



Powers: Bureau, Vol. 1: Undercover

Brian Michael Bendis (Text) , Michael Avon Oeming (Illustrations)

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The newest chapter of the Eisner Award-winning Powers is here - and it's a bold game-changer! Now that all powers cases are federal cases, Christian Walker and Deena Pilgrim are now federal agents, and must learn to live by the new rules. But when they find themselves dealing with the biggest powers cases in the entire country, will this new life close the closet full of skeletons Deena carries with her? (Absolutely not!) Walker and Deana are up to their necks in the most dangerous chase of their careers when they're faced with a case so dangerous it will take more than just their expertise to solve. Also, Deena is pregnant! So there's that. Get on board the creator-owned series that shows cops and capes like you've never seen them before!

COLLECTING: Powers: Bureau 1-6

Powers: Bureau, Vol. 1: Undercover Details

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From Reader Review Powers: Bureau, Vol. 1: Undercover for online ebook

Mike says

I think Bendis and Oeming got their jizz back. The hiatus from publishing this long-ass series is over (for some period) and it's about time we got some action-adventure and good hard-ass, unforgivingly sarcastic dialogue.

This is a nice dense read. Lots of action, twists of plot, tons of juicy, creatively constructed foul language and fun ways for the story to go sideways. Everything about this book is a satisfying read. I am full to the brim with the pleasure.

If you're a fan of Bendis & Oeming I bet this will be a great read for you. If you dislike their work this will probably be way too intensely their kind of stuff for you. Like, I really like craft beer but I'm not a big hops guy. I don't like my beer to taste like flowers and air freshener, but some folks love that. For them, Portland beer is amazing because these fuckers just DUMP the hops in beer around here. Me, I have come to really despise that type of beer, so thank god there's dudes who take pity (or feel the same way I do) and make something with a little malt character.

Favourite moments in this book are when Deena Pilgrim is giving shit to *everyone* around her. "Is this your first powers case, porn 'stache?" "I think irresponsible use of powers sperm, I think of you." It's like a symphony of sarcasm and sailor mouth. Anne, you been reading this Powers? I think it's ripe for you.

The art in this volume takes on a new look to go with the newly upgraded status of our characters. Oeming's art really looks this and moody - and I think it's due to the colourist Filardi. Good choice boys, this is a keeper. Thick, chunky, evocative - it's loose and expressive, makes the pages flow easily and gives off a vibe of extra emotion that you don't get in the hyper-realism of many art teams out there.

Shannon Appelcline says

A good continuation of Powers. I'm thrilled to *finally* see it back.

With Walker and Pilgrim now in the Bureau, it's great to see that Bendis really changes the way his procedural works. This isn't the one-clue-after-another of the last 14 volumes. It's now about surveillance and even undercover work. It's a nice change to freshen up the comic.

It's also interesting to see Bendis playing with time, with lots of flashbacks, creating an interesting narrative that does a nice job of hiding some facts until just the right point.

Meanwhile, the case is bizarre and icky, but still a nice change of pace. I didn't love the Pilgrim-under-the-influence-of-powers-AGAIN element of it, but I did like the return of characters from Powers, Vol. 13: Z, which is a nice bit of continuity.

Overall, the book is strong, but it really takes off in the last issue, which is superb.

Sonic says

OMG, this is so awesome! Just like POWERS has always been! The characters are so real, and their interactions so hilarious, and the stories so exciting, ... it is so good I cannot find the words, ...

YES! (That's the best I can do right now.)

Emily says

Good story, characters and artwork. I'll read more.

There's a ton of swearing, like an HBO level of swearing, enough that I'm commenting on it, which I usually don't. If that's a deal-breaker, take heed.

Adriano Barone says

Ho nascosto il commento, ma per ogni evenienza scrivo anche qui

SPOILER

Sempre tutto bellissimo, ma il subplot sul fatto che Deena resti incinta senza stupro fisico, ma comunque in forma coatta con lo sperma del Potere che l'ha semplicemente sfiorata... non so. Vedremo come si evolverà nei prossimi volumi (se Bendis e Oeming mai riprenderanno, dopo Powers Federali 2 non mi risulta uscito più nulla neanche in USA, e dopo il passaggio da Marvel a Dc, dubito che nonostante i buoni rapporti che Bendis mantiene con Marvel gli facciano continuare la pubblicazione di Powers con Icon...). Diciamo che mi sembra proprio una cosa da cui noi uomini non riusciamo a sfuggire.

