



Marshal Law: Fear and Loathing

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The big one destroyed San Francisco and the rebuilt city is now called San Futuro. Into this city of genetically-altered superheroes comes Marshal Law who is searching for heroes but he hasn't found any yet.

Marshal Law: Fear and Loathing Details

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Author : Pat Mills , Kevin O'Neill (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Marshal Law: Fear and Loathing for online ebook

Synchro says

Great hardcover edition containing two volumes: Fear And Loathing, Crime And Punishment.

Steven Pilling says

I like Pat Mills and i love Marshall Law.

Mills looks at Superheroes and finds them lacking.

What works is a/ you can play guess who Mills is attacking b/ you can enjoy the illsutations of Kevin O'Neill

This is like eating Haribo its not healthy but its ridiculously enjoyable

Variaciones Enrojo says

Edición española a cargo de ECC.

Rick says

Marshal Law stood out from the many nihilistic characters crowding the pages of late 80s comics. Literally an anti-hero, Law hates and even actively hunts superheroes. Set in San Futuro, a near-future version of San Francisco, *Marshal Law: Fear and Loathing* collects the first over-the-top storyline (originally published as six issues) of this scathing indictment on religion, establishment politics, war, bigotry, and hypocrisy all wrapped in the cape of super-heroics. Writer Mills, founder and longtime editor of the famed British comic anthology series *2000 A.D.*, and artist O'Neill, perhaps best known now as the co-creator (with Alan Moore) of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, deliver a unique hyper-violent, bloody reality populated with oddities such as the Jesus League of America, the Public Spirit, and Hitler Hernandez. This exploration of superheros in post-modern America belongs on the shelf beside similarly themed works as *Watchmen* and *The Dark Knight Returns*.

S. Wilson says

In hindsight, Marshal Law is what would happen if Alan Moore and Evan Dorkin has a love child and abandoned it in a dumpster. Not only do I mean that as a compliment, but that's also, in a way, what happened. Marshal Law came out in the late eighties, when comic books were reaching a larger readership

than ever that included an increasingly adult audience, yet mainstream America was still treating comic books as childish escapism, as was demonstrated by whatever the hell Tim Burton's Batman was supposed to be. Some comic book creators (such as the aforementioned Alan Moore) were eager to embrace this growing adult readership, and some did so by taking a more visceral and clinical eye to the realm of costumed superheroism.

Enter Marshal Law, a super-powered superhero hunter saddled with the job of policing rogue superheroes in a world now lousy with capes and costumes. Marshal Law is a self-hating superhero that enjoys his job, but he finds himself more involved than usual when he follows up on his suspicion that a Superman-like celebrity superhero The Public Spirit is also a serial killer/rapist calling himself the Sleepman. Behind the plot-line is a world filled with the worst of humanity transformed and magnified in the actions of its supermen, a dark and gritty reality that is perfectly rendered by Kevin O'Neill's sharp, busy, frenetic artwork.

Marshal Law was ahead of the curve when it first hit the comic stands in 1987, and while the concept of not taking comic books seriously is a bit alien with today's epic comic-book saga Hollywood franchises, it was a much needed catharsis for an adult audience looking for something with a harder edge to it. While not as philosophical or grandiose as Alan Moore's Watchmen, Martial Law: Fear and Loathing is just as important a read for those interested in exploring (or reliving) the evolution of comic books at the tale-end of the twentieth century.

Guilherme Gontijo says

Great drawing. Great narrative. It offended me at the same time amazed me. One of the most incredible comics I've ever read. Genius sutff here.

WARRANT: this is NOT for everyone. A lot of graphic (physical and moral) violence.

Thomas says

The Marshal Law books are a blast! What I love so much about this story of a cop who hunts rogue meta-humans is the genuine contempt for super heroes that Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill inject into the series. It seems like it was a huge influence on Garth Ennis' new comic, The Boys, which isn't quite as sharp.

Stephen says

3.5 stars. I really struggled between 3 and 4 stars on this one and ended up right in the middle at 3.5. My struggle was based in large part between admiration of the talent involved in the story (which was superior) and enjoyment of the story itself (which at the end of the day was "middle of the road").

The story itself, as the introduction to the work makes clear, is really a deconstruction of the super hero genre. It is not an attack on the genre itself but rather on the way heroes have been portrayed within the genre (e.g., larger than life, two dimensional, murky and convoluted backstories and no consistent continuity). The story takes place in a post apocalyptic San Francisco where law and order has broken down and roving bands of "super hero" gangs dispense vigilante judgment while a relative few are worshipped by the public as gods.

