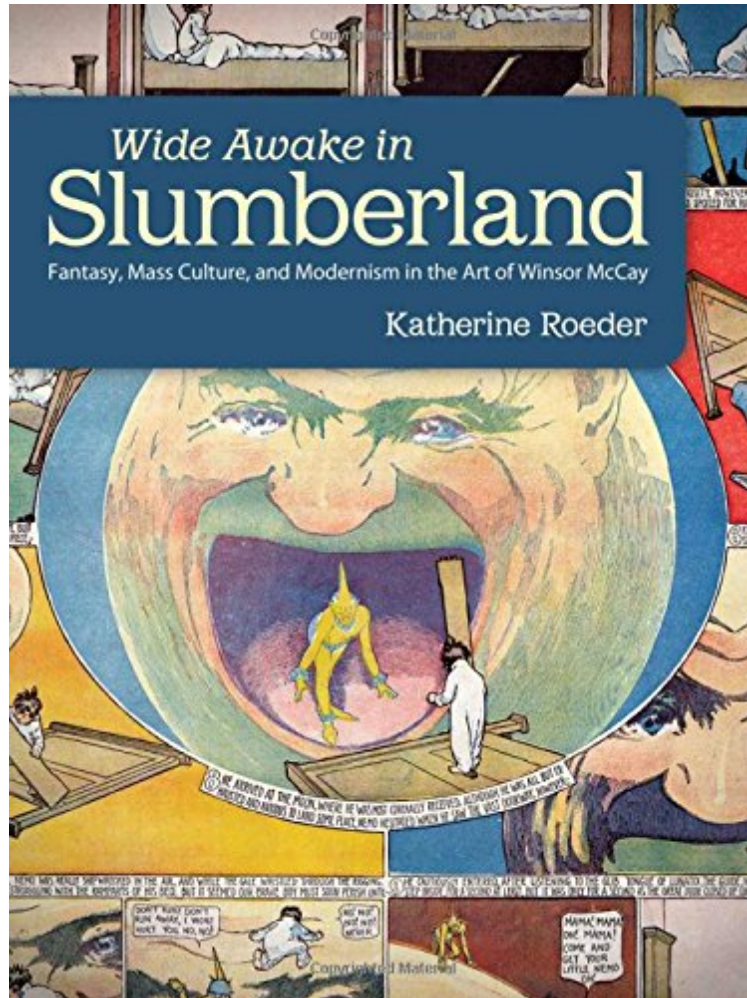


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Wide Awake in Slumberland: Fantasy, Mass Culture, and Modernism in the Art of Winsor McCay (Great Comics Artists Series)

Katherine Roeder

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Katherine Roeder : Wide Awake in Slumberland: Fantasy, Mass Culture, and Modernism in the Art of Winsor McCay (Great Comics Artists Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Wide Awake in Slumberland: Fantasy, Mass Culture, and Modernism in the Art of Winsor McCay (Great Comics Artists Series)*:

1 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Definitive work By carollt is "the" book on Winsor McCay. The author portrays him in a way that makes home familiar to all. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Art,

