



The League of Regrettable Superheroes: Half-Baked Heroes from Comic Book History

By Jon Morris

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You know about Batman, Superman, and Spiderman, but have you heard of Doll Man, Doctor Hormone, or Spider Queen? In *The League of Regrettable Superheroes*, you'll meet one hundred of the strangest superheroes ever to see print, complete with backstories, vintage art, and colorful commentary. So prepare yourself for such not-ready-for-prime-time heroes as Bee Man (Batman, but with bees), the Clown (circus-themed crimebuster), the Eye (a giant, floating eyeball; just accept it), and many other oddballs and oddities. Drawing on the entire history of the medium, *The League of Regrettable Superheroes* will appeal to die-hard comics fans, casual comics readers, and anyone who enjoys peering into the stranger corners of pop culture.

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Editorial Review

Review

“A volume rich with historical anecdotes and informed commentary on every era of comics history.”—*A.V. Club*

“With its gorgeous full page images of the comics and humorous descriptions of the heroes, each second-stringer gets a few pages of glory.”—*Boing Boing*

“Jon Morris has compiled the histories and art of some of the strangest and most unusual superheroes that ever saw print and collected them here for you. Definitely check it out!”—*Nerdist*

“This compendium of short-lived superheroes (from actual comics) will thrill and amaze.”—*Mental Floss*

“It's a great idea, executed with adroit prose, attractive design and painstaking production quality—full-page, full-color excerpts accompany each entry, turning what could have been a merely dutiful archive into a vibrant, living, expertly curated tour of a long-neglected and *seriously goofy* facet of American cultural history.”—*Monkey See*

“[A]n amusing collection of obscure wonderments.”—*Sci Fi* magazine

“Forgotten but not gone, cartoonist and graphic designer Jon Morris has lovingly resurrected, wittily chronicled, and copiously illustrated these idiosyncratic super-D-list-ers — more than a hundred — for our enlightenment and — mostly — amusement.”—*Print* magazine

“[Morris's] wealth of knowledge and whip-smart sense of humor add up to a book that's both deeply informative and quite funny.”—*Seattle Weekly*

“This excellent book would be a worthy addition to any comic fan's collection, be they the hardcore enthusiast or the more casual fan of the superhero genre.”—*ComicBook.com*

“This compilation is essential reading both old and new fans who revel in the art of comic books...This is a wealth of comic art and undeniable fun.”—*The New York Journal of Books*

About the Author

Jon Morris is a cartoonist and graphic designer. Since the late 1990s, he's operated the blog *Gone & Forgotten*, an irreverent look at the weirdest and most unfortunate stories and characters comic books have offered. In 2001, he was invited to participate in a superheroes-themed episode of the public radio program *This American Life*, a popular and frequently rebroadcast episode.

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Superheroes are big!

Contemporary culture has embraced superheroes in a major way. Hardly a month goes by without an announcement about the release of a new blockbuster superhero movie. Superhero television shows are all

over the airwaves, with more waiting in the wings. Superheroes populate our video games, advertising, clothing, and collectibles—even home furnishings. You can make your bed with superhero sheets and light your house with superhero lamps.

Perhaps this ubiquity should come as no surprise. When superheroes burst onto the scene almost eighty years ago, they captured the public imagination like nothing before. Bold, distinctive, and sometimes bizarre, the four-color caped crusaders quickly leapt from drugstore comic book racks to newspapers, radio, movie theaters, and television. True, their popularity has had its ups and downs. But however you look at it, brightly colored defenders of right and goodness like Captain America, Superman, Wonder Woman, and Spider-Man have become household names. Even once-obscure characters like the X-Men or Guardians of the Galaxy have achieved silver screen success.

Still, not every Spandex-clad do-gooder manages to make the big time. From the very origins of the genre to the newest digital graphic novels, the family tree of costumed crimefighters includes hundreds of third-stringers and Z-listers: near-misses, almost-weres, mightabeens, nice tries, weirdos, oddballs, freaks, and even the occasional innovative idea that was simply ahead of its time.

In the pages that follow, you'll meet largely forgotten heroes, those who walked away from their comic book careers without so much as a participation ribbon to show for it. They are some of the most intriguing also-rans in comics history: super-centaurs, crime-fighting kangaroos, modern-day Draculas, shape-changing spaceships, and even an all-powerful disembodied flying eye. We call these second-tier (or lower) superheroes "regrettable," but it's important to remember that none of these characters are inherently bad. Sometimes, the only factor that kept them from succeeding was bad timing, an unstable marketplace, or merely being lost in the crowd. There's not a single character in this book who doesn't have at least the *potential* to be great. All it takes is the perfect combination of creative team and right audience to make even the wildest idea a wild success.

In fact, several members of the League of Regrettable Superheroes have been revived, revamped, reintroduced, or otherwise regifted with a new lease on life. A few are attempting a comeback even now. In comics, there's always a chance that a seemingly vanished character will come back from extinction. With superheroes becoming more popular with every passing day, you never know when a once-regrettable hero might return and become the next media sensation—or at least find devoted fans among a whole new generation of comics readers.

To count these heroes out and consign them to oblivion without appreciating what they represent—evolving notions of heroism, insights into comics history, and a sampling of fantastic fashion trends in cape-and-cowl ensembles—well, that would be *truly* regrettable.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alexandra Sauer:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? That's why, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or read a book entitled The League of Regrettable Superheroes: Half-Baked Heroes from Comic Book History? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with it is opinion or you have some other opinion?

Brian Crowe:

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