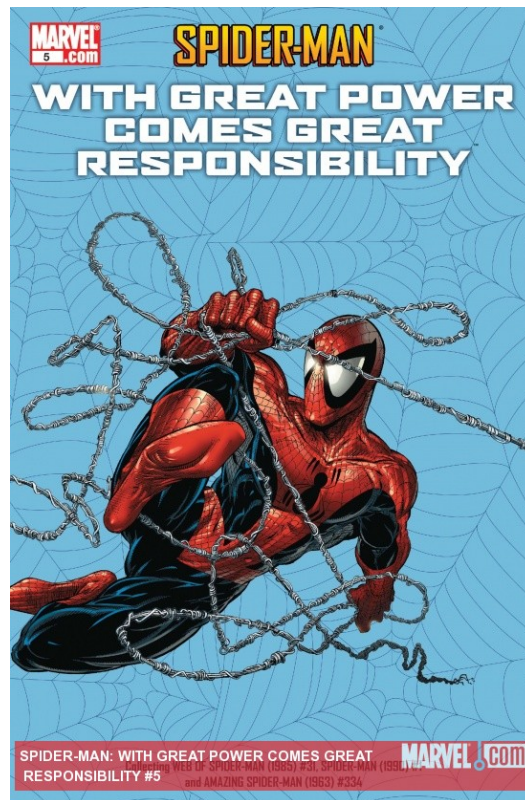


With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

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Spider-Man: With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility (2010)- August 3rd 2011
Written by J.M DeMatteis, Todd Mcfarlane, David Michelinie

With great power comes great responsibility, resonates such hope and strength doesn't it? Yet what does this mean? Why is this popular saying associated with the Spider-man franchise and where does it originate from you may wonder? It "originally appeared as a closing narration in the 1962 *Amazing Fantasy* #15, and was later attributed to Uncle Ben as advice to the young Peter Parker". *Caldwell, Patrick (June 22, 2015).*

Spider-man, or as we all know him as (well some of us), Peter Parker is way more than just your friendly neighbourhood spider man, and I am here to prove it. Spider-man needs to be known as more than just a teenage boy in a latex suit, and I believe Stan Lee wanted to portray this. His teenage realistic qualities is what makes him relatable and gives him the upper hand in regard to the superhero franchise, he isn't a fantasy or an unrealistic portrayal of what a human can achieve, his story is what makes him special, unique even. Stan's vision for spider man was to 'make him just an average teenager with normal life problems' and strived to 'create realistic superheroes as heroes aren't always perfect' *Gelb, David, director. Stan Lee. Disney +, 2023.* and spider-man is a prime and successful example of this.

Spiderman's most amazing qualities are his superpowers, and how they have helped his journey of fighting crime, defeating his enemies and keeping the streets of New York a safe environment for all, from saving lives, to things as simple as rescuing a cat from a tree, wonderful. His 4 unique yet interesting powers consist of his 'incredible agility, allowing him to

catch his enemies off guard with how quickly he can move and contort in battle'. Secondly his awareness, (also known as his 'spidey senses' throughout the franchise) "spider-man has shown an extrasensory awareness of impending danger" allowing him to recognise any sudden danger before its occurrence. Thirdly, his incredible web shooters, which is what makes spider man who he is, "Peter Parker's own invention, which were then upgraded by Tony Stark, Spider-Man's web-shooters can be used as weapons, a means to travel the city, and much more". Lastly, in the updated version of the spiderman characterisation "Peter's armoured suit includes pincers that can be used to help root Spider-Man in place".
Marvel (2023) Spider-Man , Marvel.

If you're not familiar with the formation of spider man's character, then you are probably wondering how did these rare powers come about? And why to this innocent socially awkward teenage boy?

Peter Parker is your average teenager who is a little socially awkward and also a nerdy and very intelligent boy that lives with his Aunt May and his uncle Ben. He lives a normal life until it 'changes after being bitten by a spider during a field trip to a laboratory' *IvyPanda. (2023, July 29)*. As a result of this madness, Peter was then granted super power abilities and 'instead of using them for personal gain, he decided to help others with them' *Marvel (2023) Spider-Man , Marvel.*

The spider-man franchise first originated in 1962 as a comic book, involved in the series of *Amazing Fantasy*, no. 15 by 'Marvel comics' which started off as 'Timely comics' *Sanderson, Peter and Martin, Michael A.. "Spider-Man". Encyclopedia Britannica, 1 Nov. (2023).*



