

**xkcd**  
volume 0



## **xkcd: volume 0**

*Randall Munroe*

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### **xkcd: volume 0** Randall Munroe

Randall Munroe describes *xkcd* as a webcomic of romance, sarcasm, math, and language. While it's practically required reading in the geek community, *xkcd* fans are as varied as the comic's subject matter. This book creates laughs from science jokes on one page to relationship humor on another.

*xkcd: volume 0* is the first book from the immensely popular webcomic with a passionate readership (just Google "xkcd meetup").

The artist selected personal and fan favorites from his first 600 comics. It was lovingly assembled from high-resolution original scans of the comics (the mouseover text is discreetly included), and features a lot of doodles, notes, and puzzles in the margins.

The book is published by Breadpig, which donates all of the publisher profits from this book to Room to Read for promoting literacy in the developing world.

### **xkcd: volume 0 Details**

Date : Published August 24th 2010 by Breadpig (first published 2009)

ISBN : 9780615314464

Author : Randall Munroe

Format : Paperback 120 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Fiction, Webcomic, Comics, Humor, Comedy

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## From Reader Review xkcd: volume 0 for online ebook

### Louis says

I love the way this book's page numbers are in Base 3, that the volume starts with 0, that the revision level is a Fibonacci series, that the annotations are included (though hard to read because they are small) and because there is encrypted messages in red throughout the book.

And I never really liked math, but I love this series.

Why buy an XKCD book when it's free on the internet?

What will you do for fun when the power goes out, the zombie apocalypse is upon you and all that's left good in the world is math, illumination, illustrations and love.

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### Karissa says

I have long been a fan of the XKCD web comic. I actually bought this book for my husband (who is also a big fan) right when it came out. I just finally sat down the other day and read it. It's a collection of Munroe's favorite XKCD comics. I definitely enjoyed reading it.

In the forward Munroe says he picked his favorite comics to put together in this first book. All proceeds from the book go to charity so that is pretty cool. You can read most of these comics on the web for free. However, there are additional comments throughout written in red that are pretty darn funny. There are also encrypted messages and the novelty of owning a book that is page numbered in Base 3.

Many of the jokes have some basis in science/math/physics. I do love math and enjoyed some of those jokes. Some of the physics jokes are a bit esoteric and me and my husband would both stare at them and go "huh". Others frames deal with general relationship things or popular culture.

While it does help to have some background in math/science to enjoy a lot of these jokes...there are still a lot of pages and jokes that are just generally funny. One of my favorites was the graph of intelligence versus distance to a cute kitty. Another favorite was the one where he blackmails a book lover by threatening the book of a spine (I am obviously a huge book geek, so this had me laughing pretty hard).

This is definitely an adults only book, there is quite a bit of adult subject matter throughout...and yes you do see stick people having sex many times throughout the book. While that's not really all that graphic (I mean they are stick people), there are definitely some adult themes to the material.

I thought the beginning of this book was less funny than the later entries. Not sure why, but I laughed a lot more at the comics at the end of this collection than the beginning.

Overall I really enjoyed this collection. Munroe's collection of "What If" is due out later this year and I will definitely be picking that up as well. These are more in depth but still very funny episodes where Munroe applies science to crazy "What If" questions. I would definitely recommend picking up XKCD, Volume 0 if you are fan of the web comic. If you are at all a fan of science, math, and humor you should at least check out the web comic....it's pretty hilarious.

### **Sookie says**

Its always a pleasure to go back to these. Been reading them for years and some of them were pure nostalgia.

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### **Jessica-Robyn says**

I know well enough when I am swimming a little too far outside of my depth, but that is part of what I love about xkcd. The level of enthusiasm for math and science is contagious. When this is mixed with a great sense of humour and the odd existential crisis it creates something that is undeniably special.

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### **David says**

I got copy 74/256.

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### **Evgeny says**

This is a well-known web comic with stick figures. It is also a very good indicator of your geekiness. If you understand and like some of the jokes (and you need to have a university-level math and physics classes under your belt for this), you are a geek. If you understand all of the jokes, you are a super-geek. Finally, if you are able to find an xkcd comic which is related to any particular life situation, you are an uber-geek; I kid you not, I saw people doing it.

My point is the following: my university degree was not enough to understand every comic, so proceed with caution. Still, some of the comics are funny and fairly easy to understand which warrants 3-star rating.

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### **Jen says**

Cute, fast read. I'm not a computer/math/physics/chemistry science "nerd", but I got a surprising amount of the jokes in this. Made me laugh AND feel smart at the same time! 4.5 stars.

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### **Abhijeet Jain says**

xkcd web comic are funny if you understand the science behind it. They are one of the most geekiest things out there. I couldn't understand all of the comic strips & neither one should try to, simply enjoy the ones which you understand !

While reading this, I couldn't stop thinking about geek-i-ness of Randall Munroe :)

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## Santhosh says

The usual xkcd mix of some brilliant, some obscure, some esoteric, some ROFL, some geeky, some thoughtful, some knowing-smiley, some disgusting, some classic, and some sexkcd.

