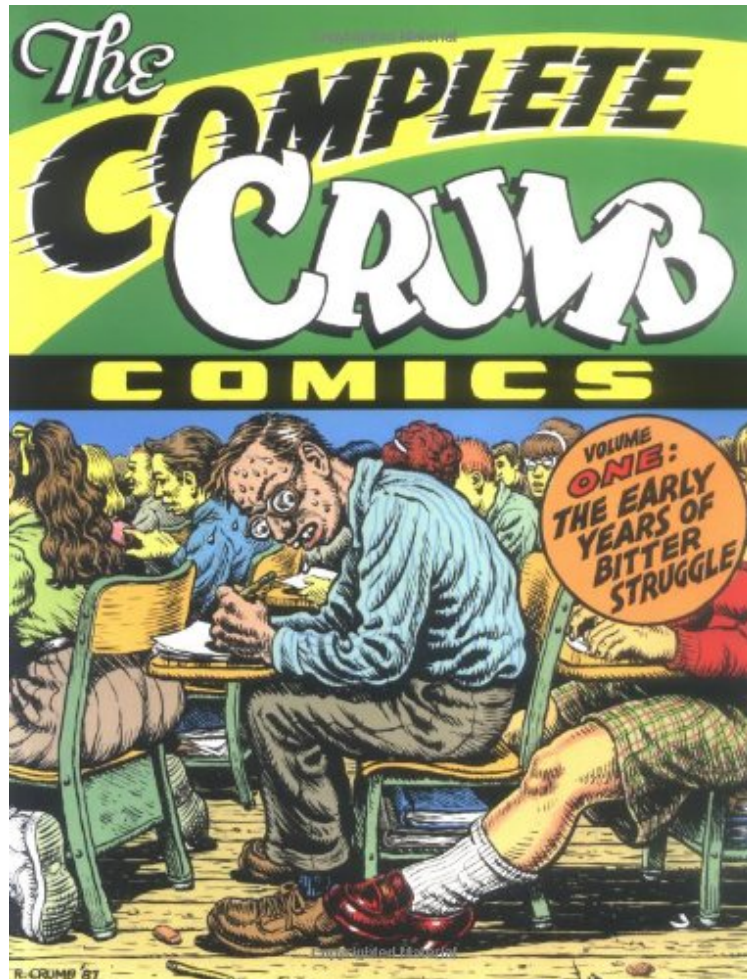


(Download pdf) The Complete Crumb Comics Vol. 1: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle

# The Complete Crumb Comics Vol. 1: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle

Robert Crumb, R. Crumb

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**Robert Crumb, R. Crumb : The Complete Crumb Comics Vol. 1: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Complete Crumb Comics Vol. 1: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. The child is father to the man By Kerry Walters This first volume of the collected works of Robert Crumb focuses on the comix he drew between 1958 and 1962. Still a teenager during this time (he was born in 1943), Crumb entered the comix world by collaborating with his older brother Charles. The two knocked out a monthly called "Foo" which they tried to hawk at their high school--there were no takers--and then desperately peddled from door-to-door, telling reluctant housewives that the mag was a "school project." But thanks to a good network system that connected aspiring comix authors, Robert (by this time Charles had lost interest and

dropped out of the comix scene) managed to touch base with like-minded folks outside of his Philadelphia/Delaware area. One of them was Marty Pahl, a student in Ohio, who encouraged Crumb and eventually married one of Crumb's sisters. The truly excellent introduction to this volume is written by Pahl. As one would expect, the art and storylines in Crumb's earliest work are uneven. But what stands out are the precocious sophistication of the work--it's hard to imagine that it's done by a teenage kid--and the fact that certain trademark Crumbian themes can be discerned even this early. The obvious differences between Robert's and Charles' talents also come through. The two brothers collaborated for a time in writing "two man comics," each drawing separate panels and challenging the other to respond and continue the story ("Treasure Island Days," pp. 21-42, is a two man comic). Charles' drawings look like they came straight out of the Disney factory that so impressed him. They're great from a technical perspective, but there's little imagination and no originality obvious to them. Robert's stuff, on the other hand, is already breaking molds. In this early material, Crumb experiments with different drawing styles--although his characteristic cross-hatching is already obvious--and his story lines, even while not always successful, almost always contain some quirkily funny panels. In the 1958 "My Encounter with Dracula," for example, the famous vampire has a portrait of Bela Lugosi on the wall of his castle. It's captioned "Father" (p. 12). In the 1960 "Robin Hood," Crumb has the Sheriff of Nottingham, a duck, trying to figure out where a fake villain's mustache ought to go on his beak (p. 63). And the entire 1958 "Khrushchev Visits U.S." (pp. 14-15) is hilarious as well as containing incredible visual detailing. Fritz the Cat makes an early appearance in the 1960 "A Christmas Tale" (pp. 91-91), predictably trying to seduce a friend's wife. But Fritz's efforts are unsuccessful, and he winds up spending Christmas alone and forlorn--two themes that reappear in several pieces in this volume. Alienation and sexual frustration are trademarks in Crumb's work, but they're heartbreakingly painful in such early material, especially in "A Sad Comic Strip," the 1962 piece that ends this volume. It, along with several other selections (pp. 95-105), has a Jules Feiffer feel, but it also clearly has Crumb's thumbprint on it. This inaugural volume into Crumb's collected works offers a fascinating insight into the early days of a true genius. Highly recommended.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I liked this book much more than I expected to like it! By JesusGeek The reviewer that said this comics artist was the child to the man hit the nail on the head. I personally found this background and art to be fascinating. Maybe I would not feel this way if I were not already a big Crumb fan (and had not also seen the Zwigoff film CRUMB). It is true that the drawings are less professional, and sometimes the pencil is rather light, etc., but I am really, really glad I got this volume. I'll said it again: I liked this volume MUCH more than I expected to like it! However, if you or the person you are buying for is unfamiliar with or new to R. Crumb comics, I'd say start with Vol. 3 or Vol. 4. Once a person becomes a big fan they are probably going to want this down the road however.

5 of 24 people found the following review helpful. before crumb found his style (this comic is boring) By J. Northit has a boring intro by some guy who isn't even robert crumb. if it was by robert crumb it would be more interesting probably. then there is a bunch of crappy comics by robert crumb that really suck. this is defenitly for the more hardcore crumb fan and not someone who is looking to check out robert crumb's work to see if they like it like I did. honestly I didn't even read the whole thing yet cuz I thought it sucked. only get this if you are already a fan of robert crumb and don't get it if you are just starting out. that is my only advice.

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.com Robert Crumb is one of America's most radical, incisive, and talented cartoonists. The Complete Crumb Comics: The Early Years of Bitter Struggle is the first of a multivolume series, and includes previously unpublished strips created from 1958 to 1962. Crumb's earliest works, some written when he was as young as 15, range from an encounter with Dracula ("I didn't try to escape Dracula, my mind was concentrated [sic] on one thing . . . I was thirsty . . . very thirsty") to Nikita Khrushchev's 1958 visit to the U.S. ("Ever watchful guards stay with Khrushchev during a refreshing hot bath."). Crumb aficionados and neophytes alike should rejoice in this classic collection of comic strips; sketchbooks; underground comics; dramatic and autobiographical strips; classic cartoon creations Fritz the Cat and Mr. Natural; and a pithy, biographical preface by Crumb's friend Marty Pahl.