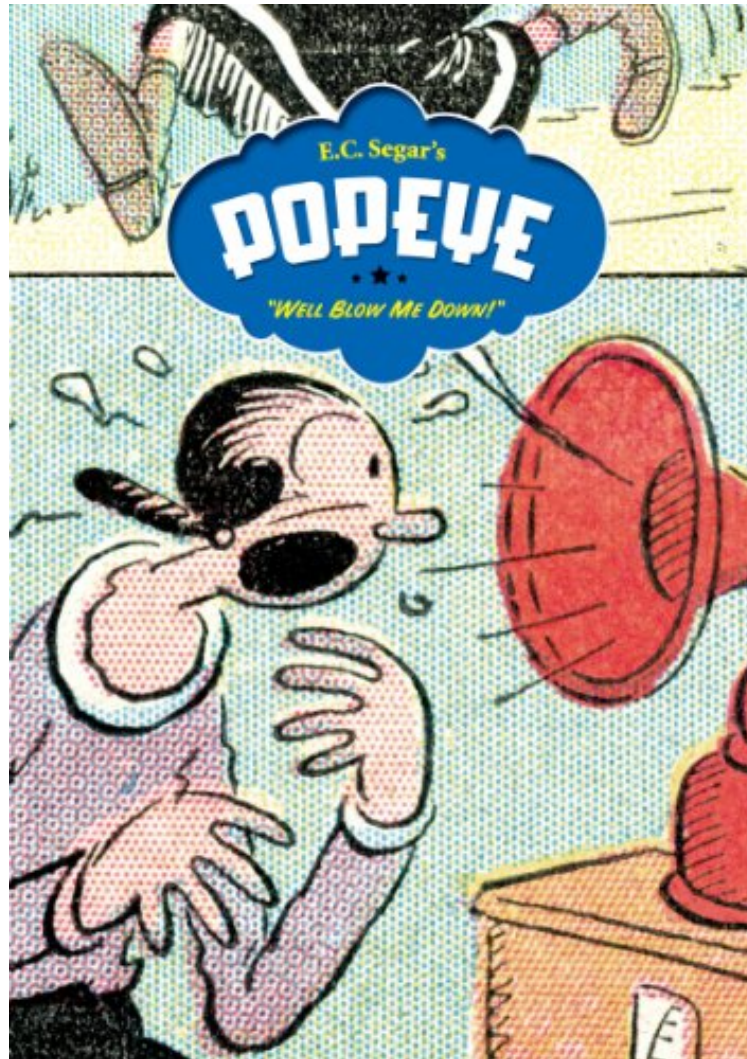


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Popeye, Vol. 2: Well Blow Me Down!

E. C. Segar

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E. C. Segar : Popeye, Vol. 2: Well Blow Me Down! before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Popeye, Vol. 2: Well Blow Me Down!:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Popeye Gets Even BetterBy David SwanVolume one featured the world's first introduction to Popeye. In this volume the character of Popeye continues to take shape. As the book progresses Castor Oyl slowly fades from the scene until Popeye and Olive are left standing as the undisputed centerpieces of Elzie Segar's Thimble Theater. Popeye's physical appearance improves significantly bringing him much closer to his traditional look particularly in his chin which looked kind of droopy in the first volume. You can sense a bit of a moral dilemma on the part of Segar. On the one hand the humor of Popeye revolves around his violent

