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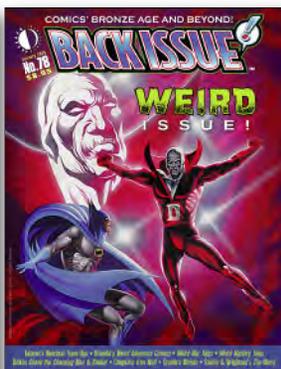
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BRICKJOURNAL #32

LEGO ARTISTRY with builder/photographer CHRIS McVEIGH; mosaic builders BRIAN KORTE, DAVE WARE and DAVE SHADDIX; and sculptors SEAN KENNEY (about his nature models) and ED DIMENT (about a full-size bus stop built with LEGO bricks)! Plus Minifigure Customization by JARED K. BURKS, step-by-step "You Can Build It" instructions by CHRISTOPHER DECK, MINDSTORMS building, and more!

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BACK ISSUE #78

"Weird Issue!" Batman's Weirdest Team-Ups, ORLANDO's Weird Adventure Comics, Weird War Tales, Weird Mystery Tales, DITKO's Shade the Changing Man and Stalker, CHAYKIN's Iron Wolf, CRUMB's Weirdo, and STARLIN and WRIGHTSON's The Weird! Featuring JIM APARO, LUIS DOMINGUEZ, MICHAEL FLEISHER, BOB HANEY, PAUL LEVITZ, and more. Batman and Deadman cover by ALAN CRADDOCK.

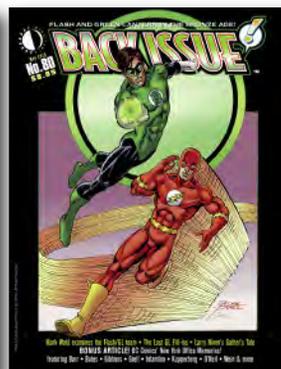
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BACK ISSUE #79

"Charlton Action Heroes in the Bronze Age!" DAVE GIBBONS on Charlton's WATCHMEN connection, LEN WEIN and PARIS CULLINS' Blue Beetle, CARY BATES and PAT BRODERICK's Captain Atom, Peacemaker, Peter Cannon: Thunderbolt, and a look at Blockbuster Weekly! Featuring MIKE COLLINS, GIORDANO, KUPPERBERG, ALAN MOORE, PAT MORIS, ALEX ROSS, and more. Cover by AL MILGROM.

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BACK ISSUE #80

"Flash and Green Lantern in the Bronze Age" (crossover with ALTER EGO #132)! In-depth spotlights of their 1970s and 1980s adventures, MARK WAID's look at the Flash/GL team, and PAUL KUPPERBERG's Lost GL Film-ins. Bonus: DC's New York Office Memories, and an interview with the winner of the 1979 Wonder Woman Contest. With BARR, BATES, GIBBONS, GRELL, INFANTINO, WEIN, and more. Cover by GEORGE PÉREZ.

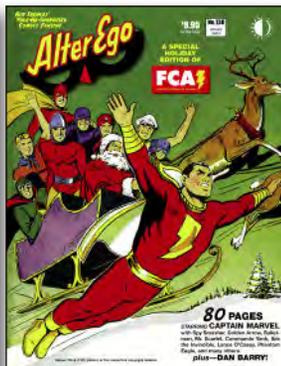
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #65

ANYTHING GOES (AGAIN)! Another potpourri issue with a comparison of Jack Kirby's work vs. the design genius of ALEX TOT, a lengthy Kirby interview, a look at Kirby's work with WALLY WOOD, MARK EVANIER and our other regular columnists, unseen and unused Kirby art from JIMMY OLSEN, KAMANDI, MARVELMANIA, Jack's COMIC STRIP & ANIMATION WORK, and more!

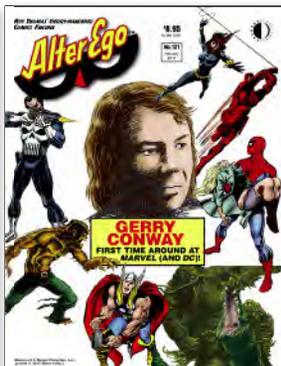
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ALTER EGO #130

CAPTAIN MARVEL headlines a Christmas FCA (Fawcett Collectors of America) Fantasmagoria starring C.C. BECK, OTTO BINDER, MARC SWAYZE—and the FAWCETT FAMILY (presented by P.C. HAMER-LINCK)! Plus: Comic book/strip star artist DAN BARRY profiled, MICHAEL T. GILBERT in Mr. Monster's Comic Crypt, BILL SCHELLY on comics fandom history, and more! Cover by C.C. BECK!

