



Black Panther: Who Is The Black Panther? (Black Panther)

Reginald Hudlin , John Romita Jr. (Illustrator)

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Collects Black Panther (2005) #1-6. Deep in the heart of Africa is Wakanda, a technologically advanced civilization of great power and mystery. Its warrior-king is T'Challa, the latest in a famed family line, and the great hero known worldwide as the Black Panther. Despite the futile defeats of the past, outsiders are once more assembling to invade Wakanda and plunder its riches. Leading this brutal assault is Klaw, a deadly assassin with the blood of T'Challa's murdered father on his hands. Klaw brings with him a powerful army of super-powered mercenaries, all hell-bent on raining death and destruction on this pristine land. Even with Wakanda's might and his own superhuman skills, can the Black Panther prevail against such a massive invading force?

Black Panther: Who Is The Black Panther? (Black Panther Details

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From Reader Review Black Panther: Who Is The Black Panther? (Black Panther for online ebook)

Shannon Appelcline says

I was excited to read the v4 *Black Panther* with art by JR jr, but this volume was just a mess.

The characterization was the worst. Everett has become a character-less stooge. If those were the Panther's Beloveds (and I'm not sure, they were two warrior women who never got explained), then they lost all their character too. The Black Knight is some sort of religious zealot. And Klaw is retconned into an assassin-for-hire??

However, the focus is also quite bad. In short, the Black Panther is almost never on screen. The first issue passes by with no appearances from the Panther, and he's not much better in the later issues. Unsurprisingly, he doesn't get much characterization either.

There were a few redeeming points, like the backstory in the first couple of issues (even with the Klaw retcons) and the great art. But overall this book become more and more boring the more I read, in large part I think because you don't connect with any of the characters.

It wasn't exactly painful to read, but I was ready to put it down by the end

Artemy says

Before seeing the Black Panther movie later this month I wanted to check out some of his comics. Unfortunately, just like with Guardians of the Galaxy, it seems that there is not a single good Black Panther run in existence. Christopher Priest's stuff is incomprehensible, Ta-Nehisi Coates writes a superhero comic equivalent of a science textbook, and Reginald Hudlin's run is the silliest thing I've read since the last time I tried to read a Stan Lee comic. Even worse, it doesn't have a lot to do with T'Challa himself. It does a decent job of explaining the mythos of Wakanda and its place in the world, but its main focus is on some laughable caricatural villains and their contrived plot to kill Black Panther because of reasons, and T'Challa is just a supporting character who shows up from time to time to kick an occasional butt.

It's dreary and depressing and I keep wondering why Marvel wouldn't just hire a good comic book writer to write a Black Panther comic. I mean, think about it! Hudlin is a film writer and director, Coates is a journalist and a non-fiction writer, and Priest is... a priest, apparently. Yes, they're all famous black people, and representation is a necessary and important thing, but these people obviously don't have the chops to write good comics!

I have no doubt that the Black Panther movie will be great. After all, Marvel hired a professional director and a bunch of professional actors, as well as a whole professional movie crew to make that film. If only they could learn from that experience and hire a professional comics writer to write a comic book, wouldn't that be swell...

Terence says

Who is the Black Panther? *He's a bad mother...shut your mouth!* The Black Panther is the ceremonial title for The King of Wakandan. He's more than just The King, he's the head cleric and head of everything else. Oh and he beat Captain America one on one before.

This volume reinforced the notion I already had regarding The Black Panther, *he is an odd character and his nation is confusing*. The Wakandans are the most technologically advanced nation in the Marvel Universe and yet they still live in houses that appear quite old and out of date. They have the cure for cancer, but they dress in animal skins quite often. It's confusing. I'd expect them to all have unique and imaginative homes and clothing, but instead it's an odd contrast of people living off the land who have jets and incredible technology.

When T'Challa is on his own and not interacting with Wakanda I find him more interesting, but overall I find him somewhat bland. I imagine his film will be a difficult one for Marvel to make relevant and interesting for the masses.

