

PENGUIN
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MARVEL
COLLECTION



DISCUSSION GUIDE



COVERS
THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN,
BLACK PANTHER, AND
CAPTAIN AMERICA!



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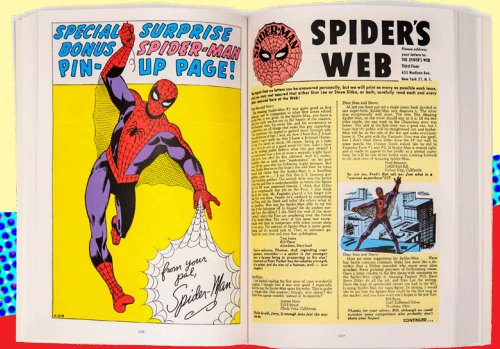
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THE PENGUIN CLASSICS MARVEL COLLECTION

presents the origin stories, seminal tales, and characters of the Marvel Universe to explore Marvel's transformative and timeless influence on an entire genre of fantasy.

For decades, Marvel has published groundbreaking visual narratives that sustain attention on multiple levels: as explorations of the relationship between power and responsibility; as metaphors for the experience of difference and otherness; as meditations on the pain of adolescence and the fluid nature of identity; as examinations of the meaning, and limits, of patriotism; as ironic juxtapositions of the cosmic and the quotidian; as resources for the understanding of political and social history; and as high watermarks in the artistic tradition of American cartooning. For the first time, these classic stories of some of the most iconic super heroes in the history of American comics are Penguin Classics.



THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THESE EDITIONS collect “Spider-Man!” from *Amazing Fantasy* #15 (1962); *The Amazing Spider-Man* #1-4, #9, #10, #13, #14, #17-19 (1963-1964); “Goodbye to Linda Brown” from *Strange Tales* #97 (1962); and “How Stan Lee and Steve Ditko Create Spider-Man!” from *The Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #1 (1964).

This anthology, available in both deluxe hardcover and iconic black spine paperback formats, contains twelve key stories from the first two years of Spider-Man’s publication history (from 1962 to 1964). These influential adventures not only transformed the super hero fantasy into an allegory for the pain of adolescence but also brought a new ethical complexity to the genre—by insisting that with great power there must also come great responsibility.

FOREWORD BY JASON REYNOLDS



A foreword by #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Jason Reynolds and scholarly introductions and apparatus by Ben Saunders offer further insight into the enduring significance of *The Amazing Spider-Man* and classic Marvel comics.



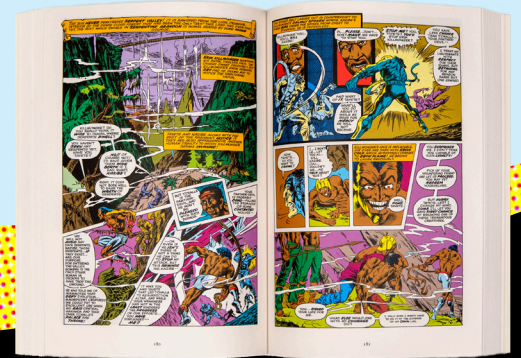
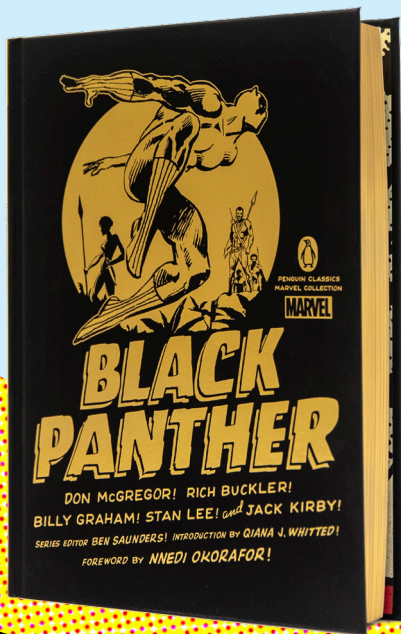
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THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BY BEN SAUNDERS



