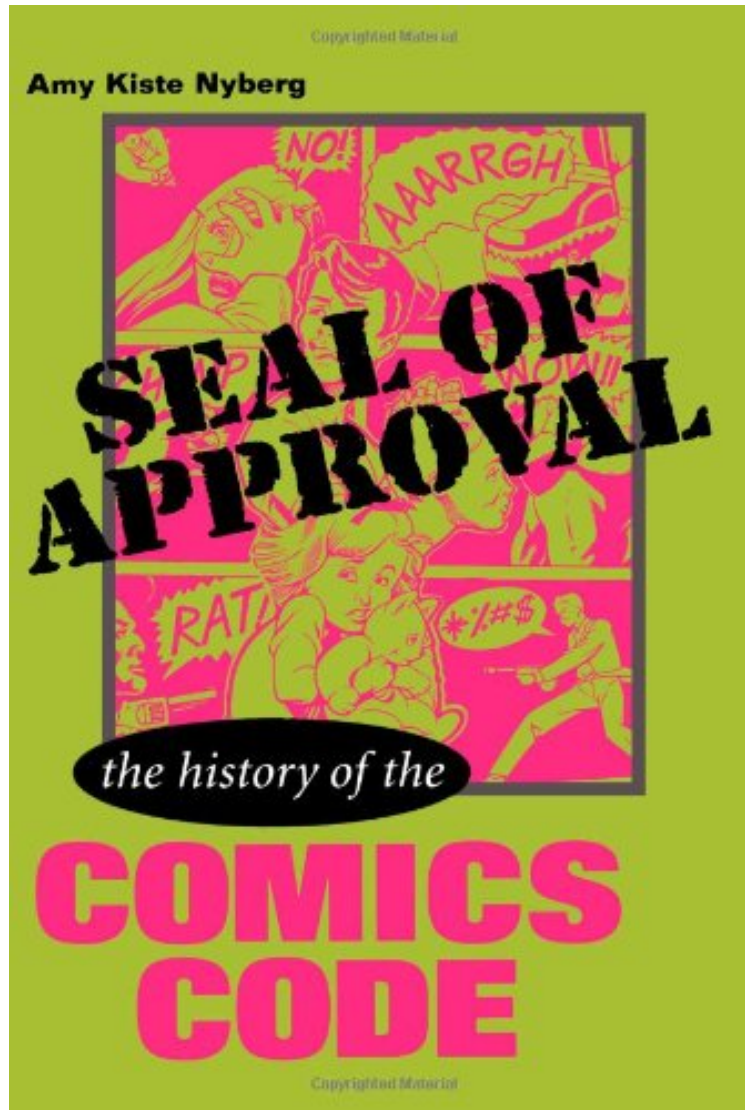


(Read free ebook) Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code (Studies in Popular Culture)

Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code (Studies in Popular Culture)

Amy Kiste Nyberg

audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#808748 in Books Amy Kiste Nyberg 1998-02-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .57 x 6.00l, .74
#File Name: 087805975X224 pagesSeal of Approval The History of the Comics Code | File size: 50.Mb

Amy Kiste Nyberg : Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code (Studies in Popular Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code (Studies in Popular Culture):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Solid History of the Comics CodeBy RDDIn "Seal of Approval: The History of the Comics Code", Amy Kiste Nyberg argues, "[Fredric] Werthams role in the crusade against comics has been largely misinterpreted by fans and scholars alike, who dismiss his findings as nave social science, failing to

