



## **Absolute DC: The New Frontier**

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Writer/illustrator Darwyn Cooke's critically acclaimed masterpiece *DC: The New Frontier* is celebrated in this oversized Absolute edition featuring new story pages, detailed annotations, alternate sequences and an extensive gallery of sketches, pinups, action figure art and much more!

In the 1950s, Cold War paranoia outlawed the Mystery Men of the Golden Age. Stalwarts such as Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman continued to fight for truth and justice, but as the world hurtled toward an uncertain future, it would take a new breed of hero to define the American Way. *DC: The New Frontier* takes readers on an epic journey from the end of the Golden Age of heroes to the beginnings of the legendary Justice League of America. Darwyn Cooke's most ambitious project yet features the stunning color art of Dave Stewart, an introduction by DC's President and Publisher Paul Levitz, and an afterword by Cooke.

## Absolute DC: The New Frontier Details

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**Download and Read Free Online Absolute DC: The New Frontier Darwyn Cooke (Writer, Artist) , Dave Stewart (Colourist) , Jared K. Fletcher (Letterer) , Paul Levitz (Introduction)**

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# From Reader Review Absolute DC: The New Frontier for online ebook

## Matthew Quann says

*DC: The New Frontier* was a comic that has long been on my to-read list, but for some reason always slipped out of my stack when I came around to the counter at the comic shop. The lads at the counter were surprised I hadn't read it, and with good reason. The late Darwin Cooke's miniseries is lauded as a modern retelling of the Gold to Silver Age transition that is filled to the brim with nostalgic punch. For a comic junkie like myself, it finally seemed like it was time to take the series down with an economically priced Paperback edition.

### The Art: 4.5 Stars

I wanted to open with a chat about Cooke's art. Earlier this year the comic industry mourned his sudden passing, but I was only familiar with the first volume of his *Parker* graphic novel adaptations. Luckily, I was not let down by the art of *DC: The New Frontier*.

Cooke's cartooning style harkens back to the 1950s in which this series is set. He's able to use a style that reminded me of a Disney movie brought to the comic's page, while simultaneously making his art gritty when necessary, or realistic in depiction of character's physiques. Cooke's depiction of the 1950s world is also splendid. He was just at home drawing an airforce hanger as he was a lounge, or a Kirby-esque psychedelic romp towards the book's end.

Though this isn't the pulse-pounding super heroic action romp that I expected, Cooke also has a great approach to action and conveys motion with the greatest of ease. My sole complaint: there were times where I wasn't certain which character I was looking at. Some of the talking heads in the story shared too many similarities to be easily distinguished. It's a bit of a shame since it had me scratching my head, or flipping back a few pages to grab hold of the story's early presentation of a character. This is less of a concern in the later chapters when everyone is garbed in spandex, but made the first half of the book a challenge.

### The Story 3 Stars

I was less hot on the story, but I have to say that I have immense respect for it.

There's so many superhero comics that are bogged down by continuity, or that necessitate tie-ins, that they are unable to deliver their own message, or provide a concise, self-contained story. Don't get me wrong: I love that stuff! But I also love when you can pick up one or two books and have an entire story contained within its pages. *DC: The New Frontier* is able to both be a self-contained story that pays tribute to continuity without being bogged down by it.

Following WWII, the Golden Age heroes have been outlawed as vigilantes and the government sees little need for the intervention of masked men and women. The only active heroes are Superman and Wonder Woman fighting in Korean, and Batman in Gotham (because, well, who's gonna stop Batman?). Cooke uses societal upheaval related to the Civil Rights Movement and the Korean War to provide a fertile ground for the emergence of the Silver Age heroes. It is a smart tale that is able to drive home the sense of hope and prosperity that the Silver Age heroes embodied while simultaneously reflecting on the events of a post-WWII world.

BUT THERE'S JUST TOO MUCH GOING ON.

I got the feeling that Cooke didn't know exactly the story he wanted to tell. Other than the Trinity, there aren't really any superheroes until the mid-way point. For the most part, I'm okay with that! I enjoyed the opening with the Losers, and Hal Jordan's story that provides the backbone of the entire series is well done, but there's a ton of stuff that is just so-so that makes the story feel more unsure of its identity than I had expected.

In the back matter of the book Cooke says that he much preferred drawing the real-life people than the folks in capes. A fair enough statement, but the story reflects that preference in such a way that I wondered if Cooke shouldn't have written one superhero series, and another with regular folk in the DC universe. It isn't that one is better than the other, it is just that more time is spent getting the heroes to their heroic roles than I thought was necessary.

