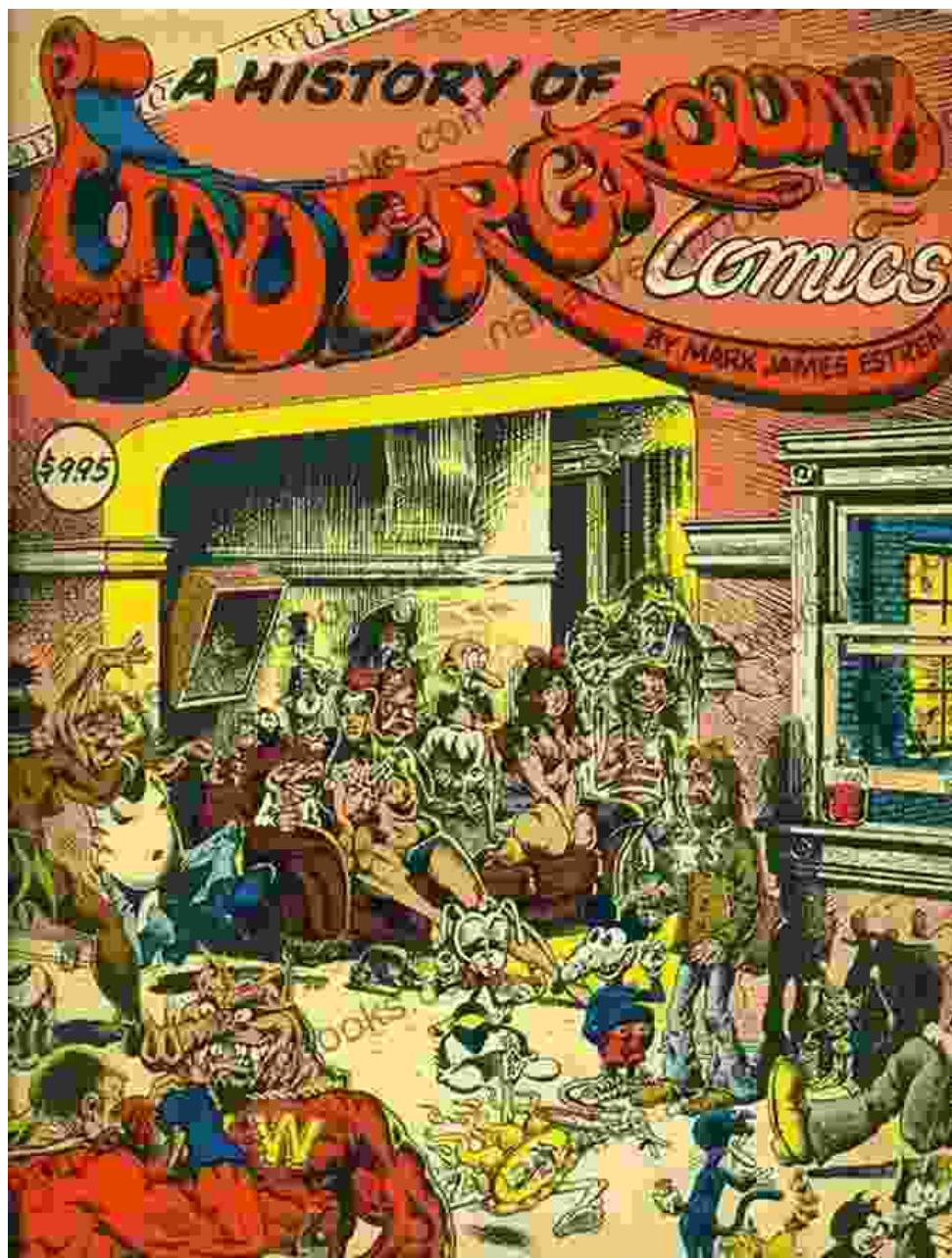


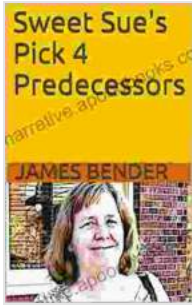
# Meet Sweet Sue Pick Predecessors: James Bender, the Unsung Hero of the Underground Comic Scene