nature and inhuman ability to take and deliver punishment. On the other hand Segar clearly wants to make Popeye a likable even admirable character. His solution seemed to be to always add at least a hint of obnoxiousness to everyone he punches so that one can make an argument that the recipient of Popeye's punishment had it coming to them. Although this means that Popeye's neighborhood (never referred to as Sweethaven as far as I've seen) is packed with men itching for a fight. Every once in awhile Popeye socks someone for no good reason like an American Indian who Popeye assumes might try and scalp him. In this case Olive Oyl acts as the voice of reason telling Popeye it's wrong to abuse American Indians. This also seems to be a way for Segar to let people know that he is aware that some of Popeye's actions are morally dubious. In this volume Popeye becomes an almost Mother Theresa type humanitarian, opening up a one-way bank using a \$25,000 the reward he received. He ends up giving out money to the poor until he's left with nothing for himself. This seems to be a continuing theme with him repeatedly using money he earns to help out the poor. Popeye has also become a hero and protector of children and in one comic Popeye tries to help a small boy learn to fight. He does this by punching out random men walking down the street. Volume 2 features some famous firsts. The first appearances of Wimpy and Roughhouse and the first time Popeye is shown powering up with spinach. It's difficult for me to express how much I loved these comics. Elzie Segar's Popeye is a surprisingly multidimensional character compared to his later incarnations. At one point, after a particularly harsh verbal barrage from Olive, Popeye slaps her to the ground. It's a shocking moment even more so because earlier in the book Popeye had financially assisted a woman who had been battered by her husband. When Olive scolds him for the slap Popeye replies, 'I yam what I yam' but in that instant with his head held low he might as well have said, 'I can't help what I yam'. Quite a difference from the cardboard hero he became as the years went by. Where else would you find a cartoon character wrestle with his own penchant for violence or later express such honest and heartfelt love for a girl? Volume one was five star material but volume two is even better. I never would have expected a comic over seventy five years old to be this edgy and legitimately funny. It's also amazing how much Elzie Segar's drawings improve over a very short period of time. There is one strip in particular that had me laughing hard. Popeye has gotten himself involved in a war and, in one of his last appearances; Castor Oyl tells Popeye that King Blozo wants to see him immediately. Suddenly a cannonball flies up and smacks Popeye in the rear sending him sailing like a rag doll through the air, through a pole, through the castle wall landing him at the king's feet. Castor says something like, "It wasn't THAT urgent". The visual of Popeye sailing through the air is absolutely hilarious and the punch line was perfect. If you're reading this review you're likely debating whether you should get this book and if you're debating let me assure you, you should. The only downside is we have to wait until fall 2008 to get the next volume. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Popeye is what he is (and that's pretty awesome) By Rosewater The first volume in Fantagraphics' reprint of all of E.C. Segar's Popeye comic strips was a transitional period. Seagar, who was in his mid-30s at the time, had been doing his Thimble Theatre comic strip for a decade at the point when the one-off peripheral character Popeye (the sailor) was introduced. It's well known that Popeye was intended to simply stay around for one storyline only to return due to the tremendous feedback from fans, but even in that one storyline we see Segar becoming infatuated with the character of Popeye, pushing all the regulars to the sideline to give the sailor man a chance to shine. The rest of that volume is a bit of a cocooned caterpillar, as the strip original focused on the Oyl family metamorphoses into a starring vehicle for Popeye. Volume 2 is where things really get good. In this book Popeye is finally firmly established as the star of the comic, and he's settled into the familiar personality and character design that we all love. Not only did Segar create a truly unique hero in Popeye, but the addition of such a great character was just the shot in the arm that the man needed because once Popeye came in the picture Segar's game was raised exponentially! The stories and images he concocts in this second volume blow away everything we saw in the first. The thrills come faster and the laughs come harder as Popeye romances Olive Oyl, battles badmen in the wild west, travels abroad to fight in a (broadly satirical) war, and steps into the ring for more slapstick-infused prize fights (the first of which were the undoubted highlights of the first volume. Why didn't the cartoons do more Popeye as a boxer shorts?). Popeye rapidly accumulates some seller supporting cast members in this volume, including King Blozo, Rough House the chef, and that miscreant Wimpy! 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Enter spinach... By ewomack Popeye the Sailor, a mainstay of modern popular mythology, blasticates his way through another delectable volume. Morality doesn't know what hit it. The one-eyed squawking proto-Superman plot device who appeared in 1929 continues to bully his way to justice with dirigible forearms and pile driver fists. So much so that, sometime in 1931 the previous alpha male, Castor Oyl, unceremoniously vanishes. Sadly, many may not notice his absence. By the Skullyville adventure, about 70 pages in, Popeye has fully usurped the strip. Duo becomes solo. Olive Oyl, Castor's sister, fills the void and brings the strip to fruition. Her battles with Popeye's personality and Popeye's battles with himself give the strip a sniper focus and a razor edge. Popeye emerges as one of the most complicated characters to ever darken newsprint. He has a heart of gold. Most of the time. The rest of the time his convoluted ideas of justice result in much pummeling of innocents. On the first page, in a very un-PC strip, he wallops an Indian because "I read all about you swabs in story books and ya ain't goner scalop me - savvy?" Later, when he whacks another one Olive reprimands him. His only excuse: "I yam what I yam." He hits cows, again to Olive's chagrin. He accidentally mauls a stranger, apologizing afterwards that "I thought ya was somebody else." He promises

repeatedly to Olive he'll give up fighting, only to use the situation to his advantage. Olive proudly kisses him, not seeing the well hidden and thoroughly trodden victims. He also spurns Olive's cooking to her abysmal heartbreak. To complicate things, Popeye gives \$500,000 to a random poor child, rescues an orphan from abusive and refuses reward money, and befriends all the neighborhood children. A heartwarming contrast to the pulverizing vigilante. But the hardest, most unforgivable, strip to stomach occurs on April 14, 1932. Here he actually smacks Olive across the face. She later proves her fortitude by saving him from vultures. She only plays the helpless woman. She's anything but (as the 13 outlaws she shoots in the shoulder and throws in the cellar can attest to). This strip has depth. And other surprises await: this volume finally eradicates the total vacuous absence of spinach from Volume One. Though Popeye already possesses Herculaen strength, spinach enables him to take on twenty men, which happens in the July 3rd, 1932 Sunday panel. Here spinach culminates as a Vitamin A coup d'tat. The twenty fall like toothpicks in a typhoon of fists. Earlier that year, a heaping pile of spinach gives Popeye the boost he needs to flatten an unflattenable roughneck. After he plummets, people rush to Roughhouse's counter demanding a helping. In the final panel, Popeye tells mothers to "tell yer youngstirs I said they should eat spinach and vegetables on account of I wants 'em to be strong an' helthy - I will be a persnal fren of all chil'ren who eats what their maw says to eat." Popeye's sensitive side once again percolates. And, best of all, Mr. Wimpy appears in full splendor as the embodiment of pathetic manipulation and gluttony. Though the depression and hunger earn him some sympathy. It works on Popeye... sometimes. Wimpy also referees all Popeye's fights (which begs the question as to why he's so poor, but there you have it). His mantra "I'll gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today!" resonates through the Sunday strips (he doesn't appear in this volume's dailies). The appearances of spinach and Wimpy makes this an unforgettable read. Try not to keep turning the beach blanket sized pages. Fans of volume one will find much to succor in this volume. E.C. Segar's brilliant amalgam of adventure, comedy, bizarre romance, melodrama, violence, and head scratching morality inexorably carries on. The tension rises, the strip focuses, and the sailor reigns undeterred (even against gorillas and robots). To claim this strip inspires philosophical reflection is no exaggeration. It's no wonder Castor Oyl quietly stepped aside and let the steamroller sailor take the wheel. Not that he could have stopped him if he tried. Like unflinching Sisyphus, nothing stops Popeye. But Bluto will appear in volume three... I guess we'll see.

