



Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers, Vol. 1

Stan Lee (Writer) , Jack Kirby (Artist) , Don Heck (Artist)

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Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers, Vol. 1 Stan Lee (Writer) , Jack Kirby (Artist) , Don Heck (Artist)
Die-hard Avengers fans know that over the years, there have been many changes in this roster of "earth's mightiest super heroes". What remains the same are the best in thrills, fun and fantasy provided by our superheroes and supervillians engaged in the classic good vs. evil struggle.

Collects The Avengers #1-10

Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers, Vol. 1 Details

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Author : Stan Lee (Writer) , Jack Kirby (Artist) , Don Heck (Artist)

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From Reader Review Marvel Masterworks: The Avengers, Vol. 1 for online ebook

Sophia says

I really enjoyed reading the beginning adventures of the Avengers and how they worked together as a team. I loved the partnership and loyalty between the team members and how they cared more about their other team mates safety then their own. Overall, a worth while read if you want to see the origins of the famous avenging team!! (I didn't read #7-9 so my opinions are based on #1-6, #10)

David Dalton says

I love these Marvel Masterworks. The Avengers, Vol 1 contains the first 10 issues of the Avengers, From way back in 1963 I believe it was. I think as a young reader I did not actually start with #1, but probably around issue #18 or so. I am sure I have these tales before from somewhere, either an old Marvel Annual (for 25 cents) or such.

Classic stories with classic heroes and villains. Somewhat simple by today's standards, but these were the issues that started it all for the Avengers and for Captain America (into the 60's from the dark days of the 40's/50's).

Jack Kirby was everywhere for Marvel in those days, as was Stan Lee.

I read this via Comixology Unlimited and have already downloaded Vol 2 of the Avengers, with issues #11 thru #20. These stories bring back many memories of those early days at Marvel!

Dang Ole' Dan Can Dangle says

these fucking guys, man

In an attempt to recreate the success that *Fantastic Four* had Marvel thought it wise to start another "team comic," this time consisting of the pre-established heroes Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, Ant/Giant-Man, Wasp, and, eventually, straight from the golden age, Captain America. Equally uninspired are the villains in these early issues. Most of the time the Avengers are just chasing around the Hulk, who is more a villain than an actual member. Plots play out similarly, with a Tolstoyan amount of writing despite the issues being 90% action.

The main problem with these crucial but lackluster formative issues is that unlike in the *Fantastic Four* comics or in the concurrent *X-Men*, the Avengers as a team lacked chemistry between its members and lacked an interesting dynamic that holds them together. FF was a family, with interesting family drama. The X-Men were young, outcast teenagers, with an interesting heroes-in-training element. Each team relied on each of its members abilities, individuals combining into a greater whole. The Avengers are a group of the strongest heroes there are, but they lack personality and none of these issues match the quality of each hero's respective solo adventures. The Avengers rarely use teamwork, instead preferring each member to work more or less alone. It seemed like there was interest in the idea that this could be a team that doesn't get along and are so strong individually that they fail to understand the concept of teamwork (evidenced mostly

by the mistrust of the Hulk) but it never really explores that. There isn't enough time to spend with each individual character so it instead feels like you're not really seeing the potential of any character at all (the useless Wasp perhaps has the most personality but even then it's poor, amounting to little more than an obsession with Thor unmatched by even that little girl from *Adventures in Babysitting*). It's just a big blur of red, yellow, green, and blue figures attacking some equally colorful baddie with no interesting drama, characterization, or story in-between. If *Fantastic Four's* premise was "superhero family," and *X-Men's* "superhero teenagers," then *Avengers's* is "superhero superheroes."

The Avengers of course went on to get better (the Masters of Evil were perhaps the first sign of this), its roster constantly changing and proving to be one of the most significant teams in comics history. These early works are interesting to look back on, and Kirby's art here is solid as always, but nothing ever seems to quite come together, as is often the case with premieres that carry such a large and ever-growing legacy on their floppy, four-color processed shoulders.

Favorite issue(s): Captain America Joins... The Avengers! (#4)
Best Cover Art: The Coming of the Avengers! (#1)

Note: Only read issues #1-5

Hillary says

Even more ludicrous scenarios than I was expecting!