1. The most famous line in Spider-Man's origin story is that "with great power there must also come great responsibility." But is this a lesson Peter only needs to learn once—or do we see Stan Lee and Steve Ditko returning to this theme in later stories as well?
2. In what ways is Spider-Man's origin different from that of other super heroes?
3. Peter's traumatic loss of Uncle Ben is what finally forces him to pick up the mantle of the hero, but he continues to be plagued by doubts about his actions and motivations. Look for examples of Peter expressing ambivalence or rejecting the heroic role throughout this collection. What do these moments reveal about his character and personality, and about the challenge of heroism in general?
4. In what ways can we read Peter Parker's early adventures as allegories for the pain of adolescence?
5. Spider-Man is noted for his compelling rogues' gallery. Why do you think Lee and Ditko's villains have proved so lastingly popular with readers?
6. What kinds of "real-world" fears and threats do villains such as Doctor Octopus, the Sandman, the Green Goblin, and Mysterio potentially represent or emblemize?
7. Steve Ditko's artistic style is highly idiosyncratic—it's almost impossible to mistake his work for that of anyone else. Only Ditko looks like Ditko, but it can be surprisingly difficult to describe his technique. What adjectives can you come up with to capture Ditko's drawing style, his approach to figures, his use of posture, his line work, his slightly skewed perspectives, etc.? How does Ditko's style help create the world of Spider-Man?



BLACK PANTHER

THESE EDITIONS, available in both deluxe hardcover and iconic black spine paperback formats, collect *Fantastic Four* #52-53 (1966) and *Jungle Action* #6-21 (1973-1976).

The Black Panther is not just a super hero; as King T'Challa, he is also the monarch of the hidden African nation of Wakanda. Combining the strength and stealth of his namesake with a creative scientific intelligence, the Black Panther is an icon of Afro-futurist fantasy. This new anthology includes the Black Panther's 1966 origin tale and the entirety of the critically acclaimed "Panther's Rage" storyline from his 1970s solo series.

FOREWORD BY
NNEDI OKORAFOR

A foreword by multiple award-winning author Nnedi Okorafo, a scholarly introduction and apparatus by Qiana J. Whitted, and a general series introduction by Ben Saunders offer further insight into the enduring significance of Black Panther and classic Marvel comics.



BLACK PANTHER

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BY QIANA J. WHITTED



1. Readers travel to Wakanda for the first time with the Fantastic Four in 1966. How does the Black Panther's explosive interactions with each member of the Fantastic Four in these early issues reveal his motivations and strengths as a super hero?
2. Much of the astonishment and disbelief that surround the Black Panther's mysterious debut are driven by misconceptions that the Fantastic Four have about T'Challa and his home on the African continent. What are some of the ways that Stan Lee and Jack Kirby challenge these stereotypical assumptions, not only through the plot's development, but also through the story's visual representation and design?
3. T'Challa's duties as both a super hero and a king are central to how his character is defined throughout his adventures. Identify key moments that show the Black Panther weighing the responsibilities that come with each of his titles. How do the two roles compare and where are they in conflict?
4. The comics published in this volume first appeared amid the prominent resistance movements during the 1960s and 1970s for racial equality in the United States and anticolonialism in Africa. How does an understanding of that history help to convey what is at stake in the Black Panther's efforts to prevent Klaw from stealing Vibranium and to defend Wakanda from Erik Killmonger's rule?
5. The "mechanized jungle" of Wakanda that was initially developed by Lee and Kirby looks quite different several years later in the Jungle Action run by Don McGregor, Rich Buckler, Billy Graham, and others. What do the differences in the setting's details and aesthetic features suggest about the aspects of the Black Panther legend that each creative team wanted to emphasize?

