

THE COLLECTOR NUMBER NINETEEN

As I've always said--
HOME IS WHERE
YOU HANG YOUR HAT !
PEACE!



Handwritten signature



Best Bill -

Joe Sinnott

THE COLLECTOR 19 · MAY 1970 · quarterly · TC ·

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EDITORIAL TC 19

BILL G. WILSON, ED.



STEVE ROGERS

If you think you recognize the drawing of Captain America's alter ego by Jim Steranko and Joe Sinnott, you're right. This is the same drawing which was reproduced in TC#16. Because we reduced it, a great deal of detail was lost, and I wasn't really pleased with it. So... I decided to get a great guy and a great inker, Mr. Joe Sinnott to ink it in for me over Steranko's pencils. To top it off, we are reproducing it ORIGINAL SIZE so that you can enjoy it for what it is: GREAT art!

Next issue: #20 will be our 1970 Comic Art Convention Issue, devoting the entire issue to photos, illustrations, and IN-DEPTH reports on activities. Also, I have on hand an excellent BIOGRAPHY of FRANK FRAZETTA which I'll try to squeeze in if I possibly can. (I'd also like to be able to devote a few pages to reproductions of his work.) I'd like to urge all of you to order your copy NOW to make sure you get one. #20 promises to be better than 100% better than #16, and what with the new guys we've added to our staff, I'm sure we can produce something to your liking.

Due to the late postal strike and some trouble with some of our mail, we're unsure about some of the material we have sent out. If you have any questions concerning an order or a submission of art or articles, please feel free to let us know, but enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (in the case of inquiries about an order) or sufficient return postage (in the case of rejected submissions). Also, please keep in mind that the Post Office is slow at times, and so are we, so please have patience with us.

ADVERTISERS: AD DEADLINE for #20 is JULY 20th!

By the time you read this, Marvel's CONAN comic book will probably have hit the stands already so write and let us know what you think of it and other innovations in the comic book industry. After all, you just don't have to write us about TC you know.

Unless I see you at the 1970 Comic Art Convention in New York this year, I guess it's just... 'TIL "THE COLLECTOR" #20...

BILL G. WILSON, EDITOR

Well, first of all, what do you think of that great cover we were able to 'DIG UP'? (I couldn't resist that one!) If you don't recognize the gent then you don't read Marvel Comics because he is DIGGER. Consider yourself lucky to see it, because, as you know, John Fantucchio has been cutting down drastically on his fandom work, and even fewer on his covers; The Collector was just one of the lucky ones! By the way, have you written to Warren yet about John's work in Vampirella (#5) and Creepy (#34)? If you haven't, then do so soon! If you would like John to stay with Warren, then by all means let them know!

I'd like to welcome Mark Feldman to our hallowed pages. Mark has consented to be assistant editor, maybe even art editor. My thanks to Mark for the use of the Back cover by the fabulous Steve Ditko, the illustration on this page by Dave Cockrum, the full page illustration by Gene Colan, and the Al Grinage art. Now, don't think Ye Olde Editor is slipping. I think I did pretty well on my own too, considering I acquired the talents of Joe Sinnott, Jim Steranko, John G. Fantucchio, Robert Kline, William Black, Tom Christopher, Anthony Kowalik, Dennis Beaulieu, Ed Romero, Max Gottfried, Jim Jones, and Don Newton!

Due to Mr. Feldman's generosity, you can look forward to art (unpublished of course!) by Sal Buscema, Gil Kane, more Dave Cockrum, more Al Grinage, and more of many more in upcoming issues! (I'd like to mention that Mark is the editor of 'I'll Be Damned', which can be obtained for \$2 from: 905 Newhall St., Silver Spring, Md. 20901

Oh, don't think we're going to get into the habit of giving you 24 big pages for only 25¢, 35¢, or 40¢ (depending upon whether you live in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, or overseas)! The reasons for this 'big' issue are: 1) This is the issue we will be trying to sell the most of at the 1970 New York Convention, and 2) we couldn't fit all the scheduled material in because of the 4 full page advertisements! If we could get four great ads like those we have this issue EACH issue, I might be persuaded to have 24 pages each time, but, we'll wait and see.

If you are interested at all in this magazine, PLEASE WRITE! I would like to know what you think of our changes. ESPECIALLY THIS ISSUE because of our addition of some great people (like Mark Feldman and Robert Kline, to name but two), and also because of the change in Hyperman. Although I don't want to pressure a great guy like Joe Sinnott, I would really like him to work with me on each and every Hyperman strip. (at least as many as possible!) Check it out!





illustrations

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Warren

Publications

The EFFECTS of VIOLENCE

via the

mass media...

ON CHILDREN

TOM CHRISTOPHER



I. TELEVISION

Television today is the most powerful instrument of mass communication in America; therefore, I was extremely interested in the results of this first test.

The word 'television' is synonymous with 'cartoons' to children in grades one through three. To them, most everything with live actors are referred to as 'movies'. This age was the most difficult to obtain information from, as they have an extremely limited attention span, and also since many of them felt they were in some sort of trouble, and therefore were nervous and untalkative.

First graders listed cartoons for all of their favorite shows; second graders listed shows with live actors as about 1/5; third graders listed 2/5 live actors.

Most of the children, though they listed favorite shows easily, were unable to recall any specific plot, but rather the general theme of the show:

'Superman fights the outer space guys with ray guns'
'Archie & Jughead have a dog named Hotdog and they sing and get into trouble....'

'Motor Mouse is a guy with a car and he rides the motorcycle and the cat chases him in the car and Motor Mouse throws glue in the street & the cat gets stuck'

All the other descriptions of the shows followed the same above patterns: good vs. evil, typical pulling pranks & getting caught, and (of course) the usual cat chases mouse and gets hit with a hammer pattern. It seemed to me that children this age were too busy to watch much TV, let alone become adversely affected.

The second group (grades 4 - 6) spent much more time watching TV, though they too would rather be playing or doing something else. They listed their favorite shows partially the same as the first group (in the cartoons): Archie, Bugs Bunny, Cattanooga Cats and the Hardy Boys were the most often mentioned for cartoons, though Gilligan's Island, Beverly Hillbillies, Lucy and other comedies with overly simplified story lines began to creep through and by sixth grade were joined by Adam 12, Ironside, Bronson, Dragnet, and other adventure shows. In recalling story lines, they seemed to pick out both dull and exciting parts; one boy went into long detail on Bronson's motorcycle, while a girl talked for several minutes on why we need police.

'Officer Friday and the other guy went in and the men put up their hands and gave them bags of stuff-forget what-and sometimes they do that but mostly they drive around like Adam 12.'

Most were undisturbed by violence (the most named shows have a great deal of action, but little or no violence) even when describing the most violent shows (I Spy reruns); they pass over it lightly and make more note of the humor 'Scotty and Kelly get beat up and thrown in a garage and they make a bunch of jokes and break out...and once they were in a big fight in a dark building and they had this real funny conversation while they were doing it...' The only ones that did emphasize the violent aspects I discovered later were emotionally disturbed and had a morbid fascination with 'all the blood'.

Old movie reruns are also popular. Most children liked the old Wolfman and Dracula things, mostly because 'they are scary' but they like to 'laugh at how dumb they are' after they're over.

The boys usually recalled the parts with action in them, while the girls liked 'the happy parts'.

The third and last group was grades 7 - 9. At this age was the greatest amount of television viewing. Cartoons, by this time, are mentioned only as:

'I watch the junk on Saturday morning, just cause there's nothing else on.'

The situation comedies liked so much at the earlier ages are also shunned. This means that the majority of shows watched are adventure. Ironside, Bronson, Dragnet, Adam 12, Bonanza, Laugh-In and Julia are among the most named.

