Attack of the Bacon Robots!

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Get your geek on! Penny Arcade, the comic strip for gamers, by gamers is now available in comic shops and bookstores everywhere. Not familiar with Penny Arcade? What? It's only the most popular comic strip on the web. It's the funniest, most twisted comic that ever lampooned gamer culture, and takes shots at everything from Star Wars to Steve Jobs. Experience the joy of being a hardcore gamer as expressed in vignettes of random vulgarity and mindless violence! Get online and direct your browser to penny-arcade.com, check out the latest strips, then, to read Penny Arcade from the very beginning, get the first collection, *Attack of the Bacon Robots*, which includes strips, sketches, and creator commentary not available anywhere else!

Attack of the Bacon Robots! Details

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Author : Jerry Holkins , Mike Krahulik
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From Reader Review Attack of the Bacon Robots! for online ebook

Susan says

For those who have somehow missed the phenomenon of the webcomic Penny Arcade (at penny-arcade.com), these print compilations are as good a way as any to get caught up, and longtime fans of the series get to tune in to the adventures of slacker gamers Tycho and Gabe with the added benefit of panel commentary from the creators. If the library comic Unshelved is a comic for a nerd's nerd, Penny Arcade is a comic for a geek's geek. References to gadgetry, gaming systems and gamer culture abound and references (and occasional appearances) by industry figures, game designers and developers and software creators can be expected--often to humorous effect(Kelly Flock, the former President of Sony Online Entertainment is often depicted as a diabolical satyr-esque character). In other words, gaming noobs and techie dilettantes be advised...this is definitely an insiders comic. If you do happen to be an insider though, it's hard not to get swept along in the rampant irreverence and Tycho and Gabe's unabashed love it or loathe it perspective on, well...everything.

Dan says

Ah, the awkward early years. Every TV show, comic, person has them. Penny Arcade's first year was the exact same way. The art wasn't quite nailed yet (and Gabe has been constantly refining it for almost ten years now) and some of the jokes seem lame in retrospect (and dated. Even with footnotes I forgot about some of these PC games). It's hard to believe they made their first "wang" joke way back in 2000 ("wang clips" is all I think of when I close a bag of chips anymore).
I've always wanted to own the PA books, but I always kept putting it off. Every time a new one would release, I'd say I was going to pick them up. Luckily, my wife remembered me mentioning this and got me the first four for my birthday. It was about time - flipping through this I realized I've been reading it regularly since mid-2000 (right around the time I started at Software Etc.) and I've yet to give back to them in any way for getting free entertainment for eight years. They earned it. Even today, when I'd be known as a "casual gamer", I still love their stuff.

Michael Hanscom says

I'm just glad I got this as an ebook in the Humble Bundle deal, and didn't actually shell out full price for a physical book. Admittedly, I'm not a gamer, but I'm enough of a long-time geek that very few of the references were lost on me. They just weren't funny...and usually, not even mildly amusing. Of course, already being familiar with the authors through their unfortunate tendency to needlessly, unapologetically, and even proudly enable the more misogynistic aspects of modern gamer culture (the Dickwolves incident, for example) may well be coloring my opinion of their work.

Justinthunderliger says

This infamous webcomic or "bcomic" (it's gonna catch on, I swear) is collected in this first volume including

stuff from 98-00. Some of the later broader stuff I can relate to, but the only time the inside-gamer-speak was understood was the early stuff-- maybe because that's when I was really into computer games. I remember stuff like the initial problems with 3d graphics cards and whatnot, but these guys must've been hanging out on graphics cards BBSs and whatnot. But who in Nerddom doesn't remember the bust of Sega Dreamcast or the rivalry of Quake 3 v. Unreal. I kinda wish they had started sooner and covered the stuff from my salad days like... well anything by Lucas Arts. Good stuff nonetheless, especially for the gamer set, but even if you know a little bit about it, you'll understand maybe 70 percent of the jokes. Got it from the lye-berry so no harm, no foul.

