

**THE COMIC BOOK HEROES: THE FIRST  
HISTORY OF MODERN COMIC BOOKS -  
FROM THE SILVER AGE TO THE PRESENT  
BY GERARD JONES, WILL JACOBS**



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## Review

With Over 120 Illustrations!

## From the Inside Flap

*The Comic Book Heroes* begins with that first issue of the Flash, an event that would alter American pop culture forever. It's the story both of the superheroes and their all-too-human creators. From "the avuncular chipmunk," Julius Schwartz, to Todd McFarlane and his bloody Spawn, the writers, artists, and editors have cast the heroes for generations of American kids in the mold of their own personalities and inner struggles.

From the Flash's 1956 debut until his death in 1986, from the relevance movement of the '70s to the ultra-violence of the '90s, and from the kid-driven market of the past to the speculator-driven market of the present, *The Comic Book Heroes* shows how America has changed since the '50s—and makes some provocative points about what America's kids are reading today.

Completely revised and updated from the 1985 edition, *The Comic Book Heroes* is the most complete, engaging, and opinionated history of comics ever. Mind-blowingly detailed, breathtakingly informative, and fascinating reading, this is the one history of comics you absolutely must have!

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- Sales Rank: #1134917 in Books
- Published on: 1996-10-23
- Released on: 1996-10-23
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 11.00" h x 8.50" w x 1.00" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 416 pages

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

One of the few essential critical works on comics (fun too!)

By Steve Dunne (stevedun@tafe.sa.edu.au)

Along with Jim Steranko's work on golden age comics, this is the best comics history there is! Instead of the nostalgic and illustrative emphasis of Steranko's books, Jones and Jacobs bring a rigorous critical approach to comics from 1956 to the present, not shirking from questioning the reputations of some accepted "classics" while finding value in some works previously derided or ignored. Their history encompasses the business itself, the personalities involved, and the growth of comics fandom, as well as the content of the comics themselves. The text is always entertaining, sometimes hilarious, and always stimulating and informative. There are few really essential critical works on comics, this is definitely one of them, and as fun a read as the comics it discusses.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

An amazing work of scholarship about comics, 1956-1996

By A Customer

This is an unbelievably detailed and comprehensive work of scholarship about what most people would consider a subject hardly worth the effort-- American comics, 1956-1996.

I can't even \*imagine\* how Jacobs and Jones accumulated the incredible depth of information reflected here. The book takes us along with the creations (and the creators) of American comics from the Silver Age to the present day, encompassing the majors, the independents, the underground comics, and God knows what else.

Not only is it comprehensive, it's written in a lively, breezy style that makes it almost a compulsively enjoyable read.

I'd say that if you're a collector or have any kind of interest in the subject, this book is a must.

The best thing I can say: I bought it purely as a desktop reference for use when dealing with my collection, and I ended up reading it cover to cover.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Thorough, Biased, but Mainly Fun

By Ricky Hunter

Gerard Jones and Will Jacobs have written a wonderful history of comic book heroes from the silver age (late 50's) to the present (mid-90's). It is an important book in providing the background details of the industry and also in its portraits of the creators of the various comic books. For one such as myself, who grew up in the middle part of this period, it combines a delightful mix of nostalgia with a healthy mix of cynicism for the business side of this industry. I was surprised that the twists and turns within the industry could often match for interest the myriad of confusing sub-plots that were being developed within the pages of the comics themselves. I was also pleased at the examination the authors provided of the fictional heroes themselves, even including the authors, at times, strong opinions. The book felt like a dialogue late at night with another expert fan of comics with often heated disagreements but always with a lot of fun and much insight. A highly recommended read.

See all 10 customer reviews...

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