'Ironside is a crippled cop who runs around with 3 other cops--two guys & a girl--they used to have something like a old armored car, but they have a better one now.'

'Julia is a colored chick with a little kid--he husband was killed in Vietnam---and, it's just an average comedy.'

'Dragnet's pretty bad.....I mean, it's okay to watch if you don't think about it.....the two cops are never wrong..... I really don't know why I watch it.'

Again, though much question has been raised in the past years over violence via mass media, none of the shows were really violent. When violence is portrayed it is never a thought-out plan, and the effects are more realistic than to implant the idea that a violent attack cannot hurt someone.

II. MOVIES

This was the hardest, as Glendora has no walk-in theatre; the only way the kids I interviewed could get into a drive-in is with their parents, most of whom have no desire to go to a drive-in after an eight hour work day. In the first group, I was mildly surprised to discover many of the children didn't know what a theatre was, and when I asked about movies, they named live action television shows. The one movie mentioned most unanimously was Peter Pan:

'Peter came and they tried to put the shadow on Tinker-

V I O L E N C E

bell, and then they flew out the window and went to an old ship...'

'There was this place where you didn't grow like an old man...'

'...And the man fell into the water and an alligator with a clock ate him.'

Though (as I recall) there were some fairly violent scenes, such as a sword duel between Peter and Captain Hook, they were done in an unrealistic style. The fight was make-believe, and apparently the kids realized this.

They stated they liked the movie because, in the words of a second grade girl:

'It was happy and I like happy stuff...'

Grades 4 through 6 also listed Peter Pan, though less; the sixth grade boys said it was 'Sissy and stupid---just dumb stuff with fairies and stuff...'

While the movie and television viewing of group 1 reflected a love for happy fantasy, the movie viewing of group 2 was as simple as their television. How to Commit Marriage was well liked, as was a horror movie for which I got several names for the same general plot:

'All these weird guys are trying to take over the world by using these dead guys who go around eating people.' seems to be a composite of the plot. I can't be sure, but I think the movie was "Night of the Living Dead", which was released several months ago. A friend told me it was the sickest, stupidest thing he'd ever seen. I pressed farther about the cannibal aspect:

'It looked real, but it wasn't.'

'It was neat, but looked kinda funny and made me sick...'

Do people really eat other people?

'No, except the guys in Africa.'

'Not...well, maybe if they're crazy. It'll make you sick...and maybe die...'

Bullitt was also popular, and the main feature was the chase scene. The Illustrated Man was mentioned a few times, mainly because of Rod Steiger's make-up. They tended to mix up the stories for the most part and those who did keep the plots straight, didn't really understand what was going on, and the whole thing was too slow and boring.

The third group named Bullitt, Illustrated Man, Romeo and Juliet, and 2001 (which surprised me). Bullitt and Illustrated Man for the above mentioned chase and make-up; Romeo and Juliet was a favorite with the girls who told me:

'He was cute'

'She was pretty'

'it was happy'

'It was sad'

2001 drew mixed reactions: it was 'good', 'funny', 'boring', and even 'psychedelic at the end', but generally too slow moving.

Quite a few of this group expressed wishes to see Alice's Restaurant, Easy Rider, Candy and a few others, but they were too young.

III. COMIC BOOKS

Group 1 read the least number of comics, mainly because most of them couldn't read at all or well enough. None of the children could remember titles or stories in the 1st grade. In the 2nd grade I go the titles Heckle and Jeckle, Jetsons, and Copy Cat, but no stories. The 3rd grade gave me Spiderman, Batman, The Fantastic Four, Superman, Superboy, and Archie:

'This big Alien (a word used greatly in science fiction comics) came and was gonna eat the world, but another guy sent the Human Torch into space and he got his gun, and the Fantastic Four won.'

Comic reading picks up in group 2, where the favorites seem to be Batman, Superman, Spiderman, Hulk, Fantastic Four, Archie, and Captain America:

' The Red Skull changed bodies with Captain America, and went around doing weird stuff and people thought Captain America was doing it and these three other guys were after the Red Skull. So they saw Cap and thought he was the Red Skull so they tried to get him, but this Negro guy with a falcon came and helped Cap get away and beat the Red Skull.' Plot intricacies, not violence.

Group 3 bought fewer comics per person, but more people read them, mostly only occasionally. The Archie series was most popular here, though the superheroes and horror still have a good foothold. For some reason, no one actually wanted to talk about them:

'You know, just the usual stuff.'

Why did they read them?

'Nothing else to do...when I'm bored, or at night before I go to sleep.'

IV. CONTROLLED TEST

For the test several types of comics were used: horror, superhero, crime, war, and humor. The subjects were asked to pick the cover that interested them the most. Well over 90% chose a 1952 issue of Startling Terror Tales, amagazine that folded 17 years ago, after sterner rulings on comic books as related to the causes of juvenile delinquency and internal censorship. The cover scene is a spider-like figure complete with a skull for a head, holding a dead man and a very much alive woman screaming, within a giant spider web. In the background are three decapitated heads, totally disrelated to the other art.

Group 1 liked it because it was scary. When telling a story about it, the general idea was that the man was dead and the woman would get away. They couldn't say where the spider came from, or what the people were doing in a giant spider web.

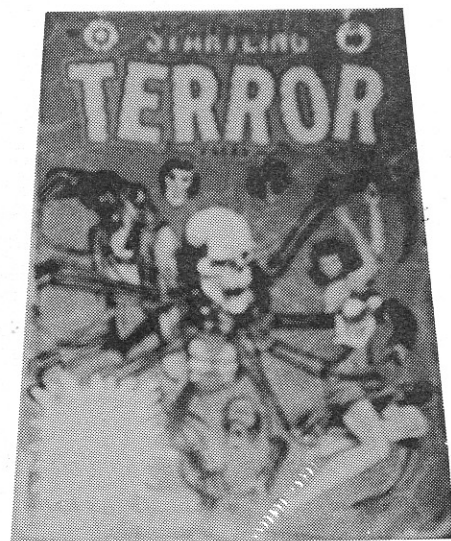
Group 2 also thought it was spooky. The story they related was about the same, though the spider came from caves and spaceships.

Group 3 picked it largely because it was funny. Their stories told the obviously ridiculous aspects of the cover and magnified them. The spider was created by such things as a 'mad doctor zombie who was kind of freaky' and 'the spider picked them up hitch hiking' and lastly 'what garbage'

Next we went through the insides to pick out favorite panels. The most popular were those of a vampyre (vampyre is the correct & original spelling) lurking behind gravestones, a young girl about to be eaten by a spider (sans death head), several people being caught under burning buildings with demons in the background, and several people attacking the afore-mentioned demons.

Again the first and second groups chose these because they were spooky or weird. However, in the fifth and sixth grades they started to criticize the pictures, probably because the cover was drawn and colored well, and the insides were quite crude. By group 3 the change was complete:

'cute', 'good', 'trash', 'slaughter*', 'oh, yeh, sure', 'Boy, that's phoney', and I could fill the rest of this page with other adverse comments.



The other comics were chosen because in two or three cases, the kids were familiar with the character through television, or in 1 case, the child (3rd grade) was attracted to anything having to do with police. The cover had two crooks in the foreground - one pointing a gun toward the reader; the other bleeding and possibly dead on the ground. In the background, two policemen shooting at the criminals.

Who shot the bleeding criminal?

'The other crook. They had a fight and he shot him.'

The police didn't shoot him?

'No.'

On the inside, even when it was obvious to me that certain people were criminals (I had not read the comic before this) he identified them as detectives.

V. CONCLUSION

There have been so many theories and arguments advanced in the last decade from both sides it is hard to know where to begin. I did not come across more than one person that was affected adversely by what he saw; a 3rd grade boy who 'liked to see ladies tied up and bleeding and screaming.' However I discovered his problems stemmed from a poor home environment, rather than an over-exposure to violence through the mass media. I do not believe that such things have any effect whatsoever on a normal child.