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ALTER EGO #131

GERRY CONWAY interviewed about his work as star Marvel/DC writer in the early '70s (from the creation of The Punisher to the death of Gwen Stacy) with art by ROMITA, COLAN, KANE, PLOOG, BUSCEMA, MORROW, TUSKA, ADAMS, SEKOWSKY, the SEVERINS, and others! Plus FCA, MICHAEL T. GILBERT in Mr. Monster's Comic Crypt, BILL SCHELLY on comics fandom history, and more!

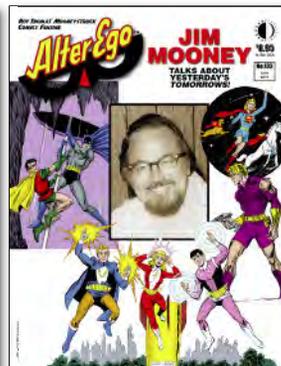
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ALTER EGO #132

75 YEARS OF THE FLASH and GREEN LANTERN (a crossover with BACK ISSUE #80)! INFANTINO, KANE, KUBERT, ELIAS, LAMPERT, HIBBARD, NODDLE, HASEN, TOT, REINMAN, SEKOWSKY, Golden Age JSA and Dr. Mid-Nite artist ARTHUR PEDDY's stepson interviewed, FCA, MICHAEL T. GILBERT in Mr. Monster's Comic Crypt, BILL SCHELLY on comics fandom history, and more!

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ALTER EGO #133

Gentleman JIM MOONEY gets a feature-length spotlight, in an in-depth interview conducted by DR. JEFF McLAUGHLIN—never before published! Featuring plenty of rare and unseen MOONEY Art from Batman & Robin, Supergirl, Spider-Man, Legion of Super-Heroes, Tommy Tomorrow, and others! Plus FCA, Mr. Monster's Comic Crypt, BILL SCHELLY, and more!

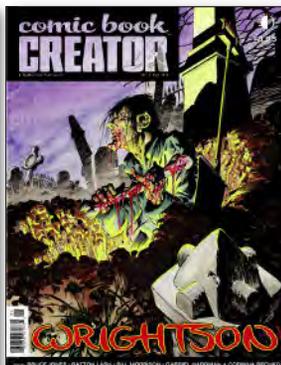
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COMIC BOOK CREATOR #6

SWAMPMEN: MUCK-MONSTERS OF THE COMICS dredges up Swamp Thing, Man-Thing, Heap, and other creepy man-critters of the 1970s bayou! Features interviews with WRIGHTSON, MOORE, PLOOG, WEIN, BRUNNER, GERBER, BISSETTE, VEITCH, CONWAY, MAYERIK, ORLANDO, PASKO, MOONEY, TOTLEBEN, YEATES, BERGER, SANTOS, USLAN, KALUTA, THOMAS, and others. FRANK CHO cover!

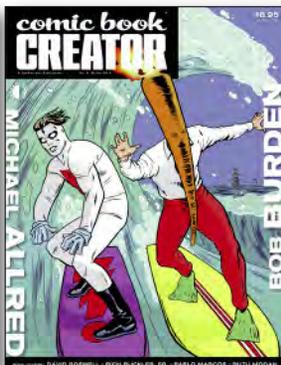
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COMIC BOOK CREATOR #7

BERNIE WRIGHTSON interview on Swamp Thing, Warren, The Studio, Frankenstein, Stephen King, and designs for movies like Heavy Metal and Ghostbusters, and a gallery of Wrightson artwork! Plus writer/editor BRUCE JONES; 20th anniversary of Bill Simpson's Treehouse of Horror with RICH MORRISON; and interview Wolff and Byrd, Counselors of the Macabre's BATTON LASH, and more!

