



Barefoot Gen, Volume Ten: Never Give Up

Keiji Nakazawa , Project Gen (Translator)

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Cartoonist Keiji Nakazawa was seven years old and living in Hiroshima in the early days of August 1945 when the city was destroyed by an atomic bomb dropped by the United States. Starting a few months before that event, his ten-volume saga Barefoot Gen shows life in Japan after years of war and privations, as seen through the eyes of seven-year-old Gen Nakaoka. As Volume Ten begins, the year is 1953. Now an apprentice sign painter, Gen has become a skilled artist, while his friends run a thriving dressmaking business. Gen falls in love for the first time, but fails to notice that a good friend has been caught in the clutches of drug addiction. Heartbreak and loss await Gen as the atomic bomb continues to wreak havoc on the lives of people in Hiroshima years after the fact. Yet these tragedies also inspire Gen to make the big move to Tokyo to pursue his career as an artist.

Barefoot Gen, Volume Ten: Never Give Up Details

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From Reader Review Barefoot Gen, Volume Ten: Never Give Up for online ebook

Lyva says

It is a good book. It tells a beautiful story even if you haven't read the other books, like I did. You get a better view of what happened in Hiroshima so many years ago.

Gláucia Renata says

Esse volume encerra a saga de Gen e seus amigos. Foi ótimo conhecer essa trágica história (não me interpretem mal rrs) através de uma forma de expressão bastante fluida que é o mangá e pelo olhar de alguém que sofreu as consequências da bomba. Tem algumas coisas um pouco estranhas na forma de expressão que tornam alguns acontecimentos um tanto quanto inverossímeis mas o saldo foi bastante positivo e estou certa que assimilei essa parte da História de forma definitiva.

Histórico de leitura
18/01/2018

"Março de 1953."

Anna Guedes says

Eu nunca tinha lido nada em tantos volumes. São 10, d-e-z, tomos e foi uma novela pra encontrar tudo. A Conrad só lançou no Brasil até o vol. 6 e em toda a Internet eu só consegui achar os quatro primeiros digitalizados (como que uma publicação lançada na década de 1970, com filme, ópera e musical baseados nela, é tão difícil de encontrar na rede?). Resultado: os quatro primeiros volumes eu li on-line e comprei dois na Estante Virtual em português e o restante na Amazon, traduzidos para o inglês pelo Projeto Gen.

Gen Nakaoka vive com os pais e cinco irmãos em Hiroshima, e tinha seis anos quando a cidade é destruída pela bomba atômica, em agosto de 1945. Ele perde o pai e dois irmãos na tragédia, um dos outros irmãos é mandado para a Marinha japonesa e a mãe e uma irmã acabam por morrer mais tarde devido a doenças relacionadas à bomba. A história vai ficando melhor de volume pra volume, mas ainda assim não é uma história fácil.

Gen é altamente autobiográfico. Nele são mostrados os horrores da guerra e a forma cruel com as decisões de governos e impérios afeta a vida da população. Gen é um personagem muito otimista (até irrita tanto always look to the bright side of life), mas não deixa de sofrer com a destruição da própria vida. O medo da morte e a perda de pessoas queridas está sempre presente, e Gen acaba por ser uma história muito violenta. Crianças apanham dos pais (o próprio Gen era amarrado pelo pai e espancado, mas isso não era visto como violência e sim como correção) e de professores, as cenas horrorosas da tragédia com a bomba e de pessoas deformadas e morrendo são sempre recorrentes, pessoas querendo tirar proveito uma das outras mesmo nas piores

situações e o governo americano (e antes disso as forças armadas japonesas) sacaneando o povo são exemplos que te deixam com um nó na garganta frequentemente.

Depois de cinco meses e 2500 páginas (hooray!), a mensagem que Gen me deixou é que a intenção do autor era a de fazer um manifesto a favor da paz e contra guerras e governos. E, como o pai de Gen não cansava de repetir, devemos ser como o trigo, que mesmo pisoteado, batido e queimado pelo sol e pelo gelo, sempre renasce forte e pronto pra dar frutos — o que cai como uma luva quando pensamos na história de Hiroshima e Nagasaki.