I asked a great many of the children to tell me about something they heard on the news. The almost universal answer: Sharon Tate. And what was on the minds of most adults, even before the recent arrests? What name was plastered on every cheap tabloid paper, movie magazine and other periodicals appealing to the lowest element of our society? What even managed to force Jackie Kennedy Onassis off the same material for the first time in six years? Sharon Tate?

In closing, I'll list arguments from both sides:

A report in Psychology today linked the very presense of guns with hostile violent feelings. It has been said that children have to learn about the life around them. Do they really have to learn about this sort of thing? In this way?

F.W.Wertham,PHD Psychology
'Seduction of the Innocent'

Wertham is a fool; it is necessary to think about a lot of things in this world that are hard to think about.
Ray Bradbury
'Guts'

...Either their mothers didn't love them, or they read comic books, which is still violence.
Mort Sahl on Sirhan Sirhan & James Ray
'LA Free Press'

I buy comics for my little girl-she loves them. Of course, she's only 2 and eats most of them.
Jules Feiffer
'LA Times'

Swedish tests show children unaffected by violent films...no significant difference between reactions of normal children & delinquents...
Psychiatric News

If I should meet an unruly youngster in an alley I prefer it to be one who has not seen Bonnie & Clyde. A lot of violence is learned behavior.
F.W.Wertham
'Guts'

Wertham said he had been through several areas of New York where the rate of juvenile delinquency was on the rise. In these areas he passed movie houses showing horror movies. Is there any wonder (he concluded) that the juvenile delinquency rate is rising? Is it any wonder that slum kids raised without a stable family relationship, in poverty, in dirt, fighting rats, and with a constant sense of insecurity, become criminals when they watch horror movies?
Richard Weingroff
'Gosh Wow'

A ten-year-old girl cried horribly after seeing a monster movie...the doctor was summoned.. it was discovered that her parents had not allowed her to view these movies before. Because of this over protection she had over-reacted during parts her friends thought funny... fortunately, it took only mild guidance to adjust her to reality.
Larry Ivie
'Monsters and Heroes'

There are only a few of the arguments. I personally believe a normal child is able to cope rationally with violence and horror via the mass media. A child has a basic sense of right and wrong instilled by his parents, and can easily distinguish between real and unreal situations and how to behave in each, even be drained of actual violence and frustrations by watching and identifying with such things.

BACK ON THE SOAPBOX

Well, here I am...sitting in my room trying to organize an article when there are so many things I should be doing...edit the literary paper...layout the literary magazine...cartoons for the school underground press...reading.. drawing...thinking...sleeping. Joan Baez over the stereo...the dove has torn her wing, so no more songs of love, we are not here to sing, we're here to kill the dove...beautiful...but, something is troubling me. It was little over a year ago I wrote 'EC meets Censorship' and it was published in TC13. Since then it has stirred up something of a controversy, and no one seeming to know aht I said or was trying to say... See, EC wasn't the typical comic company, they did a great deal of things that were not only good graphics but good ART (as opposed to good comic art). They shouldn't have been bundled in

with the fly-by-night companies when the attack began...but EC is dead...sold out to National... dead for 15 years...and I don't wanna talk about it.... But children, there's another side. Comics fandom has for years hated Dr. Fredric Wertham, and hated him virulently, for no reason. I consider the epitome of this unthinking, irrational hatred to be 'Review of Seduction of the Innocent' in TC15. Steve Schulman, it seems hasn't read the book...or ever even seen it, yet feels he is an authority on it...strange. Proof? OK...

1) He states the book was published in the late '50s...oh. Then why is mine copyrighted 1953-54?
2) 'The book beared only one purpose...to whip out the comic industry.' How many times have I heard that? How long did I believe it? Friends, Wertham saved the industry! He did not instigate the attacks; he only jumped on a crusading bandwagon against an industry that was sick (from an overdose of blood and violence) and already dying. That's right, DYING. The horror craze had run its course, so in order to try and capture the steadily dwindling reading audience, the publishers were becoming sicker than ever. So along comes the anti violence/blood group, by this time championed by Wertham (& others) and actually halted the comics before they killed themselves. ...and on and on goes the list of mistakes and pure lies that Mr. Schulman makes...and how many people take these lies as facts and soon find themselves hating Dr. Wertham also? Far too many. Even Dr. Wertham has recently made some mistakes lately though. He stated that he had no 'fight about (changing the meaning of the sentence - I used against) crime comics' while 'Seduction' has sub titles like: "The Contribution of Crime Comic Books on Juvenile Delinquency". Also that he didn't need/want 'a scape goat - anything, anyone to blame current problems on'. It IS a bit strange though that while criticizing other psychiatrists for saying the problem is 'deep' he chooses the most superficial one. I don't particularly agree with you

Doctor, but I do admire you for speaking out against something that you felt was wrong. Comics were only a small part of the problem. The main part was a relaxation of moral attitudes on the part of the parents. The early 50s were times of early prosperity...more money...more spare time...heavy doses of liberal child care. 'let the child express himself in whatever form he chooses. Punishments should be light & few.' You mentioned in the book a band of juveniles who had stacks of comics in an old house. What else would they read? Shakepeare? And really, isn't it the responsibility of the parents to try to provide better recreation than that? I worked as a recreation leader for LA parks and recreation and even the hardest cases enjoyed the stuff we did. Isn't that what we really need? Not useless censorship. I did a small sociological study in Glendora (50 children) ((the results of which you just read)) and discovered that only one child showed a love of violence--- an overly active fascination of blood and death...and this child wasn't allowed to read comics. Nor was the little television he watched violent (his favorites were Dragnet, Adam 12, Ironside, and cartoons). His problems came from a fighting, half-split family. Still, as I earlier stated, I admire you greatly and in regard to your statement about me: 'Isn't it a pity that intelligent idealistic young people like you are brainwashed by adult commercial interests': yes, doctor, it is, and I'm happy to report that I'm really not anymore. It is also a pity that too many comic fans are withdrawing from reality thru comics...totally shutting themselves off. But then again the answer (or even the problem) isn't the comics themselves, but an inability within these people to face reality...and comics can only prolong the ventual confrontation. If you have time, I would appreciate your comments on this at the below address.

Tom Christopher
842 Northridge
Glendora, Calif.
91740



true hero

Our second issue of True Hero is now ready for mailing! Just some of the highlights featured are...

- 1) A BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED COVER by Mark Wheatley!
- 2) A four page interview with JOE SINNOT!
- 3) THE BEGINNING OF THE END-an indepth article by Pat Janson!
- 4) THE PSYCHEDELIC SUPERHERO-a strip by Mark Ammerman. One of his best.
- 5) CONTINUED NEXT WEEK-part two of a complete study of the old serials by Jim Mendelsohn!

All this plus ads, letters, an editorial, and artwork by: John Fantucchio, Jim Pinkoski, Gordan Flagg Jr., Alan Hanley, Joe Kurnava, Max Gottfried, Mike O'Neil, Kevin Clement, Richard Krauss, George Baily, Tony Muscatello, and Kevin Richert! Twenty four big offset pages for only 35 cents!
MIKE CICIRELLI/5412 HUDSON AVE./ WEST NEW YORK, N.J./07093

HYPERMAN

by BILL G. WILSON/
WRITER/ARTIST

SYNOPSIS:

AFTER MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARING FROM THE X-02 TEST ROCKET, HYPERMAN FINDS HIMSELF ON A BARREN, UNKNOWN PLANET. BEFORE HE CAN LEARN OF HIS WHEREABOUTS, A BEAUTIFUL, YET MYSTERIOUS YOUNG GIRL RENDERS HIM UNCONSCIOUS WITH A STUN BLASTER....



