

[Mobile ebook] American Flagg! Volume 1

American Flagg! Volume 1

Howard Chaykin

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#916161 in Books Image Comics 2009-01-06Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.10 x .60 x 6.60l, .92
#File Name: 1582404186192 pages | File size: 22.Mb

Howard Chaykin : American Flagg! Volume 1 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Flagg! Volume 1:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Diversity is the Soul of EntertainmentBy R. Perry HookerI picked up this collection of the original American Flagg! comic books after reading a glowing review by none other than Michael "Literary Fiction" Chabon. My esteem for Mr. Chabon is so great that I purchased the book sight unseen; it

wasn't until it arrived at my office that I realized I'd unwittingly delved into the garish, sordid, and often ridiculous world of the (*gasp!*) graphic novel. (Actually, that's not true. I knew I was ordering a comic book. My point is that if Monsieur Chabon were to write a glowing review of the copy on the back of a shampoo bottle, I'd buy that, too. In my defense, Chabon is establishing himself as one of the literary giants of this generation; even the oft-misunderstood science fiction community gave him a tip o' the old space helmet when they awarded him BOTH the Hugo and Nebula awards for *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*.) Andy, a friend, observed that comic books have come a long way from their pulpy, pop-culture roots. This edition is as physically different from its newsprint predecessors as can be: it's hardbound, hundreds of pages long, and comes complete with a sewn-in bookmark. The only drawback is that Silly Putty no longer copies the pictures. The content, though, is first-rate. Admittedly, I had a little trouble following the nuances of the story at first. However, I think this is due to the complexity of Chaykin's impressively detailed creation, rather than some sort of narrative failure on his part. What's more, my experience with graphic novels is decidedly limited, so it wasn't until the second or third issue that I began to understand how to follow a story by both reading AND looking at the pictures. Chaykin's creation is a masterpiece of the anarchic American dystopia. In retrospect, *American Flagg!* could be characterized as "cyberpunk," though this genre didn't really exist when Chaykin penned his first panels. The story chronicles the adventures of Reuben Flagg, a one-time TV star who's been replaced by a computer-generated version of himself. Flagg is also (somewhat inexplicably) a member of the Plexus Rangers, an elite police force responsible for the security of the massive arcologies ("Plexmalls") that serve as the bastions of civilization on Earth. Not surprisingly, Chaykin's Earth of 2046 is anything but peaceful. For all of the sex, drugs, and high-tech violence in *American Flagg!*, it is still a comic book. Wacky sound effects, high-heeled boots, and a talking cat-cum-sidekick are all present. The work also possesses a charmingly irreverent innocence that's revealed most obviously in the facial expressions of its characters - though it be decidedly R-rated, *American Flagg!* manages not to take itself too seriously. Ultimately, Flagg!'s appeal is based on the strength of its story. Chaykin's business card, rather than "Comic Book Artist," should say "Storyteller." Whatever the medium, a good yarn is a good yarn, and *American Flagg!* is one of the best.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Dirk Topham
good
12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. A classic
By Carl W. Taitano
After several failed attempts to bring out this collection it has finally arrived. It is hard bounded and with quality paper and looks great. This collection covers the "Hard Times", "Southern Comfort", "State of the Union", and "Solidarity for Now" story lines which build on one another. In addition it included two wrap-up stories and a additional story from HC. The stories in this collection are great and although written in the 80's, still feels relevant. This is what Chaykin fans have been waiting for and its really here. Bring on Vol 2.

In 2031, chaos is the new world order. Worldwide nuclear and chemical conflict, environmental disasters and nationalism have driven the United States government and the corporations that own it to the relative safety of the planet Mars. The government and its parent companies, now renamed the PLEX, run things in absentia from the red planet. The only real law on Earth is enforced by the Plexus Rangers. Reuben Flagg was the star of a television series dramatizing the fictional adventures of one such Plexus Ranger. When Flagg was replaced by a hologram, he was drafted into the Plexus Rangers and assigned to protect the city of Chicago. Along with Raul, the smartest talking cat alive, and Luther Ironheart, the stupidest robot ever, and surrounded by a bevy of the most beautiful women of the 21st century, Flagg faces an uphill battle protecting and defending the American way of life...or rather, what's left of it. This first trade paperback collects *American Flagg!* issues #1-6 ("Hard Times" and "Southern Comfort").