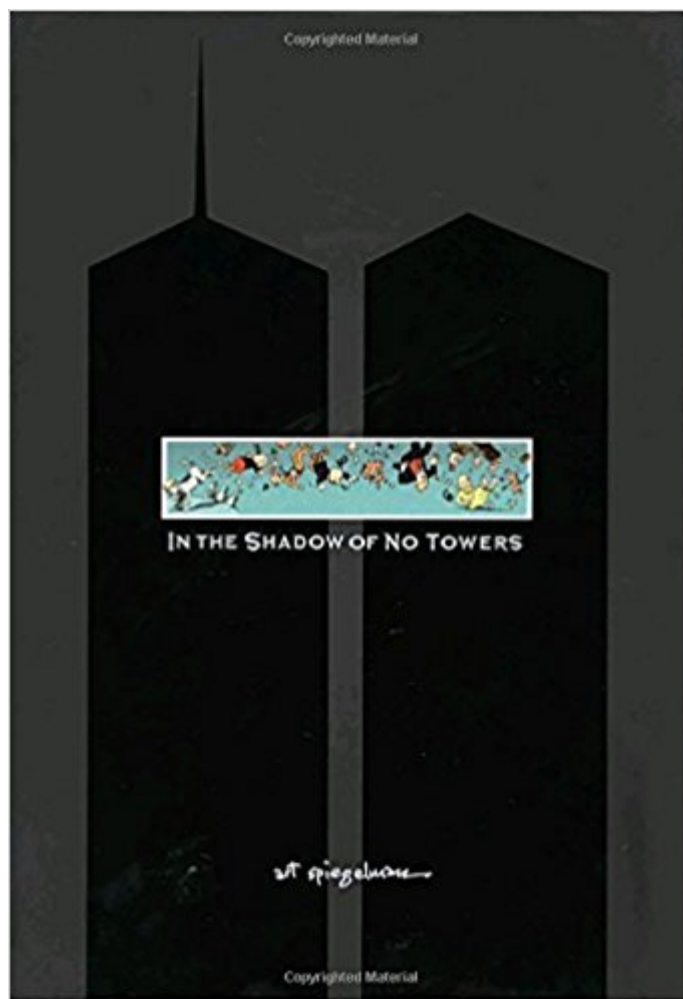


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# In The Shadow Of No Towers (Pantheon Graphic Novels)



## Synopsis

For Art Spiegelman, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Maus*, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 were both highly personal and intensely political. In *The Shadow of No Towers*, his first new book of comics since the groundbreaking *Maus*, is a masterful and moving account of the events and aftermath of that tragic day. Spiegelman and his family bore witness to the attacks in their lower Manhattan neighborhood: his teenage daughter had started school directly below the towers days earlier, and they had lived in the area for years. But the horrors they survived that morning were only the beginning for Spiegelman, as his anguish was quickly displaced by fury at the U.S. government, which shamelessly co-opted the events for its own preconceived agenda. He responded in the way he knows best. In an oversized, two-page-spread format that echoes the scale of the earliest newspaper comics (which Spiegelman says brought him solace after the attacks), he relates his experience of the national tragedy in drawings and text that convey—with his singular artistry and his characteristic provocation, outrage, and wit—the unfathomable enormity of the event itself, the obvious and insidious effects it had on his life, and the extraordinary, often hidden changes that have been enacted in the name of post-9/11 national security and that have begun to undermine the very foundation of American democracy.

## Book Information

Series: Pantheon Graphic Novels

Board book: 40 pages

Publisher: Pantheon; First Edition edition (September 7, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375423079

ISBN-13: 978-0375423079

Product Dimensions: 10.1 x 0.9 x 14.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 63 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #54,337 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #7 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Manga > Historical Fiction](#) #58 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Political Freedom](#) #105 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Terrorism](#)