Rainbowfittania says

Een echte aanrader voor te lezen.

Eric says

So the Barefoot Gen odyssey comes to an end: 10 volumes, 2500 pages, 4+ months. As I've said in reviews of individual volumes, this is an important document of Hiroshima, war, Japan, in an innovative and unique package. The protagonist, Gen, is a sympathetic guide to the experience of a city and its people who bore the brunt of the atomic bomb and its aftermath. The stories are rich and multilayered and open a window onto the very personal experience of living through a unimaginably horrific event from an on-the-ground perspective that is often lost in the sheer weight of statistics. The author heaps outrage and recrimination on all - the US, Japan, the emperor, the US occupation, the Yakuza, and the Japanese people. Usually he is balanced, at times, understandably, he loses that equilibrium.

While I enjoyed the series immensely, it did lag at the end for me. The final three volumes seemed a bit slow, a bit lacking in narrative focus, and occasionally a bit redundant and hyperbolic. The drama and tragedy of the bomb and its immediate aftermath are hard to compete with as Nakazawa follows his protagonist into young adulthood in the decade after the bomb. It was important to develop this part of the narrative, to show the long-term impact of the bomb, but the stories did not quite live up to the incredibly high standard of the first volumes. Still, I highly recommend this series, I think it is essential reading in a world that seems to have learned little from Hiroshima.

Vincent says

"Gen" este o serie excelent? de 10 volume care dezv?luie ce a însemnat bomba atomic? pentru locuitorii Hiroshimei. Aceast? lucrare autobiografic? (de dimensiuni impresionante ?i colorat? în alb ?i negru) reu?e?te s? evoce ororile tr?ite de cei afecta?i direct de bomb?, egoismul ?i cruzimea acelor japonezi care mai apoi au intrat în contact cu victimele tragediei, ?i suferin?a continu? a celor care au avut ?ansa sa supravie?uiasc? acestei nenorociri.

Travis says

My sixth book for #bannedbooksweek this year and a frequently banned / challenged graphic novel,

according to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund.

<http://cblidf.org/banned-comic/banned-...>

<http://cblidf.org/banned-challenged-co...>

I've read all ten volumes of this manga. Although I think some volumes are stronger than others, "Barefoot Gen" is an important work from a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. His images of the bombing itself as well as his focus on the long term effects of the bombing on Hiroshima and its inhabitants are a part of the story of World War II. They should not be forgotten or censured. Those who did not initially die did suffer greatly all their lives.

The book also focuses on who usually suffers during war: ordinary people, not the powerful who started the war. Neither the Japanese nor the Americans get a pass from the author. The work is neither nationalistic hagiography or demonization, but a call for moral courage from a determined pacifist.

The insistent optimism to not give up, to be tenacious in the face of hardship, is also an excellent lesson for young people.

Sometimes more pacifist propaganda than pacifist art, it is often the latter. If nothing else, it is a story that gives voice to those who were there. They have a right to be heard. Readers have the right to read and decide for themselves.

Sheila says

The conclusion of the epic 10 volume series of the Hiroshima bombing and its long term effects.

Emmy says

Wow...What a series!

Barefoot Gen is a powerful testament to hope and the pain of war. What Nakazawa did here was something special. It's so easy to say "Oh, war is hell!" but he showed us that hell. And it would have been easy to stop the story after the bomb is dropped, but he didn't do that. He showed us life before the bomb, and he continued his tale on eight years afterwards, to show us that the damage had far more effect than that one day. The effects of the bomb weren't just instant death. There were the poor victims who suffered for days before dying, the survivors left with permanent scars, those who died later from radiation sickness, and the many, many people who died at the hands of their neighbors' neglect and cruelty. This series doesn't just say that war is hell. It shows us the many layers of that hell, and it reminds us constantly of our shared humanity, and how we need to support and rely on each other.

This powerful series should be required reading for so many people. Because we don't realize just how terrible something is unless we've lived it. And we're so quick to forget the horrors unless it directly impacts us. Thank you, Nakazawa-san. This was an amazing journey.

