



Pogo: The Complete Daily & Sunday Comic Strips, Vol. 1: Through the Wild Blue Wonder (v. 1)

Walt Kelly

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The first volume of the second-most requested strip collection reprint in Fantagraphics' history.

Walt Kelly started his career at age 13 in Connecticut as a cartoonist and reporter for the *Bridgeport Post*. In 1935, he moved to Los Angeles and joined the Walt Disney Studio, where he worked on classic animated films, including *Pinocchio*, *Dumbo*, and *Fantasia*. Rather than take sides in a bitter labor strike, he moved back east in 1941 and began drawing comic books.

It was during this time that Kelly created Pogo Possum. The character first appeared in *Animal Comics* as a secondary player in the “Albert the Alligator” feature. It didn’t take long until Pogo became the comic’s leading character. After WWII, Kelly became artistic director at the *New York Star*, where he turned Pogo into a daily strip. By late 1949, Pogo appeared in hundreds of newspapers. Until his death in 1973, Kelly produced a feature that has become widely cherished among casual readers and aficionados alike.

Kelly blended nonsense language, poetry, and political and social satire to make *Pogo* an essential contribution to American “intellectual” comics. As the strip progressed, it became a hilarious platform for Kelly’s scathing political views in which he skewered national bogeymen like J. Edgar Hoover, Joseph McCarthy, George Wallace, and Richard Nixon. Walt Kelly started when newspaper strips shied away from politics ? *Pogo* was ahead of its time and ahead of later strips (such as *Doonesbury* and *The Boondocks*) that tackled political issues. Our first (of 12) volume reprints approximately the first two years of *Pogo*’s dailies and (for the first time) full-color Sundays.

This first volume also introduces such enduring supporting characters as Porkypine, Churchy LaFemme, Beauregard Bugleboy, Seminole Sam, Howland Owl, and many others. And for Christmas, 1949, Kelly started his tradition of regaling his readers with his infamously and gloriously mangled Christmas carols.

Special features in this sumptuous premiere volume, which is produced with the full cooperation of Kelly’s heirs, include a biographical introduction by Kelly biographer Steve Thompson, an extensive section by comics historian R. C. Harvey explaining some of the more obscure current references of the time, a foreword by legendary columnist Jimmy Breslin, and more. 32 pages of full-color and 320 pages of black-and-white comics

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