## Customer Reviews

Catastrophic, world-altering events like the September 11 attacks on the United States place the millions of us who experience them on the "fault line where World History and Personal History collide." Most of us, however, cannot document that intersection with the force, compression, and poignancy expressed in Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers*. As in his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Maus*, cartoonist Spiegelman presents a highly personalized, political, and confessional diary of his experience of September 11 and its aftermath. In 10 large-scale pages of original, hard hitting material (composed from September 11, 2001 to August 31, 2003), two essays, and 10 old comic strip reproductions from the early 20th century, Spiegelman expresses his feelings of dislocation, grief, anxiety, and outrage over the horror of the attacks---and the subsequent "hijacking" of the event by the Bush administration to serve what he believes is a misguided and immoral political agenda. Readers who agree with Spiegelman's point of view will marvel at the brilliance of his images and the wit and accuracy of his commentary. Others, no doubt, will be jolted by his candor and, perhaps, be challenged to reexamine their position. The central image in the sequence of original broadsides, which returns as a leitmotif in each strip, is Spiegelman's Impressionistic "vision of disintegration," of the North Tower, its "glowing bones...just before it vaporized." (As downtown New Yorkers, Spiegelman and his family experienced the event firsthand.) But the images and styles in the book are as fragmentary and ever-shifting as Spiegelman's reflections and reactions. The author's closing comment that "The towers have come to loom far larger than life...but they seem to get smaller every day" reflects a larger and more chilling irony that permeates *In the Shadow of No Towers*. Despite the ephemeral nature of the comic strip form, the old comics at the back of the book have outlasted the seemingly indestructible towers. In the same way, Spiegelman's heartfelt impressions have immortalized the towers that, imponderably, have now vanished. --Silvana Tropea

Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist Spiegelman's new work is an inventive and vividly graphic work of nonfiction. It's an artful rant focused on the events of 9/11 and afterward by a world-class pessimist ("after all, disaster is my muse"). The artist, who lives in downtown Manhattan, believes the world really ended on Sept. 11, 2001---it's merely a technicality that some people continue to go about their daily lives. He provides a hair-raising and wry account of his family's frantic efforts to locate one another on September 11 as well as a morbidly funny survey of his trademark sense of existential doom. "I'm not even sure I'll live long enough," says a chain-smoking, post-9/11 cartoon-mouse Spiegelman, "for cigarettes to kill me." The book is a visceral tirade against the Bush administration ("brigands suffering from war fever") and, when least

expected, an erudite meditation on the history of the American newspaper comic strip, born during the fierce circulation wars of the 1890s right near the World Trade Center site in lower Manhattan. This beautifully designed, oversized book (each page is heavy board stock) opens vertically to offer large, colorful pages with Spiegelman's contemporary lamentations along with wonderful reproductions of 19th-century broadsheet comic strips like Richard Outcault's Hogan's Alley and Rudolf Dirck's Katzenjammer Kids. Old comics, Spiegelman (Maus) writes, saved his sanity. "Unpretentious ephemera from the optimistic dawn of the 20th century... they were just right for an end-of-the world moment." This is a powerful and quirky work of visual storytelling by a master comics artist. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

I treasure both the original and the following Spiegelman's book. They are sheer genius, and my family also enjoyed the style and the content. Every possible emotion I endured while tenaciously devouring the stories. My 4 children were teenagers when the first book came out. Years later, my Son bought the whole set for me as a gift. He's thoughtful that way..... I cherish all of them. The stories were indelibly envisioned, and I felt the anguish of feeling(s) felt by the family and the story teller(s). A world treasure in a format that enables slow reading, or hungry reading, whatever you can digest at the time. NEVER FORGET !

Great narrative from a great author. I have Maus 1 and 2 multiple times (came across them during a college English class as required reading) and found that he had written this as well. Gave it a shot and was not disappointed. I saw that people were complaining about the binding but with the type of paper used binding it is difficult, but the binding does stay together.

Spiegelman has created another GN that is nearly as good as Maus I and II. I would highly recommend this read. His illustrations are wonderful. His insight, amazing. If you like graphic novels, this is one you should not pass up. I also highly recommend the seller, who shipped out the book promptly as well as protectively.

If you've ever read and at least appreciated Maus, you need to read this! It's Spiegelman's personality and a lot of Maus makes a lot more sense after reading this. This is a big, board book, so it stands up to punishment and it's quite inexpensive used.

For anyone frustrated by our nation's response to 9/11, this book is a fresh and welcome perspective. Spiegelman captures the confusion and disbelief felt that day by anyone who witnessed the terrible tragedy of the destruction of the World Trade Center. He also includes a history lesson about how comics relate to journalism. From the author of *Maus*, and *Maus II*, here is another graphic masterpiece.

Kind of memorializes how America was with the events of 9/11. Was surprised on the size of the book, but enjoyed Spiegelman's *Maus* and this one doesn't disappoint.

very good

Spiegelman could have written another *Maus* book. Instead he raises the bar with a self-analytical view of his personal reaction to 9/11 and the subsequent US government reaction. True to form, the content is written as a graphic novel (read: cartoon), but similar to *Maus* it loses no emotional impact. I have to admit I didn't "get" everything he was writing - perhaps because I wasn't there. But I was still left feeling the impact of the tragedy - this is important to remember in light of the call to arms and global splintering that's followed. Even if you don't agree with his politics, this is an important read.

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