Jared Pangier says

Barefoot Gen (?????) is the first Japanese Manga I've read all the way through (in Japanese). It has taken months, but I just finished the last volume today, July 1st.

It all started when I shared with my students the value of perspective, the importance of seeing the histories and hearing the stories of people who lived through and died in tragedies. I told my students how visiting Hiroshima changed my life because of the testimonies I heard from the survivors and their families. My story brought one student to speak up and recommend this story, a story from one of the survivors from Hiroshima.

Keiji Nakazawa, like many others, lived through this tragedy with many losses along the way, including all of his "inner" family members by the age of 27. Eventually, Mr. Nakazawa made use of his cartooning talents to share with others the many sides of the Hiroshima bombing, including all the dark sides of war. Through this story, ?????, which is a fictionalized version of Nakazawa-san's own story, I have been granted a glimpse at a dark part of history--something that all people living should see. Through these various lenses, perhaps, just perhaps, people will begin to see how atrocious and destructive war really is.

As a story, I give Barefoot Gen 4 out of 5 stars, but as an important piece of history, 5 out of 5 does not suffice. Please read it for yourself in English or Japanese.

Now for me, in less than 24 hours, I leave with my wife to Cambodia. I go there to show her a different world, so we can appreciate our own privileged life. I go there to revisit a world I've seen before and the world of my own historical fiction, so that I can accurately show others a piece of history so tragic yet so important to understand. Please go there for yourself.

If we all opened up our eyes and lives to the variety of experience out there, we might just start to know better; we might just start to truly put ourselves in others' shoes.

Here's to perspectives and actually learning from history.

Erika says

The whole series of Barefoot Gen was amazing. It made me realize how horrible the bomb really was, and all the truth behind what happened. I'm very glad I read these books.

Indah Threaz Lestari says

Meskipun tidak dapat jilid 1, 6, dan 7, syukurlah aku membeli tujuh jilid manga ini di KGF 2012 kemarin dengan harga satuannya 10 ribu rupiah saja (boasting mode on).

Jadi teringat waktu SD atau SMP (nggak ingat lagi deh) aku membeli komik terjemahan jilid 1-nya, yang berjudul Gen Si Kaki Ayam (mungkin bisa dibilang manga pertama yang kumiliki karena Elex belum menerbitkan Candy-Candy), dan sialnya tidak menemukan lanjutannya lagi sampai saat ini.

Kisah Gen Nakaoka (yang kemungkinan besar kisah Keiji Nakazawa sendiri) ini memberi gambaran kepada

kita tentang kehidupan rakyat biasa di Hiroshima, sebelum dan sesudah peristiwa bersejarah jatuhnya bom atom pertama di dunia.

Sebagai warga salah satu negara yang dijajah Jepang saat PD II, sebelum membaca jilid 1 komik ini dulu, kukira kehidupan rakyat Jepang damai sejahtera saat tentaranya sibuk menjajah negara lain. Minimal seperti rakyat AS yang *ignorance* saat negara dan tentaranya asyik berperang dan menghancurkan negara lain. Tapi ternyata rakyat biasa Jepang sama menderitanya dengan rakyat negara yang dijajah, khususnya menjelang berakhirnya perang. Seperti tersurat dalam sejarah, perang memang hanya demi keuntungan dan ambisi segelintir orang, meski digembar-gemborkan dengan "atas nama rakyat" atau "demi kehormatan negara", atau pembenaran-pembenaran lainnya.

Jilid 2 dst menceritakan *hell on earth for the dying and the living* setelah bom atom dijatuhkan, mengisahkan bagaimana tokoh utamanya melanjutkan hidup dan tetap bertahan meskipun tragedi dan bencana datang silih berganti.

Wheat pushes its shoots up through the winter frost, gets stepped on again and again, and send strong roots down into the earth so it can grow straight and tall... until one day it bears fruit.

Juan Manuel says

The conclusion to this epic series. Not as groundbreaking as other volumes, but still a worthy ending and a powerful message that seems today more relevant than ever.
Will be coming back to this series.