Brenton says

I can't really rate this book four stars without a major disclaimer to my friends: if you don't have at least a passing knowledge of video game history and gamer culture, most of the humor in these comics will be lost on you and you'll be faced only with a confusing array of crass gags, volatile language, and cartoon violence. But if you are in the know, you probably already agree with the webcomic-reading masses that Penny Arcade is one of the greatest modern comic strips ever, and that Jerry Holkins and Mike Krahulik are a massive credit to geeks everywhere and rightfully rule the webcomic world.

This book traces the beginning of PA, and thus Gabe/Mike's art is still rather amateur by professional standards in this volume and some of the strips fall flat (which I don't really hold against them; it takes time to find your form, and when doing three comics a week you're always going to take risks, some of which don't work). Each strip is accompanied by a short explanation or commentary by Jerry, which is a delight because the man is a veritable god among wordsmiths. This, of course, doesn't come through nearly as strongly in these short blurbs as it does in Jerry's longer and wittier news posts on the PA website, but creator commentary is never a bad thing.

All in all, this was a good beginning.

Warren says

This is the second collection of PA i've read (in le book form, I read through the backlog online a couple years ago, and have been keeping up religiously ever since).

Just damned enjoyable. refreshing to have some brief new commentaries accompanying old strips.

I write my own webcomic, and find these books to be like simple study guides in how to tell jokes in short strip form. even those that seem obviously pandering (violent) or not in line with the rest of the comics are somehow deliciously useful for those studying "how to tell a joke". a kazillion blessings on these fellows for boldly presenting their past.

i only knock a star off because the "extras" at slim. a couple pages of rough sketches. meh.

though the afterward is very inspired.

hmm. This book succeeds in making me want to buy a master collection.

Katherine says

It is hard to believe that Penny Arcade has been around for over ten years now. I didn't get hooked on the web-comic until about three to four years ago. I'm glad that the comics are coming out in print now so that I can learn the history of the e-comic.

The series follows the lives of two gamers, Gabe and Tycho. They have some funny moments sharing the thoughts and experiences about games and the tech industry in general. If you don't follow video games you might not get this book at all.

The best one in the collection was the comic that Mike Krahulik drew to propose to his then girlfriend.

Tung says

Unless you are a major geek like me, you have no idea what Penny Arcade is. If you do know what Penny Arcade is, you will have probably already read these four books. Penny Arcade is one of the most-read online comics, especially for video game enthusiasts. If you play videogames or even create videogames or work in an industry related to videogames, you read Penny Arcade as a matter of course. Where ESPN is the daily stop for sports fans, Penny Arcade is the daily stop for video game enthusiasts and nerds. These four books collect the online strips for the first four years of Penny Arcade's humor (2000-2003); each strip is accompanied by commentaries from the author and artist. A must-read, obviously, for fans of the site, and a pass for all others. But you others don't know what you're missing.

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terpkristin says

I got this from the ebook Humble Bundle. I had thought that I had been reading Penny Arcade more or less from the beginning. After reading this book, I have realized that this is obviously not true. This book, similar to the others in the PA volumes, includes the strips from 1998-2000, along with some commentary from "Tycho" about each strip. If you're a fan of the Penny Arcade Comic, then this book is a nice addition to your bookshelf, and it shows the PA guys your support of their product. Toward the end of this book, I started seeing some strips I recognized, so I'm looking forward to volume 2. I'll admit, I had forgotten how the strip used to look, the evolution of their art. Good stuff.

Megan Baxter says

[In this case, however, given that I'm reviewing a *Penny Arcade* book, I'm going to claim it's a fucking homage, or some such shit.

This book is not David Copperfield.

This assertion may seem fairly plain to most people, but I'm making the comparison for a reason. See, I always have a book I'm rereading in the bathroom. For the last several mon

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Burt says

Note: The time this was read one might deduce is BEFORE the print date of the book - but NOT before the first run of the strips, starting in 1999. I started reading PA back in the day. So don't get all Jim Cameron chronological on me. Chill.

I remember seeing my first PA strip sometime in college round two. I remember commenting 'Wow, this art is rudimentary' and forgetting about it for a little while. The occasional nugget would pop up after that . A hysterical reference to Pac Man would appear (That kid was f'ed up when I met him), or Spiderman would guest star (Oh Spiderman, you're so STRONG!) and then they started in with jokes from games I actually played. That piqued my interest.