.... HE IS FINALLY
REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS NOW.

"WHERE AM I,
AND WHAT AM
I DOING HERE?
YOU MUST
TELL ME!!"



"JUST FOL-
LOW ME AND
YOU SHALL
FIND OUT."

JOE SINNOTT

INKER

PAUL LEGRAZIE, JR

LETTERER

FORCED TO DO AS THE
GIRL DEMANDS, HYPERMAN
IS LED INTO A CLEARING ...



"THERE IS THE KEY
TO YOUR QUESTIONS!
HAIL KARG! KARG
IS SUPREME!"

AS THE GIRL'S
SHOUTS RING
IN HIS EARS,
HYPERMAN
LOOKS ON IN
TERROR AT...

...A HIDEOUS PROJECTION IN THE
SKY!



"I WILL WASTE NO TIME EXPLAINING
MYSELF TO YOU; I WILL MERELY
ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS ... FOR THE
TIME BEING. YOU ARE ON THE PLANET
EARTH IN THE YEAR 901,970; 900,000
YEARS IN YOUR FUTURE. THERE ARE
FEW HUMANS LEFT. BUT I AM THEIR
RULER. IF YOU FAIL TO HELP ME CON-
QUER THE UNIVERSE, YOU SHALL PERISH!"
CONTINUED



Gene Colan



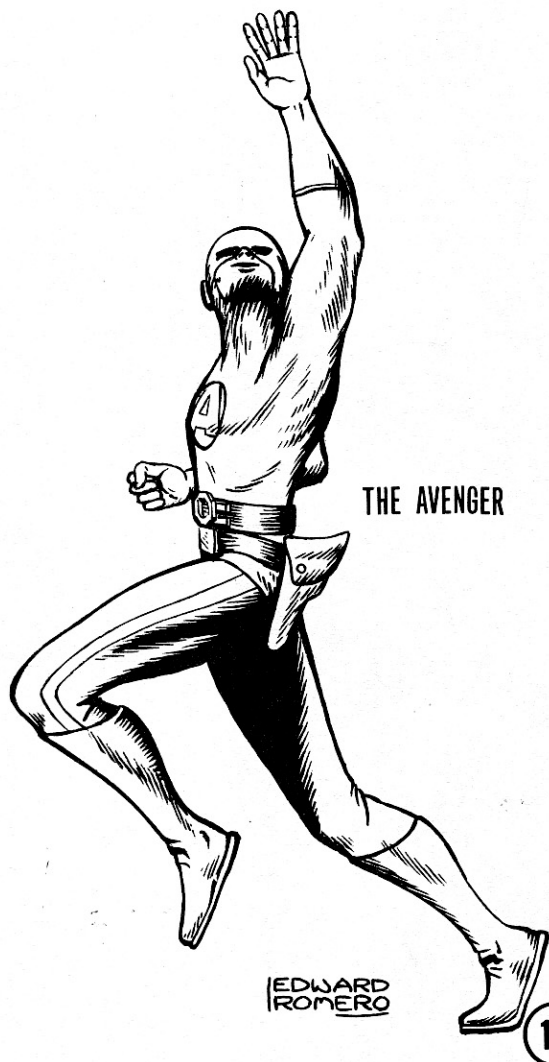
THE AVENGER *by* Dennis Beaulieu

ILLUSTRATIONS BY:

DENNIS BEAULIEU & ED ROMERO

Starting off in his own comic book which ran for only four issues, the Avenger unfortunately never quite achieved a well-received status in comic book fandom. Published by M.E. Publications The Avenger first hit the stands in 1955. The Avenger stories were drawn in a style all their own that made the character actually stand out from the background. This was partly accomplished by the clever use of very detailed shadowing on the character. Basically, The Avenger was quite a character, and for those who were fortunate enough to have read his stories, he remains in the memory of many a nostalgic fan.

Dick Ayers, of Marvel Comics fame, drew the first issue. It told of the Avenger's origin, and introduced to the reader the secret underground complex where the Starjet, the Avenger's secretly designed jet plane, fifty years ahead of its time, was concealed; ready to be used at a moment's notice.



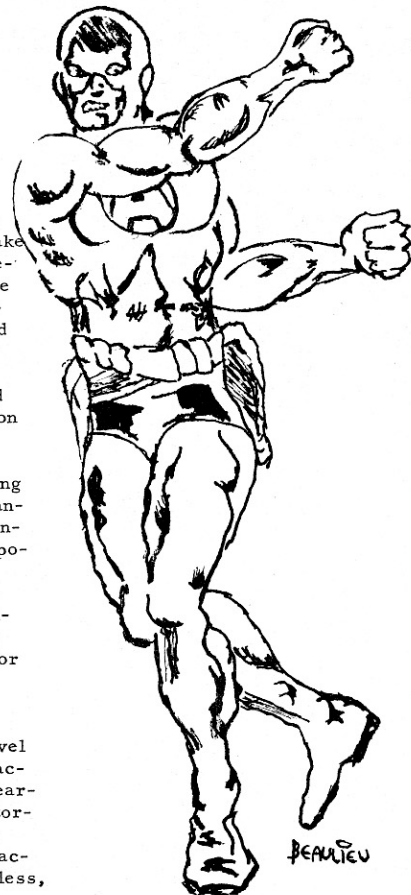
Able to do virtually everything but talk, the addition of the Starjet helped greatly to make the character more interesting. The Starjet resembled a small rocket ship - jet with airplane propellers on its nose. It had the ability to remain motionless while suspended in the air, and could land vertically, similar to a rocket. Designed and created by Roger Wright (who was secretly the Avenger), this plane was equipped to fight the forces of evil anywhere. One weapon designed for the Starjet was a guided-missile torpedo that, when fired at his submerged enemy, there was no possible means of escaping its deadly destruction. With the aid of a mechanical computer which he also designed, the Avenger could always predict exactly where the opposition was at all times. Another unique device created by Roger was an atomic motor, which supplied the fuel for the Starjet. Due to this invention, the Starjet could travel completely around the world without refueling if need be, for any length of time.

Issues 2 through 4 were illustrated by the late Bob Powell, who also worked for Marvel Comics for a spell. Bob illustrated such characters as Giant Man and the Hulk when they appeared in Tales to Astonish in '65. The Avenger stories drawn by Powell took on a different, more simple style, as he didn't exaggerate the character's features as much as Ayers did. Nevertheless, both artists' version of the strip were drawn quite skillfully.

Gardner Fox, writer for National Publications, wrote the Avenger stories, in which he inserted a certain undying quality that, had the character lasted, would have undoubtedly formed it into a well-received comic. The character itself had much potential, but as fate would decree it, ME Publications folded after the 4th issue. Due to this, the character's potential never had a chance to be developed. However, it was a very good strip considering it was done in the 50's, a time when superhero comic books were doing very poorly at all angles, especially in the quality department.

The Avenger's creation was inspired by the threat of Communism (as were so many other characters that were done in the 50s), which he vowed to defeat, if at all possible. Being only a normal man possessing just great physical strength and unlimited fighting ability, if he intended to carry out his vow, the Avenger had to create another instrument of the future. He accomplished this when he invented his dissolver gun. This weapon was designed for use in extreme circumstances. It was to be used only as a last resort when all else failed, for fear of its great destructive power. To this he added a helium-inflatable life belt which he wore over a utility belt.

With the completion of this action was created the Avenger, who was called "Mysterious Figure of the Night" for no apparent reason; as all of his stories, excluding the origin, transpired



during the daytime. It seems that this character was at first slightly influenced by Batman. Although their costumes weren't similar, some of the ideas used were. After all, over 90% of the superhero characters ever created in comics were probably modeled after some other superhero to a certain extent.