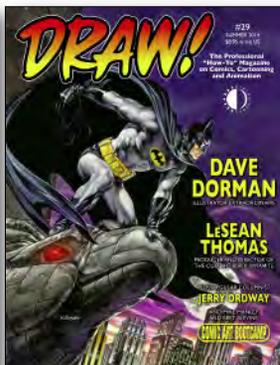
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COMIC BOOK CREATOR #8

MIKE ALLRED and BOB BURDEN cover and interviews, "Reid Fleming, World's Toughest Milkman" cartoonist DAVID BOSWELL interviewed, a chat with RICH BUCKLER, SR. about everything from Deathlok to a new career as surrealist painter; Tales of the Zombie artist PABLO MARCOS speaks; Israeli cartoonist RUTU MODAN; plus an extensive essay on European Humor Comics!

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DRAW! #29

DAVE DORMAN demonstrates his painting techniques for sci-fi, fantasy, and comic book cover, LeSEAN THOMAS (character designer and co-director of *The Boondocks* and *Black Dynamite: The Animated Series*) gives advice on today's animation industry, new columnist JERRY ORDWAY shows his working process, plus more Comic Art Bootcamp by BRET BLEVINS and *Draw!* editor MIKE MANLEY! Mature readers only.

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DRAW! #30

We focus the radar on Daredevil artist CHRIS SAMNEE (Agents of Atlas, Batman, Avengers, Captain America) with a how-to interview, comics veteran JACKSON GUICE (Captain America, Superman, Ruse, Thor) talks about his creative process and his new series *Winter World*, columnist JERRY ORDWAY shows his working process, plus more Comic Art Bootcamp by BRET BLEVINS and *Draw!* editor MIKE MANLEY! Mature readers only.

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Front cover inks: **JACK KIRBY**
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Back cover: **JACK KIRBY**

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THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR

ISSUE #64, FALL 2014



Captain America #200 splash page pencils. Several issues after his return to Marvel Comics, Kirby's story finally built to this epic conclusion, coinciding with the US Bicentennial.

The Jack Kirby Collector, Vol. 21, No. 64, Fall 2014. Published quarterly on military time by and © TwoMorrrows Publishing, 10407 Bedfordtown Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614, USA. 919-449-0344. John Morrow, Editor/Publisher. Single issues: \$14 postpaid (\$18 elsewhere). Four-issue subscriptions: \$45 US, \$61 Canada, \$66 elsewhere. Editorial package © TwoMorrrows Publishing, a division of TwoMorrrows Inc. All characters are trademarks of their respective companies. All artwork is © Jack Kirby Estate unless otherwise noted. All editorial matter is © the respective authors. First printing. PRINTED IN CHINA. ISSN 1932-6912

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KIRBY AT WAR!

A guest editorial by
Jean Depelley, with
art by Tom Scioli.
Story © Depelley & Scioli



On June 21st, 1943, Jack Kirby left his job at DC Comics and took the train to Camp Stewart (Georgia), leaving New York and his lovely wife Roz behind. After his training as an infantryman and a mechanic, on August 17, 1944, Private 2nd Class Kirby was sent to Liverpool, England as a replacement. He then landed in Omaha Beach (Normandie, France) on August 23rd and was sent to Verdun to reach General Patton's Army on its rapid offensive to the East. Jack was assigned to the machine gun platoon of Company

F, 2nd Battalion, 11th Regiment, 5th Division of Infantry, 20th Corps of the 3rd Army. There he befriended Private 2nd Class Mitchell Sytkowski from Wisconsin, who arrived in France a month before and was already a veteran, at least in Jack's mind. The 5th Division was sent to the south of Metz, while the 95th went to the North, to crush the town's German resistance. Chaperoned by Mitch, Jack had his first fights when they liberated Gorze and Novéant, two villages south of Metz. On September 7th, they reached Dornot, a small village built on the sloppy west bank of the Moselle River.

**INTERVIEW WITH VETERAN PETE TYSON
(MAIL CLERK FOR F COMPANY, 11TH INFANTRY REGIMENT)**

TJKC: THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR: When were you drafted? What were you doing before? Where did you receive your military training?

PETE TYSON: I was drafted November 12, 1941. My former occupation was Owner/Clerk of Tyson's Cycle Shop. I did my training at Camp Custer, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

TJKC: When and where did you arrive to France?

