



America, Vol. 1: The Life and Times of America Chavez

Gabby Rivera (Writer) , Joe Quinones (Illustrator)

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At last! Everyone's favorite no-nonsense powerhouse, America Chavez, gets her own series! Critically acclaimed young-adult novelist Gabby Rivera and all-star artist Joe Quinones unite to shine a solo spotlight on America's high-octane and hard-hitting adventures! She was a Young Avenger. She leads the Ultimates. And now she officially claims her place as the preeminent butt-kicker of the entire Marvel Universe! But what's a super-powered teenager to do when she's looking for a little personal fulfillment? She goes to college! America just has to stop an interdimensional monster or two first and shut down a pesky alien cult that's begun worshipping her exploits before work can begin. Then she can get on with her first assignment: a field trip to the front lines of World War II - with Captain America as her wingman!

COLLECTING: AMERICA 1-6

America, Vol. 1: The Life and Times of America Chavez Details

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From Reader Review America, Vol. 1: The Life and Times of America Chavez for online ebook

Chelsea says

I love this character! I love the art! I love the cameos.

Unfortunately, I'm still not sold on the writing style for this series. It's a little too tumblr esque for my tastes. I get that I might be a little too old for the demographic this book is attempting to appeal to and that's okay. I just feel like Young Avengers was also geared towards a 15-22 crowd and I totally got what that book was about.

I don't like the story, per say. Here's the thing, America was sorely lacking in a lot of details about her backstory. We knew that she lost her moms when they sent her away because their home planet was too dangerous. We know that she'd been on her own for quite some time ever since. We know that she's a Latina but we didn't know what community her mothers would've been a part of. America was not given a ton of backstory, is what I'm getting at. So, essentially she was a blank slate with this book.

I adore the art. I adore America as a character but where this book loses me is that it doesn't really feel like a cohesive comic. I felt like it was getting bogged down by short side plots that never really seemed to go anywhere. The group of America fan girls for example? I still don't really know why they're here except to show that America is inspiring youths. If that's the point, I would've been content with the updates showing their updates on tumblr or something like that.

I don't like that it seems like quite a bit of America's plots are driven by her terrible string of exes. They're all terrible and it's weird to me because we get no hint that America has a terrible love life in Young Avengers and while it's great to have a lesbian character actually be shown in relationships with women, it bums me out that these women are the driving forces behind quite a bit of America's actions.

I like the cameos with Kate and David. I liked getting more information on where America came from. I just wish the rest of the series was stronger. I also wish the writing style was a hell of a lot more mature.

2.5 stars

Wing Kee says

Good character, terrible writing.

World: The art is okay, it's solid, it's colourful and gives America a style and voice all her own. The world building is fractured and and janky as all hell where no full picture and a consistent world. The writing to build a stage for the story is just not well done, the school is half baked, the cameos are half baked, the characters are half baked...the world is just simply fractured.

Story: The story is janky and makes barely any sense and it's choppy and there are scene skips there are character moments that suddenly are suppose to matter, and banter that's a toss away. It's feels like it's a book written with no draft and no broad picture of all the different pieces that make the book: plot, dialog,

characters. I don't even know what I read, I read some cameos, are America's powers a problem? Did the break up just happen like that? Why the grandma suddenly appear? What the heck was the point of the story? Who are the villains? These are questions that should be well written. I can't even tell you if the story was good cause it was so slap dash.

Characters: America is a wonderful character, she has a distinct character voice but and I see the potential of her but wow the writing is pretty terrible. She's inconsistent, her dialog is janky and inconsistent in tone. The people she interacts with are inconsistent and fractured and readers are suppose to just take relationships, emotions and moments the way it is without having had any precursor for development and whether it's been earned.

This book is terrible, what writing is this? It reminds of how the disappointment I felt when I read the first book of 'Mother Panic'.

Onward to the next book!

Heatherblakely says

Read this issue by issue, rather than as a single volume. Notes on each issue below.

Issues 1 and 2: Not the same America I loved from a young Avengers, which I'm okay with. Gabby is writing America as lighter, less severe, more comfortable around her people, laughing more. I like it; I like this side of her, and I think it's really important to see POC in their communities, not always surrounded by white people. I'm also loving the self-discovery, and a lot of America's identity stuff (especially regarding her family) reflect my own. I don't love this art (McKelvie will always draw my favorite America), but the close ups are gorgeous.