The origin story, drawn by Dick Ayers, was six pages in length. It told of how, in Berlin in 1948, a Colonel Wright and his wife were abducted by Communist spies and taken to Red headquarters in East Berlin for interrogation. At headquarters, the Colonel is requested to write his brother Roger, who is a millionaire scientist in America; a letter demanding him to turn over the diagrams and blueprints for his new type plane to the Communists, or the Colonel and his wife would be killed. Roger refuses, and he overpowers the Communist agent who brought the letter. Not wanting to free the agent for fear of his brother's life, Roger notices a youngster's Ghost Rider mask that was lying on a nearby table and decides to disguise himself with a mask and costume to protect his own identity and his brother Ralph's life at the same time (it seems

ironic that a superhero's existence was directly influenced by another superhero. Incidentally, ME Ghost Rider masks actually were on the market during the 50s). For the next few days, Roger and his secretary, Claire Farrow (the only person who knew his secret identity), design and construct a protective uniform to hide Roger's identity. Then one night, his Avenger uniform completed, Roger Wright no longer exists. When danger beckons, instead of Roger Wright, millionaire scientist, the Avenger, Defender of Free Men, stands in his place. Eager to clash with and defeat the enemies of free men the world over, the Avenger walks through an underground tunnel connecting Roger's house with a special subterranean hangar until he comes upon the comes upon the cause of the kidnapping of his brother Ralph, the plane known only as the Starjet, fifty years ahead of its time! The plane of the future, created in the past! Scant minutes later, the Starjet is streaking across the ocean, bound for Europe. At the controls is the Avenger, ready to give his very life if need be, so that free men shall live on to build and create a better world.

A short time later, Europeans notice an unusual sight hurtling through the sky. Some stare bewilderedly while others, not believing their eyes, turn their heads for fear of losing their sanity. This unnatural sight happens to be the Starjet, bound for Communist headquarters in East Berlin.

After landing on the roof of Red headquarters, the Avenger soon confronts the head official and demands for him to free the two American prisoners. Moving unnoticed, the Russian official sounds an alarm that

brings three heavily armed Russian soldiers to his aid. He orders them to take the Avenger prisoner. Before the guards realize what's happening, the Avenger rams into them, knocking them all on the floor. He promptly regains his balance, and before they can regain their senses, overpowers all three; thereby leaving only himself and the horrified Russian official conscious. His patience slowly being taxed, the Avenger takes a small glass pellet from his belt and breaks it, disclosing a gaseous truth serum which he himself is unaffected by; but not so the Russian. Through the use of this serum he discovers that his brother & his brother's wife had already been executed, which was to have also happened to him the moment he had given them his secret plans. With this in mind, the Avenger now realizes that he has a mission on earth to fulfill to the utmost. A mission to prevent the crimes and oppression that the Communists, vermon of the century, force upon the innocent people of the world. Without another word, the Avenger quietly exits through an open window and climbs the side of the building up onto the roof, to where he left the Starjet. Thus starts the Avenger's trip back home, while having full knowledge that scant seconds earlier, in Communist headquarters, he had left behind a fear-filled victim for the firing squad. Such was the Communist reward for failure.

The Avenger's origin story is a prime example of the fine work which Gardner Fox did on this character. Many stories had much mystery and suspense added to them. For example: there was a time when the Avenger was stranded on a deserted island that was soon to be destroyed by an A-Bomb and barely escaped on the back of an old sea turtle. Offhand, I can't

think of any other superhero having his career prolonged primarily due to the unique idea of riding a sea turtle. I doubt that this novel idea had ever been used prior to, or after the Avenger appeared.

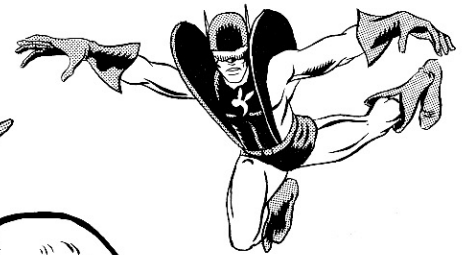
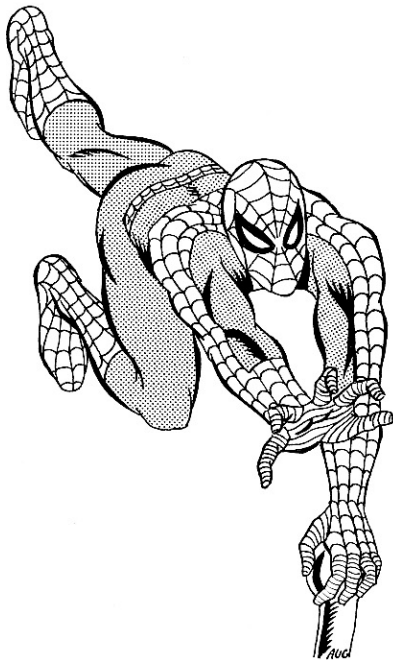
The Commies didn't quite give up their hope of obtaining Roger Wright's secret plans by a long shot, because in a later issue the Avenger met a pretty young lady, who was in reality a Red spy with a mission to obtain Roger's secret plans. She secretly gained access to his top secret file room and was about to board a hidden sub with the information when suddenly the Avenger, who had suspected her from the start, appeared on the scene and soon was again in control of his secret plans, not to mention the Communist sub.

There were many other well-concieved episodes of the Avenger, but I feel that I have presented my point to its utmost with the preceding, considerably indepth article. Who knows? If ME Publications hadn't folded, the Avenger might have lasted longer. He might have even been with us today. The Avenger's fine artwork by Ayers and Powell plus the uniquely written stories by Fox certainly wouldn't have cast this charcter into comic book limbo, for hw was truly "A Character With Character".

BY:

Dennis Beaulieu
7 Dean Street
Norwood, Massachusetts
02062

END



ART
SHOWCASE NO. 2

AL GRINAGE







SINAR ALONE

by ——— DAVID HANLEY

...Having seen a poor man get cheated in a dice game, Sinar demanded that the man's money be returned to him. Given a signal by the tavern owner to attack the unsuspecting Sinar, the other four spectators, who were also barbarians, drew their scimitars. After taking care of his two assailants, Sinar sprang to the aid of his comrade.

Sinar used his sword as an axe and drove it down the middle of the man's skull; the fellow died instantly. The last Harubean turned to meet this new threat and in doing so left his back unprotected. Sinar's ally made sure that would be the man's last mistake, as he drove his sword into the man's spine and buried the blade to the hilt. The last of their aggressors ended his life wallowing in his own blood.

"What is your name?" Sinar asked.

"I am Zark, and if you could—". Zark never finished his sentence; he just collapsed in Sinar's arms.

Sinar helped him to one of the still standing tables and brought some very strong wine for them to drink. Sinar knew of someone around these parts who was supposed to be a sorcerer who could do great things. He was determined that he would heal his comrade. Sinar lifted him as if he were a babe in arms and carried him along the dusty road on the outskirts of Craser to the temple where the sorcerer dwelled. At last they were at the temple. Sinar carried Zark up the worn and crumbly stairs and into the seemingly ancient temple.

Sinar was greeted by one of the servants; he was short but stockily built, and he wore a white tunic and a green sash. Without asking any questions, the servant simply said to Sinar:

"You are expected. Come this way."

Somewhat surprised at this disclosure, but still determined to have Zark healed, Sinar followed the servant through the tapestries corridors making no sound.

The tapestries depicted not only the rise and fall of civilization, but also hideous half-men from time's earliest drawings. From these he averted his gaze.

Finally they came to a wide-chambered room where in sat a slender, wasp-like man on a silk-en divan. In this room also were tapestries, but of a more pleasant nature.

"I've been waiting your arrival." said the old man. "My name is unimportant. You may call me Antar if you wish."

