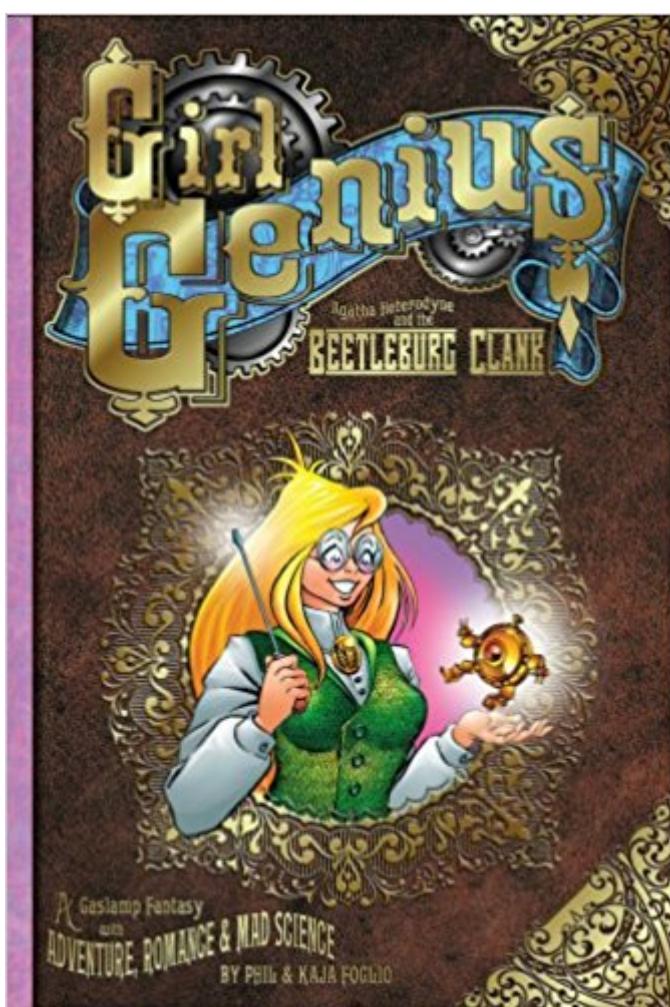


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# Girl Genius Volume 1: Agatha Heterodyne & The Beetleburg Clank



## Synopsis

In a time when the Industrial Revolution has become an all-out war, Mad Science rules the World... with mixed success. At Transylvania Polygnostic University, Agatha Clay is a student with trouble concentrating and rotten luck. Dedicated to her studies but unable to build anything that actually works, she seems destined for a lackluster career as a minor lab assistant. But when the University is overthrown, a strange "clank" stalks the streets and it begins to look like Agatha might carry a spark of Mad Science after all.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Adult/High School-The Heterodyne family, who "travelled the globe negotiating peace, stopping monsters, and shutting down doomsday devices," are heroes among those with the Spark, the ability to play with the laws of physics, until their disappearance. Now, student lab assistant Agatha Clay works for Dr. Beetle at Transylvania Polygnostic University. After soldiers of fortune steal the locket her uncle gave her years before, she is cast out of the university and left alone while her anxious foster parents go to retrieve it. Agatha takes a nap and awakes, disheveled and greasy, to be confronted by one of the soldiers. He is looking for revenge because his companion died and he blames her and the locket, which contains a complicated mechanism. Meanwhile, back at the university, Baron Wulfenbach and his son Gilgamesh run into a clank, a mechanical robotlike device that seems to be searching for someone. They reprogram it to find its maker, whom the Baron suspects is a new Spark. The clank returns to the shop where Agatha and the soldier are arguing,

and the Baron orders them both kidnapped. The sepia-and-white art is lively and appealing, with distinctive characters and a richly imagined environment. There are many humorous touches, such as the "big fish" sign on a, well, big fish in the marketplace, or the Jagermonsters, humanlike soldiers who have an odd *joie de vivre*. The book includes a bonus color story that gives a glimpse into Agatha's future, which apparently involves a talking cat and several constructs. Sly, witty, and great fun. Susan Salpini, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"*Girl Genius: Agatha Heterodyne and the Beetleburg Clank*" collects issues #1-3 of the Phil & Kaja Foglio's popular Gaslamp Fantasy series. Features of the first collection include beautiful sepia art (highlighting the lovely inks of Brian Snoddy), 7 1/2" x 11" art-book presentation, and a new 8-page color story from Agatha's exciting future of Adventure, Romance, & Mad Science... Teens & Up. *Girl Genius* is well-loved by (and suitable for) all-ages, but we fully support parental review prior to reading.