History, Comics, Sociology ... this has it all. By Daniel This review originally published in www.lookingforagoodbook.com. Rated 4.25 of 5 I'm a little disappointed with myself for not previously knowing who Winsor McCay was. As someone interested in art, comics, and history, I feel I've missed out on something, but am very glad to have become acquainted with him through Katherine Roeder's book, *Wide Awake in Slumberland*. Winsor McCay is considered to be the father of modern comics and his work was likely considered cutting edge and avant garde. I was extremely impressed with the highly imaginative fantasy elements that were regular aspects of his strips. And while it was his comic strips that were inspiration to some of the biggest names in comics work, this book examines McCay as an artist and his work in relation to the mores of the time and compares and contrasts the creativity of the work with a growing, adaptable, changing society. Author Katharine Roeder has done some incredible research and presents the work quite well. Though 'scholarly' and not a 'light' read, the work is very accessible and the book is peppered with McCay's strips as examples of what Roeder is discussing. This is one of those books that I intend to read again, and because I have it in digital format, I'm putting it on my 'wish' list for a hard copy. There is too much here to capture it all in one reading and McCay's work deserves attention, and I just plain want to understand this artist better. My one complaint is my digital copy. The lettering in the comic strips is small, fine and I often could not read it. I read this book primarily on a 10.1" tablet, and if I tried to enlarge a page to read the strip, it pixellated out so much that it was still impossible to read. I tried reading it on my computer screen but still experience pixillation issues with the small type face. While this prevented me from fully appreciated McCay's comic strips, it did not prevent me from understanding Roeder's work. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in art, comics, history, or sociology. Looking for a good book? It is unlikely that you are already familiar with Winsor McCay, but I assure you that this book is worth your attention and you will probably come away with an appreciation for the man, his art, and the context for the time it was popular. I received a digital copy of this book from the publisher, through Netgalley, in exchange for an honest review. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I learned something. By Elle Markov This book gives a background of the great cartoonist Winsor McCay and his famous work. This was an enjoyable and enlightening read. I will say that this book might not be enjoyable to everyone, so obtain at your own risk. You will see some of McCay's work and learn of the work of a great cartoonist. The book reads like a documentary and it feels very educational. Rating 5 out of 5 Read@Book

Cartoonist Winsor McCay (1869-1934) is rightfully celebrated for the skillful draftmanship and inventive design sense he displayed in the comic strips *Little Nemo in Slumberland* and *Dream of the Rarebit Fiend*. McCay crafted narratives of anticipation, abundance, and unfulfilled longing. This book explores McCay's interest in dream imagery in relation to the larger preoccupation with fantasy that dominated the popular culture of early twentieth-century urban America. McCay's role as a pioneer of early comics has been documented; yet, no existing study approaches him and his work from an art historical perspective, giving close readings of individual artworks while situating his output within the larger visual culture and the rise of modernism. From circus posters and vaudeville skits to department store window displays and amusement park rides, McCay found fantastical inspiration in New York City's burgeoning entertainment and retail districts. *Wide Awake in Slumberland* connects McCay's work to relevant children's literature, advertising, architecture, and motion pictures in order to demonstrate the artist's sophisticated blending and remixing of multiple forms from mass culture. Studying this interconnection in McCay's work and, by extension, the work of other early twentieth-century cartoonists, Roeder traces the web of relationships connecting fantasy, leisure, and consumption. Readings of McCay's drawings and the eighty-one black and white and color illustrations reveal a man who was both a ready participant and an incisive critic of the rising culture of fantasy and consumerism.

"In tallying up the influences on McCay, Roeder conjures a bygone world of popular entertainment: "[His] comic strips reflected the modern consumer culture of the early twentieth century by tapping into the exuberance of the circus, the appealing chaos of the amusement park, and the abundance of the department store." In this joyful book, the *Rarebit Fiend* and *Little Nemo* sleep and dream again." -Washington Post From the Back Cover "Continuing work begun in John Canemaker's landmark biography, Katherine Roeder's study is an accessible, jargon-free, and thoroughly entertaining exploration of Winsor McCay's comic strip innovations, vividly placing yesterday's cartoonist in his epoch while articulating the continuing appeal and growing relevance of McCay's work to today." -Chris Ware "A century later McCay's ingenious pictures have lost none of their fascination, and Roeder helps us see their wit and subtlety more clearly than ever. She recovers the energized world of spectacles and ideas from which they emerged, where vivid dreams and fantasies were inspired by the dangerous excitement of modern life. This book offers the same combination of sheer enjoyment and critical insight that makes McCay's work so captivating." -Michael Leja, author of *Looking Askance: Skepticism and American Art from Eakins to Duchamp* About the Author Katherine Roeder teaches courses at George Mason University. Her essays appear in *The Comics of Chris Ware: Drawing Is a Way of Thinking* (University Press of Mississippi) and *A New Literary History of America*. She is also a contributor to the *Comics Journal* and *American Art*.