Xisix says

This series has a similar thing in common to the Watchmen. Deals with people with "powers." Superheroes that are required to be registered (from vague memory - something Tony Stark initiated in another world yes?) Anyway ... that's not so important. Women are acquiring super spunk in a darkened noir-esque setting. Reluctant Federal agents go after evildoers. Particularly appreciate strong female protagonist's character. Artwork seems a bit simplistic in a way but grows on you. The style leaning more towards cartoons plays against the serious writing. anyway ... not shabby. Only have first volume so will see if second falls into my claws down road.

Mike says

What a read! We are now about 14 volumes into the Powers saga. After Chicago is nearly destroyed in an

"incident", super-powered individuals, or "Powers", are required to register and all criminal cases involving Powers are now Federal. Christian Walker and Deena Pilgrim have been transferred to the FBI and battle Powers and crime families.

Patrick says

One of the things I like best about this series is that it's always changing. It never gets stale and old because it's repeating the same thing over and over again. That's hard to do over the course of 15 books.

In fact, off the top of my head, I can't think of a single other comic that's done it so well. I can think of some series that maintain a consistently high quality over 15 books, Hellboy springs to mind, but the tone and type of story stay largely the same.

There are plenty of books that change drastically over their run, Fables for example, but it's rare that their stories are constantly excellent.

Anyway. Powers is knocking it out of the park for me. It's always interesting. There's a steady mix of long term story arcs to provide mystery and short term arcs to provide closure. The banter is top-notch, even Whedoneque at times. The characters are real...

Yeah. I think it's safe to say at this point that this is one of my favorite comics. Highly recommended.

Jeff Lanter says

I've been reading Powers for years now and while I know some people are fatigued by the series or would prefer if it didn't "relaunch," I'm okay with it, because after all of this time, Bendis still has new ideas and new surprises for fans. I think this book is meant to be one where someone who may have watched the TV show can jump in and read the comic, but honestly, I don't know if it works well that way. There is so much backstory and characters that have been built up over the years in Powers that some of the more meaningful parts of this story would be lost to someone new to Powers. Regardless of that, this is one of the more out there ideas Bendis has explored so far in Powers and I liked it. This series is still raw and gritty even with some more Sci-Fi stories being explored instead of normal street crimes. Best of all, Powers still is funny and has some great one-liners. That is something I always appreciate and enjoy whenever I read or reread it. Maybe it is because I haven't read Powers in a while, but the art and coloring seems like it has improved and I really liked how this book looked. Oeming has always had his unique style, but some of the panels are really well done and made me stop and appreciate them. This is definitely not one of the best Powers volumes, but it is certainly well worth reading and I look forward to as many Powers volumes as Bendis and Oeming decide to make.

TJ Shelby says

So glad this story continued and so sad knowing I only have one more volume left.

Jeff Raymond says

I feel like it's been forever since we had a trade in this series come out. It's a reboot of sorts as we move Deena and Walker to the feds, and not all of it works, but the book on its own is still miles ahead of a lot of the comics out there.

Most importantly, the series still has me anxious to know what'll happen next. Definitely a solid entrypoint, definitely a worthy continuation of the series.

Drew says

Every time I read any significant amount of this comic it's after years of not reading it, because the issues come out so damn rarely. I thought I'd get to blow through a big stack of them tonight after letting a four-year backlog build up, but I just realized I'm missing the last issue of Powers: Bureau, so I'm gonna have to stop after this til I can scrape up \$5 to mail order a copy from Midtown Comics or some shit. Anyway, this series is pretty much Bendis at the top of his game, and the sky's pretty much the limit when he's really on, so of course this rules. After something like 15 issues with barely any presence of my all-time favorite Powers character Deena Pilgrim, she is if anything more essential to this arc than Walker, and therefore I am on cloud 9 about this whole thing. There are tons of previous volumes of this series you should read first if you really wanna dive into this one, but good lord is it ever worth it. This volume was a blast and I can't wait to fix my stupid missing-issue error so I can read more.

