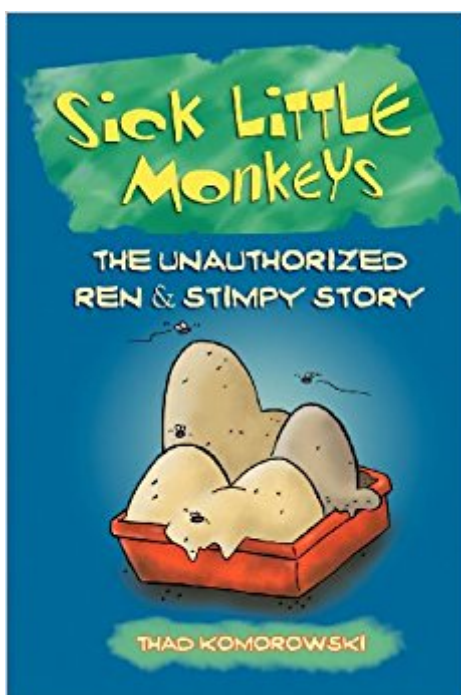


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Sick Little Monkeys: The Unauthorized Ren & Stimpy Story



Synopsis

In the 1990s animation boom, The Ren & Stimpy Show stood supreme. Through vigorous draftsmanship, charismatic voices, irreverent sight gags, crass humor, and stellar character acting, animation's most talented and disturbed artists created an entity for the Nickelodeon cable network that pulled the art form out of a 25-year rut. The world has never been quite the same since - and we're eternally grateful! Now you too can join the rollercoaster ride that is the fascinating, insane real-life story of art, money, and ego that gave birth to Ren HÅlek and Stimpson J. Cat. History Eraser Buttons need not apply. No stone has been unturned, no magic nose goblin unpicked, in this extensively detailed history of the show that defined a generation and changed an entire medium. It's everything you wanted to know about Ren & Stimpy - but were afraid to ask!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, nuff said", cartoonist Bob Camp once recalled about working on Ren and Stimpy. Having read Sick Little Monkeys, his comment makes perfect sense. Ren and Stimpy had no precedents in television history. It was a cartoon that broke all the rules of TV animation production; raising the bar in artistry and humour to heights inconceivable during the medium's `dark age'. Though supposedly intended for children, it became a huge hit to a diverse audience, enjoying the antics of a psychotic chihuahua and a moronic cat on different levels. At its best, it holds up as a staple of `90s comedy. How did such a daring and unique show come into being? Not without difficulty. Thad Komorowski's sound journalistic work presents the surprising, bizarre, hilarious and at times, tragic details of the show's conception and its demise.

Previous information available about Ren and Stimpy has often been heavily biased in favour of creator John Kricfalusi, who was fired from the show during its second season. Many regard his outing as a typical martyr story of individual artist versus corporate Hollywood, but the truth is far more complex and interesting. 60 people, including artists, producers and voice actors, were interviewed by the author. Kricfalusi was not one, hence the book's unauthorised status. However this proves to be less of a hindrance than an advantage as the grim realities of John K's egotistical behaviour and tyrannical directing style are able to surface. That said, the book also highlights Kricfalusi's distinctive talents and genius. Regardless of his personality, Ren and Stimpy simply wouldn't exist without him.

I don't know why, but I'm really drawn to stories about mercurial, self-destructive geniuses. And in the world of animation, no one fits this description quite like John Kricfalusi, the creator of Ren & Stimpy. If you've been at all aware of his online presence within the past 15 years, it's easy to view him as an unbalanced, unrealistic crackpot who lashes out at just about everything that's been created since 1950, because, for the most part, that's an entirely accurate description of the guy. But, even with the terrible behavior he's exhibited throughout decades of work in the animation industry, without him, it's likely that cartoons would be just as insipid and dreadful as those that polluted the airwaves from the '60s to the '80s. Sick Little Monkeys: The Unauthorized Ren & Stimpy Story frames the history of John K.'s cartoon in this very specific context, and the drama, agony, and battles over this landmark show proves just as interesting as the episodes themselves. It should be noted that John K. had no input in the creation of this book, and that's definitely for the best; his own narrative of the behind-the-scenes antics at Ren and Stimpy has been widely available for years, thanks to his tendency to publicize and vocalize the details about Nickelodeon firing him from his own show. And SLM provides more than enough evidence that John K. enjoys twisting the truth to fit his self-serving agenda, since the book practically overflows with plenty of stories about how much everyone hated working with him -- though these former co-workers never deny his skill and brilliance at animation. Basically, author Thad Komorowski lets John K. dig his own grave with various quotes and accounts that stand as extreme contradictions to John K.

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