Jimmy Williams says

I read all kinds of books. One thing that has been true and remains true is some of the best stories are told through comics. I have to be honest though my opinion of this collection is completely bias. Black Panther is the greatest black super hero of all time (That ain't hard to be in here but still). That was a little House Party reference because Reginald Hudlin wrote this collection and..... Nevermind

At any rate Vol. 1 introduces you to the Black Panther and also Wakanda. The art is dope and the story is cool. My one problem with this comic so far is the lack of comedy. Great comics IMO have the ability to deal with serious issues, have amazing action scenes but at the same time make you laugh by interjecting comedy.

Michelle Morrell says

A stylized story of attempted invasions of Wakanda and the \$h!t that rains down on the misguided fools that attempt it. My first Black Panther story, not my last!

Bookdragon Sean says

The Black Panther is more than your standard superhero. He stands for something that has real world value beyond that of his comic book universe. He is a strong symbol of black pride and when he first appeared on the pages of a marvel issue in the sixties he was a symbol of the world beginning to move forward, a world ready to move beyond the horrors of slavery and the cultural aftermath that followed it.

So who exactly is the Black Panther?

He is a symbol of freedom and individuality; he is a symbol of the right to rule one's self in the face of imperialism, slavery and cultural apartheid. Not everybody wants to be part of the rest of the world (with all its self-imposed problems) some people like isolation and independence. For the Panther's people this is on an international scale. He is not just a man to fight against crime and injustice within his own culture but he is also a political ideal, one that stands for cultural independence and national authority.

And all I can do is respect that. Captain America stands up for America, but do the American values really need someone to defend them in the comic book universe? They are firmly established in the real world, and they are not under threat like black identity has been. Just look at the way the Panther deals with Steve Rogers:

Not many can defeat the super soldier, and even fewer with ease. The best thing about the Panther is how advanced he is. Not technologically speaking, but ethically so. His culture isn't driven by money or greed, but peace and prosperity through natural human development. The Panther doesn't have any super powers; he is just a highly trained and skilful warrior, one ready to pass down the mantel to the next generation of warriors. It's all for the purpose of defending of defending their cultural identity against those that would superimpose their ways onto it. The Panther is a symbol of pride, justice and, again, black power. Needless to say, these are very important ideals.

I'd love to do some research on his first actual appearance. This is a modern re-write as comics often do. I think there's much to say about this character in the world of academia from a theoretical perspective of postcolonialism.

The film trailer looks quite good too!

Bookishrealm says

This was a great introduction to Black Panther. With the movie coming out in a couple of weeks, I wanted to familiarize myself with his origin story. While this book does not follow the same plot as the one described in the movie, it does give a great introduction to Black Panther and Wakanda. I was pleasantly surprised by the artwork and definitely loved learning about all the characters. This installment in the Black Panther story is mainly focused on T'Challa and his rise to the throne in Wakanda. As he attempts to do what's best for his nation, he meets an old adversary responsible for the death of his father. No one has ever been able to infiltrate Wakanda, but this old enemy is attempting his best to throw T'Challa and the rest of the nation off their feet. It was truly captivating. I loved the plot. My only complaint is that I wanted to know more about Wakanda and those related to T'Challa. I feel like the writer was so focused on the plot that we missed out on significant character development. I will be reading other versions of T'Challa's origin story to learn more about this unique and exciting Marvel character.

Peter Derk says

Oh man, if you're looking for a Black Panther comic book to read, I'd go with this one. Stuff happens, there's excitement, and there's just enough backstory to make sense of everything. This one delivers where the Coates book was a little bit of a letdown. Namely, I was introduced to the characters, the situation, and Wakanda like I didn't already know what was happening. Most of us probably occupy that space when it comes to the Panther, and if that's you, this is the book.

The art is also by the amazing John Romita Jr, one of my all-time favorites. That guy kicks ass. The art in the new book was also very good. I give the edge to Romita, but what can I say, the dude is in my top 3.

jwadams19 says

A thrilling book of stuff i didn't know about the black panther. Amazing artistic work too!

Labyrinth says

I was surprised at the vehemence of some of the bad reviews on Goodreads. Some people really don't seem to like the writer, Reginald Hudlin, or this depiction of Black Panther at all. After reading the first 6 or so books, I understand their feelings, but I have to disagree overall with an easy dismissal.

