



Ages of Heroes, Eras of Men

Julian C. Chambliss

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Ages of Heroes, Eras of Men explores the changing depiction of superheroes from the comic books of the 1930s to the cinematic present. In this anthology, scholars from a variety of disciplines - including history, cultural studies, Latin American studies, film studies, and English - examine the superhero's cultural history in North America with attention to particular stories and to the historical contexts in which those narratives appeared. Enduring comic book characters from DC and Marvel Comics including Superman, Iron Man, Batman, Wonder Woman and the Avengers are examined, along with lesser-known Canadian, Latino, and African-American superheroes. With a sweep of characters ranging from the Pulp Era to recent cinematic adaptations, and employing a variety of analytical frameworks, this collection offers new insights for scholars, students, and fans of the superhero genre. The anthology comprises three chronologically-divided sections corresponding to the well-established distinction in comics of the Golden Age, Silver Age, and Modern Age. Section I, "Defending the American Way," connects the emergence of the new superhero genre to the social, political, and economic issues of the Progressive Era, the Great Depression, and World War II. Section II, "Crisis of Consensus," examines the rebirth and evolution of the superhero comic in the context of Cold War anxiety. Section III, "The Modern Age," explores the ongoing development of the superhero in the post-Cold War world, with a narrowed but more sophisticated comic book readership and ultimately an expanded new audience in other media.

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