

TOGETHER WE RISE

New addition to Marvel series unites heroes for interesting flick

By Lauren Sexton
ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Just months before the United States entered World War II, Jack Kirby and Joe Simon released the first issue of a controversial new storyline in Timely Comics, which we now know as Marvel. The hero was the First Avenger—Captain America—and the series tackled real-world problems in an entirely new way.

In honor of the 75th anniversary of that issue, Marvel's *Captain America: Civil War* has hit theaters changing the way people look at movies as they did with comics.

Joe and Anthony Russo's second time directing in the Captain America film trilogy yielded incredible results. Bringing forth the dawn of a new era, not in just Marvel movies, but in the industry itself, the Russos find the perfect balance of character development and action by giving humanity to the superhero genre.

The newest adaptation of *Civil War*, which originally debuted as a comic, stars Chris Evans as the beloved star-spangled man with a plan, and Sebastian Stan portraying the complex Winter Soldier, formerly known as Bucky Barnes, a long-time friend to Steve Rogers. Robert Downey Jr., Scarlett Johansson and Jeremy Renner reprise their roles as Avengers from the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), with the appearance of the new members Scarlet Witch (Elizabeth Olsen), Falcon (Anthony Mackie), Ant Man (Paul Rudd), War Machine (Don Cheadle) and Vision (Paul Bettany).

Directors also introduced two highly anticipated superheroes: the Wakandan Black Panther (Chadwick Boseman) and Spiderman (Tom Holland).

A chain of unfortunate events—the battle of New York (*Avengers*), the fall of Washington D.C. (*Captain America: Winter Soldier*) and the recent tragedy in Sokovia (*Avengers: Age of Ultron*)—has the world believing that the Avengers should be put in check because of the excessive casualties that have occurred since they joined forces.

This causes the morally right Steve Rogers to butt heads with Tony Stark, leading to a problem among the Avengers.

Directors must strive to find the right balance of action and plot, which has historically been a problem. This gives the impression that there is normally less substance inside action films.

The film does an excellent job exhibiting proper use of CGI and action sequences. But *Civil War* is just no action movie. This was the perfect balance of plot and action, exceeding any standards and nonetheless creating new ones.

The blend of plot and action is remarkable, and they deftly mix in aspects of the entire MCU, giving time for more focus on the future, but also development of the past.

There is something about *Civil War* that makes it stand out among all the other movies in the MCU. It gives more humanity to the franchise's classic characters.

The film shows insight into the emotions of superheroes and their normal lives. Viewers can see that even the strongest of people can have mental disorders, emotional issues and tragic events happen to them. It makes it more relatable and distinguishes it from any other superhero film.

Captain America: Civil War is truly a cinematic masterpiece in the art of superhero and action movies. The Russo brothers have yet again shaken the MCU. However, they did not just shatter the hearts of fans, but the standards of producing action films.



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Captain America:

Civil War (2016)

Directed by Anthony

Russo and Joe Russo

PG-13

★★★★★

ALBUM

HOPE

★★★★



ITUNES.APPLE.COM

If Cage the Elephant and Mumford and Sons had a metaphorical, folk-rock baby, it would be The Strumbellas' new album, *Hope*.

Riding the success of their breakout single "Spirits," which graces almost every alternative radio station, the Canadian band is taking its first real step into popularity.

The album acts as a portfolio of the six-piece band singing about hard times and how they'll get through them together. Group vocals accentuate almost every song, giving the entire album a homey feel. The easygoing sound is refined so that it sounds carefree, but not exactly careless.

Hope contains the typical acoustic guitar and clapping rhythms that listeners can find on any indie folk album, but paired with punchy bass and drums, they make the album a true folk-rock hybrid. The duality of the genre is most apparent in the booming track "Young & Wild."

The Strumbellas seem to specialize in spectacular, emotional ballads that leap into large choruses, but that gimmick gets a little overdone throughout *Hope*.

After "Spirits," *Hope* may seem like it becomes a parody of itself to listeners. At some point in the middle of the album, the catchy, foot-stomping tunes all begin to sound the same, just with different lyrics. Same beat, different story.

Those who give the entire album a listen in one go will bounce from melancholy tunes to hearty anthems, leaving them in a grayish state of everything-is-awesome-but-also-sucks.

However, one thing that The Strumbellas get right is storytelling. The heartfelt songs carry stories within themselves, letting listeners relate with their own hardships while still following along. Beautifully specific tracks like "The Night Will Save Us" and "The Hired Band" are just two examples that take listeners on a journey inside lead singer Simon Ward's head.

With lyrics that refer to a literal banjo in the sky, when indie folk fans are feeling hopeless, *Hope* is definitely what they need.

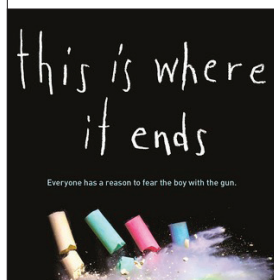
Hope; The Strumbellas; Glassnote Records; 2016

By Abbey Cadieux

BOOK

THIS IS WHERE IT ENDS

★★★★



GOODREADS.COM

School shootings are gruesome, and their occurrences are rooted in damaged social interactions. In *This Is Where It Ends*, author Marieke Nijkamp tries to convey a school shooting situation through the eyes of four teenagers: twins Tomás and Sylvia, JROTC trainee and ex-girlfriend of the antagonist Clair and sister of antagonist Autumn.

