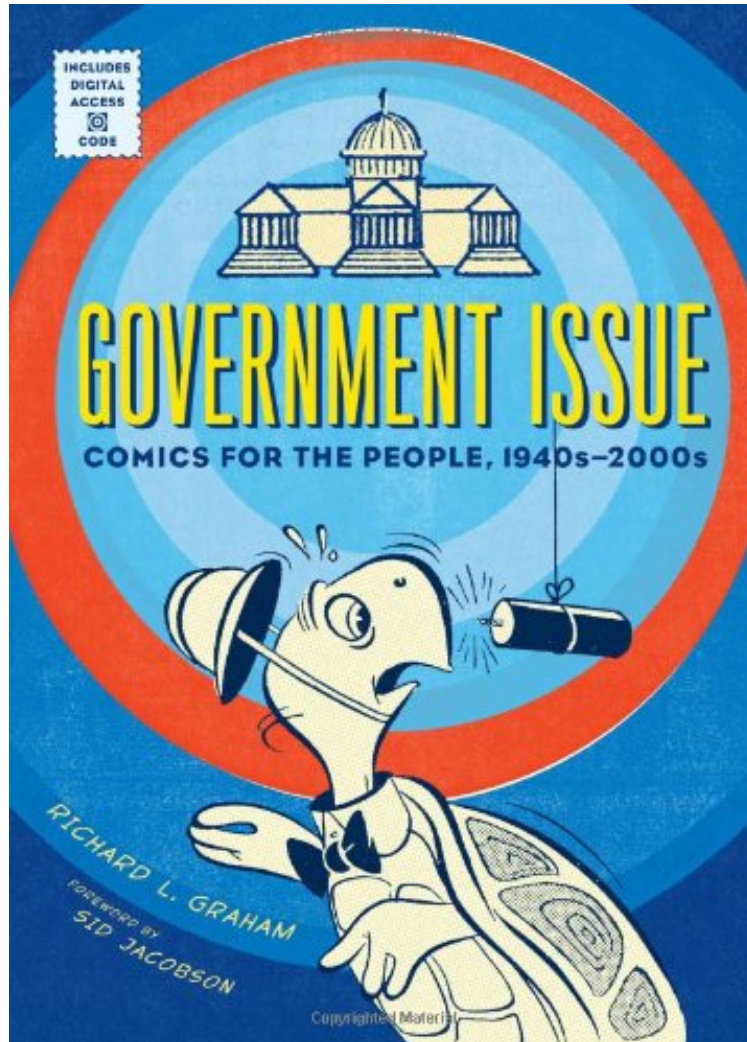


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## Government Issue: Comics for the People, 1940s-2000s

*Richard Graham*

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**Richard Graham : Government Issue: Comics for the People, 1940s-2000s** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Government Issue: Comics for the People, 1940s-2000s:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fun and Smart! By James B Carter If you're interested in how governments have made use of the comics medium for propaganda and social engineering, this is a great place to start! Colorful enough to act as a coffee table book but smart enough to cite in your research, this text has wide appeal and will teach anyone who reads it something they didn't know before. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fun for family By Michael F. Warren Great old time Comic 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and important book! By Michael As a historian of the Atomic Age, I found this book to be an outstanding contribution to our understanding of the government's role in educating, indoctrinating, and, in some cases, scaring people on a

wide of topics considered important. This is a great addition to my collection.

Since the 1940s, federal and state government agencies have published comics to disseminate public information. Comics legends Will Eisner and Milton Caniff produced comics for the army. Lil Abner joined the navy. Walt Kelly's Pogo told parents how much TV their kids should watch, Bert the Turtle showed them how to survive a nuclear attack, and Dennis the Menace took A Poke at Poison. Smokey Bear had his own comic, and so did Zippy, the USPS mascot. Dozens of artists and writers, known and unknown, were recruited to create comics about every aspect of American life, from jobs and money to health and safety to sex and drugs. Whether you want the lowdown on psychological warfare or the highlights of working in the sardine industry, the government has a comic for you! Government Issue reproduces an important selection of these official comics in full-reading format, plus a broad range of excerpts and covers, all organized chronologically in thematic chapters. Earnest, informational, and kitschy, this outstanding collection is the ultimate comics vox populi. Praise for Government Issue: Public-service comics never looked so good. Cleveland Plain Dealer The book includes work by Neal Adams, Denis Kitchen, Milton Caniff, Walt Kelly, and other big names, all producing pages paid for by American taxpayers, many of whom never even got to see [them]. Now, at last, we have that chance. A.V. Club A gold mine of the serious, the silly, and the truly strange stuff the government thinks we ought to know. Scripps Howard News Service

From Booklist Captain America fights drugs, Lil Abner promotes military recruitment, and Supergirl encourages seat-belt use in the public-service comics produced by federal and state government agencies, compiled here by Graham, a librarian who curates the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's digital collection of government comics. In the 1940s, comics legends Will Eisner and Milton Caniff produced instructional comics for the military (Eisner's efforts were recently collected in *PS Magazine: The Best of the Preventative Maintenance Monthly*, 2011); other prominent cartoonists represented in the volume include Walt Kelly, Charles Schulz, and Neal Adams. But most of the hands behind these publications were anonymous artists with varying abilities who taught the public about such matters as public safety, civil defense, and financial literacy. Many are kitschy glimpses into the era's culture, touting fallout shelters in the 1950s and offering shrill antidrug messages in the 1960s. Recent examples include the late 1990s *Captain Abstinence* (crudely drawn by high-school students) and *Dignity and Respect*, a low-key guide for soldiers on the Homosexual Conduct Policy initiated by the Clinton administration but withdrawn by President Bush. Most of the comics are excerpted; a scannable code provides access to the full comics online. --Gordon Flagg About the Author Richard L. Graham is an associate professor and media services librarian at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He created and curates UNL's digital collection of government comics.