Also, the big-bad of the entire series, other than being an interesting creature to look at, felt like absolutely every blockbuster monster movie of the past 5 years. Alien-things trying to wipe out all of humanity with requisite destruction porn is an act with which I feel over-saturated.

But I've said a lot of bad things while ignoring the good. Hal Jordan's development to Green Lantern is endearing, John Henry's story hits home, and Wonder Woman is in proper form in this comic.

### **Overall Impression**

This is a really fun comic. I may not have thought it was well-balanced and my expectations were for a sprawling super heroic epic. *DC: The New Frontier* is not that, but a book that attempts to capture a feeling, and the tone of an era of comics. In fact, had there been no heroes and just regular folk, I think I would have enjoyed this more. I'd recommend this one for the art alone, but I imagine a great many of you will enjoy the story a lot more than I did. There's a lot of cheesy parts, and a heavily populated, busy story going on, but there's also a lot to appreciate.

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### **Nicolas Bateman says**

Cooke's masterpiece is, simply put, one of the best comics I have ever read... A transcendent study of 1950's America and the relevance of its heroes.

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### **Ma'Belle says**

For some reason, I have \*never\* heard anyone talk about this epic graphic novel-style DC story by Darwyn Cooke (who died two years ago this week). Not on any lists, referenced as inspiration, nothing. I randomly found the adapted feature length animated version of it in my library's catalog while searching for DC Lego DVDs. I checked it out on a whim and was blown away by the quality. I would put it up there with Batman: Under the Hood in my Top DCAU movies list. Finding the book itself proved to be more challenging, likely

because of the luxurious printing and binding style, which means libraries have to pay more for it. After waiting for it to be shipped from some random library in rural Oklahoma that happens to own the largest Deluxe HC edition, the first thing I noticed was the extremely high quality paper and inks used. It feels good to turn the physical pages, and the way the light hits the colors from various angles strikes me as being much better than that used in most comic book trades and graphic novels.

The story itself is essentially a JLA origin story, which has been done countless times. The New Frontier is strikingly different, and ended up being one of the most riveting, best-told comic books I've read, especially within the DC universe.

Most striking is that the core JLA members serve more as supporting characters rather than being in the spotlight the whole time. In the annotations and afterword, Cooke explains that as a kid, he was never into superhero comics, but loved the war, Western, and mystery comic books. This explains why the majority of the story focuses on various obscure DC military figures who fought in the Korean War (which itself is often referred to as The Forgotten War, and is technically still going to this day, but agreements were finally made last month to work towards a resolution to the conflict).

The first 30 pages act as a prologue featuring The Losers, which Cooke explains was DC's lowest-selling, least-memorable wartime comic. There's a mist-covered, mysteriously hidden island in the center of the ocean that some G.I.s crash landed on while delivering a high-ranking former Nazi scientist to the Allies. Now a rescue team has been sent in, but they quickly get picked off by motherfucking DINOSAURS! In the afterword, Darwyn Cooke points out that it was intentional to make the first real hero in The New Frontier a Native American. I wondered about that, but find myself wishing there were much more inclusion of Native characters in superhero stories - \*especially\* every time we see Superman make a grand speech about fighting for Truth, Justice, and the American Way, and the "freedom for every man and woman to pursue their destiny." Like, come on, Supes, you don't know about the history of colonialism and genocide in America?!

I predicted that the Nazi scientist himself would be key in the plot, but that's not the case. The historical fiction elements are crucial in establishing the mood and progressing the story through various conflicts. A line from Yeats's most famous poem (The Second Coming), a children's author based on Dr. Seuss, and the mass paranoia and Red-jacketing during the McCarthy era are significant pieces in the story. Fear of communist influence in the U.S. has prompted a no-masks-allowed law akin to Marvel's Superhero Registration Act (aka The Sakovia Accords). The JSA (Justice Society of America, which predates the Justice League of America) has avoided having their identities revealed by disbanding. The only superheroes that are registered and sent out on government-sanctioned missions are Superman and Wonder Woman.

The two JLA characters that get the most page time and personal insight are Hal Jordan (obvi because he's an Air Force Top Gun type) and John Jones, which was the first human-passing alias taken on by Martian Manhunter, and is humorously inspired by detective shows on television. I've never been a big Green Lantern fan, but the character arc for Jordan becoming the first human to wield a power ring is fantastic. J'onn J'onzz has for many years been an underplayed character and, in my opinion, is fascinating, powerful, and thoughtful enough to warrant a much higher level of attention in both comics and adaptations into other media, so I was greatly pleased with his role in the book.

