

■ Book review

Even Batman needed help getting on his feet

Manual offers guidance to would-be superheroes to help them discover and hone their super-duper skills

BY ANDREW MCCOLLUM
PULSE REPORTER

The day after Thanksgiving will officially ring in the shopping season. If you find yourself coming up short for that superhero comic book lover you have on your list, take a look at "The Government Manual For New Superheroes" by Matthew Brozik and Jacob Weinstein.

The book's humor centers on the it's-funny-because-it's-true look at the basic elements of classic truth-and-justice-era superhero comics. The mock-u-manual is written as a 1950s government how-to booklet. A quote on the back cover says a lot about the book: "The government provides manuals for new homeowners and new motor vehicle operators, but what's a new superhero to do?"

The manual's eight chapters explore everything from choosing a costume — "nothing says, 'Evildoers, beware!' quite like a large piece of cloth tied around your neck" — to finding an arch enemy. Government studies show that the best places to meet a nemesis include "the library, the grocery store, the mall, the park, and your local

legislature," according to the book.

Without using any trademarked names, the book has quite a few nods to classic superheroes. At times, these jokes can be quite funny, but the rest of the time they feel longwinded. For example, here is a nod to Superman: "Observe! Overhead in the firmament! There's a waterfowl! There's an aerodyne! There's —" The book's superhero in-jokes tend to revolve around classics: Batman, Superman and Spider-Man.

The book's content would benefit greatly with some humorous diagrams and illustrations. Unfortunately, the book's art looks like it was taken from some 1950s-themed clipart CD. Like many things in the book, its playful but bureaucratic voice is luke-warm-funny.

"The Government Manual For New Superheroes" is a quick read that gets a few chuckles and maybe a laugh or two. It's an OK book that would make a decent, albeit mindless, gift for the superhero comic book lover in your life.

amccollum@dailyemerald.com

Comics



LAURA BETH BRANDT



DUSTIN REESE

Thanksgiving: Harry Manx plays tonight

Continued from page 6
Without a mustache, expect to pay \$2.
Harry Manx will be performing tonight at Luna at 30 E. Broadway in downtown Eugene. Tickets can be pur-

chased in advance for \$15 at Adam's Place, located next door to Luna. The show starts at 9 p.m. On Friday, see Spencer Bohren play the blues at 9 p.m. for \$10. These tickets can also be

purchased in advance at Adam's Place. Then on Sunday, catch 3 Leg Torso play live at Luna at 9 p.m. for \$7.

amylichty@dailyemerald.com

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