Issue 3: Definitely my favorite so far, and probably one of my favorite things I've ever read because I relate to it so much.

"After my moms died, I left the parallel. I found spaces on earth where little brown girls blended into the scenery and became part of the family. Once Abuela Santa offered me that first plate of arroz on gandules, I was one of hers. No questions asked. Didn't even know what a Puerto Rican was. I just knew these folks looked like me and let me in."

Listen. (And please don't argue with me about any of this, because I'm speaking from personal experiences and I'm sick of being told my experiences aren't valid.) Not knowing where you come from *sucks*, especially when you're brown. When you're white and don't know who you are or where you come from, it's also not great, but you can find solace in many, many places. When you're brown and don't know where you come from, there's this added layer of "what am I" on top of the who and the where, and not knowing exactly what identity you are is awful. Not being able to figure things out because the only person (people, in America's case) who can answer your questions and help you is dead is also awful. America finding people who look like her and finding her place in the multiverse that way is amazing and gorgeous and something I wish I could have done, because now I'm stuck in no-woman's-land and have nothing and no ties. This issue made me cry, because I love that Gabby Rivera is allowed to address this type of thing and explore identity and race and that feeling of belonging.

"Still, I was a tourist everywhere. Lifting language and culture from the love of people who weren't my kin but held me as their own. Dove fists first into being a super hero 'cuz it felt right. Like I was honoring my moms, you know?"

Tourist everywhere. That's me. That's why I've left most social platforms--I don't fit anywhere. So I left, fists out.

Issue 4: Not as heavy-hitting as issue 3, but still enjoyable. Also, I need all of America's crop tops. All. of. them.

Issue 5: YOU CANNOT TELL ME THAT AMERIKATE ISN'T END GAME. I know that some people want them to stay friends because we definitely need more strong female friendships in comics (we need them everywhere tbh), but I get my friendships from Doreen & Nancy and Jennifer & Patsy. I need America and Kate to eventually go from best friend soulmates to romantic soul mates.

"...And I could really go on, but what I want right now is a minute to think."

"I'm going to give that to you and anything else you ever want, Kate Bishop. You know that?"

"Always the bride's best archer, never the archer-bride."

GOD. JUST. UGH. (Though I also would give Kate Bishop whatever the hell she wanted because Kate Bishop is my dream girl.)

I need more Amerikate road trips. Time to go write some.

Issue 6: Fuck, I love this cover.

I put this in my Hawkeye review, but I really don't understand why we don't see more crossover between Kate and America--they're both dealing with family stuff, they both ended up in a fight club, and I know Kate is in this issue but the stories themselves aren't intersecting at all. I love that Kate is part of the search and rescue and that she's involved in this to begin with because of course she would be, but some acknowledgement of the fact that they're both being hit with some identity stuff would be great.

"America's mejor amiga" uh huh sure just like they're gal pals, right. I refer to my friends as the Thelma to my Louise all the time /eyeroll

How lucky to have family who can help you figure out who you are.

Overall: I also wonder what the implications of this run are--if America identifies as Latina because when she was a kid and wandering around Earth alone, what does that say about who she is? Does that mean that I can connect with her more than I thought because she just kind of...picked an identity? I know we're getting more of her backstory and her family was Latinx according to what we're seeing, but how do identities and ethnicities change when you're talking about a superhero who isn't originally from Earth? Identities are already looked at differently in the US vs other places on the globe, so how much more different would they be when looking at someone outside of this planet? What if her family had a different ethnicity than the one she picked when she was alone? What does this mean for people who didn't grow up with their culture? Is it more okay for non-white people to pick up on customs and expressions and borrow from each other?

I'm over-thinking this, I know, but America is my favorite and the things Rivera has brought up in this run are interesting and have made me think a lot.

Dan says

I like and find this character interesting in team books, but this with her solo...really jumped the shark. I kept finding myself really disliking this character with every page turned. Marvel we don't need every book to be like fucking Squirrel Girl.

James DeSantis says

If I based this on art alone I'd probably go with a 3 or 4. However this story...