Mike (the Paladin) says

Actually I'm a bit ticked off. Not at the book, but at the reviewers who think the 1960s are to be sneered at because they were the 1960s. I was a kid (and young adult) in the 60s. When grown I raised my own kids and in the 80s I would never have let them wander in alone and select from the comic books of that era without supervision. Yes comics of the '60s were different. You don't like it...don't read it. If however you think you might enjoy the art and stories of a time when comics were a different thing then give it a try. Sure the dialog is a bit more corny, the characters don't disembowel each other, any love stories are implied more than graphically drawn... how terrible.

The nostalgia here is (for me) so thick you can cut it with a knife. I was 11 years old in 1963 and just becoming a Marvel fan. Over the years that followed Captain America became my favorite comic book hero. Yes, that Captain America, the one who made speeches about free people standing and fighting for their freedom against despots and dictators. (Many villains were surviving Nazis [Nazi super villains] or invaders from space or the future or an alternate dimension or whatever). As soon as I opened this up I was there again and I enjoyed the book immensely. (I have ordered the next 2. LOL)

These are comics from what is called the Silver Age of comics. No they're not the gritty 1980s and 1990s gore fests. No they're not the angst ridden "who are we really" 2000s. They tell direct stories where there is usually a clear right and wrong. The heroes often fall for obvious ploys by the "bad guys". Plot exposition takes place often in word balloons over the character's head as their in the midst of a fight. BUT, you also get the patented wise guy comments that Marvel pioneered. In their day these were actually on the cutting edge. Jack Kirby is still remembered as THE comic artist. He originated Cap back in WWII and was the artist that brought him back here.

So, this is comic history and it's worth holding on to and remembering, even if all don't really appreciate it. If it's what you're looking for enjoy.

Clarissa Peña says

This was my first real foray into the comic book world in text form. I was determined to read the original stories despite being urged to choose something more modern. I am so very pleased to have been able to find these books and look forward to continuing to read Marvel's Masterworks collection to the extent that I can. There was of course some dated language and context but the fact that the stories managed to keep me, a New Yorker engaged on my daily commute through the subway system while also eliciting some interesting glances from my fellow riders is a testament to the strength of the overall concept of heroes. We can all relate to the characters in some way as they are not perfect and we can all watch in awe as the team behind The Avengers develop their style and update costumes, hairstyles, colors, and as they feel their way through the tone and writing style in an effort to constantly engage their readers. This medium is always a work in progress and I appreciate that the Marvel team seemed to appreciate that even in the early days of their success.

Cassy says

This book is a book that really shows its age. And that's not to say that I didn't enjoy the book, because I did. I like the older drawing style and seeing how the team started and all of that.

However, for the first three books, Hulk was pretty much their enemy and the "bad" guy. And then he kind of disappeared from the books. It's also hard to follow sometimes, because an entire story line would happen in a different series (such as the Iron Man comics) and you wouldn't have any sort of frame of reference in this anthology. At the time, it was probably fine, because if you were buying one, you were buying them all and comics were cheaper. But, now, it's a style that doesn't work so well.

You also had the characters CONSTANTLY narrating their actions. "I'm the Mighty Thunder God, Thor and now I'm going to take my mighty hammer and twirl it so that a cyclone will engulf you and disable you." No, I'm not even making this up. It was pretty much an entire comic book full of that.

Also, I understand it was 1962, but good God. Couldn't the (only) woman in the group have SOME sort of important role? Wasp never did anything. She talked about how cute all her male counterparts were, she talked about make-up and she ran away a lot. I am so glad that female comic book characters aren't wilting flowers anymore (even if they are still incredibly over-sexualized.)

So did I like the comics? Well, yes, but I think I just have a hard time reading something that's so dated. I just don't think I have the ability to appreciate the comic like I should.

Michael Poirier says

Crucial piece of Marvel history, with inconsistent story and art. Legend has it that the first issue was slapped together and rushed out because the Daredevil series was running late--and it shows. #1-3 are shaky, but things pick up once Cap is introduced in #4. Around that time, Kirby's art improves in

leaps and bounds; Chic Stone and Dick Ayers take over inks and the results are gorgeous.

Once Kirby leaves, Don Heck takes over. Never a fan favourite, Heck's figures are clear, his storytelling flawless and each panel is a complete scene unto itself.

Stan Lee's writing falters in the last few issues, but it still makes for a fun read.

Overall, a mixed bag, but Lee & Kirby were just churning this stuff out; I'm sure they had no inkling we'd be scrutinizing it 50 years later.

