



This Book Contains Graphic Language: Comics as Literature

Rocco Versaci

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This Book Contains Graphic Language looks at different literary forms and genres—including journalism, fiction, memoirs, and film—in relation to their comic book counterparts. By demonstrating the ways in which comic books (and graphic novels) both reflect upon, and expand the boundaries of literature, Rocco Versaci demonstrates that comics have earned the right to be taken just as seriously as any other literary form.

As comics and graphic novels become more popular than ever, literary critics are finding that they now have a new subject to examine. But while many advocates of the medium maintain that comics are a true art form, there have been no detailed comparisons among comics and "legitimate" types of literature. Filling this void, *This Book Contains Graphic Language* examines different literary forms in relation to their comic book counterparts. These literatures include prose memoir, Holocaust memoir, journalism, film, and-for lack of a better term-the "classics." Each richly-illustrated chapter outlines the key issues of one of these forms and then explores how comic books have been able to reflect and expand upon those issues in unique ways.

The comics discussed include *Eightball* by Daniel Clowes, *Love and Rockets* by Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez, *American Splendor* by Harvey Pekar, *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, *Palestine* by Joe Sacco, *Frontline Combat* and *Two-Fisted Tales* from EC Comics, *Sandman* by Neil Gaiman and *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* by Alan Moore. By examining the ways in which these and other comic books and graphic novels expand the boundaries of literature, English professor Rocco Versaci demonstrates that the medium of comics has earned the right to be regarded as an important artistic and literary form.

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