America is about a superhero who can punch people. Well, actually, she can punch portals into other dimensions and shit. Kind of cool right? Well this is her Solo series after being part of Young Avengers and Ultimates for awhile. So she decides to find herself. Try to go to school and be her own woman. This sounds like a recipe for something truly exciting. Gabby Rivera is a well received author too so this could only further my excitement. What went wrong?

Good: The art. It's really great at parts. Some of the most colorful and wonderful scenes of fighting I've seen. I also enjoyed some moments of light humor.

Bad: The story is just...awful? A mix of try hard, which is the worst part about it. I don't mind America's voice being more hip, using words like "moms" is fine. My issue is everyone in here talks like they belong on Tumblr or something. Like straight from the interwebs instead of real life people. Also some of the dialog is cringy at best, with some odd wording for characters. The hawkeye issue in particular was bad, which is a shame because I always hope for her and Hawkeye to fall in love. Also the pacing is a huge issue, most of the time being very very freaking boring.

Nothing really worked well in this book except the art. Saying that I can't give it higher than a 1.5. Still better than a few comics I read this year but this is one of the lower ones.

Paul E. Morph says

Let me start by saying that I really, really liked the artwork on this book. If I was rating it on the art alone, it would get four stars easily. The only trouble is, there was a story, too, and I'm afraid to say the plot was all over the place. Not terrible or anything but a teensy bit of a shambles.

Having said that, I went into this book not exactly *disliking* America Chavez but certainly entirely indifferent to the character. Having just finished this book, I now think she's pretty awesome, so the writer must have been doing *something* right.

Drown Hollum says

I was excited for Gabby Rivera to take a swing at America Chavez, but this was just bad comics. The pacing is off the wall bad, with flagrant misuse of various Marvel properties, which make this title feel out-of-canon. The sudden changes to America's dialogue, power-set, and personality are out of tune with every other book she is featured in, causing this to read more like fan-fiction than an actual Marvel comic. There are some neat ideas buried in here, including America's luchadora abuela, and Sotomayor U, but this is an absolute chore to read, and for me at least, was absolutely joyless in its inanity. I'm thankful Marvel sourced a queer Latina author to work on a queer Latina character, but truly, this was one of the worst books I've read from Marvel all year. Joe Quinones does a lot of the art though, and as always, he's on point.

Slapping time-travel into her move-set was a bad call too, and I have to wonder if Al Ewing has to shoulder any of the consequences in his Ultimates book.

Chantaal says

I was really looking forward to this since I really liked America in Young Avengers, but...it tries too hard. It tries SO hard, in so many different ways, that it ends up being nonsensical and falling flat on its face.

There are one or two really good moments -- usually when America is reflecting on her past or her parents -- but they're overshadowed and beat into submission by the fact that America is kind of an asshole and every other character in the book is some kind of shallow tumblr stereotype. Representation matters, but it doesn't help in this case.

So disappointing.

Sarah says

Look as a big America Chavez fangirl, I loved it. It was silly and sweet and queer and didn't take itself too seriously and basically was EVERYTHING I was looking for.

C.T. Phipps says

Quite possibly the worst comic I've ever paid money for. I'm actually tempted to give it two stars, though, because while there are works that I hate on philosophical reasons (Holy Terror), this is a comic I LOVE to hate because it's just so...badly written. I think the best way to think of it is that it tries to be cool and edgy and ends up being like a modern 60s Batman. Except, it's not deliberately cheesy but accidentally camp.

I loved America Chavez during her Young Avengers run and picked up the comics in individual issue format all at once in hopes of seeing more of the cute bruiser with attitude. Basically, a lesbian Latina version of the Thing. Instead, the graphic novel opens with her quitting superheroism because it got boring (note: she abandoned a paradise world made by her parents' sacrifice in order to be a hero to other people).

America also breaks up with her long-time girlfriend because she won't move to a new place with her and America Chavez doesn't want a long distance relationship. Note: America Chavez's superpower is she's teleporter with unlimited range. It's a shame because i liked the development of that relationship.

