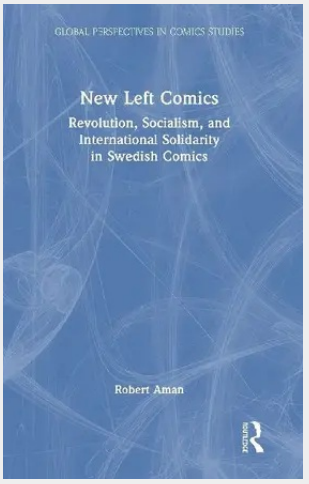
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New Left Comics

Revolution, Socialism, and International Solidarity in Swedish Comics

Why does Johan Vilde testify about Sweden's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade? Why do the young Stockholm sons, Stefan and Sacho, in Mystiska 2:an discuss class society and commercialism on their way back home from school? And why does the Phantom start a co-operative society in the jungle and act as a mouthpiece for Prime Minister Olof Palme? And in reverse: why is it almost impossible to imagine Spider-Man, Tintin, or Archie ruminating about trade union issues, gender equality on the labour market, or taking a stand against the apartheid regimes in Southern Africa? New Left Comics examines the leftist radicalisation in Sweden during the decade immediately succeeding 1968 through the lens of comic books. It looks at four of the most popular and widely read comic books and graphic novels—Johan Vilde, Tumac, Mystiska 2:an, and The Phantom—between 1968 and 1980, and uncovers the ways in which writers and artists used mainstream comics as a medium to teach and inform readers about various forms of injustices and inequality—as well as utopian futures—by adding social, political, and economic comments. This topical and engaging volume in the Global Perspectives in Comics Studies series will be of interest to researchers and students of comics studies, literary studies, visual art studies, cultural studies, media studies, and sociology. It will also be useful reading for a wider academic audience interested in discourses around world politics, politics and media, politics and popular culture, and comics traditions.

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