Orion says

Barefoot Gen, Volume Ten: Never Give Up by Keiji Nakazawa

The Barefoot Gen series documents the life of young Gen Nakaoka of Hiroshima starting when he is six years old in the summer of 1945 when the USA dropped an atomic bomb on the city. Never Give Up is the tenth and final volume of the series, and is set in Hiroshima in 1953, eight years after the events of the first book. As in previous books, the characters suffer from memories of both the terrors of the war and the horrendous day the atomic bomb destroyed their city and caused their lives to change forever. Gen and three other orphans of the bomb live together in a small shack and dream of opening their own business making and selling the dresses they now sell as street corner vendors. Gen has also been learning to be an artist while working at a sign shop, and falls in love with his boss's daughter. Yet the long lasting effects of the atomic bomb on the people of Hiroshima's bodies and their souls will not let them live in peace. Memories of the horrendous day and its aftereffects continue to fill their minds, as the silent poison of radiation sickness eats away at their bodies.

The anti-war theme that has pervaded this series, starting in the first book with Gen's father and his opposition to the war that the military and the emperor have forced on the nation, is especially visible in this, the last book of the series. In this book the author outlines Japanese war crimes and makes a call for a world without war, especially calling for an end to atomic weapons. The book opens with a short two page introduction called "Gen's Message: A Plea For Nuclear Abolition" written by the translators and editors of Project Gen. It states clearly that "nuclear weapons and nuclear power cannot coexist with life on Earth." This strong pacifist message against war and nuclear power gives the ten volume story of the bomb and its aftermath a structure and a meaning far beyond simple history.

Chris Blocker says

Never Give Up, the tenth and final volume of the Barefoot Gen series, is a worthwhile end. Like its immediate predecessor, it is also guilty of being a bit too episodic and losing the primary thread, but its a little more focused and does provide a mostly satisfactory ending.

Reaching the end of the series, seeing the entire story for what it is, I have a few thoughts on the story as a whole. Throughout, I felt the series relied too heavily on comic violence and mischief. I'm sure there was a reason for this, perhaps the author wished to lighten up an otherwise bleak story. Personally, I found it distracting. Characters were frequently beating one another up over silly matters, urinating on one another, throwing feces, mooning, and farting. Once or twice is one thing, but it happens many times in each volume. There's an immaturity to these moments that is often reflected in the illustrations themselves. How is it that a series that's clearly and constantly proposing peace is so insensitive to the feelings of others? Nations are expected to stop all wars and dispose of all armaments, but our characters maim and even kill those who disagree with them, sometimes over the smallest argument. I agree with the author's anti-war propaganda, yet I cannot deny the hypocrisy displayed in the sanction of needless violence.

As the series progressed, especially after the midpoint, the story became less and less relevant. New characters were haphazardly injected into the story just to create new plotlines. Some of these characters were introduced and quickly assimilated just so our protagonist would have someone to mourn by the book's end. Better foresight would've allowed the introduction of these characters in earlier volumes and allowed the reader to grow attached to them. Unfortunately, none of the deaths in the final three volumes carried any weight. There wasn't time to develop the relationship. The last death that was truly meaningful was the death of Gen's mother; her death needed to be the climax of the series. One volume after that to tie up the story would've been fine. In my opinion, the last three volumes could've been condensed and served as the eighth and final volume.

Despite the crude moments and, at time, illustrations, and despite the poor plotting, Barefoot Gen is stellar when it's at its best. The horrors of atomic weaponry are rendered in a way that forever seers itself in the reader's memory. Even with the limitations of the black-and-white cartoons, Nakazawa really put his soul into some of the illustrations, nightmares and all. The agony of the fire, the stench of the corpses, the intense pain of losing control of your body years after the disaster—all of these are vividly on display. The way characters thrown their heads back at awkward angles as blood projects from their throat, the way the landscape is littered with corpses whose hands are outstretched, but whose fingers are curled, the way the sun continues to burn and give life—all are rendered with extreme care. The Barefoot Gen series is at its best when it shows the emotions—the heartache, the horror, the hope—and at its worst when it tries to be preachy or comical.