Aaron says

Thor's nemesis Loki is imprisoned, but Loki's magic is unbound and he uses his power of illusion to cause the Hulk to be hunted. Rick Jones, Hulk's teenage sidekick, tries to contact the Fantastic Four for help but instead reaches Thor, Iron Man, Ant-Man, and Wasp. They all converge and eventually the misunderstanding with the Hulk is cleared up; the five heroes agree to form a tentative team, named the Avengers by Wasp. Eventually the Hulk leaves the group and Captain America makes his first Silver Age appearance, becoming a core member. The Avengers go up against notable antagonists for the first time in nearly all of these first ten issues, such as the Sub-Mariner, Kang the Conqueror, Zemo and his Masters of Evil, Wonder Man, and Immortus.

Stan Lee and Jack Kirby finally begin nailing it as they bring all of their independent heroes together into one group to fight legitimate threats that are greater than any of the individuals could deal with. Though the action-filled panels can only briefly focus on one Avenger at a time, the switching off between the various Avengers and their occasional interactions produce issues that are greater than the sum of their parts. The continued inclusion of Rick Jones as Captain America's mostly useless sidekick and the gender stereotyping of Wasp are my only gripes, though these elements are typical for their time and easy to overlook. The best examples of Silver Age Marvel fun I've read so far.

B. Rule says

The early imagination and sheer ebullience of Lee and Kirby's most fertile period is definitely on display here. The ideas come fast and furious, although they are rarely explored in any detail. That must wait for some future date. Seeing the history of these characters was great, but my enjoyment in reading this was continually dampened by the absolutely outrageous sexism that pervades this book. I realize this work is a product of its time, but cheese and crackers, it's unbelievable! Literally every line out of the Wasp's mouth is some boy-crazy garbage or remarks about her makeup/clothes. The same ridiculousness infects Sue Storm and even the Enchantress when they make appearances. This book reads like the eager and fevered imagination of teenage boys, and I guess they brought their conceptions of women with them.

Chelsea says

So, this does suffer from a case of the 1960's.

It has the lighthearted, warm, team feel that I've missed since Avengers Disassembled but older comics have a lot of things I'm less jazzed about. Too much exposition when you could show rather than tell, little use of

female characters (and when they are there, it's simply to assist), it's all very, very white.

That being said, this is one of Marvel's better older series. Sometimes I struggle to get through their old catalogue but I have no problem reading older DC comics. This one was fairly easy. I skimmed through some of Ant-Man's scenes because he's a complete asshole to Jan for no reason whatsoever. Speaking of, I don't have a problem with Jan being boycrazy but (and this is my complaint with several characters written this way) they don't let her do anything else outside of that. She's an Avengers, a founding Avenger and they just use her to create distractions so Hank can get out of jams. She doesn't get a huge slot on in panels because he's Giant Man and she's usually in Wasp mode so you can literally skip right over her. It's a bummer because, from the newer comics I've read, Janet van Dyne is a treasure and she deserves so much better.

The stuff with Cap, Iron Man and Thor is really great. The stuff with Cap and Rick was a little odd.

The art is pretty great.

So, it's a recommend because it's fairly easy to get into but don't waste time getting bogged down by the exposition heavy panels.

Wsclai says

Like the classic illustrations.

tysephine says

I've seen reviews on this volume that rate it low because of cheesy storylines and bad writing. Overall, the storyline IS cheesy and the writing is not the best, but these comics have to be taken in their intended context. These comics were written in the 1960s, an era where social issues were just coming to the fore and children were certainly not exposed to the violence we see today. Comics were a simple art and were supposed to be uncomplicated. As far as 60s comics go, The Avengers was golden.

Don't go into these with the idea that you will be reading something complex and daring. Take these comics as the light-hearted pasttime they were meant to be.

Jon(athan) Nakapalau says

'Foundational' first ten issues. Lee/Kirby continue to consolidate plots and interactions: the team finds that they must work with each other to confront some of the deadliest super villain's in the Marvel Universe. Without an existing relationship before the founding of the team (contrast with the FF) the Avengers must put aside ideological disagreements and join forces to protect the world.

Angela says

A classic begins. Its very gung ho and action orientated. I love the way the women character spend half their time flirting or swooning at the men. It makes you wonder what the Wasp saw in Giantman in the first place. Not much detailed character stories, the Hulk joins and then becomes the bad guy. Nothing really indepth on the individual issues.