He then clapped his bony hands twice and

two more servants came in through an alcove. The man named Antar addressed them, saying, "Take the wounded one of the two men into the beakurse and attend to his wounds immediately."

He then gestured for Sinar to come nearer to the divan on which he was reclining.

"Pay me heed, Sinar, to what I will say."

Sinar did what was requested and said, "I have some questions for you. How did you know my name, and that I was coming here?"

"If I described the exact process you would not understand. It is enough for you to know that I am capable enough to get what I want," said Antar.

"I am not interested in what you are capable of, sorcerer. I would pit my sword against your sorcery at any time, for it has served me well through many a battle."

Antar, seemingly amused, said, "Yes, you are the right man for what must be done."

"...And what makes you think I'll do it?" Sinar retorted.

"Be at ease, friend. I wish you no ill. I only ask that you do one favor," Antar replied.

"Very well," Sinar agreed, "what do you wish?"

"Do you see these burning candles?" (Sinar nodded) "They give off a rather pleasant aroma which induces a short, dream-like state in which all will be made known to you."

Sinar let the aroma enter his nostrils, and in seconds it began to take effect. Sinar, in his present state, saw something begin to take shape. It was Antar, and he was talking...

"You are young, and have many adventures in your life that are still to come, if you seek them, but what I tell you now has or will have an effect on the future of man. It concerns Zarm. Have you heard of him?"

Sinar's dream self replied, "Only from that which some lecturers, priests, and their lot use to keep rebellious people under their control."

"Well, of late Zarm has gained enormous power, and the magic of the Vazars, the lighted ones, cannot hold him at bay much longer. In desperation, they consulted with the Supreme One, who is forbidden to interfere in the affairs of man except for consul. All that he said was that one man, who was called Sinar, could have a chance of defeating Zarm."

The Sun. Cursed Sun! Even stars get awful cold, when you're dyin'.

Then came the wind. In brief but lusty gusts its marching left my frail raft quaking, rocking heavily from the pitching waves. Small comfort, though comfort that alien breeze surely was! Lost RC - units don't help when a Vapor-suit needs recharge. Now the suit was suffocating, and off it came. No good anymore, so I offered it to the rising sea as if presenting some sacrifice for deliverance from this watery, shifting plane. But as the ocean accepted my useless garment and that suit slid beneath the waves, I had achieved no satisfaction for all my homage.

Thankless Sea! Rolling, over, under. Rising, and...

Falling. Toward that Sun, Beta Thuri, which was rapidly nearing the point of rupture. Nova! Another seventy-two hours and everything that will be here won't be here.



But the sun's closest planet loomed into visual perception as the Kore-meson propulsion unit throttled to an audible whine then a low, murmuring, yet pleasantly singing hymn for the reduced-velocity planet approach.

They called this world Kanaan. A world so vivid, so beautiful from off-planet that visual observation was an experience. Soon a legend.

The sky was clear; it had no clouds to hide the earth. It had no water.

Kanaan seas were of an addictive, intoxicating substance only when minutely sampled. In any excess of a tenth liter, the human nervous system is inescapably numbed and life is irretrievably squandered.

Atmospheric oxygen count was low, necessitating portable tanks for supplement. The inhabitants didn't require oxygen; the Kaanes merely tolerated it. They accepted as well, or rather adjusted to, the plains of rolling, fibrous rock that they called land.

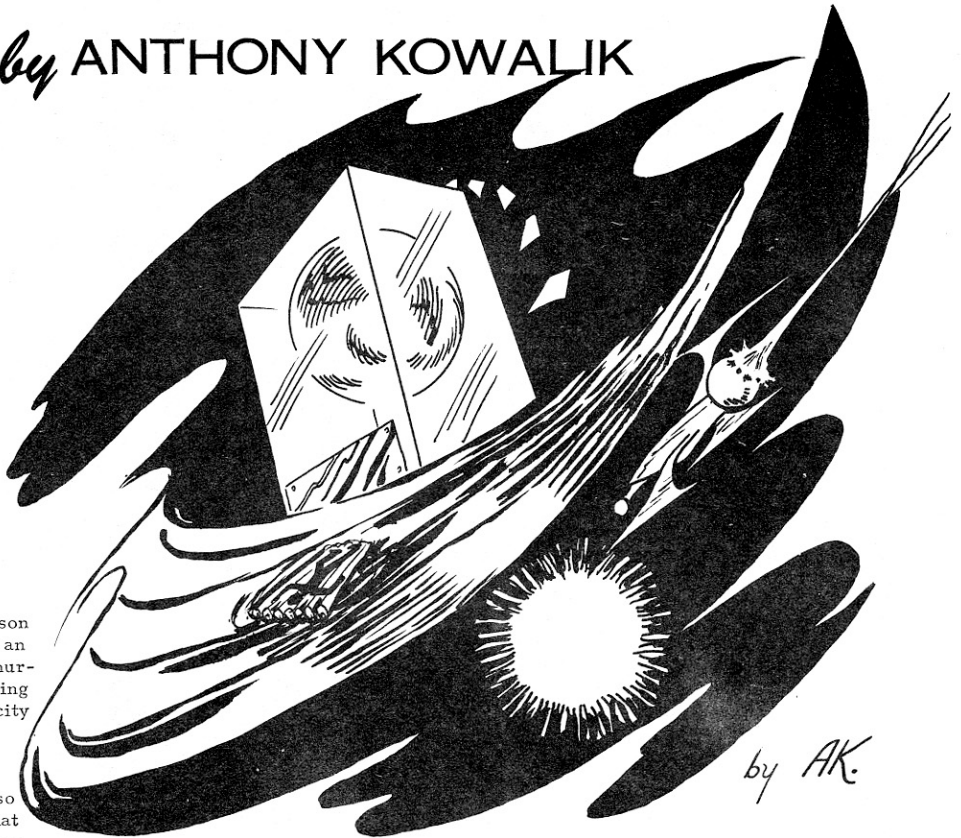
And then there was...

The Wind. The raft almost upset that time! I slipped, fell, yet clung against the rough, bound fibrous stalks. I struggled, and grasped those pillars that were once of-the-liquid, and which now floated upon it. Reeds, thick reeds, side by side.

The dark, shadowed furrows between, like...

Streets. The Kaane Committee

by ANTHONY KOWALIK



by AK.

SUN DAY ON KANAAN

was there. "Welcome."

After the feast, the Kaane-Lord held a private audience. The drinks offered were palatable. Of course, human aliens were here before. And I explained our mission. To remove his people from this doomed planet.

Sixty-two hours remaining till Sunburst.

Their Lord didn't seem to listen; in fact, he didn't. He knew. We were to remove him by force, if necessary.

His own drink flew, splattered into my face. It stung, my eyes igniting with a liquid fire.

The Sea. Straining to enter my gasping lungs, the numbing liquid washed over my prostrate form. Even the raft seemed more pliant than my limbs. But feebly I rolled onto my side just above the breaking, choking waves. My head throbbed; no supplemental oxygen remained.

The entire sky flashed on and off. On-and-off. The halo-light was blinding; duel of light and darkness. A weird corruscating display I had seen nowhere else.

Storm. The Kaane Committee Lord flashed at us. Wouldn't listen.

"Museum pieces!" he spat. I well understood. "You came from the ocean of space, and you will be cast upon our own landless sea," he finalized.

Not difficult; our drinks held an added ingredient. Drugged, my crew and I were quickly whipped from Land by the receding currents so that land was lost when I awoke. I was alone, and my life was leaving, drifting even swifter than the raft. My strength discharging.

The storm, silent but severe ended. I fell back to the knarled raft, harder this time. Though pain yet flowed, I even doubted the movement of my blood anymore. Hard, soft; green, low; blue, high; gray, bright.....