On the downside, this book is politically charged. Some sensitivity to race issues is to be expected with an African-American super hero, but there's an overall depiction of a world that is run by greed and power, symbolized by America and the Church. America kowtows to big business aka Haliburton, and they use Klaw's invasion of Wakanda as an excuse to inv...help Wakanda using recycled zombie soldiers. People who lack good character in these books spout anti-French sentiments. It is pro-French. Wakanda is held up, in this world, as a place of Enlightenment. Someone very caught up in their Conservative world view is likely to get angrier and angrier while reading. The parameters of the universe will interfere with their enjoyment of the story. They'll likely say, "There is no story," because they can't see one. However, this series was written to please a young, black, liberal audience. It is "translated" into their language and aimed to fit their views as a demographic (Marvel hopes). As readers, whether we agree or disagree with Hudlin's world view, we can accept it, much the way we accept the "rules" in Tolkien's or any other author's universe, for the sake of the story.

Once one has accepted the parameters, the story elements can be better appreciated. T'Challa is a role model. The Black Knight best acts as his foil. The Black Knight commits villainy in the name of God while T'Challa as "The Panther God" acts as a role model, and after saving a young boy, reminds him that he is only human and that God works through him. The villains represent countries who have colonized Africa as well as African leaders who take advantage of their own people. As the Panther races off to find Klaw while his cousin is in danger, we see that he does, indeed, have potential weaknesses, and is not a static character.

The two points that I couldn't put down though were, "Be cool, man. Be cool." from an African native ages ago. It felt more like dudes on a corner than ancient Africa. Also, the Black Knight's Pegasus poops on Cannibal's pretty hat. POTTY HUMOR? SERIOUSLY?

I still plan to read more of the series. I look forward to reading about Black Panther's relationship with Storm. Since I haven't read any Panther before, I'd also like another writer's take for comparison.

Alazzar says

I should have listened to the warnings.

I decided recently that I wanted to give Black Panther a shot, mostly because I thought he looked cool. (Hey, this reasoning worked with Daredevil--couldn't it work again?) So I did some research to figure out which book I should try first, and, unfortunately, this one definitely wasn't at the top of most lists. But it's one of the few my library system happened to have, so it's what I went with.

Reviews I'd read before diving into this book seemed to be rather divided about its author, Reginald Hudlin. Some people thought he was good. Some people thought he stunk. As it turns out, the second group was right.

For starters, the rumors are true: Hudlin's dialogue is terrible. Like, legendarily bad. And his version of "wit" is, without exaggeration, about as clever as something that's stupid.

(That last part was my attempt at some Hudlin-style writing. I think I failed, on account of not being terrible enough.)

And as if the dialogue wasn't retarded enough, the Wakandans (Black Panther's people) aren't exactly doing anything to endear themselves to the reader. I mean, this is a nation so technologically advanced that they've cured cancer . . . and they won't share that secret with the rest of the world, because they think we're not "spiritually advanced" enough yet. So I guess all the non-Wakandan people of the world get to keep dying of cancer, just because Wakanda is full of assholes.

The story (which isn't very good, by the way) is followed by a three-page note from the book's writer, Reginald Hudlin. He goes on and on about how Black Panther is the most badass superhero out there. It's total fanboy ranting and raving, and it somehow made me hate both the Panther and Hudlin even more.

When I went to the library to pick up some Black Panther material, I got two books. This one makes me want to not even try the second. Good work, Mr. Hudlin.

Eric says

A nice reintroduction. Good Art and Story. Perfect, no. Overall a good vehicle to discuss colonialism with comic tropes. High brow? Hardly.

Sam Quixote says

This is an excellent jumping in point for those (like me) who don't know the character of Black Panther in the Marvel Universe at all. Reginald Hudlin (director of House Party) scripts a pretty decent introduction to the character. He's like Captain America but for Africa, and dresses all in black sans shield. Unlike most superheroes who are vigilantes, Black Panther is the leader of his fictional African country Wakanda which

is a self sustaining nation that is far more technologically advanced than Western nations, let alone African nations (they even have a cure for cancer!).

