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Max is a grave-robbing 13-year-old who gathers relics to pawn for comic book money. Macon works at the local Mallmart by day and publishes his comic book manifestos by night. Madison is a punk beauty who just might be able to fly. When Macon gets badly beaten in a fight with his boss over comic books, Macon and Madison take revenge by smashing the front of the store. They leave their calling card graffitied across the wreckage: Comic Book Liberation Army. The next day Max joins in the mayhem and soon the town has declared all-out war on comic books.

Thus begins *Teenagers From Mars*, a chaotic comics extravaganza in which three teens strive against censorship, and adults, to protect the comics they love. Originally published as a series of comics, *Teenagers from Mars* shows what happens when people who love comics enough to fight for them are forced to.

Teenagers from Mars Details

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From Reader Review Teenagers from Mars for online ebook

Tyler Kroon says

Instant fave of mine. A punk/comix story following two violent teens who meet, fall in love, and fight the cops to defend their comics. Super entertaining and pulpy, and as always, I'm a huge fan of Rob G's black and white illustrations.

Melki says

Turns out, teenagers from Mars are just like teenagers from Jupiter

and Neptune -

Spoiled, bored, and not big fans of adults OR working for a living.

I'm guessing the author meant this to be a profound statement on censorship, but it comes off as a bland exposition of teenage rebellion.

I laughed once when I saw the Mayor's taint.

(And no, I've never used that line in a review before.)

Damon says

This was... not very good. There's other stuff by Rick Spears I like a lot - Black Metal was really great, and I love Pirates of Coney Island (even though I'll probably never get to see it finished). And when I met Rick Spears @ SPX last year, he said THIS one was his "baby". And maybe that's true, but it seems like a baby he had when he was in high school who was raised by his drunk aunt and grew up to be a dull-witted crust punk who huffs natural gas right from the stove.

If I had read this when I was 13 or so, I might have loved it. Or at least liked it more. But now it just seems really... apparent. There's no surprises, and no suspense, and no interesting plot development. The characters are all totally flat and generic, as is the artwork throughout (except when it gets worse in certain places). I dunno - the best thing I can say about it is that it didn't take long to read.

Jan Philipzig says

If you asked an eleven-year-old comic-book geek full of admiration for his older punk-rock brother what a

really "cool" teenager does and looks like, he might say: "He'd be like my brother, but even cooler and tougher. He'd always get into fights, and he'd throw rocks at Walmart for not carrying my favorite comic book, and he'd defend comic books against my teacher who always says mean things about them. Oh, and he'd have a girlfriend who is cute and kicks ass, of course." If you then took this reply for the wise answer to everything and dragged it out over 250 awkwardly-paced pages, the result would be something like *Teenagers from Mars*: a poorly executed nerd revenge fantasy. And just in case this sounds "so bad it's good" - it's not, the story takes itself far too seriously for that. I'm afraid this one is just plain bad.

Marissa says

It's exceedingly rare that an indie comic at any random convention will grab me as thoroughly as *Teenagers from Mars* did. I picked up a first issue, filed it away in my "would like to follow up on" mental list, and then never did. When I offhandedly saw that it had been collected, it landed on my TBR pile, but still took me nearly a decade to track down.

I'm not disappointed by it, though after ten years of self-hype, I'm not sure what I could have possibly expected. I love the art, the story is fast paced and loose, it's a perfectly acceptable foray into the world of a misunderstood twenty-something comic fan in city full of squares. Would I recommend it to anyone? Unsure. But I'm glad I found it, and I'm glad I read it.

Printable Tire says

Just finished reading another graphic novel. Took about 2 hours to read, which seems about right. Rushed through the ending a little bit as I had to pee, but whatever. My ex-girlfriend when she was still my girlfriend lent it to me as it is her favorite book. I can see why, as the heroine shares more than an uncanny resemblance to her, at least as far as looks go anyway.

