

DC Through The 80 2020: The Experiments

When it comes to comic book adaptations, DC has always held a prominent place in popular culture. Throughout the 80s, DC experimented with various storylines, characters, and themes that have shaped the comic book industry as we know it today. In this article, we will take an in-depth look at DC's revolutionary experiments in the 80s and how they continue to influence the superhero genre in 2020.

The Darker, Grittier Side of DC

DC had always been known for its classic and iconic superheroes like Superman and Batman. However, as the 80s rolled in, DC decided to explore darker and grittier storylines that deviated from the traditional superhero narrative. One of the most notable experiments during this time was Frank Miller's "The Dark Knight Returns."

In this groundbreaking mini-series, Miller depicted an older, retired Batman who comes out of retirement to fight crime in a dystopian Gotham City. The story not only pushed the boundaries of what a superhero comic could be but also explored deeper themes of morality and the societal impact of superheroes. This experimental approach resonated with readers and ushered in a new era of complex and mature storytelling in the superhero genre.

DC Through the 80's (2020-): The Experiments

by Sophie Burrows (Kindle & comiXology)

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 2480179 KB

Print length : 484 pages

Lending : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported



Deconstructing Iconic Characters

DC's experiments in the 80s also involved deconstructing and reimagining their iconic characters. Alan Moore's "Watchmen" is perhaps the most famous example of this. Moore took traditional superhero archetypes and placed them in a gritty, morally ambiguous world where the line between hero and villain was blurred.

By deconstructing the concept of superheroes, "Watchmen" challenged readers' perceptions of good and evil, power, and the role of vigilantism in society. The success of "Watchmen" paved the way for subsequent deconstructions of iconic characters, such as Neil Gaiman's "The Sandman" and Grant Morrison's "Animal Man." These experiments allowed DC to explore the psychological depths of their characters and delve into more nuanced and complex narratives.

Pushing the Boundaries of Graphic Storytelling

Throughout the 80s, DC also experimented with the format of comic book storytelling. The limited series format became increasingly popular, allowing creators to tell self-contained stories with a definitive beginning and end. This allowed for more experimentation with narrative structures and themes.

One of the most notable examples of this experimentation was Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' "Watchmen." Moore and Gibbons utilized a nine-panel grid system to create a visually cohesive and thematically rich narrative. This innovative approach to sequential storytelling earned "Watchmen" critical acclaim and set a new standard for graphic novel storytelling.

DC's Experimentation in 2020

DC's experimental spirit has not diminished in the modern era. In 2020, DC continues to push the boundaries of storytelling with bold and innovative projects. The critically acclaimed series "Doom Patrol" embraces the bizarre and surreal, presenting a team of outcast superheroes with unconventional powers.

Another recent example is Tom King's "Mister Miracle," a reinvention of the iconic character that delves into themes of trauma and mental health. These experiments showcase DC's commitment to exploring new storytelling techniques and tackling complex subject matter.

Influence on the Superhero Genre

The experiments conducted by DC during the 80s have had a lasting impact on the superhero genre as a whole. The shift towards darker, more mature storytelling paved the way for other publishers to explore complex themes and narratives beyond traditional superhero tropes.

DC's experiments also influenced the rise of independent comic book creators who sought to break away from mainstream conventions. Works like "Kick-Ass" by Mark Millar and "The Boys" by Garth Ennis demonstrate a similar deconstructionist approach and reflect the influence of DC's experiments on the broader comic book landscape.

DC's experiments throughout the 80s spearheaded a revolution in the comic book industry. By exploring darker storylines, deconstructing iconic characters, and pushing the boundaries of graphic storytelling, DC reshaped the superhero genre and influenced countless creators in the process.

In 2020, DC's commitment to experimentation remains strong, with new projects continuing to challenge traditional storytelling conventions. As we look back at the experiments of DC through the 80s, we can see their profound impact on the superhero genre and appreciate the ongoing legacy they have left behind.



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The 1980s were a period of unprecedented achievement and transition for DC Comics, one that introduced some of DC's most acclaimed and bestselling titles, including Watchmen and The Dark Knight Returns. For the first time, DC offers a retrospective of this monumental decade in one collected edition, featuring some of the most innovative and creative comics of the era, highlighting the work of groundbreaking creators such as Grant Morrison, Neil Gaiman, Alan Moore, and Frank Miller, in genre-bending works that pushed the boundaries of the medium. Collects Secret Origins #48, Swamp Thing #40, The Sandman #8, Doom Patrol #25, Warlord #48 and #55, Legion of Super-Heroes #298, Nathaniel Dusk #1,

Infinity Inc. #14, The New Teen Titans #16, The Best of DC: Blue Ribbon Digest #58, Watchmen #1, Camelot 3000 #1, Batman: The Dark Knight Returns #2, Angel Love #1, and History of the DC Universe #1-2, all selected by former DC President and Publisher Paul Levitz.



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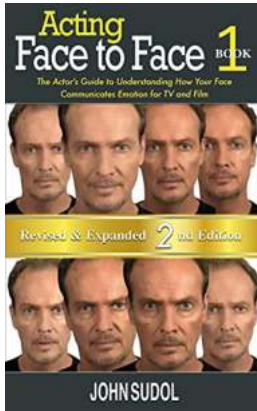
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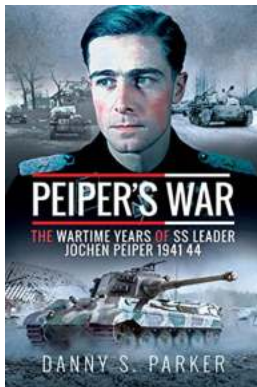
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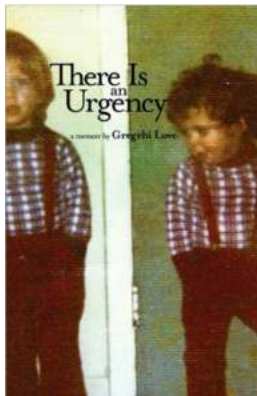
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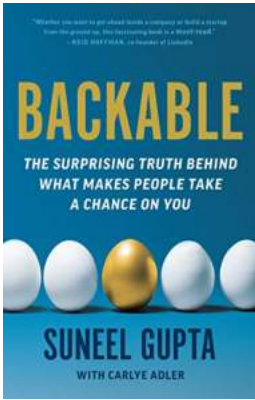
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By Noah Jacobs



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