I'm not going to describe the plot anymore, but I highly recommend getting this book. It's an epic one, coming in at around 400 pages, with an additional hundred pages of bonus content worth going through. But as superhero stories written in chapters like this, New Frontier is much more readable than, say, Watchmen.

Speaking of Watchmen, the controversial Before Watchmen comics a few years back was one of the last major projects Darwyn Cooke was involved in before passing away. I have little interest in reading those, but now I'm eager to seek out more of the DCAU films and shows he wrote.

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### **Anthony says**

I read this a few years ago, but it was digitally on my iPad. I was happy to see a new printing of the series in the deluxe format. It reads so much better in print. When I read it on my iPad, parts of it seemed to drag a little, but in print it flows much better. I think it's cause at times it can be a little dense with everything that's going on. But it is a good book that has a great take on the 50s/60s era. There's also some cool back matter, but this might have appeared in earlier editions like the Absolute. I'm not sure if there's anything exclusive to this deluxe edition.

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### **Rocco Versaci says**

Cooke is one of my favorite comic book artists; he's got a gorgeous retro style that perfectly captures the time period depicted in this book--the 1940s & 1950s. The story covers the "changing of the guard" as heroes of the JSA made way for those of the JLA. In this sweeping adventure, however, we see them all pull together to stop a force that threatens to destroy the world (well, what else would they join forces for?). Cooke's writing is every bit as sharp as his line.

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### **Sean Gibson says**

Look, I'm a nigh-40-year-old man who reads superhero comics. (How nigh, you ask? T-minus 7 months and counting, so please get your grim reaper cakes and hilarious "over the hill" cards (with a picture of a hill) ready now.) I also have a shirt that says "Dungeon Master" that I proudly wear (even if my wife refuses to be seen in public with me when I do). So, I get that I'm particularly awesome, and that my opinion on a book like this has to be taken with a fanboy grain of salt.

But, I've been reading superhero comics for 30 years now, and one of the main reasons I keep reading them, despite the absurdity of massive crossover events that constantly reboot continuity and set fire to every single writer's attempt to do anything in the way of characterization (looking at you, Marvel, even though I love you, for inflicting this, this, and this upon us), is to have that same feeling I had when I read my very first superhero comic (that would be the first issue of the Dark Phoenix Saga, incidentally): that there exists in the world a group of goodly people who will bravely battle the forces of evil no matter the odds, and they'll do it not because they're fearless, but because they are dedicated to defending those unable to defend themselves and will do so at any cost. And, ideally, they'll do it with some clever banter and with visual panache.

It's been a long time since I've read a comic that hit that sweet spot like The New Frontier. Cinematic in scope (not surprising, given Cooke's background as an animator), pitch perfect in tone, and clever in its reinterpretation of classic DC mythos, this masterclass in sequential storytelling is everything you want in a superhero comic: deep characterization, plot twists and turns, kinetic action, and heroes that are simultaneously down to earth and larger than life. I used to hold up JLA: Year One as the gold standard for DC origin stories; I think The New Frontier is the new gold standard.

The world can seem very dark these days, and we need all the points of light we can get. This is one of those points of light. If you're a comic fan, or even if you're not, do yourself a favor and add this to your reading list. You'll thank me. Or maybe ask to borrow my Dungeon Master t-shirt. Or give you lessons in how to be awesome. Or maybe teach you how to shimmy, because nothing says "for a good time" like these A-minus cups slinging from side to side. I'm happy to do all of the above.

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## **Camilo says**

4.5

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## **Tristan says**

*"If we're talking about mainstream comics, I think there have been a lot of real tactical errors made in this century. I can't really read superhero comics anymore because they're not about superheroes. They've become so dark and violent and sexualized. I think it's a real wrong turn. I don't know how a company like Warner Bros. or Disney is able to rationalize characters raping and murdering and taking drugs and swearing and carrying on the way they do, and those same characters are on sheet sets for 5-year-olds, and pajamas and cartoons."*

**- Darwyn Cooke ( 1962-2016)**

The recently deceased Darwyn Cooke was a unique voice in the modern comics landscape. Aided by his elegant retro style he always tried to get back to a more childfriendly way of telling superhero stories while maintaining the utmost respect for those characters' origin and meaning. *DC: The New Frontier*, a charming reimagining of the founding of the Justice League in the 1950's, is everything DC should aspire to be, but hasn't been for quite a while.

Such as it is, it is the perfect refreshing tonic to combat the current obsession with the dark, "edgy", tormented superbeing.

