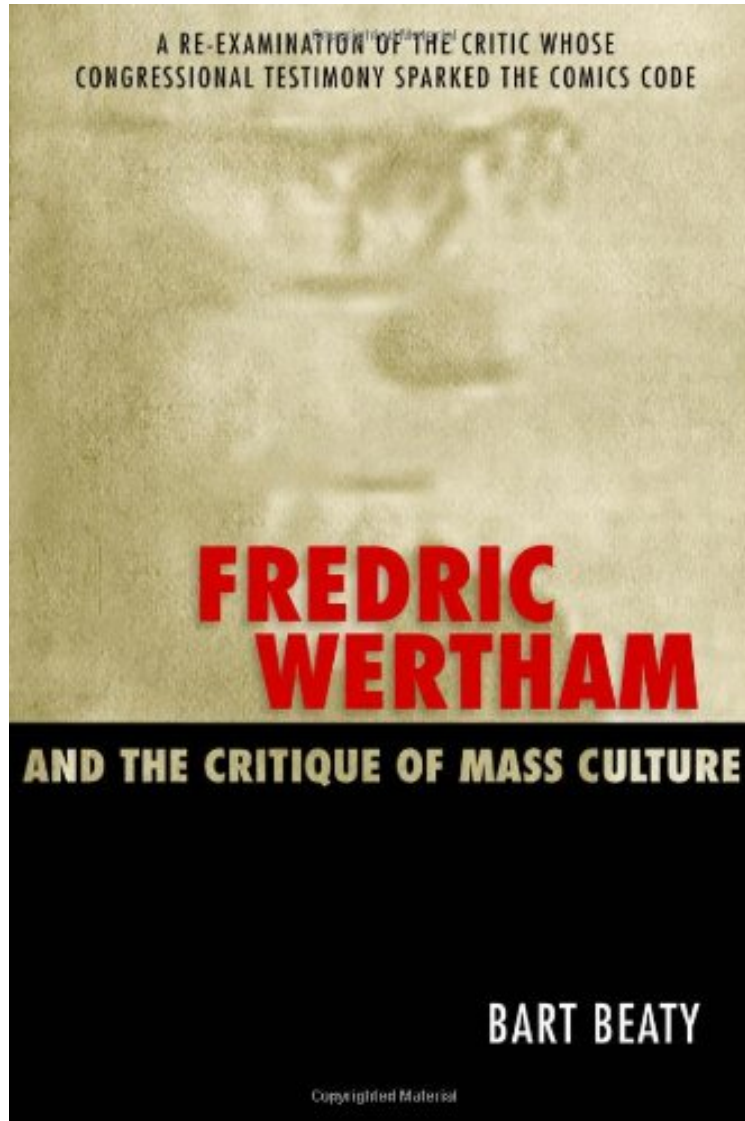


(Read now) Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture

Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture

Bart Beaty

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Bart Beaty : Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. This book by far is the best scholarship about Wertham available and it needs to be ...By Ian GordonOver the years there has been a lot of noise about Wertham and his criticism of comics. To be sure Wertham brought this on himself by hyping his concerns about the impact of comics on children in an overblown manner. Beaty who gained access to Wertham's papers before anyone else other than the family's appointed biographer (a story in itself) presents a balanced and clear headed view of Wertham's motivations and

actions. This book by far is the best scholarship about Wertham available and it needs to be read more widely by those engaging with comics and Wertham.

Too often remembered solely as the psychiatrist and cultural critic whose testimony in Senate subcommittees sparked the creation of the Comics Code, Fredric Wertham was a far more complex man. Author Bart Beaty traces the evolution of Wertham's attitudes toward popular culture and reassesses his place in the debate about pop culture's effects on youth and society. When *The Seduction of the Innocent* was published in 1954, Wertham (1895-1981) became instantly known as an authority on child psychology. Although he had published several books before *Seduction*, its sharp criticism of popular culture in general--and comic books in particular--made it a touchstone for debate about issues of censorship, child protection, and freedom of speech. *Fredric Wertham and the Critique of Mass Culture*, a fresh perspective on Wertham's career, reinterprets his intellectual legacy and challenges notions about his alleged cultural conservatism. Drawing upon Wertham's published works as well as his unpublished private papers, correspondence, and notes, Beaty reveals a man whose opinions, life, and career offer more subtlety of thought than previously assumed. In particular, the book examines Wertham's change of heart in the 1970s, when he began to claim that comics could be a positive influence in American society. The Wertham that emerges is a critic who was significantly more progressive and multifaceted than his reputation would suggest.

From the Publisher This re-examination of the critic whose Congressional testimony sparked the Comics Code * Offers a comprehensive overview of Fredric Wertham's career and writings * Uses newly available private papers to give insight into Wertham's intellectual development * Provides in-depth case studies of *The Seduction of the Innocent* Wertham's most famous book and an unpublished manuscript * Re-examines Wertham's thought by tracing his change of mind in later life From the Inside Flap A reexamination of the critic whose congressional testimony sparked the comics code About the Author Bart Beaty is associate professor of communication and culture at the University of Calgary. His work has been published in the *Comics Journal*, *International Journal of Comic Art*, *Canadian Journal of Communication*, *Essays in Canadian Writing*, and *Canadian of American Studies*.