The book has America go to college in a superpower filled campus, time travel back in time to punch Hitler (normally a plus but she prevents his capture by Captain America and Peggy Carter--good job, there, Meri), as well as then drop school to go on a Vegas road trip. I don't mind slice of lice comics but America really comes off as spectacularly selfish both as a friend, girlfriend, and I suppose we're meant to assume she's a superhero even if she doesn't do any heroing. It's like Wonderella replaced the character from the Young Avengers and Ultimates.

It wouldn't be a problem if not for the fact the comic fawns over America and treats her as incredibly cool, badass, as well as more interesting than she is. Ms. Marvel, Kate Bishop, Spider Woman, and others all just fawn over how awesome she is. I think Peggy Carter is the only one who really comes off well as she (gently) tells America she's not really all that.

It's the thing, I like America as a character but she's damn near unrecognizable here. The dialogue is bizarre and often filled with references to social issues no sane person actually debates (why don't children the age of nine not get the right to vote?) and no actual plot. It's a very non-comic comic and while that should be lauded...it's just damn bizarre at times. I guess I'm not the target audience because I'd like to see America being, well, a hero.

2/10

Chad says

America Chavez is a pretty cool character in Young Avengers. She's super strong, can fly and portal between dimensions. Cool powers with a great look. She also seems very self-confident and together. This book does a 180 on her character. She's extremely self conscious as she ping pongs from side quest to side quest with no real plot or goal to the story. It's set up as her going to college (even if it's some weird, super-science college that's never really explained.), but it feels like it's really about America's quest for love. The story seems like a bunch of ideas Rivera jotted down that she thought sounded great but with no thought about how they all fit together logically. I also don't understand why Madrimar wouldn't just tell America who she was. It wasn't a surprise to the readers. Given how she handled things sending America through time, I'd never talk to her again. It makes no sense, other than Rivera was trying to create some artificial mystery.

Now let's talk about that dialogue. Actually is it dialogue or someone's Twitter conversation? I'm surprised the conversation didn't come out in textese. That's what it sounded like, not too people chatting with one another. And when it wasn't Twitterspeak, it was huge amounts of exposition dumped out of someone's mouth. It's OK to use a narrator or other old school way of giving exposition. Anything that's not as clunky as this.

The art in the first four issues was good, even if Joe Quinones couldn't keep up on a monthly schedule on his own. However, Ramon Villalobos has a real fugly art style. Some of those last two issues made my eyes bleed.

I have a feeling if I google this series right now, I'll find it's already been cancelled... Yep, I was right.

Renata says

As a comics reader I'm used to embracing a certain amount of confusion of "is this a new character or just a character I haven't seen before? Is this college in a different dimension or like what's happening here?" But basically I really enjoyed it! I especially loved seeing her interact with Peggy Carter and 80s Storm <3

A fun start to a series, I'll definitely continue to follow it.

Adam Spanos says

This comic opens with a 9 panel grid of both known characters and some random people asserting that America is a great person, one of which appears to be the writer herself. This sets the stage for what is one of the worst comics Marvel has made in recent years. The writer is so entrenched in trying to make America a Lesbian Latina role model she forgets to make a good book. She adds hamfisted references to modern politics like "Punch a Nazi." The Spanish she decides to sprinkle into the book is so surface level and stereotypical coming off as a parody. Any amount of movement towards a character arc made in the Ultimates series was ignored or quickly written out so the writer could move on to making America overpowered and over hyped.

Diz says

The writing in this is really bad. It has too much exposition, which ironically doesn't make the story easier to understand. Characters don't really talk to each other. Instead, they throw catchphrases at each other and talk in a style that I can only describe as the type of writing that you find on new-agey motivational posters. Character motivations aren't clear and their emotional states change suddenly. Finally, lots of random stuff happens for no apparent reason. In one scene, America punches Hitler because he was just walking aimlessly on a battlefield, I guess? There's no way to know.

Danika at The Lesbrary says

This is my first book I've read with America Chavez, so I think I might have liked this more if I was already familiar with the character. You can definitely tell this is a Gabby Rivera book, because there are so many pep talks! I got echoes of Juliet Takes a Breath.

There are different artists in issues 5-6, and I wasn't a big fan of that style. It was a bit distracting to me. I also probably would have liked it more if I knew Kate Bishop as a character. I will continue reading it, but I feel like I didn't love it quite as much as I was expecting.
