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Siegel and Shuster's Funnyman: The First Jewish Superhero, from the Creators of Superman

Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster
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Jerry Siegel, Joe Shuster : Siegel and Shuster's Funnyman: The First Jewish Superhero, from the Creators of Superman before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Siegel and Shuster's Funnyman: The First Jewish Superhero, from the Creators of Superman:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Funnyman: The First Jewish Superhero By Michael D. Funnyman, brain child of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, was started after the duo parted ways from DC Comics. They were hoping that it would take off, but it did not. Possibly because people were expecting another Superman. At any rate, the book did not last that long, and this volume collects the entire run, including the rare Sunday and Daily newspaper strips.

This is the first book ever devoted to a Jewish superhero and the first of the book is devoted to Jewish personages in American culture as background, the Siegel and Shuster describe the development and creation of Funnyman, followed by the covers and stories. Very unique idea that really never took off, so to speak. Readers may view this volume entirely differently from other readers reading this volume, but is a must have for its creativeness and as a tribute to the fathers of the superhero. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Perspective on Siegel Schuster By William A. Sodeman Good backstory on one of the Siegel and Shuster's last attempts to create a superhero. Shuster was legally blind and had significant trouble drawing. Let go by National, the duo needed a hit to support their families. Funnyman was highly derivative - he looked like Danny Kaye, and his persona change as the creative duo tried various tweaks to attract readers. The book's author puts the creation in context, as a product of Borscht Belt comedy. Outside of NYC, readers of that era would struggle with some of the references that Siegel Shuster made. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The creators of Superman and their path By Wood Comic For the initiated Jerry Siegel and Jerry Shuster were the co-creators of Superman the most important and iconic character in the history of the medium. Unfortunately, that accomplishment did not lead to the fame and fortune that they anticipated. After a failed legal attempt to regain the rights to their creation they were dismissed by the publisher. Fortunately, for them they had offers from other publishers and immediately embarked on a new creation. This book describes their most ambitious post-Superman project.

Here is a kaleidoscopic analysis of Jewish humor as seen through Funnyman, a little-known super-heroic invention by the creators of Superman. Included are complete comic-book stories and daily and Sunday newspaper panels from Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's creative fiasco. Siegel and Shuster, two Jewish teenagers from Cleveland, sold the rights to their amazing and astonishingly lucrative comic book superhero to Detective Comics for \$130 in 1938. Not only did they lose the ownership of the Superman character, they also agreed to write and illustrate it for ten years at ten dollars per page. Their contract with the DC publishers was soon heralded as the most foolish agreement in the history of American popular culture. After toiling on workman's wages for a decade, Siegel and Shuster struggled to come up with a new superhero, one that would right their wrongs and prove that justice, fair-play, and zany craftsmanship was the true American way and would lead to ultimate victory. But when the naïve duo launched their new comic character Funnyman in 1947, it failed miserably. All the turmoil and personal disasters in Siegel and Shuster's postwar life percolated into the comic strip. This book tells the back story of the unsuccessful strip and Siegel and Shuster's ambition to have their funny Jewish superhero trump Superman. Mel Gordon is the author of *Voluptuous Panic: The Erotic World of Weimar Berlin*. Thomas Andrae is the author of *Batman and Me*.

From Publishers Weekly In 1948 Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the bitterly disenfranchised cocreators of Superman, attempted to recapture success by launching the comedic superhero "Funnyman." The comic book series, which also spawned a short-lived newspaper strip, was a flop, lasting only six issues, and is regarded as a footnote. In this volume, Gordon and Andrae attempt to make much of the fact that this footnote wears clown shoes, positioning Funnyman as "the first Jewish superhero." Gordon's lengthy disquisition on the roots of Jewish humor opens the book. Though full of fascinating facts and images, the essay is fragmentary and poorly organized, and the implicit relationship to Funnyman is often strained. Andrae is on firmer ground with his analysis of Superman and Funnyman as twin offspring of two Jewish phenomena: the strongman and the schlemiel. Unfortunately, the book reprints fewer than 40 pages from the series' six issues, alongside excerpts from the strip. One suspects some editorial embarrassment that Siegel and Shuster's stilted attempt at heroic slapstick fails to entirely live up to the claims made on its behalf. A fuller presentation would have permitted readers to better consider those points that do seem apt. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "...Funnyman's immediate historical relevance is as the character Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster created as their follow-up to Superman, but underlying that is a point of larger cultural importance. Andrae and Gordon approach the character as the most straightforward expression of Jewishness in comics at the time, and as a springboard to a wider discussion of the history of Jewish humor... Funnyman was the result of Siegel and Shuster turning a specific ethnic style into a more universal one. Funnyman might come from Jewish tradition, but in comics form he becomes any goofy guy who has to stand up against brute force of any sort. He's far more reflective of the reading audience, as well as the creators, than Superman ever was, though Clark Kent was an attempt to rectify that. The Yiddishisms might have whispered to one audience, but the 'schlemiel' is something many people can identify with..." — Publishers Weekly