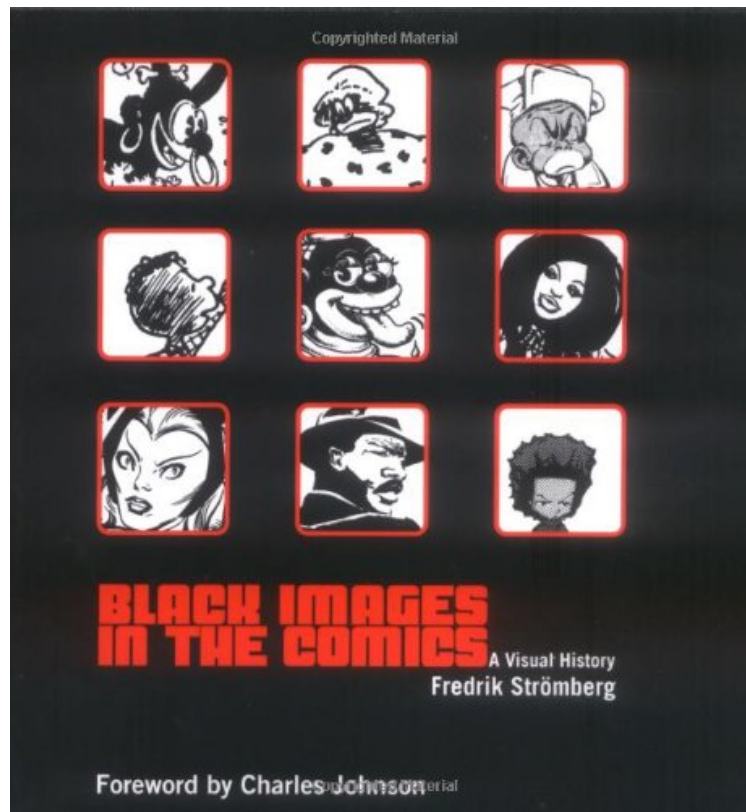


## Black Images in the Comics: A Visual History

Fredrik Stromberg

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#2766317 in Books 2003-08Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 .91 x 6.26 x 5.94l, #File Name: 1560975466160 pages | File size: 33.Mb

**Fredrik Stromberg : Black Images in the Comics: A Visual History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Black Images in the Comics: A Visual History:

16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Somewhat disappointingBy Andre M.This book is somewhat disappointing on a couple of grounds. For one thing, Stromberg only uses one panel from each of the comics he discusses, thus the reader has a difficult time getting these particular comics in full context (although his accompanying notes are good). This and (as Charles Johnson noted in his prologue), the "Negro Comics" of Black newspapers of the 1900s are given somewhat short shrift as a means of comparison. Cartoons dealing with the portrayal of Africans as simian-like savages are used so frequently that the point that this stereotype was common among cartoonists is beaten to the ground.These flaws aside, it's a good introduction to the subject of Black protrayals in the cartoons. Aaron McGruder (of "Boondocks" fame) wrote his college thesis on this subject, cartoonist Tim Jackson has a website on vintage Black cartoons, and B. Keith Murphy who is a professor at Ft. Valley State University (Georgia) have also done research on this topic. I hope this book encourages them to publish their studies.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. uniqueBy reading guyThis is a small book (about the size of a paperback) that packs a lot of information. Each page gives a sample cartoon and the facing page gives a one page write up. I found this to b informative and a very unique work; giving a lot of insight into the evolution of comics

within the context of cultural prejudices and stereotypes. I highly recommend this for anyone with an interest in the history of comics. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Intro to Black Comics History By William Foster I had met the author of this book at a major comic book convention and was very interested in the topic. I learned a great deal about comic images from all over the world. It has become a valuable part of my research library on this topic.