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## **Earnest says**

The New Frontier presents a refreshing and modern take on the superhero origin story. Darwyn Cooke foregoes the obvious route of updating the old stories by having them take place in the contemporary. The superheroes live in the World War Two and Cold War era, around the same time of the Golden Age of comics and when superheroes started appearing in comics. When thinking of modern interpretations, it has the connotations of somehow becoming darker, grittier (the lasting influence of Alan Moore). What Cooke has given us instead is a story of conflict and drama but, like the superheroes that star it, colorful and full of adventure.

Each of the stories perfectly distills the human story that made superheroes a forefront in popular culture. It's not just because they are cool but rather is they represent the archetype of humanity rising above the struggle, of bridging barriers between cultures, of fighting for your beliefs against the tide, of hoping for more in your life. These and more are what the superhero represents. Though such aspect is often underrepresented in other stories where it's enough to have that twist and big showdown in the end. Of course, the separate stories of Frontier eventually intertwine into the world-in-peril big battle ending. The big ending is the logical conclusion to the meeting of the personalities in the book. The journey meanwhile is fully-formed; with a sense of completion and at the same time of more, there are struggles still and life goes on for the Justice League.

A lot of the success of the books portrayal is due to the artwork. It perfectly captures the sense of hope and light that the superheroes represent in a dark time.

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### **Bruno Carriço says**

Perhaps i don't know enough about Golden and Silver Age characters to really care about this... most of the time i felt lost trying to understand who was who. Really like Cooke's drawings but some characters (to me) looked almost the same.

Non related but related, was this the book that inspired Batman Vs Superman? Seems that some of the plot lines are similar, and it looks like Justice League new movie will also borrow from this.

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### **Jared Gillins says**

The next time DC tries to decide what new direction to head in, they should remember how awesome New Frontier was and ask Darwyn Cooke for some advice.

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### **Dan Schwent says**

An alien menace threatens the earth in the late 1950's and it'll take every hero humanity has to stop it.

**Confession time:** While I'd heard of The New Frontier, I didn't pick it up until after Darwyn Cooke's death. Now that I've read it, I wish I'd picked it up sooner.

The New Frontier is the story of the transition of the DC universe from the Justice Society era through the 1950s to the formation of the Justice League. Pretty much every DC character from pre-1960 is in it. Unlike how things originally went down, The New Frontier links characters from DC's war comics, their supernatural comics, and their super hero comics.

I knew this was going to be something different when the first few pages had The Losers fighting dinosaurs. The story is pretty much a love letter to the DC comics of the late 1950s. In addition to old favorites like the Justice League, some without their powers for most of the book, Darwyn Cooke dug up King Faraday, Slam Bradley, the Challengers of the Unknown, Adam Strange, and many others.



Rick Flag and Task Force X, aka The Suicide Squad, played a prominent part in safeguarding America once the Justice League went into retirement. I loved seeing a pre-Green Lantern Hal Jordan paling around with Rick Flagg and Ace Morgan. The early days of J'Onn J'Onnz, aka the Martian Manhunter, were really cool as well.

I thought it was great that Darwyn Cooke didn't focus on the icons like Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman, instead giving a lot of time to Hal Jordan and the Challengers of the Unknown. The Flash and Green Arrow could have had more to do but Cooke only had so much room to tell his tale.

While the story was great, I loved the art. Cooke's retro style did a good job of evoking the 1950s period it was depicting. It was Silver Age with a modern touch and quite something to behold. I'll definitely be tracking down more of his work.

I could gush about this book all day. Instead of talking about Kingdom Come with reverence, this is the DC book people should be holding on a pedestal. 4.5 out of 5 stars.

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### **Eric says**

**4 3/4 stars**

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### **Shane Perry says**

I had originally read this a few years ago as well as watching the animated film, but this new hardcover collection was too good to pass up. Darwyn Cooke does an excellent job of pulling everything from the various nooks and crannies of DC's Silver Age into an origin story that perfectly captures both the period and the superheroes involved. But the real star of this collection is Cooke's art. This just may be my favorite art for any comic I have ever read. The supplemental material in this deluxe edition provides a new story as well as giving great insight into the various characters, real people/events, and stories used to create this comic. This commentary is a great resource for those curious about the characters they didn't recognize. A must read comic for anyone who loves superheroes.

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### **Jim says**

I expected something a bit different. Maybe it's just me, but I didn't care much about what I was reading. At least 60% of this is about Hal Jordan and some other characters ( like Colonel Flag ) that I don't know and after this I don't care to know. The biggest problem was that after I got to the middle, I forced myself to go through the entire thing. I simply got tired and didn't care whatsoever about what is going to happen.

Not everything is bad though, there are some nice moments and the art is very good. I am sure that many people like it, or will like it in the future, but it just wasn't for me.

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