It was very funny, very touching. The artwork was amazing and the whole book was extremely cinematic, especially all the "sound effects." There was good pacing throughout, good character development- when it was cliché it basked in its clicheness, enjoyed it fully. I can understand after reading this why "tongue-in-cheek" stuff can be fun and appealing- if it also depends on likable and believable character situations. I thought I would hate the "nerd revenge fantasy/happy ending to Columbine" ending but it worked for me.

Subjectively? This book made me feel old. It captured perfectly what it's like to be a teenager in blah-burg America. I have difficulty nowadays empathizing with fanboy youth culture- as the \$\$\$ rolling in from the million comic book movies show, they are really no longer even "subversive" consumerist, and I have come (or perhaps have always hated) the trite Tromafied idea of mad fat Christian slobbos with pitchforks burning comic books. How morally superior can you get? Showing the rest of the world to be ignorant squares has always disgusted me, and this book bestows an almost Ayn Rand-like elitist saintliness to the protagonists. But is such entitlement, of moral and intellectual superiority, what being an "outsider" teenager in America is like? You bet.

And this book made me feel old. When you are young, it is easy to rebel against "society," to "stick it to the man" in whatever form he/she/it takes. There is school. There are your parents. There are your peers, etc. When you get older, it becomes harder. There is no "society" anymore. There is no "establishment/machine"

to stick it to. I grew up sticking it to the man until about halfway through college, when things became more complicated than that. If you continue trying to stick it to the man after a certain age, it becomes really sort of pathetic: witness me, who has dropped out of society. Who am I “sticking it to” but myself?

And again subjectively I can understand why my ex-girlfriend would love this book, and I projected a great deal of her into the story. Part of our troubles was she wanted to get to the fanboy inside of me, but the fanboy inside of me died a couple years ago. Which really really sucks, because we would’ve been perfect for each other in high school, or college.

Sometimes I feel it’s lame that I still think I’m at the age where I have time to worry about things like this.

Great book overall!

Have to remember not to return this one to the library!

Wendy says

Absolutely freakin' hilarious! Captures the corrupting nature of adults and the social-equality seeking of the adolescent. Stumbled on this one by chance in the school library.

kubby says

comic book liberation army!

i didn't think i'd like this book, but i was quite surprised when i couldn't put it down! and there are cheesy parts that typically i'd find pretty stupid, but here i found endearing. what i like is there is included tidbits from comics history--like the mention of the guy from florida who has been banned since his teenage days from drawing comics. no really, this was a real case and if he were to be caught drawing comics, he'd end up in jail. at any rate, this book reminded me of censorship of and within the industry and that we must fight for our freedom of speech.

Arielle says

So this was really good. It has everything I like in one place: zombies, punks, comic books, graffiti... what's not to like? The characters were awesome and the storyline, while not original, held my interest. My main problem with the book was a few sloppy things that could have easily been changed but for some reason (it felt like laziness on the part of the writer) weren't. For instance, why is almost the only black guy in the entire book shown throwing away a stash of pornos? Why are two of the villains disabled? Just so the comic can have a few pirate jokes? Why are all the girls in the comic impossibly thin with large breasts (yes, I know this is common in this genre and yes, I know it's just a comic and they can do whatever the hell they want with it. But it's hard to believe the main heroine who kicks men's asses for looking up her skirt would lie around all the time in her underwear). These are not huge issues, but they could've been dealt with in a more creative fashion if the writer had put in just a little more effort.

Rose says

I'm not sure whether I think this graphic novel is a good choice to give to an angry teenager in your life - or a terrible, terrible choice for an angry teenager that will give them terrible, terrible (inaccurate and melodramatic) ideas about anarchists and fighting The Man. Either way, I fear I'm not the target readership. Though I can't say I didn't enjoy the bit with the girl beating the bodily fluids out of a creeper looking up her skirt, or the adorable hippie comic shop owner, or the timely moments of nerd solidarity.