TYSON: I arrived in France on Utah (Sugar Red) Beach, July 1944.

TJKC: Did you meet Private Jack Kirby (Jacob Kurtzberg)?

TYSON: I do not remember meeting Jack Kirby. I remember his name because I was delivering incoming mail and proofreading all outgoing mail for censorship of soldiers in Company F.

I took over responsibility of mail clerk duties for Connelly KIA at St. Blaise, Sept 8, 1944. Mail clerk duties required for me to stay with the company commander, thus not getting the chance to meet and befriend new replacements.

TJKC: Do you remember the circumstances of Kirby's repatriation? He and Mitch Sytkowski suffered from trenchfoot.

TYSON: Records in my position indicate Jack was taken off the line on November 14, 1944 for "Trench Foot". I do not recall him returning to F Company, 11th Infantry Regiment.

TJKC: What happened to you after November, 20th, 1944? When were you repatriated? Where were you then? What did you do afterward?

TYSON: I stayed in Company F throughout the war, including the "Battle of the Bulge". In fact, I had to stay overseas longer due to my being called as a witness for a court martial proceeding (AWOL). Remarkably, I was never wounded despite F Company having a 400% casualty rate! ★



The 5th Division's mission was to cross the river. Its code name was the "Dornot Bridgehead" but it could have been called "2½ Days in Hell"...

As most of his war companions, Jack didn't have factual information on dates nor locations, and Kirby being the fantastic storyteller we all know (you don't read this magazine for no reason), there were risks of having some overstatements in his testimonies. I received decisive help from Elizabeth and Alain Gozzo from the French association *ThanksGIs* (www.thanksgis.com), who put all their archives and documentation at my disposal. Be sure to visit their website—these guys are just wonderful!

This work is extracted from my book *Jack Kirby, le super-héros de la bande dessinée*, the extensive French biography published by Neofelis (www.neofelis-editions.com). With Neal Kirby's approval, a part of it was adapted into comics by Tom Scioli and I (wish we could find a publisher and complete it as a full graphic novel!), and we proudly present it here. It is currently being developed as a documentary film by Marc Azéma and me for Metaluna Productions. So you haven't heard the last of *Kirby at War!*

I am writing these lines on September 9th, just returning from Dornot where I attended the bridgehead's 70th anniversary and commemorations. I'm still overwhelmed with the emotion I had meeting veterans and their families (thanks again, Laura and Brian!) and am happy to see this event becoming more and more important with the passing years (there were many officials, including members of the US Consulate, some government members, mayors, and military officers there). I sincerely wish Jack's children will make the trip to Dornot one day. There, I assure you they will be welcome!

And, by the way, after years of investigation, I can tell you that there were very few mistakes in Jack's statements, and absolutely no exaggeration on his part. Period! Kirby was not only one of the greatest artists in the 20th century, he was also a real war hero—maybe not as strong as Captain America, but at least as courageous.

This work is dedicated to Jack's unlucky friends, the 10,489 GIs buried at St. Avold (Lorraine) who gave their life to liberate my country. ★

