

## **Darn, That's The End**

In a few weeks, I'll see something I never felt that I would. I'll see the last regularly produced *Peanuts* comic strip. It'll be a Sunday strip. The dailies are already gone.

I know that Schultz is mortal, and I understand that he's just reached a point where he can't produce the comic anymore. Honestly, after drawing more than 18,000 strips, anyone would need a rest. Although I understand all that, the idea that *Peanuts* would always be there is as deeply ingrained as the idea that there would always be air.

Yes, I know someone else could take over and draw it forever, but thankfully Schultz isn't willing to do that. I saw the *Pogo* "revival" - thanks, but no thanks.

Bill Watterson wrote a very erudite and warm discussion of the contributions *Peanuts* made to the comics strip for the *L. A. Times*. If anything his discussion was too technical. As a fan of the comics medium I understood what Watterson was saying, and he said it in an accessible way, but I don't think most people think that hard about comics. Schultz's mastery of the form meant that they didn't have to. Watterson's right about *Peanuts*' lasting and continuing contribution to comics, but that's not why I'll miss it.

Schultz created a gang of characters so real that they're like my own friends. I've adopted jokes and expressions from the strip into my daily life, and more than the well-known ones like security blanket. The same way I share jokes and history with my friends, I fell like I share that rapport with the *Peanuts* gang. It's rare and beautiful to create characters with such depth, especially when you've got something like 3 square inches a day to do it. But that's not the most important reason that I'll miss it.

The most important reason that I'll miss *Peanuts* is that it is a part of my family. The gang were my friends when no one else was around. They were part of my family's dinner table conversation. They helped me through sad times and made happy ones better. Certain strips are eternally tied to certain real events in my life. Basically the only thing I didn't do with them was fight.

The idea that they won't be around any more feels like a family member moving away.

Thanks for letting the gang visit so long, Mr. Schultz.