

Wildcat Anarchist Comics

Donald Room

Foreword by Jay Kinney • Colors by Jayne Clementson

Wildcat Anarchist Comics collects the drawings of Donald Room, mostly (but by no means entirely) from the long-running "Wildcat" cartoon series that has been published in *Freedom* newspaper since 1980. Room does not just purvey jokes but makes the drawings comical in themselves, "getting the humour in the line," provoking laughter even in those who do not read the captions or speech balloons.

The chief characters in the strip are the Revolting Pussycat, a short-fused anarchist who is furious and shouty; and the Free-Range Egghead, an intellectual who would like anarchism to be respectable but sometimes appears foolish. Governments, bosses, and authoritarians are presented as buffoons, and quite often so are anarchists. This thoughtful and delightful collection includes strips from *The Skeptic* and many more, all beautifully colored for the first time by Jayne Clementson.

The book also includes a lively autobiographical introduction that discusses Room's role in the 1963 "Challenger case," in which a corrupt police officer planted a weapon on Room at a demonstration, ultimately resulting in Room's acquittal.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Donald Room, born 1928, became an anarchist in 1944 and has contributed articles to the anarchist paper *Freedom* since 1947. He studied graphic design in Bradford, England, and his cartoons have been published in the British press since 1950. His editorial cartoons have appeared in *Peace News* since 1962. His strip series "Wildcat" has appeared in *Freedom* since 1980, and "Sprite" in *The Skeptic* since 1987. In 1963, he was charged with carrying an offensive weapon, but the prosecuting officer made a mistake in planting the evidence, and in working to save his own skin Donald accidentally initiated the celebrated "Challenger case," a conspiracy among police officers to discredit nonviolent demonstrators.

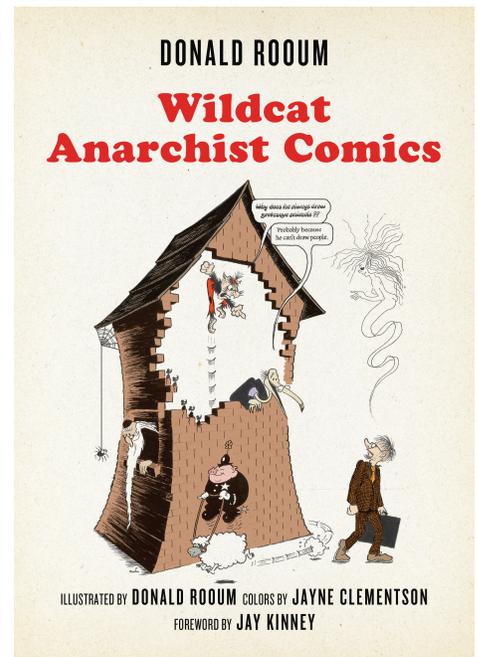
Jay Kinney was an active participant in the underground comics movement from 1968 through the '70s and into the '80s. He cofounded the romance comic satire *Young Lust*, founded and edited *Anarchy Comics*, and contributed to numerous other comics. He served as editor of *Whole Earth's CoEvolution Quarterly* before founding *Gnosis: A Journal of the Western Inner Traditions*. His other books have included *Hidden Wisdom*, *The Inner West*, and *The Masonic Myth*. He recently contributed a chapter on the underground comics movement to *Ten Years that Shook the City: San Francisco 1968-1978* (City Lights).

Jayne Clementson is an anarchist and a professional print designer in London, England.

ACCOLADES

"It is not only a work of genius, but of great originality, using outrageous knockabout comedy to convey serious ideas . . . this strangely effective technique of using utter farce to get below intellectual defences is successful in getting us to face challenges that no mere political pamphleteering could do. And we anarchists, with our eyes open, must accept that we too can be ridiculous in the passionate pursuit of our ideals."

—Tony Gibson, *Freedom*



SUBJECT CATEGORY

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