



Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World

By Ferenc Morton Szasz

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The advent of the Atomic Age challenged purveyors of popular culture to explain to the general public the complex scientific and social issues of atomic power. *Atomic Comics* examines how comic books, comic strips, and other cartoon media represented the Atomic Age from the early 1920s to the present. Through the exploits of superhero figures such as Atomic Man and Spiderman, as well as an array of nuclear adversaries and atomic-themed adventures, the public acquired a new scientific vocabulary and discovered the major controversies surrounding nuclear science. Ferenc Morton Szasz's thoughtful analysis of the themes, content, and imagery of scores of comics that appeared largely in the United States and Japan offers a fascinating perspective on the way popular culture shaped American comprehension of the fissioned atom for more than three generations.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This volume proves that 'small is beautiful' and can be significant. In only 136 pages, the late Szasz provides a fascinating account of the depiction of atomic warfare and energy in US and Japanese comics and cartoons. Some of what Szasz reveals is downright scary: the extreme censorship of WW II and the devastating impacts of American nuclear testing and failures. The inclusion of small press comics such as Leonard Rifas's EduComics testifies to the comprehensive nature of this book. Summing Up: Highly recommended. All readers." *Choice* magazine; Outstanding Academic Title in 2012

"Charming and sophisticated . . . One might view *Atomic Comics* through many lenses. To some degree, the book fits in the 'researcher studies pop culture' category, but it is much too entertainingly--even at times, wryly--written to consign to the academic corner of the library." -*Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*

"...*Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* is a **seminal work** identifying the perspective that cartoonists brought to nuclear issues that was to prove enduringly influential upon public opinion--an influence that continues to be felt to this very day." -- *Midwest Book Review*

"An **immensely readable** survey of how comic books have sowed fear and excitement ... clearly written and free of the jargon one might expect from an academic press." Pat Padua in *blogcritcs.org*, 8/15/12

"... *Atomic Comics* is a useful text, serving as a lucid introduction to the various intersections of popular culture and social issues during the Cold War. In a more general sense, it clearly identifies the ways all manner of popular cultural forms express the ideological conditions of their historical moment, thus serving as a succinct introduction to the study of popular culture and history. Szasz's prose is accessible and jargon-free, friendly to both undergraduate and general readers and the text is filled with images of the works he describes. **It could fruitfully appear on undergraduate syllabi in American studies, history, and popular culture courses.**" Sean Cashbaugh, *H-Net Reviews*

"*Atomic Comics* is the 2013 winner of the ALA's "Choice Outstanding Academic Title" award. I read it in almost one sitting, and if this book is any indication of academic writing, then we'd all be reading nothing but academic titles. . . . Although we've been living in the atomic age for more than seventy years, many of us are woefully lacking in any clear understanding of what the atom is all about. Szasz is less interested in educating the reader about the atom than in telling us about the role comic books played in a dedicated effort to bring the atomic age, in both fiction and nonfiction, into the hands of the public – and he does a bang-up job. . . . Szasz writes with an atomic power all his own. This is not a big book (163 pages, text and notes), but he takes the history of the comic book all the way from its beginning to the twenty-first century with its atomic events, good and bad. The industry's eagerness to educate and entertain in all things atomic will leave readers wishing Szasz had written more. The index alone is worth the price of admission." *Bookin' with Sunny*

"An excellent resource, as informative and entertaining as one could wish for." blogcritics.org, 7/30/13

"*Atomic Comics* is well worth reading for those who want to know more about how the Atomic Age impacted the American imagination."—*Rain Taxi*

(*Rain Taxi*)

"Reading *Atomic Comics* reminded me of the reasons why I enjoy smart history and historians who draw meaningful conclusions from their research." -- ISLE

(Ann Ronald *ISLE*)

About the Author

Regents Professor of History, Ferenc Morton Szasz taught at the University of New Mexico for forty-three years. Renowned for his wide-ranging interests, in his teaching and scholarship he focused on American social and intellectual history, thereby embracing the history of American religion, World War II, and the Atomic Age. *The Day the Sun Rose Twice: The Story of the Trinity Nuclear Site Explosion, July 16, 1945* remains one of his most popular books.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Brim:

This *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This specific *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* without we know teach the one who examining it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't always be worry *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* can bring when you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even cell phone. This *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* having excellent arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

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The knowledge that you get from *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* is a more deep you searching the information that hide into the words the more you get thinking about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* giving you buzz feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in selected way that can be understood by means of anyone who read that because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This particular book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this *Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World* instantly.

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Janet Thaxton:

The reason why? Because this Atomic Comics: Cartoonists Confront the Nuclear World is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap that but latter it will shock you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who also write the book in such awesome way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning entirely. So , it is good for you because of not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This phenomenal book will give you a lot of gains than the other book include such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking way. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I had been you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

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