Observing black imagery through a century of comics. This wide-ranging little book spotlights over 100 comics strips, comic books, and graphic novels to feature black characters from all over the world over the last century, and the result is a fascinating journey to, if not enlightenment, then at least away from the horrendous caricatures of yore. The book begins with the habitually appalling images of blacks as ignorant "coons" in the earliest syndicated strips (Happy Hooligan, Moon Mullins, and The Katzenjammer Kids); continues with the almost-quaint colonialist images of the suppressed Tintin album Tintin in the Congo and such ambiguous figures as Mandrake the Magician's "noble savage" assistant Lothar in the '30s (not to mention Torchy Brown, the first syndicated black character), moving on to such oddities as the offensive Ebony character in Will Eisner's otherwise classic *The Spirit* from the '40s and '50s. We then continue into the often earnest attempts at '60s integration in such strips as Peanuts (and comic books such as the *Fantastic Four*), as well as the first wave of "black strips" like *Wee Pals*, juxtaposed with the shocking satire of underground comics such as R. Crumb's incendiary *Angelfood McSpade*. Also investigated is the increased use of blacks in super-hero comic books such as *Uncanny X-Men* and *Luke Cage*, *Hero for Hire*, as well as syndicated strips like *Friday Foster* and *Quincy* in the '70s (to say nothing of *Beetle Bailey's* controversial *Lt. Flap*). From *Cartoon Coons* to the *Boondocks* wraps up from the '80s to now, with the increased visibility of blacks, often in works actually produced by blacks, all the way to the South African strip *Madam Eve*, Aaron McGruder's pointed daily *The Boondocks*, and Ho Che Anderson's Martin Luther King biography *King*. Each strip, comic, or graphic novel is spotlighted via a compact but instructive 200-word essay and a representative illustration. The book is augmented by a context-setting introduction, an extensive source list and bibliography, and a foreword by Charles R. Johnson, the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation fellowship and winner of the National Book Award for his 1990 novel *Middle Passage* (and a published cartoonist to boot!).

From School Library Journal Adult/High School--Noble savage, Uncle Tom, Mammy--these are just three of the stereotypical images of African Americans that Stromberg examines in this insightful book. The author tends to allow the artwork to speak for itself; his commentary primarily provides historical and cultural context and, in general, does not set out to impart a specific agenda. A single illustration appears opposite commentary that provides editorial context. The images are drawn primarily from the daily strips of newspapers, although a few notable exceptions like the *X-Men* and R. Crumb's *Angelfood McSpade* come from comic books. The collection opens with an unsigned political cartoon from 19th-century England that displays some of the horrendous treatment black slaves endured. It moves along chronologically to icons from the 1930s like Otto Messmer's *Felix the Cat* to contemporary strips like Aaron McGruder's *The Boondocks*. Lesser-known works from around the world are also included. Stromberg is startlingly objective in his comments on the images and their cultural significance. Only a handful of artists cause him to step outside this editorial objectivity and praise them for their work. These few include Charles Schulz (*Peanuts*) and Berkeley Breathed (*Bloom County*, *The Outland*), who, in the author's perspective, ignored the stereotype and created strong, memorable characters that happened to be black. The book presents a unique look at the evolution of comics, but it also proves comics to be an effective and sobering lens for viewing the history of racism toward blacks.-- Matthew L. Moffett, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist As this small but potent book shows, African Americans didn't fare any better in the comics medium than elsewhere in popular culture. Stromberg's compact cultural critique encapsulates each of about 100 black comics characters in a brief, single-page essay and a full-page illustration. The presentation is chronological, from stereotyped "coons" in early newspaper strips, such as "The Katzenjammer Kids" and "Moon Mullins," to servile sidekicks such as Mandrake the Magician's Lothar and the Spirit's Ebony, to black additions to the casts of "Peanuts" and "Beetle Bailey." Highly problematic are such portrayals as underground cartoonist R. Crumb's grotesque jungle queen, *Angelfood McSpade*: Is Crumb racist, or just trying to get a rise out of liberal readers? Recently, an encouraging trend toward all-black, though also all-bland, strips such as "Wee Pals" and "Curtis" has culminated in the controversial, refreshingly radical "Boondocks." American examples preponderate, though foreign comics, such as *Tintin in the Congo* (1930-31), reveal that the U.S. didn't have a monopoly on stereotypes. A worthwhile, illuminating if embarrassing addition for popular-culture and black-studies collections. Gordon Flagg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A book not only for the comics fan, but also for people interested in sociology. -- Kvallsposten