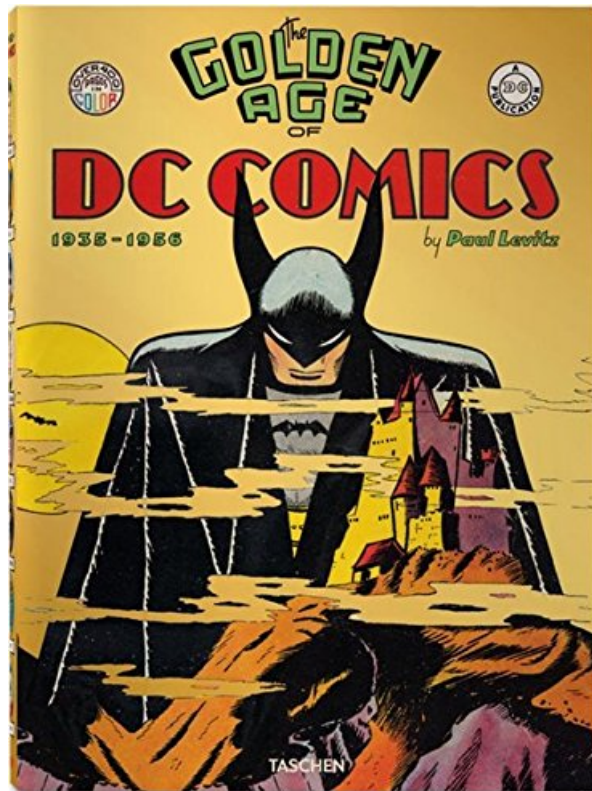


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- Original language: German
- Dimensions: 12.99" h x 1.69" w x 9.65" l,
- Binding: Hardcover

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151 of 154 people found the following review helpful.

The answer to whether you should double dip if you have the 75 Years book

By Modrnknight

First, a few words about the previous Paul Levitz book, "75 Years of DC Comics." Those of us who have purchased it know that it is a humongous book that you need a forklift to pick up. In its 12 x 16" size and almost 20 pounds, a solid coffee table was needed to support it. The book, as the title suggested, covered the entire history of DC Comics...and was very expensive.

Now, Taschen Publishing has issued a smaller book based on the previous unwieldy book. As a matter of fact, they are releasing five separate volumes, each pulling material from the 75 Years book, and each highlighting a distinctive historical age in comic books. The first release is this one, devoted to - as the title suggests - The Golden Age of DC Comics, an era ending in 1955, when the Silver age was born.

The first thing you will notice when you compare the 75 Years book to this more recent one is the 75 Years book looks like that muscular bully next to the skinny kid in those old Charles Atlas ads that ran in comics. That's not to say that the new book isn't a respectable size in its own right. It measures 9" x 12" and what intrigued me was the fact that it is listed as 400+ pages devoted to just the Golden Age of DC comics. The original 75 years book covered the origins and Golden age of DC in 239 pages... so, the thought of an additional 200 pages to a DC fan was sheer heaven. Prior to ordering this more recent book, I had read interviews that Levitz gave where he said the difference would be more illustrations than before.

Like many of you, I wondered if it would be worth a double dip. I decided to take a chance and purchased it. I have just completed a side-by-side comparison that took several hours. I hope that the following review will help you decide.

The \$60 price tag on the Golden Age of DC Comics is heftier than it should be. However, Amazon's price of approximately \$35 is just about right. It's a really good-looking book on its own and it fits nicely on your lap while you are reading it. It is filled with illustrations from DC comics of the time period and, in that sense, it fulfills its purpose to someone who hasn't purchased the 75 Years of DC Comics book. But, for those who have, I want to point out what has changed...and where it is better, the same, and worse.

When you open the Golden Age book, the first section you come across is an interview with artist Joe Kubert. This is a nice new addition that runs seven pages. What follows it is a reworking of the 75 Years book. And I do mean a reworking! I thought it would be relatively easy to do a side-by-side comparison

because at first glance it does look like the 75 Years in layout. However, it only takes a few pages into the new book to realize that it does not follow page by page. For the new volume -- and I say new only in terms of publication date -- they have moved illustrations all over the place. Through all that, difficult as it was, I still did a comparison of the two books to see how many new pictures have been added. Doing so, the first thing I noticed is that there hasn't been actually approximately 200 new pages of illustrations added... but, rather, it is more a case of re-using pictures from the first book but oftentimes enlarging them to fit a full page. In certain cases, this works because some of the items were postage-stamp sized pictures in the first book, and now can be seen in much bigger and clearer detail. However, there are some that were large in the first book that it now been shrunk down. Some of the ones that were enlarged I have to question why? One splash page of a Batman story which was just one of several illustrations on a page in the 75 Years book has now been increased to cover two full pages in the Golden Age book. Why?

A comparison by the way of the front and back covers of the 75 Years book shows they have been alternated for the Golden age book. Where Superman was on the front cover and Batman on the back is now reversed for the Golden age book.

One thing I did notice right away from glancing at the text in the opening chapter of the Golden age book is that several paragraphs have been eliminated from the 75 Years. Other text has been trimmed or slightly revised. So, too, a number of illustrations from 75 Years have been cut down to show a panel or two, as opposed to several panels of a comic page in the original book. It is true that the new book sometimes will expand a little bit on panels, but more often than not we are seeing less in the new book than the original. Also gone are the fold out timetables and the glossy gold-colored pages saying "Golden Age of Comics".

