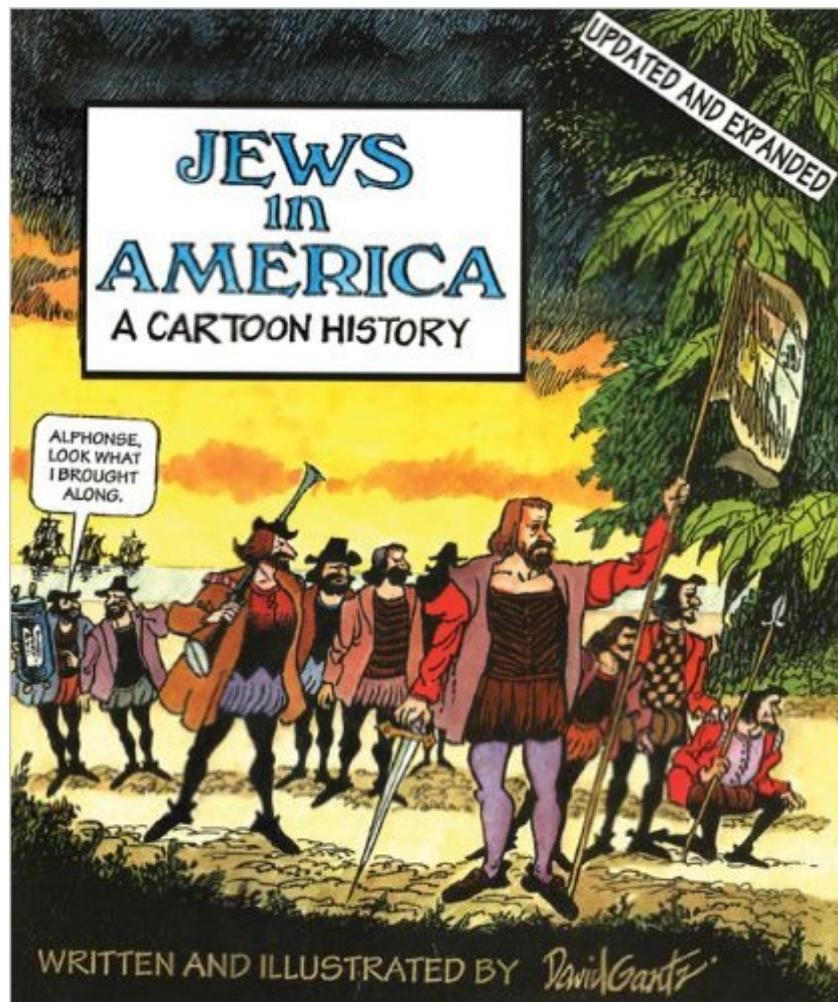


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Jews In America, New Edition: A Cartoon History



Synopsis

A unique presentation of the history of Jewish life and culture in the United States over the past 500 years Jews in America is a graphic history that uses the comic book formatâ "an artistic expression as American as jazzâ "to depict five centuries of Jewish life in this country. With its blend of humor, history, and old-fashioned sentimentality, Gantz, an artist who has spent a lifetime using paper and ink to present social commentary and issues with wry wit, illustrates the prominence of Jews in American history from the time Columbus first set foot in the New World. Jews in America will appeal to readers from ages 12 to 120.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There's a fair amount of information here, some accurate, some not so much and some that might be better called opinion. A book this size can't be encyclopedic but lots of material is covered. Unfortunately sometimes you get interested in a story, you turn the page and it's on to something different. At the end I felt like I'd read a bunch of articles or a collection of one shots done for some other publication over time since there really isn't much of a narrative thread throughout. The pages are not "cartoon" in the sense of the four panel comic strip or 6 panel page of comics & graphic novels, this is more an illustrated page with lots of accompanying text. The artwork is a bit loose, unique and mostly engaging but don't expect a lot of accuracy where you already know what a person covered here looks like. The celebrity Jews throughout the book will likely be unrecognizable to younger readers. I'm old enough to have heard of some of them but others I had to go look up on Wikipedia. Two issues I had with the author's editorial viewpoints: 1) The author briefly touches on

Japan's involvement in WWII by a caricature of Hirohito that looks like something right out of a wartime propaganda piece. Unfortunately the author fails to mention that Imperial Japan refused to engage in Hitler's plans for the Jews and actually provided transit visas for 10s of thousands of Jews out of Europe as well as temporary residence for a Yeshiva, thus saving it from destruction. Slight irony that the author uses only racist imagery which has so often been used against the Jews.² In the updated appendix, the Internet is portrayed basically as a haven for Neo Nazi goons to stir up hatred with only a minor nod given to the idea of the first amendment. Since there are so many good Judaica learning resources on the web, this seems a real shame. All that aside, this isn't a bad book but I can't honestly give it more than 3 stars.

I read or viewed or both, a chapter called 'The History of the Jews in the Graphic Novel'. It told the story of a number of significant Jewish graphic artists, Seigel and Schuster who invented 'Superman' and the inventor of the graphic - novel as genre, Will Eisner. For me it was quite startling to read something that looked to me like 'comic- books' I do not know if the pretension of making this form a high- art genre is justified or not, but I do know it is a clear, enjoyable way of telling a story, getting a message across. In this present work it is the history of the American Jewish community over the past three- hundred and fifty years.

Written and illustrated by David Gantz, Jews In America: A Cartoon History is a grandiose history, superbly produced in a black-and-white cartoon format, very carefully researched and engagingly presented so as to inform and appeal to readers of all ages. Surveying the Jewish involvement in American history ranging from the discoveries of Columbus in the 15th century, down to the United States of present day at the dawning of the 21st century, Jews In America: A Cartoon History is almost impossible to put down. This is a unique, often humorous, always accurate, and very highly recommended study for personal, family, school, and community library Judaic Studies and American History reading lists and reference collections.

A few bits of the book seem to be an opinion by the author rather than a fact. The bit about women being rightful to work among men seems to be an opinion. I guess boxer Max Baer Sr. (Jethro's father) was Jewish as this book reports though I heard Max Baer Jr. say on a talk show that he (Baer Jr.) is Catholic. Also, I debate that the Jews lost Nixon the 1960 presidential election. I thought the Italian-American Mafia did. Well, book is at least around 85% accurate.

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