Wet. One lone violent breaker tipped the raft and tossed me to the edge. What could I lose? No longer my life. Wood as gone.

And I swallowed the crashing, cooling, boiling liquid of the sea. Dead-to-taste, its forbidding essence numbing beyond recall. I didn't care, as if I could. Now.

And with a final convulsion I rolled into the sea; down. My exit thoughts were of me as I slowly sank with them.

Then I sensed a brightness, a bursting light!

As I left life.

Comments

JOHN G. FANTUCCHIO :

"This latest issue came out very well, and I'm quite pleased with the reproduction of Quicksilver."

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"Just got your letter and the magazine... a fine issue."

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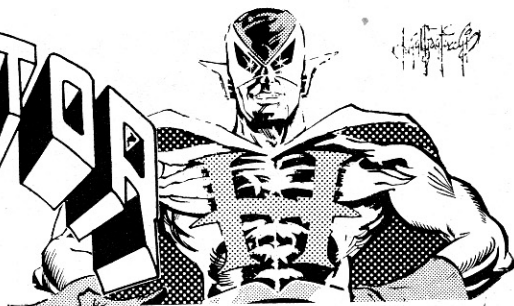
"Many thanks for your letter and the copies of The Collector. Looking forward to reading more in The Collector. Many thanks for your interest in my work."

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JIM JONES : "Just received The Collector #18. A VERY enjoyable issue!!! Your printer did an EXCELLENT job on The Spider... ALL of those tiny little Crayola marks on the rough paper reproduced very well!!!! Now, I know you've got to be losing money at 25¢ a copy!!!!"

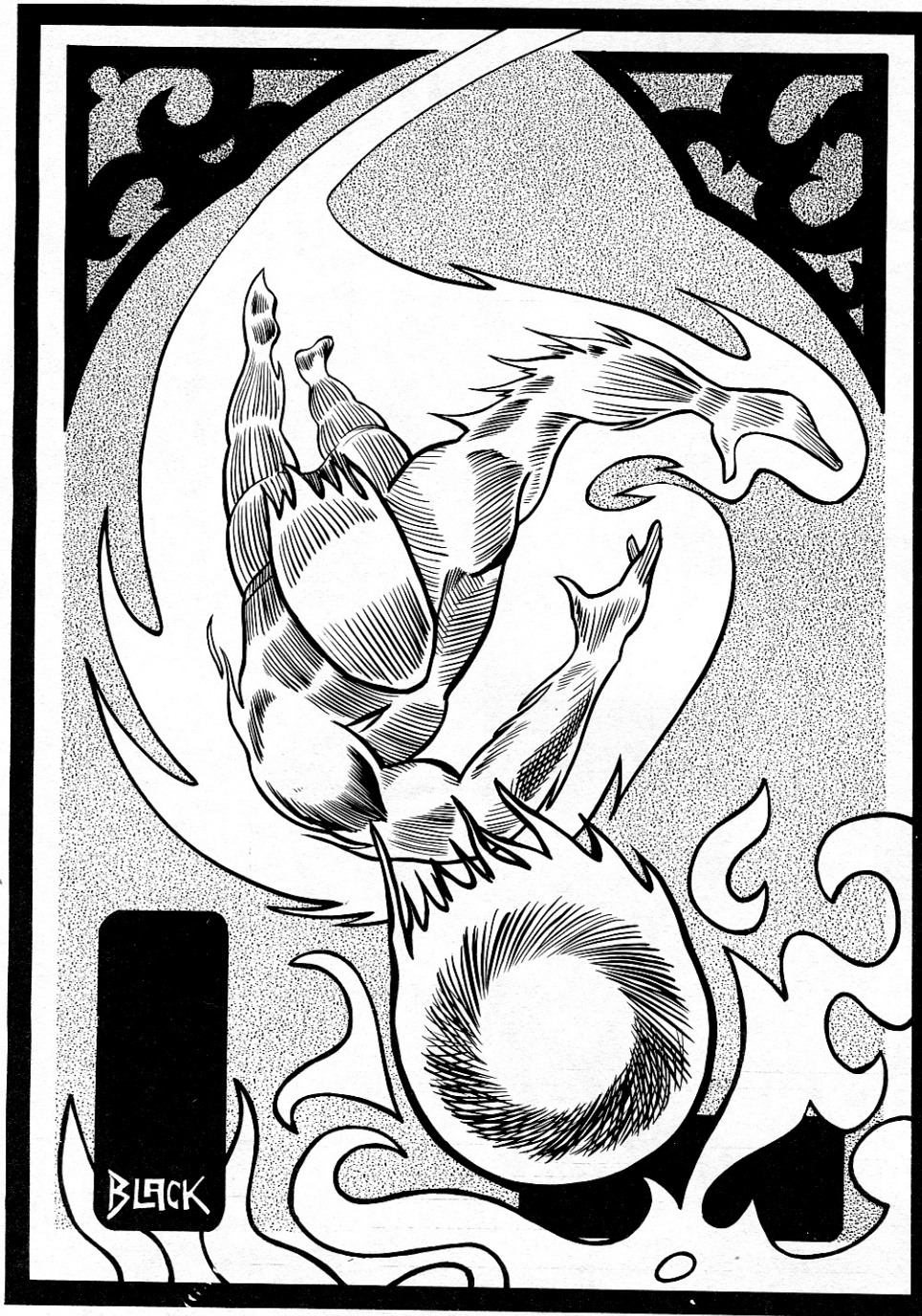
((ED: Thanks, Jim, for your praise of the last issue. As far as me losing money on this deal, well, yes and no. The new policy I recently put into effect (last issue) charges Canadians and foreigners (regretably) an additional monetary fee which takes care of the P.O., and makes it possible for me to earn more \$\$ on each issue (I like to break even))

JOHN ROUSE : I just received TC's 11220 Dumbarton Dr. 16, 17, 18. It's amazing the way you've brought up the quality of your fanzine since, for example, #11 (my first issue). The articles are great, as are the sketches and formats.

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BERNIE BUBNIS : My son is six and he was
65 Walnut Avenue heart broken to discover
E. Farmingdale the first fanzine he payed
Long Island, NY for with his own money
11735 never arrived. He is the
reason I've started hang-

ing around fandom again. My own collection
of comics turned him onto collecting his own
my back issues of zines (old ditto stuff) with
my articles and art from the past era had
him driving me up a wall until I got him
some new fanzines. I dropped a line to old
friend Gordon Love (who I just knew would
be still publishing) and Bernie Jr. was on his
way. Needless to say he really dug your zine
and his old man was no better. It was well
put together and the artwork really shows
how far fannish talent has progressed . (I re-
member when I released a dittoed calendar
with each page illo'd by the then top talent
of fandom- Foss, White, Ray Miller, Buddy
Saunders, Alan Weiss, Kente, Keltner, Grass
Greene and two pros- Kirby and Russ Man-
ning). Duffy Vohland sure comes across as
a bit of a Wrong Way Corri gan. But his ill-
fated predictions remind me of a column I
once did for RB/CC called 'Professional
Ponderings'. I hung around the DC offices
day and night and reported exactly what the
scuttlebut around the editor's table was---
all bunk. I predicted the Elongated Man
would join the JLA, DC would issue a special
comic devoted to the exploits of the JLA at
the NY World's Fair, and the Sick Magazine
would fold! Fandom taught me how to be a
liar and bear it, probably being my biggest
asset in my new career as a writer. Fine
issues; enjoyed 'em both. Best of luck on
your future,

Bestest

Bubs

Bernie Bubnis

((Thanks for your letter, Bernie. Nice to
hear from one of the pioneers in comic fan-
dom! Hope you'll be sticking around fandom
for awhile. A lot of progress has been made
in recent years. It's growing up!!! --Bill))

Keep those cards & letters
coming folk!!!!!!!