understand how his work on comic books fits into the larger context of his beliefs about violence, psychiatry, and social reform" (p. xiii). Nyberg traces the origin of objections to comics back to the early 1940s, but explains that the panic did not intensify until after the war, when publishers, no longer able to use patriotism as an easy selling point, began branching out into horror and crime stories to maintain sales. Despite public cries for censorship, Nyberg argues that the U.S. Senate committee knew it was effectively powerless. Nyberg writes, the intention of the hearings from the beginning was to force (or frighten) the publishers into adopting a self-regulatory code like that of the film industry (p. 79). Nyberg demonstrates that Wertham offered vindication to mothers who felt responsible for juvenile delinquency. In focusing on the gendered argument against comics, Nyberg writes, The issue of gender is linked to violence in Wertham's study, since women are generally victims in comic books. In many comic books, women were portrayed as objects to be abused or to be used as decoys in crime settings. Women who did not fall into the role of victim were generally cast as villains, often with masculine or witchlike powers (p. 95). Later, Judge Charles F. Murphy, the first czar of the Comics Magazine Association of America, hired a staff of five women to help him evaluate the comics that passed through his office. Nyberg writes, Enforcing standards in children's reading material was an extension of the mother's role in 1950s America (p. 115). Though Nyberg reinterprets Wertham's role in this history of censorship, she does not suggest that he was justified in his stance. In sum, Nyberg presents a balanced portrait of the moral panic over comics in the 1950s and its role in censorship.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good overview of a complex issue. By Don McGowan "Seal of Approval" was recommended along with David Hadju's "Ten-Cent Plague". I have read them both. To my mind this one is better, but I may be approaching this from a different perspective than most. I work in an industry that is currently confronted with many of the issues that the comics industry confronted in the 1950s - the video game business - and so I'm looking specifically for something that will be instructive and not just descriptive. Unlike Hadju's book, "Seal of Approval" is written by an academic (Nyberg is a professor at Seton Hall) and it shows. It's a very balanced historical overview coupled with an analysis of the Code and its various iterations over time. It speaks to the cultural context to the original Code but also to the way the companies governed by the Code adapted themselves over time, as well as the fact that not all publishers were governed by the Code and yet some managed to stay in business (Dell being the most significant). It's very well-researched (15 pages of bibliography) and it's definitely worth picking up. The strongest part of this book is the way that it puts the crusaders in their social, cultural, and professional context. Fredric Wertham, who seems to have been the Jack Thompson or Carrie Nation of this issue, is often caricatured as... well... just like Jack Thompson or Carrie Nation. In Nyberg's presentation we learn that Wertham was a social scientist of some note before he got to this issue. He may well have gone off the deep end when he got to comics but it's interesting to see how he got there and explains why he got the exposure he did. The most cogent criticism I'd give of the book is one that's common to books written by academics: except for social scientists who are used to doing interviews most academics don't like to get out and deal with people in their work and so they end up relying on source materials where source interviews might be more helpful. I don't know whether Nyberg did do interviews or not, but the sections on how the review process actually worked over time and still work today read like they're assembled from materials. They could have used some perspective on how the business actually is done. As the guy who often does content review for Microsoft games, I know that a policy manual is tough to work with because of the edge cases and the subjective nature of reviewing, and if you went only from written documents you'd miss the flavor of the exercise. But seriously, this is a good book on its own merits. As a source for consideration about whether and how the games business might develop "Seal of Approval" is also helpful. Although not perfect for the reasons I mention, the sections dealing with life under the Code and the changes to the Code over time have been instructive. Nyberg isn't Niall Ferguson either but I'll be recommending this book to colleagues anyway.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly informative. By D. A. Yurkovich If you think Seduction of the Innocent was the sole factor in the establishment of the Comics Code, think again. This book is expertly written and extremely well researched. You will be shocked by just how much you DON'T know about the history of this industry with regard to censorship.

For the past forty years the content of comic books has been governed by an industry self-regulatory code adopted by publishers in 1954 in response to public and governmental pressure. This book examines why comic books were the subject of controversy, beginning with objections that surfaced shortly after the introduction of modern comic books in the mid-1930s, when parents and teachers accused comic books of contaminating children's culture and luring children away from more appropriate reading material. It traces how, in the years following World War II, the criticism of comic books shifted to their content, and the reading of comic books became linked with the rise of juvenile delinquency. This resulted in attempts at the local, state, and national level to ban or license comic book sales. A major figure in the crusade against comic books was the psychiatrist Dr. Fredric Wertham. While he played a significant role in the postwar attack on comics, his accusations against the comic book industry have been misunderstood by comic book fans and media scholars alike. They have accused him of being a naive social scientist who saw direct causal links between the reading of comic books and delinquency. In fact, Seal of Approval shows that Wertham's work is much better understood in the intellectual tradition of media criticism of the Frankfurt school and their critique of mass

culture. The negative publicity aroused by the controversy, coupled with fears that the government would pass censorship legislation, led publishers to adopt the self-regulatory code. It has been changed only twice, once in 1971 and again in 1989. The legacy of the comics code is that it continues to define the comic book medium as essentially juvenile literature. While the code offers protection against those who attack the media (and not just comic books), it also reaffirms the public perception of comic books as children's fare. As a result, the comic book has yet to achieve legitimation as a unique form of expression that blends words and pictures in a way that no other medium can duplicate. In tracing the evolution of the controversy and the resulting code Seal of Approval examines important issues about children, media effects, and censorship. It is the first book-length scholarly study of this period of comic book history.

From the Inside Flap A study that explores the history of comic book censorship About the Author Amy Kiste Nyberg is a professor in the Department of Communication at Seton Hall University.