Oh, and the book's page numbers are in Base 3, there are encrypted messages in red throughout the book, the tooltip texts are all included, and all proceeds from this book go to charity.

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## Sandra says

While some were funny, I guess I'm not a real nerd or fangirl to appreciate and understand most of them. What If? definitely suited me better.

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## Philip says

"This book is a collection of strips from *xkcd*, a free webcomic. I want to get that out of the way so you don't feel betrayed later when you realize you paid for a book of things that you could get for free from the Internet."

I actually got this book from the library, so don't worry about it.

Though, I may end up buying it. I love xkcd.

The book is exactly what it purports: a collection of xkcd comics in book form. Since you can all go to xkcd.com, I'm not going to write a true review of the book. However, as a tribute to xkcd, I'm asking you to write the most obnoxious and annoying comments on this "review." Feel free to use as many ad hominem attacks as possible. Make sure you don't spell anything correctly, etc...

Internet comments are a common theme in xkcd, so I think it's appropriate. Check out this one, for instance.

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## Lucy says

Beautiful book. And the proceeds have gone to build a school in Laos. Buy one from the xkcd Website. The NYTimes says:

"While Mr. Munroe conceded a nostalgic love of books, remembering how he devoured books of a favorite comic strip, Calvin & Hobbes, he said he is now a committed Kindle 2 user, preferring it to print. Still, he said: 'I have this urge. You want to print them out and put them up on places. There is something good about collecting them together.'" quite!

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## Nicolas Ward says

This contains most of what I consider to be "classic" xkcd, in terms of the comics I remember reading, the comics that I reference outside of obvious xkcd contexts, and the comics I sometimes wear as shirts. For the most part I remembered the jokes, although a number of them were refreshers where they weren't ones I had referenced or thought of since reading through xkcd the first time.

My one complaint with the layout is that what used to be the mouseover text (a key component of xkcd's humor, and something that is incidentally missing when reading current comics on a touchscreen device) is wedged kind of randomly in between panels. I think it would have made more sense to include it in a more standard caption position. I also noticed the lack of the original comic titles, something I found odd since that was at times also part of the humor.

As far as the "extras" included in the book version, I haven't taken the time to look at the cryptographic puzzle hidden in the margins, although I did enjoy some of the other additional jokes and annotations.

I'm pretty sure this is the first physical book I've read that was CC-licensed, unless one of Lessig's books that I've read was.

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## **Manny says**

I am the coauthor of a peer-reviewed conference paper which cites an xkcd cartoon.

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## **Kathryn says**

XKCD, for the uninitiated, is a webcomic "drawn" by Randall Munroe. It features primarily stick figures and typically focuses on "nerdy" topics such as science, math, science fiction, Firefly, and the like.

XKCD: Volume 0 is the first collection of XKCD strips. Munroe selected the best of XKCD from the first 500 or so comics. He added a little commentary to a few strips and included some coded messages, which I didn't bother decoding. The book will no doubt delight XKCD fans.

I used to love XKCD, chiefly for obscure jokes about esoteric topics. (I am also a nerd.) However, over the years, the quality of XKCD has significantly degenerated. Relationships and sex have always been a theme of XKCD, but strips on this topic have gotten progressively creepier and more disgusting, culminating at last in the infamous "TGI Friday's" strip, the point at which I stopped reading for enjoyment. (I'm not providing a link because it is extremely NSFW and doesn't have even a vestige of humor to make up for its coarseness. If you really want to know, it's #631.) (I say "for enjoyment" because I did continue to read for several more months to watch the train wreck, but eventually, even that amusement paled. I haven't read xkcd for probably close to a year.)

In addition to the proliferation of "sexkcd" strips, the math/science strips have also declined in quality. The complexity has declined to high school level at best, and the jokes are no longer clever but are instead "reference" jokes, by which I mean that they are predicated on Munroe and the reader sharing the same bit of obscure knowledge and being contemptuously amused that other people don't. (I must shamefully admit to having laughed at similarly premised "jokes" in the past.)

Munroe's disdain for the liberal arts has also grown significantly, or perhaps is merely showing more. I'm an

engineer myself, but I highly value the individual study of liberal arts, particularly in terms of what used to be called the classics. Munroe, on the other hand, has nothing but sneers for any academic pursuit that is not math or science. In one particularly egregious example, he made an offensive comic, then doubled down with an offensive mouseover text that stated outright that people who are "not getting a real science degree...have a lot of free time." This statement, particularly in context of the offensive comic, made clear the depth of contempt he has for the "soft" sciences. Hours later, he added, "Zing!" to the mouseover text, in a stealth edit apparently intended to soften his insult. The damage, however, had been done.

In short, as Munroe's mask has slipped and the ugliness of his personality has shown through, I have stopped reading XKCD. Unfortunately, his behavior has also colored my reaction to the original comics, to the point where two stars were the most I could conceivably give to the book. Looking at other works to which I've given two stars and my admittedly arbitrary choice to rate books based primarily on my level of enjoyment (except that I will give five stars only to a book that I consider objectively excellent), however, I will decrease the rating to one star.

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