



The Complete Terry and the Pirates, Vol. 1: 1934-1936

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Celebrating the centennial of cartoonist Milton Caniff's birth, IDW Publishing will publish a six-book series, collecting the entirety of Caniff's groundbreaking newspaper adventure strip Terry and the Pirates. The Sunday pages will be reproduced in their original color, alongside the daily black-and-white strips. Volume One contains more than 800 consecutive strips, from the series' beginning in October 1934 through the end of 1936.

The Complete Terry and the Pirates, Vol. 1: 1934-1936 Details

Date : Published September 4th 2007 by Library of American Comics

ISBN : 9781600101007

Author : Milton Caniff

Format : Hardcover 367 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Comic Strips, Adventure, Graphic Novels, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Complete Terry and the Pirates, Vol. 1: 1934-1936 for online ebook

Erik says

Caniff's art is good, but it starts very slowly and I didn't like Terry at all.

Daniel says

A beautiful reprint of the comic strip of the 1930s, following the American Terry and his adventures in China of the 1930s. The artwork is very good, quite superior to the comic books of the later 1930s which would introduce superheroes.

The stories are entertaining -- nothing earth-shattering, but great "popcorn movie" style adventures. Like most material of the day, [i:]Terry and the Pirates[/i:] does have the misfortune of featuring some incredibly crude ethnic stereotypes.

Alicia Evans says

Terry and his companions have tons of wild adventures on the high seas. They have to worry about pirates though, who somehow take an interest in them. Admittedly, they group does tend to be in the wrong place at the wrong time relatively often.

The comics themselves weren't that wonderful for me as a reader, mainly because they felt very dated and there wasn't any kind of real sense of urgency. I'm sure that there would have been more excitement attached when the strip was running due to the time period and the slower release of the strip. I just didn't find it very entertaining in terms of the comics. I did like the historical sections though where we got a background and some context. I could definitely see this being helpful from the academic/research perspective, but not necessarily for pure entertainment.

Sam Falco says

If you can overlook the sexism and racism in this collection of eighty year old comic strips... well, you can't really overlook the sexism and racism, because it smacks you in the face on every page. Especially in the strips where protagonist Pat Ryan smacks a woman in the face. And I'm not sure there are more than a handful of strips in two years worth of strips that don't contain at least one racial slur about the Chinese.

The stories themselves are formulaic and repetitive. The women characters are basically interchangeable. The introduction is worth reading if you are a comic strip history buff, but other than that, there's nothing worthwhile in this collection.

Korynn says

A great strip in which a boy and his hero with their racist version of a sidekick rescue damsels in distress and get into life or death situations involving Asian pirates. Lots of heroics that become repetitive but is livened by interesting new characters. It starts a bit stiff but improves further one, especially with the introduction of characters who are unclear as to their side of the fight between good and evil.

Glenj says

Three stars only because it takes a while for the book and characters to grow and become what it will be later. The art and panel structure is simply astounding.

Dominick says

This was my first extended exposure to *Terry* (I read a very little bit of it as a kid, in comic book form, and the *Mad* parody, of course), and I'm rather underwhelmed. Caniff's art is generally a wonder to behold, especially the Sunday pages--or it would be, if not for the prevalent racism of the strip. That's of a piece with its historical context, of course, but it's still difficult in 2013 not to cringe at Connie's caricatured features and pidgin English, or at the casual references to "chinks," "rice-burners," and so on. The stories are occasionally clever but not as a general rule superlative narratives, and the book exacerbates its unsatisfactoriness on this front by stopping in the middle of a continuity (something of a habit with these IDW collections, in fact, and a consistently irritating one). And it's very hard in 2013 to get past the inherently problematic central conceit, of a grown man bumming around the Orient with an adolescent boy he's not related to. All the hot chicks in the world falling for Pat Ryan (and most of them do) doesn't really take the squick factor out of that weird conceit.

Frank Roberts says

I have read volumes 1-4. I was too young to see these in the paper as a kid, but ran across them a while back and decided to give them a try. While the racism in them is unfortunate and of the time (1930s), the storytelling and artwork are truly groundbreaking. Caniff really knew how to entertain people, and he had strong female characters at a time when women were usually in the comics to be rescued, not taken seriously. He even hinted at a lesbian relationship in one storyline - interesting that it got past the censors at the time. One of the things I really liked about the comic strip was that it dealt with stuff that could really happen - no dinosaurs, no aliens - just bad guys (or gals), and, eventually, WWII.

Philip says

Fantastic adventure strip, marred only by the racism of the time (1930s). Thrilling stories and amazing art.

Andy says

Terry and the Pirates is an action-adventure strip that's a cross between Indiana Jones and Tintin (which, debuting in 1929, seems to have an unmistakable influence on Terry). The saga begins as Terry, a young American boy (probably about 12 or 13?) explores China, looking for a hidden treasure left by a relative. Assisting Terry is a "two-fisted" journalist named Pat Ryan and a Chinese guide (of sorts) named George Webster Confucius, or "Connie" for short. The trio get embroiled in all sorts of adventures with pirates, femmes fatales, and other villains.