Agatha Clay is a young woman with a mysterious past. She lives in a world complicated by Sparks (think mad scientists with the ability to create devices and living things that bend or break the known laws of science) and ruled by Baron Wulffenbach, a Spark who conquered Europe to stop the chaos. Agatha's doesn't know her origin or about her imminent Sparkhood. When a mugging and theft allows her talents to break loose without warning, all hell begins to break loose, too. *Girl Genius* is beautifully drawn and wonderfully manic. Its characters are human, animal, robotic (called Clanks), and artificial biological constructs. The huge story includes Agatha, the Baron and his son Gilgamesh (himself a developing spark), the King of Cats, Jagermonsters, pirates, the most fearsome nanny in the known universe, a traveling circus, Translyvania Polygnostic University, various monsters, and Punch and Judy. The backstory underlying it is fascinating, imaginative, and enormously detailed. The villains are not totally evil, and the good have their dark sides, but don't take any of it too seriously. This is comedy that is both broad and pointed, and it works beautifully. This comic is a whacko masterpiece of adventure, romance, and discovery. After fifty years of reading all sorts of comics, this is now my all-time favorite.

If you don't know Phil and Kaja Foglio from -his- work in Dragon Mag's "What's New", from the MythAdventures series (book and/or comic), the Buck Godot stories, their (blush) XXXenophile series, or their work illustrating "Magic, The Gathering" cards (notably Urza's Science Fair Project),

shame on you! Go back two spaces and loose a turn. Gas-lamp Fantasy is sort of like what Jules Verne, Mary Shelly and H.G. Wells were writing back in the day. Steam-powered wonders, cobbled-together reanimated monsters, and pneumatic nutcrackers. (who doesn't like nuts?) Add a bit more modern-times feel, fantasmagoric (tm) illustration and color, and more tongue in cheek humor than you can shake a bag of knezels at, and presto! Genius! And the Girl, DON'T forget the girl! Damsels-in-distress, damsels-outta-de-dress, damsels who would shemk me upsidy-like the head with a 3/17 occipital left-leaning heterodyne wrench if I continues! (Yowza!) So stop reading this and BUY it already! Buy the whole series! (Buy two! Gotta keep one set "Mint Condition", dontcha?)

Mostly, when you see the phrase "fun for all" it really means "fun for nobody", but that does not apply here. The Foglios' illustrations and writing are vivid & joyous, and their sense of humor displays minds born with the belief that "the world is mad, so why not enjoy it?" Clever riffs on the old Universal Horror classics mix with wild sight gags & a great fondness for the spectacular in their work. There's a plot, too. That's always nice. The Hipster gives it a Big Thumbs UP!

A+ plus nineteen more words so that they stop bugging me to write reviews. Aren't the stars enough? Leave me alone!

Great characters set in a wondful universe! I was overjoyed reading through it and puzzling out the world history, dropped in a way that wasn't heavyhanded but left me enough clues to keep me interested and moving forward. Agatha is great hero and seeing her evolve is really entertaining.

I'll only review the first one, but I love all of this comic. The art is good and fabulously colored, the story is fun and witty and the characters grow and change as they progress. Yes, it's melodramatic and a serial, it's designed that way!

So, I read this online, but I definately wanna collect them all! They've incorporated this odd mash of genre -a steampunk/comedy/action/mystery/romance and of course, mad science, with actual plot. Plots within plots! theres this weird bizarre ordered chaos thing going on, if that makes sense? I read this online and it was busy but in a really good way. It's difficult to tear yourself away from it. I have actually felt adrenaline from reading this because it completely carries you away into their mad adventures. A MUST READ; particularly for girls, teenagers, adults, steampunk fans, fantasy fans,

fans of art (THE ART ), fans of webcomics, fans of books, fans of vampires-ish, vampires, human beings, aliens, and anyone reading this.

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