Trike says

I am an unabashed fan of the Powers series, which I felt was getting a bit off track and was following the plot of the Ultimate Marvel storyline a little too closely for my taste.

With this iteration, though, Bendis and Oeming have rebooted the series by federalizing all powers cases and recruiting both Pilgrim and Walker into the FBI. It's very much a back-to-basics story in the vein of the original Powers series which also acknowledges what went before. The world the characters live in continues on the same course, but the story of the main characters themselves has been reset... which, now that I think about it, is pretty much what Bendis did with Ultimate Spider-Man.

So there goes that theory.

Anyway, this had all the hallmarks of a great Powers story: intrigue and machinations, organized crime and rogue superbeings, as much sex and violence as you would find in an HBO series, Deena dropping the F-bomb at least a hundred times. I'm on board for more adventures anyway, but I'm curious to see where this takes us, since making Walker an FBI agent can only mean really explosive things are to come.

Here's hoping we don't have to wait as long for the next volume. It felt like waiting on a George R.R. Martin novel. (There's that HBO connection again. HBO should really adapt this to series. I know FX tried a couple years ago, but the F-bombs alone disqualify this for anything other than pay cable.)

Fun factoid: did you know you can't use "F.B.I." in your title unless it's approved by the government? That's why this is called "Powers: Bureau" instead of "Powers: FBI." That's what I hear, anyway.

Sean Gibson says

Playing the genre mashup game is always a good time; I mean, who doesn't love those horror/romance hybrids? (Zombie Fabio, anyone?)

Powers represents one of the more successful early mixed-genre comic titles, featuring superheroes in a street-level crime drama—capcs and cowls meets Guys and Dolls. This isn't a hard-boiled detective story starring Superman, though—sure, there's superpowers and spandex and crime and sleuthing and riffing on plenty of cop show tropes, but there's also prehistoric Neanderthal monkey sex, powered-up self-copulators who can impregnate a lady just by getting a little bit of their special brand of sticky love glue on someone's hands (note to ladies: don't shake hands with that guy), and enough eviscerated bodies to satisfy even the most sadistic B-movie addict.

In other words, it's exceedingly different from, say, Top 10, Vol. 1, which is very much a police procedural in the traditional mold that just happens to feature super-powered characters in a futuristic environment (I highly recommend Top 10, incidentally—it's superb).

In Powers: Bureau, Vol. 1: Undercover, after some 14 volumes or so of watching our main characters Christian Walker and Deena Pilgrim crack case after case, the FBI has taken over jurisdiction for all "powers" cases, meaning that Walker and Pilgrim are now federal agents. It's been a few years since I've dipped my toe in the Powers pool, and either my memory is failing (which is entirely possible, as I introduced myself to someone as "Rod" the other day, and I'm pretty sure that's not my name) or Bendis decided to rev up his David-Mamet-procreates-with-Kevin-Smith-style dialogue to another level of over-the-top zaniness—while Walker remains the more reserved of the two lead characters, he's just as addicted to witty (and obscene) banter as Pilgrim in this outing.

This is a strong continuation of the Powers saga, though probably not a good jumping-on point for new readers despite the fact that it marks the beginning of a new series—too many allusions to prior incidents might leave you scratching your head. So, if you're a Powers neophyte, check out Powers, Vol. 1: Who Killed Retro Girl?. If you're a Powers fan who, like me, took a break for a few years, this is an ideal way to jump back in.

Just make sure you wear rubber gloves so you don't end up pregnant. I can only speak for myself, but a baby bump would not be a good look for me...

Vittorio Rainone says

Per carità, è sempre bello leggere dei due detective Pilgrim e Walker. Ma perché ricominciare, al di là delle vendite? Cosa cambia con l'FBI al posto della polizia? Molto poco, e anzi, in questo nuovo caso che vede un super sperma fecondare persone (uomini come donne) e generare nuovi individui potenziati (contagiando anche la Pilgrim nel frattempo) l'unica cosa che colpisce è una degenerazione del vocabolario di Bendis, con più parolacce e la tendenza forse troppo pesante a trattare tutto come una commedia brillante americana.

Piacevole a leggersi, ma siamo lontani dal Powers che (fino allo scorso volume) fu.