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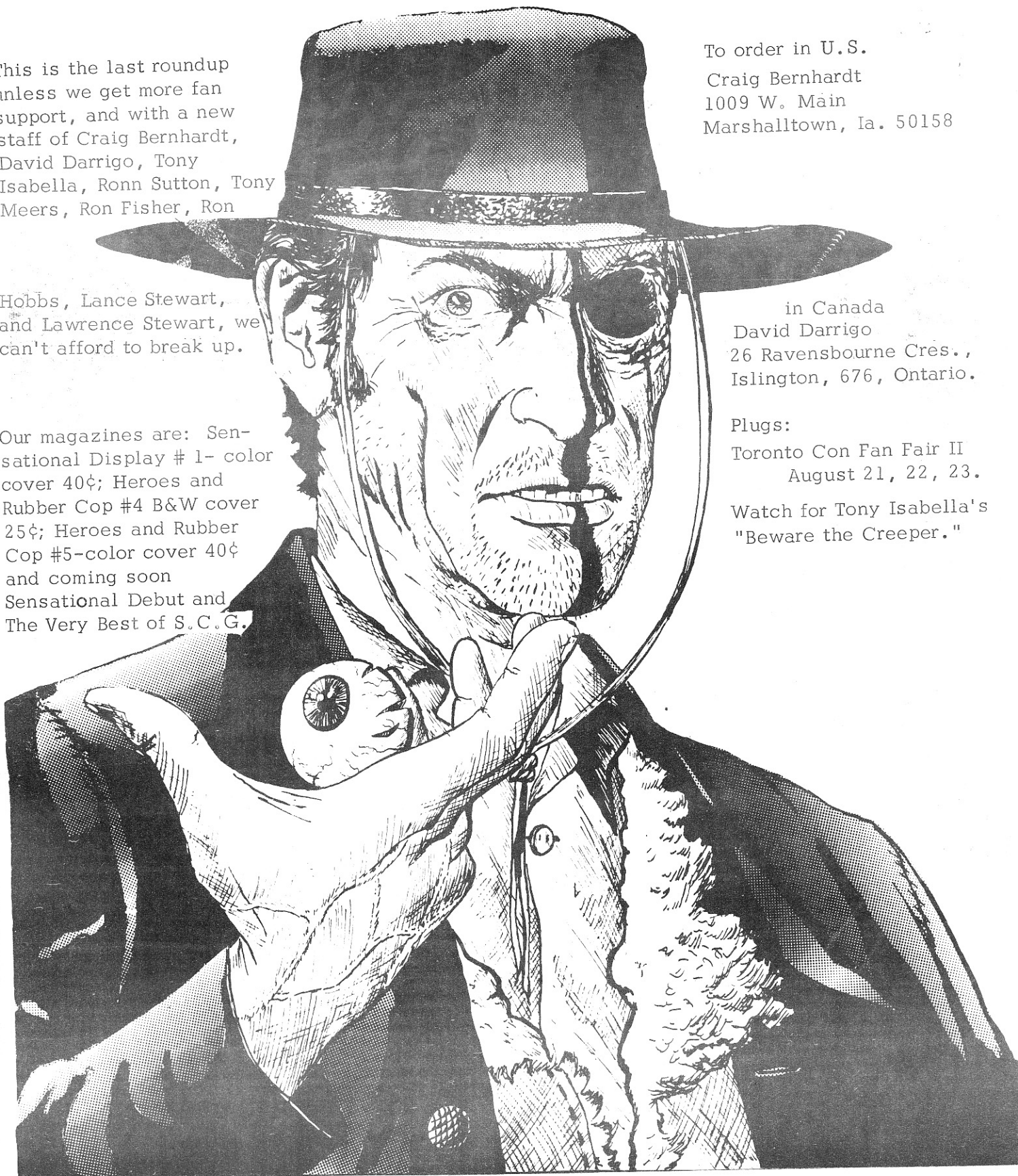
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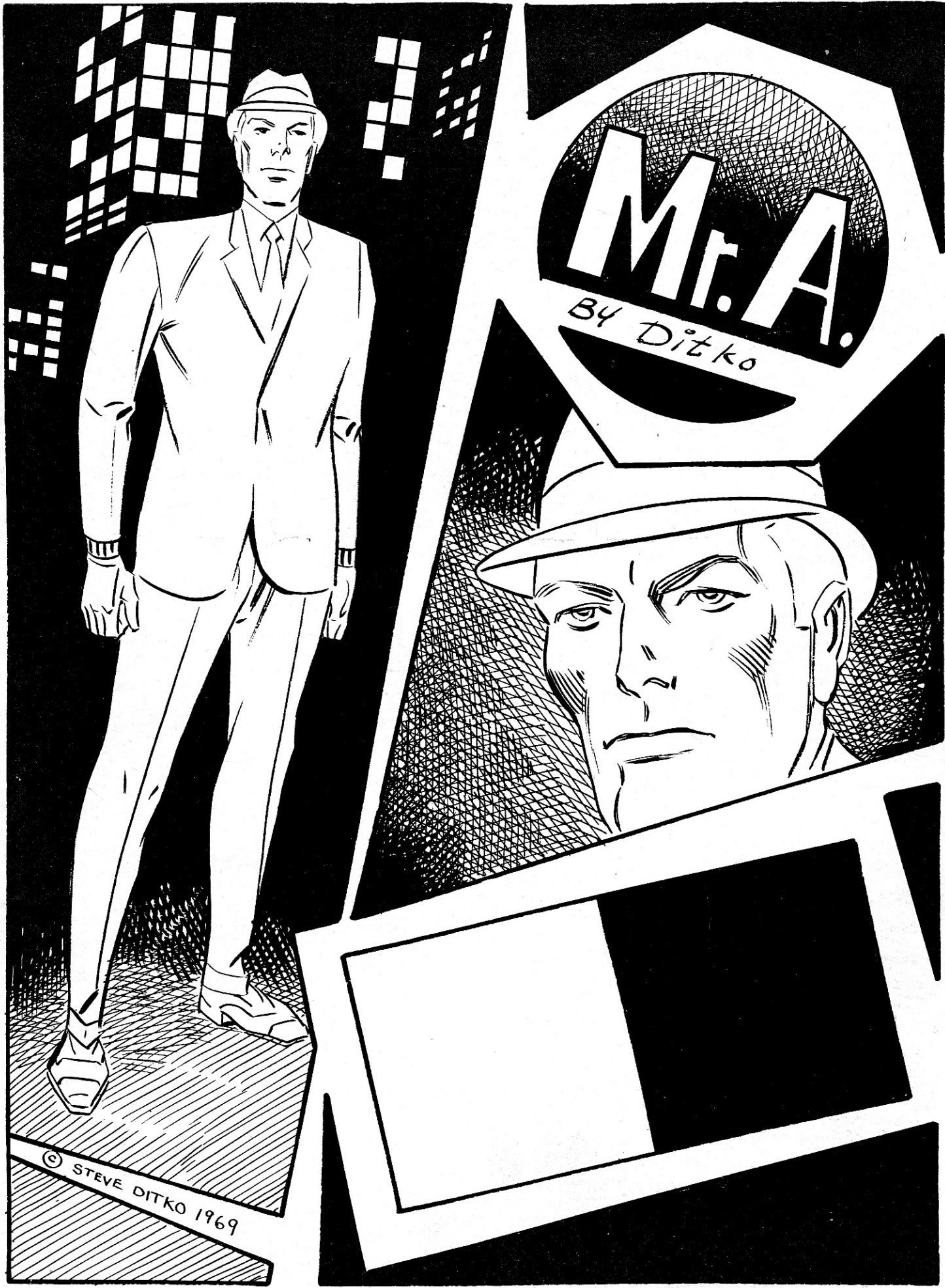
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