The series is great fun, despite the many un-politically correct interpretations of other races and Caniff's often confusing attempts at conveying slang and broken English. This is, however, 1934-36, and Caniff is simply a product of his times, so don't judge him too harshly. What makes Terry and the Pirates not only good, but very good (bordering on stellar) is Caniff's artwork, storytelling and pacing. When I look at Caniff's drawings from 1934, I'm amazed at the detail, the amount of characterization conveyed in the faces and the attention to detail. It's simply stunning. Plus Caniff knows how to tell a story. There's something going on in each panel; no filler. Yet Caniff's greatest strength is in the story's pacing.

I never seriously read comic strips as a kid, so I never was caught up in keeping up with a serialized story day after day. Caniff understands this, makes each daily strip essential and makes each one work on it's own, yet provides just enough of a cliffhanger to keep you hungry for the next installment.

The trick for Caniff was to keep two story lines going at the same time. In those days, many Americans only read the Sunday newspaper, which meant comic strip serial fans would miss the majority of the story if they only read Sunday editions. Caniff wrote a separate story for the Sunday edition (which is presented first in this IDW edition) from the daily edition, giving readers two separate stories. Eventually (in the last fourth of this volume) the story lines merged.

From all the reviews I've read, this first volume is the weakest of the series (collected in six volumes from IDW). If that's the case, I've got some amazing reads ahead. Even in this first volume, you can see the progression in both art and story, neither of which are weak or bad. They just start out good and get better and better.

If you enjoy Indiana Jones, Tintin, Jonny Quest, or just great adventure comics, you're going to love Terry and the Pirates. A big thank you to Chris Marshall over at the Collected Comics Library for steering me in the direction of Terry. It's pretty safe to say that the complete Terry and the Pirates is firmly at the top of this year's Christmas list. Give it a try - I think you'll enjoy it as much as I do.

Lloyd says

<http://bestcomicsquest.blogspot.com/2...>

Philippe Malzieu says

Milton Caniff had all invented. Opposed to the "ligne claire" of European comics, he developed a drawing with ink. His graphics influenced the majority of the young draughtsmen of comics, in particular Pratt. The line can be raw. The brush precedes the action. It gives a cinematographic dimensio.

He dynamited the classical scenario by giving another dimension to the hero. In particular he gave a very important role to the Chinese interpreters Georges Webster Confucius. Far from the caricature, he escapes to racist stereotype. Confucius plays the part of the chorus of the Greek tragedy while being by his ingenuity an engine of action.

It is necessary to insist as on the main function as Caniff gives to the woman. They behave like men, even worse, while being sibiliment beautiful (I love Dragon Lady, a true fatale woman).

It is funny, merry, light and full of optimism.

What else?

Scott Radtke says

The legendary adventure classic finally compiled in a format that gives the book it's due. Caniff is one of the giants of the comics medium, it's only going to get better.

Brian Rogers says

Terry and the Pirates is both wonderful and awful.

It's a master class in pacing - Caniff has 4 panels a day to keep an adventure strip going, keeping readers interested, explaining things to new readers, with little chance that people would be able to read them the way we're reading it now, and he knocks it out of the park. The story is completely engaging over the two years in this book.

It's gorgeous to look at - after the first few months Caniff hits his stride and the layouts, shadow work, backgrounds and characters are wonderful. The action sequences, from fights to ship chases, are fluid and energetic. The dramatic scenes are equally so, captured in key moments so that everything from life or death arguments to a woman weeping at the thought she is losing her husband's attentions are as engaging as the fights.

The characters are sharply drawn, with several very strong women in supporting roles from capable love interests like Normandie Drake (what a name!) to femme fatales (the iconic Dragon Lady) to the delightful Burma, a female adventurer every bit the equal of the trio of male heroes. Yes, all of them fall for the emotionally distant, physically perfect Pat Ryan, but he falls for all of them too, so everyone is making questionable decisions based on attractions. And watching how young Terry interacts with each of these powerful women in different ways adds depth to everyone.

And it's yellow peril racist as all get out. Connie, the comic relief sidekick, who when first introduced a veritable idiot who expresses himself only in 'comically' broken English. His personality and skills get much better over the course of the series, but it's not until the last month of this 2 year period that we are shown Connie talking to other Chinese people in his native tongue and (and this is important) he doesn't sound like an idiot. It's a critical point in the portrayal of the character, but it comes much, much too late.

Worst is how Connie a painful visual caricature - huge buck teeth, jug ears, bright yellow skin, no eyeballs for the slant eyes - and most of the Chinese are some variation of the same, though none as extreme. It's doubly maddening because everyone else, the Caucasians obviously, but also the Pacific Islanders, South Asians and Indians are all accurately rendered. Many Chinese are only slightly caricatured, the Dragon Lady

not at all, so Caniff could clearly do this if he wanted to, but he's making the conscious choice to have the population of the country where he is basing his story look like Mickey Rooney in *Breakfast at Tiffanys*. Pat and Terry's appearance changes in subtle ways as Caniff settles in, but even as he makes changes to them, Connie remains painful to look at.

Was it a different time? Yes. Was racism more prevalent? sure. But that doesn't excuse this. It's not like the other ethnic groups of the South China Sea are always written with deep respect as the major players are always the Americans or Europeans, and he eventually comes to treat Connie with respect, showing his competency along with his comedy, but he's choosing to draw him, and a large chunk of his cast this way. It's what keeps the strips from being perfect.

Freder says

The book is gorgeous, and really does credit to Caniff's talent. I'm just not a huge fan of TERRY, which is why the lower rating.