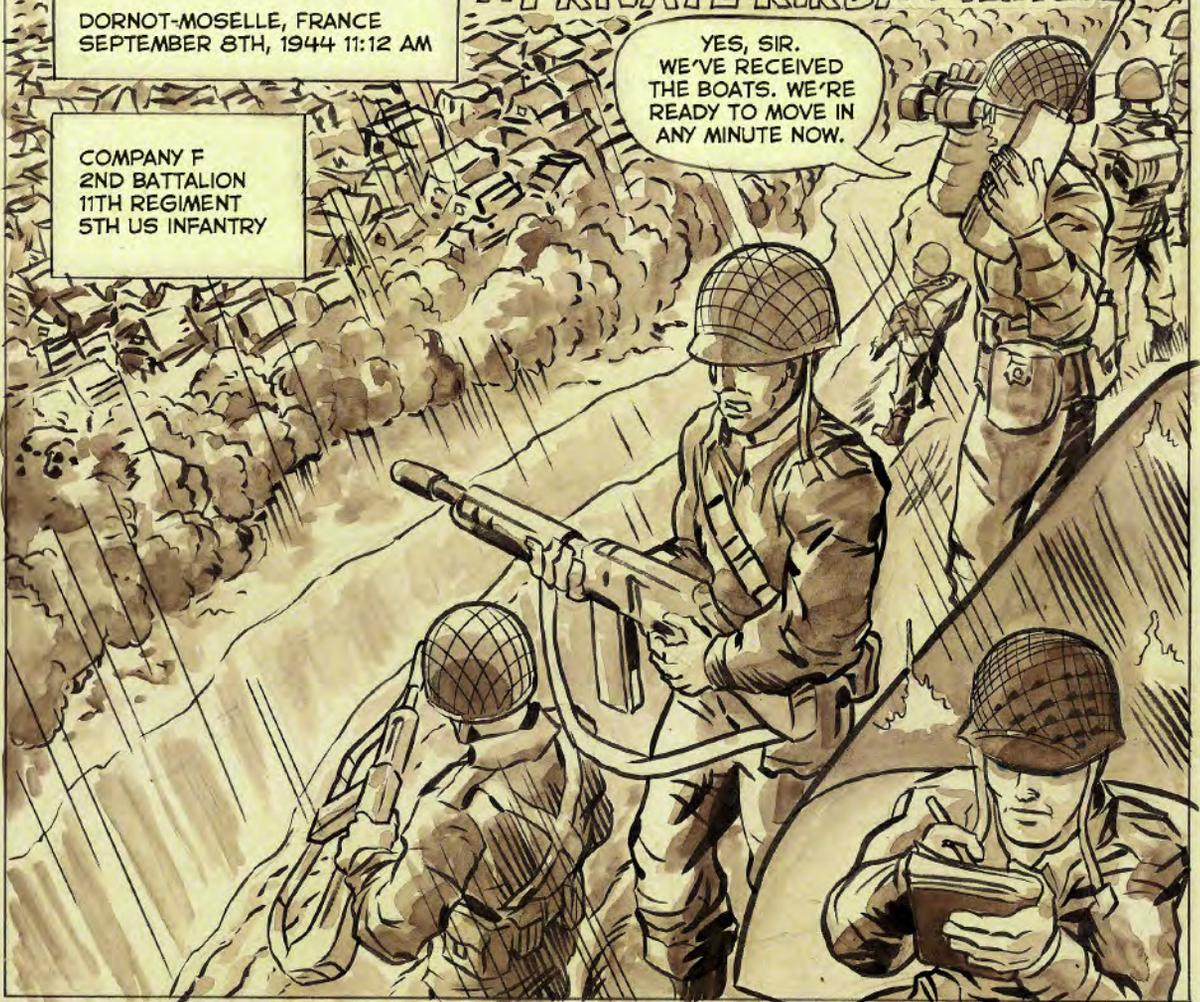
2½ DAYS IN HELL

A PRIVATE KIRBY ADVENTURE

DORNOT-MOSELLE, FRANCE
SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1944 11:12 AM

COMPANY F
2ND BATTALION
11TH REGIMENT
5TH US INFANTRY

YES, SIR.
WE'VE RECEIVED
THE BOATS. WE'RE
READY TO MOVE IN
ANY MINUTE NOW.



*Dear Roy—
Today we're taking
a pleasure cruise
on the
Moselle
River*

C'MON, JACK...
PUT THAT PENCIL
DOWN FOR ONCE
IN YOUR
LIFE.

NO
KIDDING,
MITCH?

