



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 28, 2010

Archie Comics to Feature Obama and Palin

The writers of the classic Archie Comics series seem to be doing their best to remain contemporary and mainstream. This was clear when the writers elected to add an additional character to the cast, one who was homosexual. Now, the writers have allowed politics to enter into the arena by featuring stories that star none other than President Barack Obama and former Alaskan Governor Sarah Palin.



CBS notes the changing nature of the *Archie Comics*, which have been around since 1942. While they are “famously wholesome and old-fashioned,” the comic book series “appears to be attempting to move slightly more modern conversations: Last September, the series welcomed its first gay character, Kevin Keller, to the fictional town of Riverdale.” Now, *Archie Comics*’ readers will find themselves regaled by fictional stories involving caricatures of Obama and Palin.

The decision to feature both Obama and Palin was first announced at this year’s Comic-Con International in San Diego. The first Obama/Palin issue, entitled *Archie #616: “Campaign Pain” Part 1* and set to be released in December, involves the President and former Governor teaming up to impact a high-school election. According to the *New York Post*, “The polarizing pair are dragged into a heated campaign battle between eternal teenager Archie Andrews and arch-nemesis Reggie, who are both running for class president of Riverdale High.” Obama enters the scene as Archie’s lead endorser, prompting Reggie to seek the assistance of Governor Palin.

The cover of “Campaign Pain” Part 1 features the amazing political duo sharing a milkshake while Archie remarks, “Wow! I guess anything’s possible.” The solicitation for the issue reads: “President Barack Obama and famed politician Sarah Palin get involved as Student Government campaigns spiral out of control at Riverdale high! The race between Archie and Reggie gets hot as campaign chaos reaches to the top, forcing an impromptu visit from these big-name politicians, who get pulled into the fray!”

A month later, Part 2 of the same issue is scheduled to be released. According to the writers, the second installment is full of repercussions for the involvement of the two notorious politicians: “When President Obama and famed politician Sarah Palin arrive, Riverdale becomes the center of a national crisis! Archie and Reggie have each claimed support from one of these political powerhouses, but they don’t! Now Riverdale is in chaos and when the Secret Service gets involved, it only gets worse!” The cover for the Part 2 features Archie, Obama, and Palin arm in arm and donning Riverdale High sweater vests. On the same cover, Archie announces “Everybody gets along in Riverdale!”



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The Archie comics are no stranger to politics, as many of the featured stories target environmental issues and encouraged “green” behavior, even before the term “green” was cool. However, the decision to include characters like Obama and Palin indicate a willingness to tread on more dangerous territory, though the stories featured in the December issue focus more on the strange unity between the two polar opposite politicians than any actual political issues.

Politico reports, however, that the detente is only temporary, as later issues will feature Obama and Palin duking it out. The cover of one of these soon-to-be-released issues bears the likenesses of Obama and Palin in superhero suits prepared to fight. Another of the covers reveals the two politicians attired in boxing gear, anticipating the fight of their lives. The latter cover is designed for “The Fight for America!” issue, wherein Obama is dubbed “The Chicago Kid” and Palin is labeled “The Thrilla from Wasilla.”

Jon Goldwater, co-CEO of *Archie Comics*, explained his decision to run with the Obama/Palin theme. Since the company received such positive feedback on the first cover, featuring Obama and Palin sharing a milkshake, he felt, “Why ruin a good thing?”

“We sat around and talked and said, ‘Holy toledo!’ This is something that we should take a look at and bring the President back on the cover for,” Goldwater remarked. “At the end of the day, President Obama and Sarah Palin completely come from opposite sides, but they both want the same thing: The best interests of the United States. And we figured Riverdale High School was a place they can unite.” Perhaps poignantly, Goldwater clarifies that his decision to include Palin as Obama’s foil was inspired by his belief that Palin is in fact the “apparent GOP leader.” “She’s out front and center and there is no other dynamic candidate that we can see here at Archie that basically represents the Republican Party. No one else occurred to us, actually.”

Bleedingcool.com reports, “Aside from biographical comics, a number of comic books have used the appearance of Obama to increase sales, and Sarah Palin has appeared in a few satirical books too. This is the first in any way to suggest that the two politicians are comparable.”

Examples of comics that have featured President Obama include *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Barack the Barbarian*, and *Youngblood #8*. Palin was the subject of a biography comic from Bluewater Productions, while also appearing as a villain in the *Barbarian* comic.

Archie Comics have found great success in special-feature comics, including the “Archie Weddings” and “Life with Archie” magazine, and hope to see similar triumphs with the Obama/Palin series. The first installations of the Obama/Palin series, Archie issues 616 and 617, are scheduled for release in December 2010 and January 2011.

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