George says

Here's the deal:

First, it's not a sci-fi story despite being titled, "Teenagers from Mars." That in itself is a let down. "Mars" is just a small closed minded town. The story is a comic book dork's wet dream where a couple accidentally start the (I believe it's called, but can't quite remember) Comic Book Liberation Movement. Essentially it's a few kids rebelling against adults that are trying to ban and censor comics. The story was too predictable and the teens seemed a little too angst ridden for their own good. Banning comics? Come on. I guess it could and probably has happened, but that doesn't automatically make it a good foundation for a story with stereotypical characters. Plus, it's in black and white.

What's not so bad:

The smart comparison between adults in the story to mindless zombies was good. The violent action scenes were fun, they kept the story going.

Afsheen says

I picked this up on a recommendation at the Comix shop on Divisadero in SF. I leafed through the first few pages and was intrigued enough to take it home. Couldn't put it down that night. About bout a couple of kids in the town of Mars who start the "Comic Book Liberation Army", it is light on everything, including plot and dialogue, and maybe a bit cliché, but is a hell of a lot of fun to read. I could swear that the heroine is based on a girl I used to date. But as the authors aren't from California, it must be a coincidence.

Andrea Blythe says

Teenagers from Mars enters a strange meta world. In the city of Mars comic books are reviled by adults and loved by the youth, who act in direct rebellious opposition. The main character is a young comic artist, who falls for a girl and in order to impress her performs an act of vandalism, which quickly spirals out of control.

The book isn't meant to be real life and it certainly riffs off real situations (the comic book scare of the fifties

with its panicked parents and burning of books), but it exaggerates it, bringing it to the point of satire. The line between youth and adulthood is perfectly clear. Adults (with a few exceptions of drug addled hippies) are suit-wearing fascists, who blow things out of proportion and hate comics. Adults, the book declares, have something missing, and this is made clear by the fact that several of the most dangerous antagonists are literally missing body parts.

Meanwhile, the teens and the kids are the epitome of cool. They rob graves, go to parties and get painted up as zombies (both of which make me now note the theme of death and dirt as further separate from the sterile environs of the adults), and they have a devil-may-care/rebel-without-a-cause fatalistic attitude. And in a way, they are cool (sometimes I really want to have the ability to just not give a sh*t), and the kids do relate to each other in ways that are meaningful.

Similar to many superhero comic stories, and perhaps inspired by them, the clear duality of good and evil sets the plot up to follow the tropes of a hero creation myth. How do our wayward teens strike out against the fascism of the adults, how do they fight back?

Overall like both the art and the story better here than I did reading Rick Spears and Rob G.'s other book *Dead West*, though even here the quality of the drawings fluctuates and some panels seem to have been handled more lazily than others, which is rather annoying when it happens during a full page dramatic scene. I'm not really sure where I stand on *Teenagers from Mars*. I kind of want to like it, but in the end I kind of don't. So, I guess I'll just sit in the middle somewhere and see what others think.

Stanley says

After picking up the single issues during my comic collecting days in college, I recently grabbed a used copy of the trade. I saw it sitting on my pile of "to read" books this morning and thought back to how awesome it was and decided to give it another read.

This was a book that was one of the first I can remember reading that was outside of the mainstream. At the time, I was reading a bunch of Marvel, a little DC, and a smidgen of Vertigo and Dark Horse. Outside of this, though, I read very little.

When someone at the local shop suggested I check it out, I got hooked.

Reading it again, 10 years or so later, I see it through very different eyes. Where I just saw it as cool before with zombie parties and a kick ass chick now I see more of the lemming nature of society that was on display here.

With the upcoming elections and the GOP nominees racing to the lowest common denominator on their way to becoming mini-Hitlers, the actions in this book don't seem quite as far fetched as they once did, although I just may not have seen this aspect of our society at that time in my life.

If nothing else, this is a little oddity of a book that hopefully has woken a few people up over the years, caused them to think critically of their surroundings, and helped a few take action when they are being oppressed.

Bookthreat says

Read our review at <https://bookthreat.com/2017/07/21/1727/>
