

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

# Why Captain America Had to Die... and Why He Won't Stay Dead.

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*Assignment Editor*

Usually comic book heroes are mourned only by those in the graphic novel/comic book know. The death of the first Flash was all but ignored by most mass media outlets, Bucky's passing was largely overlooked (even now most readers are saying to themselves "whose Bucky?"), while the murder of Batman's second Robin, poor orphaned Jason Todd, barely held the North American public's attention for

more than a millisecond.

However, the slaughter and subsequent demise of the sublime Captain America has been a top story for both CNN, Fox News and the New York Times in recent weeks.

A main player and champion of freedom for Marvel Comics, Captain America was first created in 1941. His first battle was against Nazis. Later, he fought union organizers and red flag waving communists. His gruesome assassination, the grand

finale of a month-long series entitled Civil war, has left many disheartened fans wondering why Captain America had to die and whether or not the comic book genius of Marvel will bring him back to life.

The series begins with the United States federal government passing an act which requires that all superheroes register with the government, a process that means all heroes have to reveal their secret identifies in exchange for a salary and pension plan. After the act is passed and made into a law,

the characters living in the Marvel universe split into two groups.

The first oppose the law on the grounds that it violates the rights and freedom that heroes and all Americans share. The other side advocates the act as a responsible obligation and a way to ensure that rogue superheroes can't get away with breaking other laws. Civil war breaks out after the characters choose sides. Ultimately the series ends with the side willing to be registered winning, and the assassination of Captain America (or Cap as he was lovingly referred to).

As noted by many readers, the series can be read as an allegorical commentary in relation to the events of Sept. 11, and the introduction of the Patriot Act in the United States. This has sparked a lot of debate over whether Captain America's death was a political statement. Essentially diehard fans believe that Captain America has long been drawn in order to fight America's most hated enemies—the Nazis, the Russians, and now he has died fighting the United States government.

Second year student Martha Kelley thinks that this should be noted.

"I think the idea that Captain America would fight against the American government demonstrates that it's own governing body has become the greatest threat to American ideals."

Dylan Miller, The Lightning Bolt Comics owner and graphic novel fanatic, doesn't entirely agree.

"Well, the story is about how much freedom people will trade for security, and it's about the society of fear in America right now. The storyline is a political statement. That being said the ultimate death of Captain America was simply the nature of comic books and was not really a political statement."

He explained that most comic book series need a big finish.

"The storyline suffered several delays, and lasted so long and contained so many characters that a major player had to die in order to justify to the fans the months of waiting. I also think that the author wanted to be put some reality into the plot too but mostly the death is just how comics work."

Considering the recent resurrections of Jason Todd in DC comics, Jean Grey in the X-MEN series, one has to wonder if Captain America will stay dead or like his counterparts, be reborn.

Miller says that this is highly likely. "Oh he'll be back. They can't bring him back to life right away because it will look weak in the light of all the media attention but if they can figure out a clever way to do it, Captain America will be fighting for freedom again in a few years....Superheroes rarely stay dead."

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