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)



BLACK PANTHER

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

BY QIANA J. WHITTED
(CONTINUED)



6. In his essay from this collection's appendix, McGregor reflects on his creative decision to build a plot around a virtually all-Black cast and avoid cameo appearances by the Avengers in the 1970s story arc called "Panther's Rage." What are the benefits and drawbacks of McGregor's choices for this story? Do you agree with his strategy?
7. How would you characterize the different threats posed by the Black Panther's ensemble of adversaries, including Venomm, Lord Karnaj, King Cadaver, and Madam Slay? To what extent are his prolonged battles against alligators, dinosaurs, poisonous plants, and other nonhuman foes more than simply tests of physical endurance?
8. Describe the roles that women such as Monica Lynne, Chandra, and Malice play in the Black Panther comics. Are their ideas and actions instrumental to the story's progression? Consider, also, the ways these characters anticipate (or depart from) the women who would join the world of Wakanda in the decades to come, including T'Challa's sister, Shuri, and his royal bodyguards, the Dora Milaje warriors.
9. Compare T'Challa's experiences in Wakanda with his visit to the U.S. South in the volume's final story arc, known as "The Panther vs. the Klan." How does the Black Panther approach questions about racism, justice, and tradition through his perspective as a king and a super hero who is also a Black man?





CAPTAIN AMERICA

THESE EDITIONS, available in both deluxe hardcover and iconic black spine paperback formats, collect *Captain America Comics* #1 (1941); the Captain America stories from *Tales of Suspense* #59, #63-68, #75-81, #92-95, #110-113 (1964-1969); “Captain America . . . Commie Smasher” from *Captain America* #78 (1954).

Drawing upon multiple comic book series, this collection includes Captain America’s very first appearances from 1941 alongside key examples of his first solo stories of the 1960s, in which Steve Rogers, the newly resurrected hero of World War II, searches to find his place in a new and unfamiliar world. As the contents reveal, the transformations of this American icon thus mark parallel transformations in the nation itself.

FOREWORD BY GENE LUEN YANG



A foreword by *New York Times* bestselling author Gene Luen Yang and scholarly introductions and apparatus by Ben Saunders offer further insight into the enduring significance of Captain America and classic Marvel comics.

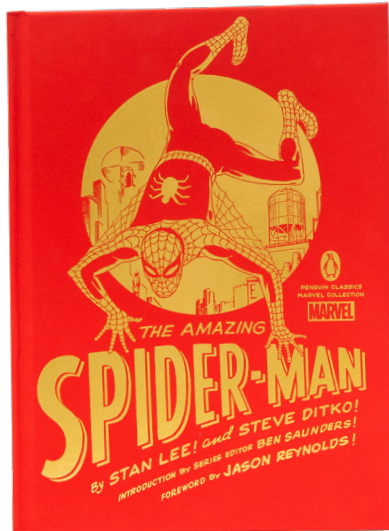
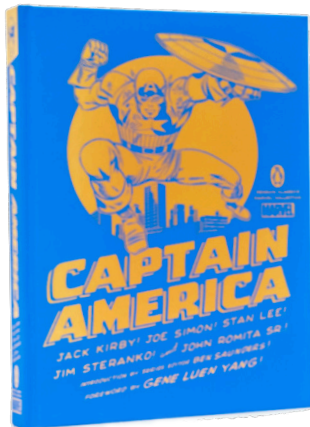
CAPTAIN AMERICA

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BY BEN SAUNDERS



1. What do you know about the variety of American attitudes toward “the war in Europe” prior to Pearl Harbor? How does that context change how we might interpret the cover and stories from Captain America Comics #1, which appeared several months before the Pearl Harbor attacks, in early 1940?
2. In what ways does Captain America’s 1940 origin story combine real-world elements with fictional tropes?
3. This volume is unusual in that it contains examples of the very first Captain America Comics from the 1940s as well as stories from the 1960s that are essentially “remakes” or reworking of those early stories. Compare and contrast one of those stories—the origin of Captain America, for example, or the first appearance of the Red Skull. How are they similar and how are they different?
4. What do the changes in these paired stories from the 1940s and 1960s suggest about changing attitudes toward World War II?
5. What do they suggest about changing approaches to the idea of the super hero or to the practice of comic book storytelling?
6. How would you describe the differences in Steve Rogers’s personality before and after his long sleep in the ice?
7. Almost all the stories in this collection were penciled by Jack Kirby. But his artistic style evolves dramatically across the pages of the book. How would you describe the differences among his early, middle, and late style?
8. The final stories in this collection are by Jim Steranko. What are some of the distinctive features of Steranko’s approach to comic book art, layout, and storytelling?





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THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

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