(A quick note: both books take time out to salute major talents in the comic book field of the 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s. Please know, I hold masters like Will Eisner and Jack Cole in the highest regards, but the pages here illustrate the Spirit and Plastic Man, respectively, neither of which were produced by DC comics in the 1940s. Yes, they work with these characters now, but I truly feel that these books should be representative of the actual time period for DC comics. I feel the same way about the inclusion of EC comics in both volumes. In my opinion, they just don't belong.)

Now let's look at what has been added to the Golden Age book. From my account, there are approximately 120 new illustrations. Not 120 pages of new illustrations... just 120 additional pictures. Do these make it worthwhile for of someone who has the 75 Years book to buy the Golden Age? If the panels, covers, and photos were a significant addition, I would've said yes. But, for the most part, these are run-of-the-mill that add nothing. The best was in the original.

I do think that possibly with all five of the new volumes sitting on your shelf, it will make a very nice history. And much easier to manage than the original 75 Years. If you have no intention of picking up the 75 Years of DC Comics book, then, yes!, please go ahead and purchase the Golden age book and the ones that will follow. BUT if you have the 75 Years, with its sheer size and quite a few illustrations that don't make it into the newer book...and more text...you're probably better off keeping the 75 Years edition and passing on the five volumes will follow. I don't see reasons of any significance to own both.

So, in summary:

PROS:

1. Reduced size and weight of new book makes it much easier to pick up and read.
2. About 120 additional illustrations.
3. Some pictures that were small in first book are larger now.

4. Cheaper to buy if you want only one or two volumes.
5. New Joe Kubert interview.

#### CONS:

1. Missing and reduced text.
2. Not 200+ pages of additional material; just same material rearranged and spread out over smaller-dimensioned book.
3. Some of the illustrations that have been increased in size are good but for the most weren't necessary.
4. Due to decreased page dimensions, some multi-panel illustrations have been reduced to one or two panels.
5. The approximately 120 additional illustrations are of less interest and add nothing.
6. Glossy pages denoting chapter beginnings have been eliminated and now use regular material.
7. Eliminated foldout time table pages.
7. As a set, the five volumes together will be more expensive than the 75 Years book.

So, to answer the question: should I double dip? The answer is no.

I love DC comics, and I have done so since I was about eight years old back in 1963 when I first discovered Superman, Batman, and the other four-color wonders. Whatever way you decide to go on this, whether it be the original 75 Years book, or the individual five volumes, you are in for a very wonderful history of the best comic book company ever.

21 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

Loved It Even Though I Essentially Already Owned It

By David Swan

Right after I ordered *The Golden Age of DC Comics* by Taschen I had a sudden fear. What if the book was nothing more than a reprinting of the Golden Age section from *75 Years of DC Comics: The Art Of Modern Mythmaking*. Well, my fear was warranted and this indeed is the first section of a book I already own. Having said that I don't entirely regret buying this book. It does contain new material including an interview with Joe Kubert and many new images but everything written by Paul Leyritz is kept unaltered as far as I can tell. As much as I love this books much larger parent there is one big problem with *75 Years of DC Comics*; it is simply unwieldy as reading material.

You don't just pull *75 Years of DC Comics* off a shelf and peruse it. You have to make plans to read it. Unless you have ever seen and held the book it is nearly impossible to get a sense of its size. In 2004 Taschen put out a biography on Mohamed Ali and the XXL version weighed in at a staggering 75 pounds. It was not meant to be read. Although *75 Years of DC Comics* isn't nearly that large the effort it takes to pull it out of its protective case and somehow either rest it on the floor or, God help you, lay it across your legs, is not insignificant. Good luck trying to just hold it in your hands. *Golden Age of DC Comics* is the portable, readable version of *75 Years* and that alone may make it worth buying. *75 Years* is like the collectable version to *Golden Age's* readable version.

*The Golden Age of DC Comics* is not for everyone. Casual comic readers or non DC fans will likely be quickly bored. The only story in the book is the story of DC comics. It's mostly images of comic covers and interior images, b/w photos of children reading comics, images of printing presses, famous and not so famous personalities from comics golden age, demonstrations of color separation in the four color image process. There are tons of quotes and short blurbs about DC accompanying the images but this is not a wordy book. You can fly through the 400 page book pretty quickly. The images are all beautiful although Taschen didn't exactly bust their budget on high quality comics as most of the comic covers shown here are probably about Fair condition. I absolutely love this book but I am precisely the target audience. I'll give it five stars

despite essentially owning it already because it's just that cool.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

**A Gem with Dozens and Dozens of Visual Facets**

By J. R. Trtek

This is a nice companion volume to the much larger (and more difficult to manage) *75 Years of DC Comics* by Levitz. The book is almost exclusively visuals with captions, but what visuals they are, including not only artwork from DC's Golden Age, but also behind the scenes photos of production and distribution. There is an interview with Joe Kubert, but the main text is a long general but still illuminating essay by Levitz on the era. If you're looking for a detailed narrative history, be advised that this isn't it. The collage of images in this hefty book, however, give a number of snapshots which, collectively, give a distinctive portrait of DC from its beginnings to the mid-1950s. Highly recommended.

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