

Book recommendation: Jimmy Corrigan

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William Ansley — 15 Mar 2001, 23:08

I didn't chime in during the "who's a catholic" discussion. I'm not one, but my tastes in reading are.

I know there are some other people on this list who like reading comic books, oops, I mean a graphic novels, so I feel it is appropriate to strongly recommend Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth by Chris Ware, which I have just finished reading.

I am mentioning it on this list because I feel there are certain resonances between Gene Wolfe's work and Chris Ware's. They share a certain formality of tone and Ware also makes you do your fair share (or more) of the work in figuring out what is going on in the story.

Ware's protagonist is much more dysfunctional than most of Wolfe's characters and his story is more grim tahn many. Ware's book also is not science fiction or fantasy, although it certainly draws on these genres.

I think very highly of Scott McCloud's 1993 book Understanding Comics, in fact I would go so far as to say that I think it is a work of genius. One of McCloud's themes is that comics can accomplish things that can be done in no other medium. If you want a demonstration that this is true, read Jimmy Corrigan.

William Ansley