But people want what they don't have and many have tried to invade Wakanda's borders for years. Partly because the nation is so rich and is sitting on a massive oil deposit it refuses to mine, Black Panther and his government come under fire from mercenaries and greedy plutocrats looking to exploit this isolated yet deadly nation.

Well written with lots of action, "Who is the Black Panther?" is a fine introduction to a somewhat unknown Marvel character. This edition also includes two Fantastic Four issues from 1966 where Black Panther made his first appearances.

Mike says

?I've never acquired an emotional connection to the Black Panther as a solo character. That probably makes me suspect as a racist, and that's always a possibility a bleeding heart socialist should consider. Humbling.

Maybe it's that I've never heard great praise for any of his solo runs. Maybe it's that his homeland is a cold intellectual paradise - not like Attilan with its stultifying politics, but the fact that Wakanda is so technologically superior that I always just assume there's little real conflict to read about. Well, the Black Panther was always brooding about some unmet goal or unspoken interpersonal stressor, but nothing that said "let's dance, smile and have a drink or three". Not that all my superhero tales need to go down that path, but the super-serious cloud over BP's head... (Man, how to select a metaphor for "not fun" that doesn't mention "dark", "clouds" or "shadow")...makes me less-than-enthused to dive in to his world.

The impression I'd gotten from Goodreads reviews was that Priest's run was inferior to Hudlin's, so I'm reading that short run (mini?) right now on MU. It's biting in its commentary, but a little like every Inhumans story I read too, with all the stodgy and boring courtly politics that does nothing for me.

Hudlin infuses an edge to these stories that helps get past those built-in limitations. His political/social/racial(?) commentary definitely ups the stakes, by daring to take the majority white-dude audience through a potentially-uncomfortable ride through the "fun"house of life through a black world's eyes.

Great climactic tech-and-fisticuffs battle. Fun and satisfying. Panther all the way.

David says

I love the concept of Blank Panther. He's the bad ass king of an African nation so advanced they've found the cure to cancer. He's so adept at fighting, he could take Captain America. He's a genius military strategist, benevolent leader, and he's intelligent. He's an awesome character if you're looking for a positive Black role

model in the comic book medium.

So why didn't I like the book? One name: Reginald Hudlin. The writer of "classics" such as *House Party* and *Boomerang*. While I appreciate those movies from my childhood, it's really not an impressive resume for writing comics.

Hudlin's dialogue is less than mediocre. There is no wit there. It just feels juvenile, clunky. I groaned at the opening scene, worried about what was to come:

"Stay cool, stay cool"
"Hold your ground, running will only make it worse."
"Oh, it's getting worse--" (Thousands of spears flying in the air)
"Kiss my butt, Wakan--"

"Stay cool"? "Kiss my butt"? Did I forget to mention that this dialogue was from 5th century African tribesmen? At first, I tried to rationalize it as just rough translations of what had been said in native language. I wouldn't even accept this if it was said in English.

Even worse, Black Panther really doesn't come off as a bad ass in this book. Read Jason Aaron's current mini "See Wakanda and Die" and you'll see just how monumental this king can be. Hudlin's book tends to tell us through exposition that Black Panther can do this, and he can do that. It's like he's just telling us how awesome he thinks BP is, but he can't show it to us. We need some bad ass lines. We need him to stand up against the unbeatable odds and triumph! Ugh.

And don't get me started on Hudlin's take on racial issues. Black Panther is defined in this book by his blackness. And that's what gets to me. We get it, Hudlin, BP is Black. And he's awesome. He's an awesome Black guy. But stop hitting us over the head with it. He is more than Black. He is a king, a father, a leader, a fighter, a diplomat, and hero. *Show* us he's a great CHARACTER regardless of his ethnicity. Then we'll see, without being told explicitly, that he's one of the greatest superheroes the Marvel U has seen, Black, White, Asian, Latino, Kree, or Skrull.

What saddens me more is that this is going to be the basis of BET's cartoon. By the way, the animation is pretty crappy. I was really hoping for fresh material. From what I hear, Christopher Priest's run was much better, and I look forward to picking those up. I'm hoping Jason Aaron gets a full-time gig on the book now too. I originally gave this book two stars, but I think I was just being kind because I like BP as a character. Sorry Hudlin, but I can't like this book.
