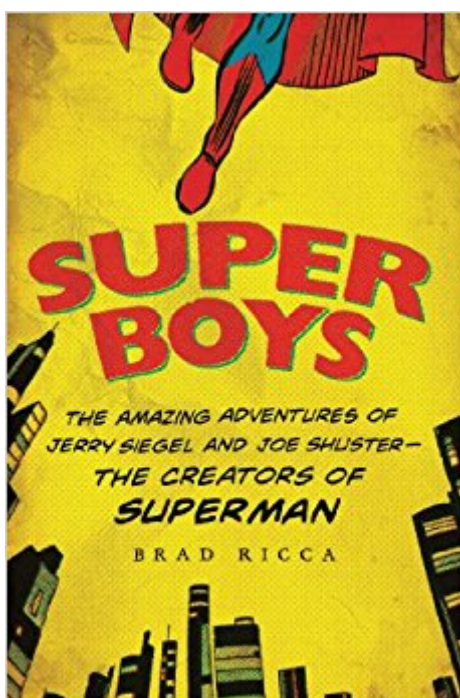


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Super Boys: The Amazing Adventures Of Jerry Siegel And Joe Shuster--the Creators Of Superman



Synopsis

In time for the 75th anniversary of the Man of Steel, comes the first comprehensive literary biography of Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel, creators of the DC Comics superhero— Superman and the inspiration for Michael Chabon's *Kavalier and Clay*. Drawing on ten years of research in the trenches of Cleveland libraries, boarded-up high schools, and secret, private collections, and a love of comic books, Brad Ricca's *Super Boys* is the first ever full biography about Superman's creators. Among scores of new discoveries, the book reveals the first stories and pictures ever published by the two, where the first Superman story really came from, the real inspiration for Lois Lane, the template for Superman's costume, and much, much more. *Super Boys* also tracks the boys' unknown, often mysterious lives after they left Superman, including Siegel's secret work during World War II and a never-before-seen work from Shuster. *Super Boys* explains, finally, what exactly happened with the infamous check for \$130 that pulled Superman away from his creators—and gave control of the character to the publisher. Ricca also uncovers the true nature of Jerry's father's death, a crime that has always remained a mystery. *Super Boys* is the story of a long friendship between boys who grew to be men and the standard that would be impossible for both of them to live up to.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review Spanning nearly a century, this is the story of a would-be sf writer and tireless self-promoter (Siegel) and his more subdued but very talented schoolmate (Shuster), who created a

superhero and, quite by accident, kick-started the immature comic-book industry and revolutionized sf. Then, thanks to one ill-considered decision made before anybody knew how popular or profitable Superman was going to be, they nearly lost all connection to the hero they'd created. Ricca reveals the true story of Superman's creation (the Man of Steel was the product of roughly equal parts imagination and clever repurposing of preexisting ideas) and goes into great detail about Siegel and Shuster's protracted, often heartbreaking legal battle to reclaim ownership of their character. After the pair's contract to produce Superman stories expired, Shuster faded into relative obscurity, but Siegel kept his hand in the comics industry, even returning to the Superman character in the late 1950s as an uncredited scripter. Ricca tells their post-Superman stories with compassion and just a hint of righteous indignation. How dare Superman's publishers, who were making millions of dollars, cast aside his creators? At the end of this account, when Siegel's and Shuster's names are finally restored to the character, four decades after his creation, readers might find themselves leaping out of their chairs and cheering. A wonderful book, as exciting as Michael Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* (2000), which was, of course, inspired by Siegel and Shuster, and as gripping as Sean Howe's excellent *Marvel Comics: The Untold Story* (2012). --David Pitt