This Is Where It Ends is written in a gripping manner. Nijkamp ends each teenager's perspective with a cliffhanger, which keeps the reader lingering on the pages for more and was one of the book's redeeming qualities. In this respect, Nijkamp hit the nail on the head.

The book focuses on the victims of the shooting rather than the shooter, which is an attractive quality. A lot of stories try to delve deeper into the motivations of the shooter to try and answer the question of why. It is refreshing to see Nijkamp developing the victims more. People always remember the stories of the shooter but never remember the victims. This twist of information worked well and added to its appeal.

One blunder this book has is its glorification of school shootings. Nijkamp writes in a way that incorporates good and evil by making the antagonist Tyler dimensionally evil and the students the heroes for surviving and sacrificing. This is turning a serious situation into a Hollywood movie which is risky and a touchy angle for a book like this. The way Nijkamp writes doesn't compliment it.

The story itself could have used more development. Throughout the book, people's backstories and relationships were under-described, leaving it almost bland. Everyone's situation was a stereotype. A kid with a dream feels out of place and despondent. A student skeptical about her career choice but feels pressure by family legacy. These stories are overused.

Overall though the book wasn't a bad read, it's a great read for someone who want something different from the popular fiction genre.

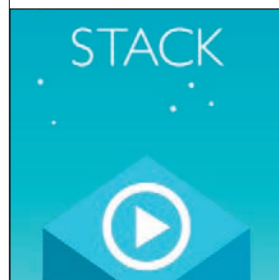
This Is Where It Ends; By Marieke Nijkamp; Sourcebooks; 2016; \$11.10

By Josie Bennett

GAME

STACK

★★★★



ITUNES.APPLE.COM

As the name implies, the application *Stack* is all about stacking. *Stack* is a plain, reflex-based puzzle game where the player is tasked with stacking tiles on top of one another.

The user must to tap the screen to match sliding tiles with the previous-placed tile size. If the player fails to do this, the excess piece or pieces that do not fit will fall. The next tile will be uniform with the new one and this process will continue on and on until the tiles are too small to stack.

Stack is simple, yet challenging, as players must time the tile just right so that it fits on the stack. It is a test of player reflex. The game's addictive nature lends itself to the scoring system in which each tile stacked, whether perfect or slightly off, rewards the player with a point. This scoring system motivates the user to try and try again to reach a larger score.

The art style of the game is simplistic. The screen is spartan, consisting of no more than a multitude of swaying, pastel-colored blocks waiting to be placed upon the background of an equally pastel-colored starry sky. The contrast in color between the background and the tiles is always very distinct, making it very easy to discern between the two. One other nice effect is the transition in colors as the tiles ascend through the level.

Music in *Stack* is non-existent. The only sounds accompanying the player are the clicks and clacks of tile meeting tile and the sound of matching up tiles, which is very satisfying and ascends with pitch as the user makes perfect matches in succession.

Stack is an entertaining and simplistic game with a rather interesting set of mechanics that will keep users trying continuously to build their towers of pastel tiles high into the star-laced night sky.

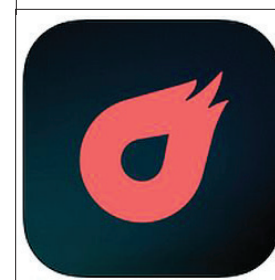
Stack; KETCHAPP; 2016; Available for iPhone and Android

By Giuseppe Parison

APP

WORD FLOW

★★★★



GADGETS.NDTV.COM

Word Flow is an app that allows the user to customize the look and use of any keyboard on their mobile phone.

The utility works by taking the place of the user's original keyboard. Like an emoji keyboard, it is added as an extra in the settings menu. Simply activate it in settings, apply it on the keyboard currently in use, whether it is *iMessage*, *Kik* or any other messaging app and start typing.

A great feature for people with larger phones is *Word Flow's* ergonomic, one-handed mode which puts the entire keyboard at a curved, 90-degree angle for easier accessibility when typing with one hand. The app also includes a mechanic new to the iPhone platform which allows for swipe-typing, a system only previously seen on Android phones. This means users can draw a path among the keys to spell out words they wish to type.

Users can either choose from a set of pre-made themes or create their own custom keyboards. They can edit the keyboard to have different colored letters, digits and symbols as well as a theme color, which encompasses the entire keyboard. It's also possible to place wallpapers as background and employ different sound effects when typing.

The keyboard itself, however, is slightly more difficult to type on than the iPhone's original layout because there are no distinct borders surrounding the letters. Instead, they are made to give the appearance that they are merely floating. However, this is a minor nitpick as this dilemma can be solved through the use of autocorrect and is ultimately not a massive hindrance to the typing experience as a whole. Users may only find themselves missing a letter here and there every once in awhile.

Word Flow is a nice tool that grants the users an increased level of customization. It also helps that the app is published by Microsoft. So, it is a safe bet that this utility will be well supported and optimized as time goes on.

Word Flow; MICROSOFT; 2016; Available for iPhone or Android

By Giuseppe Parison