Into this world come Marshal Law, a jaded ex soldier who is now a "hero hunter" (his tag line is, "I have yet to meet one"). Marshal works for a covert agency who polices the supers. His main nemesis is the most popular hero, the Public Spirit (i.e., Superman) whose public persona is as the ultimate American hero but who Marshall believes is hiding a darker side.

The imagery of the story is superb and the intelligence of the writing is top notch (I would even say at times superior to benchmark works like Watchmen). However, the story itself (at least for me) was a bit too convoluted and didn't keep me as engaged as I would have liked. It is possible that this is the kind of story the needs to be read VERY SLOWLY in order to absorb the narrative and I may not have taken my time enough with this one.

That said, this is still a graphic novel I would recommend for fans of the genre, especially fans of works like Watchmen and Batman: The Dark Knight Returns.

Afa says

Dikatakan, protagonis cerita ini sangat membenci superhero, orang-orang yang berkeupayaan luar biasa. Kalau saya mahu orang tak pernah baca komik, untuk membenci superhero, inilah bukunya yang saya akan berikan. Agak ironi jika difikirkan untuk penulis mengejek superhero, sudah tentu beliau perlu baca dengan banyaknya komik komik superhero, supaya ceritanya terasa pedasnya. Kalau saya masih boleh tahan dengan cerita cerita ganas, tanpa plot sukar, ternyata ini bukan bukunya. Ceritanya agak teliti, tak begitu lurus, tetapi disulami dengan keganasan hampir setiap mukasurat. Permadeath. Saya suka stroke pelukis yang agak angular dan warnanya, tetapi sindiran sindirannya agak kasar dan sedikit terbelit lidah dengan rasa pahit di pengakhiran cerita.

Jibreel Chan says

Best case against vigilantism. Kurtzman is alive!

Printable Tire says

What a horrible, noxious apocalyptic world these two have created, rife with vein-popping, phallic-oozing, Christ-themed sociopathic "superheroes" originally created for work in the Nam-like Zone, and the bondage-gear, morally superior but goonish Judge Dredd knockoff Marshal Law set to rid San Futuro of its most undesirable, deranged "superhero" elements. Drink deep the putrid aroma of every saturated, over-detailed panel, and revel in the rape and destruction of superhero creeps like Sleepman and gangs with names like Gangrene, Sewer-Side, Skin Jobs, and the California Bastards. This is social and political satire at its most foul, but it expertly (albeit paradoxically charmingly amateurishly???) unfolds, even if the murder-mystery at its core is easy enough to figure out 3/4ths of the way in. As Clive Barker says in his surprisingly good introduction, "the sadistic, sexist, brutal world of Marshal Law doesn't have this reader panting with vicarious satisfaction... we close the final page disgusted and distressed... Personally, though reading Marshal Law is not precisely a pleasure, it will leave a mark on my imagination the way countless pleasures have failed to do. And from its pessimism there is no way out but up, which is, perversely perhaps, a kind of hope."

Wesley says

This book collects the six issue mini-series that was published in the late eighties by epic and was written by Pat Mills with art by Kevin O'Neill. The pair are both alumni of the British comic 2000AD and collaborated previously on the fantastic Nemesis the Warlock. Mills has written a number of other series for 2000AD including sword and sorcery epic Slaine and ABC Warriors. O'Neill is probably best known these days for his work on The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen.

Published just after Watchmen and The Dark Knight Returns, Marshal Law is a savage deconstruction of the superhero paradigm. Its bleak setting and black humour is perfectly captured by Kevin O'Neill - most panels deserve extra scrutiny for the humorous background details and random graffiti. The over the top storytelling might not appeal to all but I have always loved the amoral antics of the heroes and disproportionate response of San Futuro's finest. One of the many comics of the eighties that I wish the creators would revisit.

Christopher Grant says

Pat Mills is, was and will forever remain a genius in my mind. Marshal Law is just the tip of the iceberg as far as proof goes.

Between Mills' writing and Kevin O'Neill's outstanding artwork, Marshal Law stands heads above the rest of the superhero disembowelment movement.

J.G. Keely says

Marshal Law is a high-octane black comedy, a satire on superheroism which tackles many of the same themes as its contemporary, Moore's much-lauded 'Watchmen'. But while Moore takes a serious, realistic tack in his deconstruction, Mills' satire is much more overt and over-the-top.

Like Moore, Mills is showing how ridiculous it is to take superheroism at face value, and trying to show what people would really be like if they had superpowers: naive, amoral rockstars bent on attacking anyone who doesn't agree with them.