Who is the creator of this amazing character? And why a human spider as a superhero you may wonder? Stanley Martin Lieber best known as the wonderful Stan Lee created the spider-man character back in 1962 when he was working for Marvel comics. Stan Lee had once said that 'teenagers were not respected' and 'why couldn't a teenager be a hero?' One day, while racking his brain for new and fantastic ideas for a superhero character, 'he had seen a fly crawling on the wall' and 'wanted to create a character that could stick to the wall like an insect'. As a child stan lee remembered 'reading a comic called 'the spider' master of man, which stuck with him and inspired the name spiderman' *Gelb, David, director. Stan Lee. Disney +, (2023).*

Steve Ditko, the first ever spider-man illustrator, was able to capture Stans visions perfectly with all the colours, emotions and strengths that stan had envisioned, Stan had said that Steve managed to 'give him personality' through his drawings like no other and that he 'got that feeling of the average guy who turned into a hero and still had problems' "*Stan Lee on What Made Spider-Man So Special.*" *Marvel.com, 13 November (2018)*. Spidermans iconic suit is seen in bold primary colours that are very striking, which is quite odd because spiders are typically black, but that wouldn't work with this type of portrayal, no one would want to read a comic with a scary black spider on the cover which wouldn't fit with spidermans goofy personality. That's why using bright bold colours is the perfect way of enticing people with this creature that normally brings fear. Although it is unclear as to the reasoning for the colour choices of spidermans suit, I do have some theories on its hidden meanings.

At the start of the first spiderman film, Peter starts off his spiderman lifestyle wrestling where he creates his first suit with these specific colours, wrestlers are usually seen in loud and colourful costumes. This then led him to create his iconic suit. The colours are also the american flag

colours, Spiderman is obviously known to be an American character that is based in New York, which would have resonated well with the American public.

Stan had admitted that he didn't 'think it would be as popular as it became' "*Stan Lee on What Made Spider-Man So Special.*" *Marvel.com*, 13 November (2018). However, it spread worldwide and associated him as an American franchise rather than an international character. The colours have a pop Art feel to them which makes me think about bright primary colours that are eye-catching, Pop Art is seen a lot in comic books with its big extravagant writing yet I can see it in Spider-Man's character also. The costume is seen as very 'relatable' and that 'anybody reading Spiderman in any part of the world can imagine that they themselves are under the costume' and that's a 'good thing' "*Stan Lee on What Made Spider-Man So Special.*" *Marvel.com*, 13 November (2018).

The suit is made from a full body skin tight spandex texture, the costume is a mixture of a strict colour palette of blue and red, with gloves, boots and a full face covered mask. Why did Stan Lee want Spiderman to be masked unlike most of the superheroes we know? The mask 'has plastic lenses with a chrome covering that allow Peter to see out, without letting others see in, the lenses also protect Peter's eyes from dust particles and the glare of the sun while he is swinging through the city' this was created in order to keep his identity anonymous while he stuck with his two different lives as Peter Parker and a superhero. 'In addition, the mask helps to conceal Peter's identity by muffling his voice, thus making it unrecognisable to others'. "*Spider-Man's Suit | Marvel Database | Fandom.*" *Marvel Database*.

Like all comic books we see, they are all of a similar look and style and the Spiderman comics are no exception to this. 'Comic art is considered sequential art, as it aims to tell stories in a sequence'. 'Tempone, Denise, and Sol Díaz Castillo. "*What Is a Comic Book and What Are Its Main Features?*" *Domestika*'.

Comics are a way of being extremely experimental and free, which I believe to be quite magical. It gives us the opportunity to express humour, fantasy, social commentary, reality and can feature all sorts of ideas and genres that are possible. The storytelling qualities throughout the Spiderman comics are endless, and they consist of both images and text and also imagery alone. The art of portraying a story without words is a way of communicating a visual storyline that makes the reader aware of what is going on without having to read, which in my opinion is very clever. In the comic book 'The Amazing Spider-Man 2022-present' there are multiple storytelling pages with just images that portray Spiderman fighting crime against his villains which gives us the idea of what is going on and we can almost imagine what is being said, which is very simple yet effective.

Alex Ross spoke about his inspiration for painting Spiderman throughout his career and how it influenced the creative process, 'I've always associated the costume with being a real thing' and wanting to connect my visuals with the idea that there's a person underneath.' Ross, Alex. "*Painting Spider-Man Through the Years – Alex Ross Art.*" *Alex Ross Art*.

In conclusion, Spiderman is more than just a character behind a mask, we are introduced to a fearless teenager that lives two lives, his hero work as Spiderman and the emotional real life problems that Peter faces. This is all shown through the illustrator's storytelling visuals.

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