**Sweet Sue's Pick 4 Predecessors** by James Bender

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 588 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Print length	: 210 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported



## **: The Birth of an Underground Masterpiece**

In the annals of underground comics, few names shine as brightly as Sweet Sue Pick. Created by the enigmatic artist and counterculture icon, Trina Robbins, the comic's transgressive themes and groundbreaking artwork sent shockwaves through the 1970s counterculture movement.

But what many may not know is that before Sweet Sue Pick burst onto the scene, there was another artist whose unique artistic vision laid the groundwork for its revolutionary spirit. That artist was James Bender, a enigmatic and largely overlooked figure whose contributions to the underground comic scene are worthy of recognition.

### **James Bender: A Pioneer of the Underground**

Born in 1939, James Bender was a self-taught artist who emerged from the dark and gritty streets of New York City. His early influences ranged from the gritty realism of EC Comics to the surrealist masterpieces of Salvador Dalí.

In the late 1960s, as the underground comic scene began to take shape, Bender found himself drawn to the counterculture movement's rejection of

societal norms and embrace of artistic freedom. He began creating his own underground comics, which soon caught the attention of fellow artists and publishers.

### **'James and Me': A Journey into the Psyche**

In 1968, Bender released his seminal work, 'James and Me.' This groundbreaking comic explored the depths of human consciousness and sexuality through a series of surreal and often disturbing vignettes.

Bender's artwork was unlike anything else being seen in the underground comic scene at the time. His fluid lines, grotesque imagery, and unconventional panel layouts created a unique and unsettling atmosphere that transported readers into a world of their own nightmares.

### **The Influence on Sweet Sue Pick**

While Sweet Sue Pick was undoubtedly a product of Trina Robbins's own artistic vision, it is impossible to deny the influence that James Bender's work had on her. The transgressive themes, the exploration of female sexuality, and the surrealist aesthetics that defined Sweet Sue Pick can all be traced back to Bender's groundbreaking contributions to the underground comic scene.

In fact, Robbins herself has acknowledged Bender's influence. In a 2012 interview, she stated, "James Bender was one of the most important artists in the underground comix movement. His work was groundbreaking, and it helped to pave the way for my own work on Sweet Sue Pick."

### **Lost but Not Forgotten**

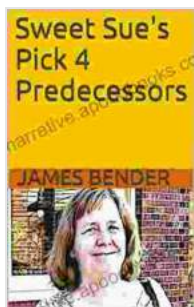
Despite his significant contributions to the underground comic scene, James Bender's work has remained largely underappreciated. This is partly due to his reclusive nature and his decision to retire from the art world in the mid-1970s.

However, in recent years, there has been a renewed interest in Bender's work. Art collectors, historians, and underground comic enthusiasts have begun to recognize the significance of his contributions, and his work is now being featured in exhibitions and retrospectives.

### **: A Hidden Gem Rediscovered**

James Bender was a visionary artist whose unique artistic style and transgressive themes helped to shape the underground comic scene and pave the way for the iconic Sweet Sue Pick. Despite his obscurity, his work remains a vital and influential contribution to the history of alternative comics.

As we continue to explore the rich tapestry of underground comics, let us not forget the forgotten masters who, like James Bender, left an enduring mark on the art form.



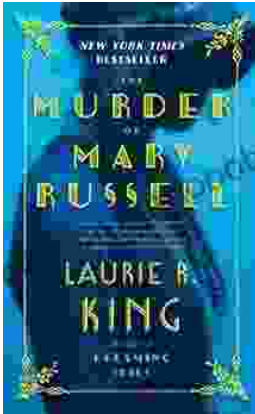
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