The second volume collecting the entirety of Segar's original Popeye (Thimble Theatre) covers 1930-1932 and introduces Segar's second greatest character: Wimpy, the most likeable lowdown cad ever to grace the comics page. Fantagraphics's second volume (of six) of the acclaimed hit series collecting the entirety of E.C. Segar's original Popeye (a.k.a. Thimble Theatre) comic strips begins with a foreword by Beetle Bailey creator Mort Walker and continues with an introduction by noted film and cartooning critic Donald Phelps. This second volume features work from 1930 to 1932, and most notably includes the debut of Segar's second greatest character: J. Wellington Wimpy. Wimpy stands as a one-of-a-kind icon some 70 years after his creation, the most likeable lowdown cad ever to grace the comics page. Popeye Vol. 2 includes the stories: "Clint Gore" (continued from the cliffhanger last volume); "A One-Way Bank," in which Popeye opens a bank that allows withdrawals but no deposits; an extended war story featuring King Blozo that begins with "The Great Rough-House War"; and "Skullyville," which wraps up the daily strips for this volume. A 2008 Eisner Award Nominee: Best Archival Collection/Project Comic Strips; a 2008 Harvey Award Nominee: Best Domestic Reprint Project. Color and black-and-white comic strips and illustrations throughout

From Publishers Weekly Looking back to an era when comics were mainly about being funny, this lovingly produced coffee-table volume in the Complete Popeye series reprints Thimble Theatre strips from 1930 to 1932, in both color and black and white. By this time, the original leading characters of Segar's troupe had become a supporting cast for the one-eyed, cantankerous sailor with an odd sense of chivalry, a love of spinach and a massive pair of fists. In this volume, Popeye and his sweetie, the gangly spinster, Olive Oyl, subdue western bad men and settle the war between Tonsylvania and Nazilia, while enjoying their testy courtship. Readers won't find the two-page spreads and camera angles they're used to in modern comics, but a rich, colorful soap opera full of wonderful moments. They won't run into much pretentious social commentary, either, though the episode in which Olive's brother, Castor, and Popeye open a One-Way Bank to give away money to needy people may have felt especially relevant during the Great Depression. Mainly, Popeye just punches out any guy in his way, the more pompous and tough-looking the better. As he tells Olive, I yam what I yam an' tha's all I yam! Segar's wildly fertile imagination is more than enough. (Dec.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist The 1930-1932 newspaper strips in the second volume of the one-eyed sailor's adventures show Segar hitting his stride. Lengthy story lines see Popeye and his not-quite-yet sweetie Olive Oyl twice visit the Wild West to break up a band of cattle rustlers and to take charge of Olive's father's ranch, and travel to the kingdom of Nazilia to intervene in a war with rival Tonsylvania. In another sequence, Popeye uses the reward for capturing the rustlers to start a one-way bank that gives money to those in need, a concept that surely struck a chord with Depression-era readers. The concurrent 16-panel, full-color Sunday strips (each supplemented by an 8- to 12-panel gag strip featuring household inventor Sappo), exploiting slapstick rather than long stories, are equally effective. This volume's offerings include the debut of

gluttonous moocher J. Wellington Wimpy, whose laid-back selfishness and casual cowardice (Lets you and him fight) made him the ideal foil for Popeyes kindhearted bluster. Distinctly American humor, worthy of mention in the same breath with Twains and Lardners creations. --Gordon Flagg Distinctly American humor, worthy of mention in the same breath with Twain's and Lardner's creations. --Gordon Flagg"The book design is an announcement on its own, all blaring dot colors and die-cut title, as if our hero had put his fist through the cover itself they're some of the greatest comics ever drawn. --Chris Randle"Every bit as well-designed as its predecessor, but it's even more entertaining Segar was starting to realize the full extent of what his little brawler could do. "