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Crisis On Infinite Earths



Synopsis

Originally published in single magazine form as Crisis on infinite earths, 1-12--T.p. verso.

Book Information

Series: Crisis on Infinite Earths

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: DC Comics; Gph Rep edition (January 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1563897504

ISBN-13: 978-1563897504

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.6 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

How is it possible to review this graphic novel objectively? People seem to either love it or hate it. And both with good reason. It was a story 50 years in the making that still has major ramifications, both positive and negative, for comics today. Longtime comicbook readers feel that they need "continuity" in the stories they read. Continuity is the idea that a fictional universe, such as the one in which DC's superhero comics take place, operates with a certain logic and is internally consistent. By 1961, however, DC was having trouble with continuity. How could they explain that, twenty years ago, Batman and Robin were fighting Nazis and hanging out with FDR, while in the present they were fighting Commies and hanging out with JFK ... but Robin was still only a teenager??? Since DC's WW2 stories were too fondly remembered to just be ignored, the editors decided that they all took place in an alternate universe, dubbed Earth-2. The present-day DC heroes lived on Earth-1 and were a good deal younger than their Earth-2 counterparts, not having debuted until after WW2. Every year Earth-1's Justice League teamed up with Earth-2's Justice Society, whose Robin was an adult, whose Superman had grey hair, etc., etc. By the early 1980s, DC decided that the multiplicity of Earths-- of Supermen, Batmen, and Wonder Women--was hurting the company's ability to attract new readers. The DC universes needed to be simplified into a single universe and duplicate characters eliminated. This move has remained controversial ever since, but I maintain that it was

the right thing to do, because I only became a DC reader in the aftermath of CRISIS.

You can't talk about the DC Universe with anyone without referring to post-Crisis and pre-Crisis events. For these reasons alone, any DC Comics fan has to read the brilliant Crisis on Infinite Earths by Marv Wolfan and George Perez. It is also unique in that it chronicles the deaths of several DC characters, most of whom have since remained dead. These include the deaths of Kara (the original Supergirl) and Barry Allen (the silver age Flash, who was the main Flash character for almost 30 years). These are some of the best deaths ever written in comics, especially the Flash's horrific death against the story's antagonist the Anti-Monitor. The Crisis is a massive, ambitious project which DC undertook in 1985 to simplify the DC Multiverse and turn it into a universe. The multiverse was too confusing with different versions of the same characters living in different parallel universes. The end result was a single coherent universe in which different universes were merged into one. So it is obviously a very important story. But that's not all because it also holds its own as a story. The Monitor is on a mission to save the positive universe from being devoured by the negative universe, ruled by the Anti-monitor. To do this, he gathers key heroes and villains from both the positive and negative universes to stop this. The end result, as the advertisements of the time said, world lived, world died, but the universe was never the same again. Like, say Lord of the Rings, Crisis has a main antagonist but does not seem to have a main character. In the beginning it seems that perhaps the Monitor and his helper the Harbinger are the main characters but at some points the focus shifts on other characters.

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