Mills keeps the violence of comics, as well as the twisted, overwrought sexuality, but he removes the entertainment value. He actually makes sex and violence disturbing and difficult to read--in a comic book--an achievement I find it difficult to overstate.

The book isn't easy to read, but its enjoyable because of Mills' insights on nationalism, colonialism, dystopia, war, killing, and sexual subversion. It's about Empire, about responsibility and power inequality, and Mills never shrinks back from the darkness.

He's a clever guy. The way he plays with the cliches of feminist theory versus the symbolic misogyny of comics is amusing and insightful. Likewise, his deconstruction of Superman ranks up there with Moore's 'Dr.

Manhattan', Kirkman's 'Omni-Man', Bendis' 'Supershock', or Miller's take on The Man of Steel in Dark Knight.

The art is great, too. I knew O'Neill from 'League of Extraordinary Gentlemen', but he really shines here. The series is built on a lot of little references, in-jokes, and subversions, and the minutiae really help to build and maintain the complex world.

I would definitely point to this book as a great example of doing world-building gradually, with the introduction of details that fit together to produce a whole. We don't waste time on long flashbacks or setups, and there's not much expository dialogue. Mills gets you into the story, into the action, and starts playing with ideas from issue one.

It's been said that this is a comic book for people who hate super heroes, but it shows a thoughtful fondness for the genre. In truth, the hatred is saved for what superheroes inevitably become: unchanging, mythical, overpowered, melodramatic, with incomprehensible back stories, endless retcons, and which always return to the same old familiar thing.

For me, this backlash is understandable, but then, I've never been able to get into huge, iconic, longrunning comics. I like a miniseries, something that has an end, and a character arc--and while some authors are able to maneuver a good story out of a played-out institution, most of them just keep the soap opera moving.

Marshal Law doesn't suffer from this common malady. It's well-written, thought-provoking, disturbing, and funny. It deserves to be more well-known, but its subversion isn't as easy to gloss over as 'Watchmen'. To appreciate it, you have to love what comics can be, but resent what they usually are, yet without the pretension one gets from some indy books and fandoms.

It's a love for comics precisely because they are dark, dirty, and absurd. It brings to mind a snatch of a Gaiman interview, where he intones that he's never liked the term 'Graphic Novels', because he likes comics, and he writes comics. Like him, Mills is writing somewhere between pulp and Art, which is a precarious place to be, but much more interesting than the alternatives.

My Suggested Readings in Comics

Eric says

This was published in 1987?!

Can you believe that one year after Watchmen and Batman: The Dark Knight Returns changed the world of comics forevermore Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neil predicted, lampooned, and castrated the very worse aspects and excesses of that very change they ushered in, years before those aspects and excesses became widely apparent in the early nineties!? I speak, of course, of the Dark Age of Comics, which, a few would argue, still hasn't ended.

Mills and O'Neill go beyond refusing to pull punches and instead try to beat to death (or at least cripple for life) the superhero genre and its conventions by bashing its head and balls with a metaphorical baseball bat over and over again. More fascist imagery than you can salute at! Grotesque, over-the-top musculature and disproportionate bodies before Rob Liefeld became synonymous with them! Female superheroes are

literally genetically engineered whores for the male superheroes! Our protagonist Marshal Law is a giant piss-take on Judge Dredd! And one of the most demented depictions of the Superman archetype I've seen with The Public Spirit, who is perhaps second only to *Irredeemable's* Plutonian in sheer pessimism (imagine if OJ Simpson was a literal superhero)!

All of this, plus much more (the toxic masculinity prevalent throughout superhero comics, the US intervention throughout Latin America during the Reagan years, etc.) do Mills and O'Neill have lined up in their sights in this six-issue miniseries. *Marshal Law* most likely won't be your idea of a fun read. It may just be the ugliest presentation of superheroes I've come across. Though I've tagged it as black comedy and humor, the laughs I had, more often than not, were less because I found something hilarious and more because I just needed a temporary release from the bleakness and insanity of Mills and O'Neill's fucked up vision of what the world would be like if it was littered with superheroes and antiheroes. Alan Moore summed up *Marshal Law* perfectly

"If *Watchmen* did in any way kill off the superhero - which is a dubious proposition - then *Marshal Law* has taken it further with this wonderful act of necrophilia, where it has degraded the corpse in a really amusing way. I think that's great... Pat and Kevin do it so well, with such style and with such obvious malice; that's the fun thing about *Marshal Law*. They're not just kidding, they really hate superheroes."

4 1/2 stars