Soon I was a regular reader. Eventually, I came to check it every day, not just for the strips, but for the posts by the authors under their pseudonyms Gabe and Tycho. I still go there like a devotee. I go there with more regularity than I do a house of worship.

In retrospect, I see the same thing going on with the art stylings that I see with my own art or with other cartoonists. Look at Jim Davis for instance. The original Garfield strips were a crime against art. They were pretty ugly. But as time moved on, the art got cleaner, more stylized. I wish I could say the same for Garfield's content. The art for Penny Arcade is now just that - art. Crude, vulgar, insulting art most days (see the fruit molesting kitchen appliance that features as a regular), but hey, I like that kind of thing, potty humor is hysterical. Gabe is also arguably the best color strip comic artist on the webcomic scene.

While this book is a collection of their first forays into webcomics, the content is what sells it, kind of in the same vein of South Park. It's not the art in this case (it took some time for the strip to come into its own stylistically), but the spirit of two guys who had just started hacking out their place in the webcomic scene's nascence. If they keep penning them, I'll keep buying them.

Daniel Messer says

I've been a video game nerd since I was in elementary school. When I hit middle school, my parents bought me the Nintendo Entertainment System and it altered my life profoundly. I cavorted in the dark reaches of video game trivia, backstory, plot line, news, and anything else that piqued my pixelized interests. My peers thought I was slightly crazy. Sure, everyone liked video games, but no one in their right mind liked them that much.

By high school, I'd met a good friend who shared my passions. It was nice to know that there was someone else out there with the same obsession as me. Later, another friend introduced me to the wonders of Penny Arcade, and I've been a fan ever since. Jerry Holkins, the writer, is smart. I mean he's almost scary in his intelligence. Mike Krahulik, the artist, has improved on his style and craft over the years became a fantastic comic artist.

The comic strips, laden with swearing and intellect far too intelligent for the newspaper's funny pages, are a treat for anyone looking for something far more interesting than you'll ever find printed in the paper.

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rhea says

While it's their start out strips it's still hilarious, it has my favorite strip in it that is absolutely immature, but it's all in good fun. Also, I'm still a sucker for the proposal in it, it seems to be the only way to do a public proposal and have it not be embarrassing, though still extremely cheesy and cute. If you know nothing about gadgets, gaming, or that culture there is no point in reading this, you won't understand the jokes.

Evgeny says

First of all, a disclaimer: if you do not know that it is, this is most probably not for you. The comics deal with issues of gaming, mostly computer and console. Penny Arcade is very well known in these circles, which means that even if you have a passing interest in the subject you must have heard about them - thus the disclaimer.

The biggest problem with the comics - other than required knowledge of the subject - is that it does show its age. The first book talks about games released between 1998 and 2000; by the rate the gaming industry moves, it is practically the age of dinosaurs. Case in point: at one point they praised the early 3-D graphics which by modern standards looks VERY ugly.

I played some of the games they reference, and even in my case I do not understand quite a few of the jokes. Fortunately, they have comments for every single comic which is a required read. Unfortunately, some of the comments go along the line, "I really have no idea that this comic is about". Well, neither do I as a reader.

I also do not agree with their position on some of the issues in gaming. Still, there are some diamonds in the rough, enough of them to warrant 3-star rating.

Christopher says

To start with, let's talk about who this is for, because that is everything. The Penny Arcade comics are available for free on their site, penny-arcade.com. If you aren't familiar with the strip, or just want to read the old stuff, go there and do so. This book is not for you and there is a good chance you won't be happy with your purchase.

This volume is for fans of PA who want a little extra commentary. Jerry, the writer, gives a sentence or two about each strip in this book that covers the first two years of strips, from late 1998 through 2000. Some of these are very basic in the "I have no idea what we were thinking" vein. But others are more interesting. They talk about fan reaction, or how they met someone who was in one of their strips after they made it, or about something they were angry about, which led to the strip in question. None of it is in depth or particularly earth-shaking, but it is interesting if you're looking for that sort of thing.