Photo of the Day | BANANA



Students dress in banana costumes at the UConn men's basketball game at Gampel Pavilion on February 14, 2026. Students waited outside before the game to secure seats in the student section. PHOTO BY ELLA GORHAM, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

X-Men, Avengers and found family

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With a new Avengers movie coming out relatively soon, which will include a long-awaited X-Men crossover, it's worth delving into what makes the two teams different. Their disparities have been noted since their releases. Despite sharing a similar premise of people with superhuman abilities teaming up to take down a larger threat, the X-Men films are notably different from the Avengers. While the Avengers movies show the dynamics between characters by focusing on a shared enemy that they are brought together to defeat, X-Men focuses on more human issues, namely persecution. This leads to more nuanced team-ups, particularly with Charles and Erik oscillating between fighting together and fighting each other.

While the Avengers do have their own internal fighting, as made clear in "Captain America: Civil War," their fighting is less personal. Aside from a few friendships within the team, there isn't a lot of love shared between members. They were forced together by S.H.I.E.L.D in a last-ditch effort to confront a threat stronger than any one member alone. While they're all interested in doing "the right thing" the X-Men are much more tight-knit, as they are bound together by the shared experience of persecution. Their responses to said persecution certainly differ, as is apparent with Erik and Charles, but their goal is ultimately the same. They can't help but feel a connection with all other mutants. That is to say, their fight is always personal, and they're a team because they want to be. When they aren't fighting threats, they more or less live together, work together and hang out as friends. The Avengers usually do not; in solo movies, they are hardly seen with even those they consider friends on the team.

This connection point is emphasized throughout the X-Men films in a way that is pushed to the side in the Avengers movies. The best comparison of this is Steve Rogers' relationship with Bucky Barnes contrasted with the relationship between Erik and Charles. The X-Men films, time and time again, show that the friendship between Charles and Erik is so strong that despite fighting on numerous occasions, they still love one another. They have a connection and understanding that seems unconditional and impossible to break. Compare this to the friendship between Bucky and Steve. Steve does everything in his power to save his friend and goes rogue on the Avengers, prioritizing Bucky over everything else. However, the Avengers films toss that relationship to the side when Steve has a chance to have a "normal" life, one without Bucky, instead opting to live his life with Peggy (someone who had been happily married to someone else, and had zero chemistry with Steve, but we don't need to get into that).

Due to the commitment and focus in the X-Men films on the relationships among the team members, the feeling the audience gets surrounding a "found family" is much stronger than in the Avengers films. The Avengers movies make it very apparent that they're only working together because they have a shared goal and there isn't much love or care between the members. That isn't to say those types of dynamics are absent from the Avengers. There are plenty of meaningful relationships presented in those films, but the focus on the team is not that of a found family. The more recent "New Avengers" do seem to be taking note of the appeal of strong bonds within a team and will most likely (hopefully) go on to be a found family.

These dynamics are important because they add complex layers to the plot, making for much more interesting stories and characters. For Charles and Erik in X-Men, their love for one another alters their actions, but it doesn't change their outlooks and judgements. It allows for films that explore nuance. For instance, in "X-Men: First Class" when Erik spends the majority of the film teaming up with Charles to take down Shaw. Despite admitting that he agrees with everything Shaw is doing, and ultimately becoming a Shaw replacement, he works with Charles because he wants to kill Shaw for killing his mother. This is an intriguing narrative that allows us to understand Erik better and subsequently all other characters involved. There is an ability to separate nuances out, which is only possible when the characters and their dynamics are placed at the forefront as opposed to the threat they're confronting.

The Avengers films generally avoid these nuances in favor of having a shared enemy be enough, and any discrepancies come not from established character beliefs or dynamics, but from relatively straightforward disagreements. The Avengers generally don't utilize the complex and painful backstory of each individual character as much either, which makes for less personal scenes than the beach scene or nuclear reactor scene in "First Class."



Comic book art depicting members of the X-Men, a superhero team. The X-Men films focus on relationships between members of the team, creating a strong sense of found family.
PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

This is by no means a complaint about the Avengers. The two groups simply have different things to offer. The Avengers are great for more one-on-one dynamics, such as disagreements between Steve and Tony, or friendship (or a different word that ends in "ship") between Steve and Bucky. The X-Men, though, are a much better representation of the found family trope, as the love and connections between the characters are placed at the forefront.



Daily Campus Comic

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