"A wonderful book, as exciting as Michael Chabon's *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay*. Booklist, starred boxed review "An admirably thorough account of Siegel and Shuter's long struggle to get their creation published...That they came up with the first bona fide superhero, thus helping change popular culture and sowing the seeds of a multi-million dollar industry, is a remarkable accomplishment, which Ricca recounts grippingly." The New York Times Book Review "Compulsively readable... Ricca's comprehensive biography reveals the turmoil and creative genius that led to our most enduring superhero, the Man of Steel." Publishers Weekly "Thoroughly researched... speaks to the treatment of artists by corporate America and its relationship to truth and justice. Written in a breezy, accessible style, this title will have wide appeal, especially to those whose views on the American way were shaped by comics, television shows, and movies featuring the Man of Steel." Library Journal "The title *Super Boys* says it all . . . the truly amazing biography of two of the most important names in popular fiction." Stan Lee "An American icon drawn with compassion and verve. A must read for heroes everywhere." Jeph Loeb, author of *Superman For All Seasons* and writer/producer of *Smallville* "No square panels or word balloons can contain Ricca's gripping effervescence:

it's headier than a bird or a plane or a speeding bullet. — Tracy Daugherty, author of Just One Catch — “Beautiful and heartbreaking.” — Brad Meltzer, New York Times bestselling author — “As a citizen of the modern world, you need to read this book.” — Neal Adams

I read Gerard Jones' "Men of Tomorrow" and Marc Tyler Nobleman's "Boys of Steel" which covered the same ground and were very good but this book, 10 years in the making, is amazing! So much detail you wonder if the author spun around the world at super speed and turned back time in order to follow the events as they occurred. Thanks to years of being a Superman fan and reading the aforementioned books I knew enough about Jerry and Joe but I knew nothing about their early years, Jerry's wartime service, Joe's post Superman work, Jerry's Marvel work, and their days after getting the pension from DC/Warner Bros. Unless Jerry and/or Joe kept some journals of some kind that have yet to be unearthed, I think it may be safe to say that this will be the final word on their lives. If you're a Superman fan or of comic book history, this is required reading.

I grew up in Cleveland listening to my mother tell us about how she sat in study hall with Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster as they wrote the beginnings of Superman. Sharing her friendship with these two talented and creative boys was a highlight of my childhood. When I saw that the book came out, I was fascinated to hear more about this story. It was everything I expected. The most enlightening part of this saga was the detailed philosophy of Superman's character and the differences between him and other superheroes. Growing up in Cleveland and listening to stories from someone who was actually there as it all began was huge. Reading the book was like hearing the later parts of my mother's life story. Thank you Brad Ricca for your extraordinary research and story telling.

While I enjoyed this book a great deal, it was sometimes a tedious read. The author delves deeply into every possible origin of Superman. From the costume, to the individual powers, to the name of Superman and Clark Kent. He gives the reader a good idea of the history of the era as well. I read the book to get a better insight into Siegel and Shuster. There was a fair amount of conjecture into Siegel's thoughts. Once the author got to the lawsuits regarding the ownership of Superman, the book gained a lot of steam and was a better read for me. I rate the book highly, even with the tedious nature of the telling of Siegel's early days as a writer.

So much I didn't know! Excellent read.

A great, detailed biography of Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster focusing on hometown, local information and examinations of hard to find fanzine and high school documents. It is always easy to find flaws and items left out when reviewing the span of 2 lives, but Brad unearths new, original information and clears up myths(like Jerry's father dying from shock, not a gunshot, during a robbery) through thorough research. My favorite parts were the details of the creators high school lives and writings in fanzines they created and the Torch high school newspaper. He also goes into newspaper articles about super athlete Jessie Owens that Jerry probably read in the month when the idea of Superman was birthed. A little speculation but the influences and conjectures ring true. All of the background of the early science fiction and pulp magazine heyday coupled with high school alienation made the creation of Superman more authentic and clear than I have ever read before. Joe Shuster is also treated with more detail and respect than any other author has given him. After seeing rare examples of his early artwork and prize winning posters, his talent is truly honored. The guy was a terrific artist. Poor vision may have limited his evolution but Jerry was lucky to have had such a talented collaborator. Some of the stories of his later life are sad, but show that he was a man with a big heart. Nice to see the respect with which Brad treats him. In short this is a terrific read for anyone interested in comic book history or influences on Pop culture. It also is an insightful look at the American dream of success and fame and how a great idea and subsequent riches can often be snatched from the rightful creators. That unfortunately makes this a universal story.

We'll written, well researched; this is a book for fans of comics, their kids, and anyone interested by the history of the era and what hard work and perseverance can accomplish.

Good, fun book with tons of info I hadn't come across before. A good source in my undergrad thesis in the section concerning Superman.

I gave this to my 15 year old grandson for Easter.... He was very happy with my choice of a gift for him...

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