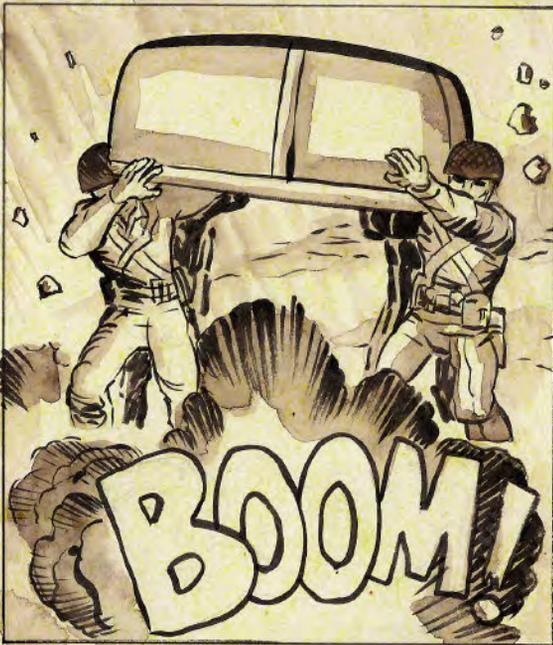
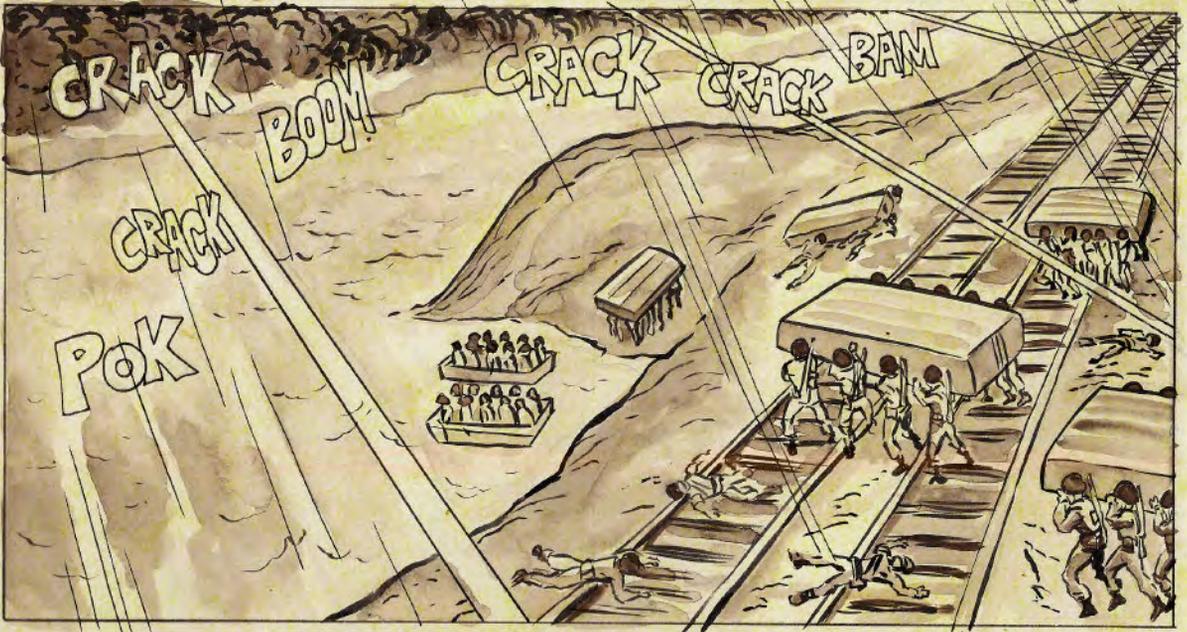
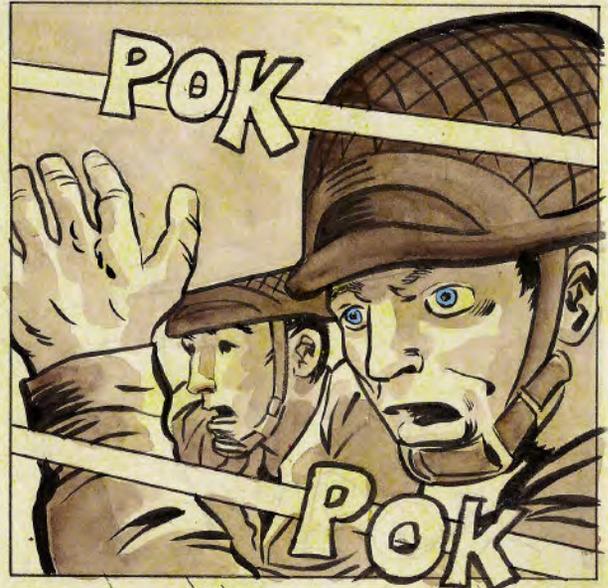
STICK CLOSE
TO ME AND KEEP
THE WISCRACKS
TO A MINIMUM.
THIS ISN'T GONNA
BE A PICNIC.

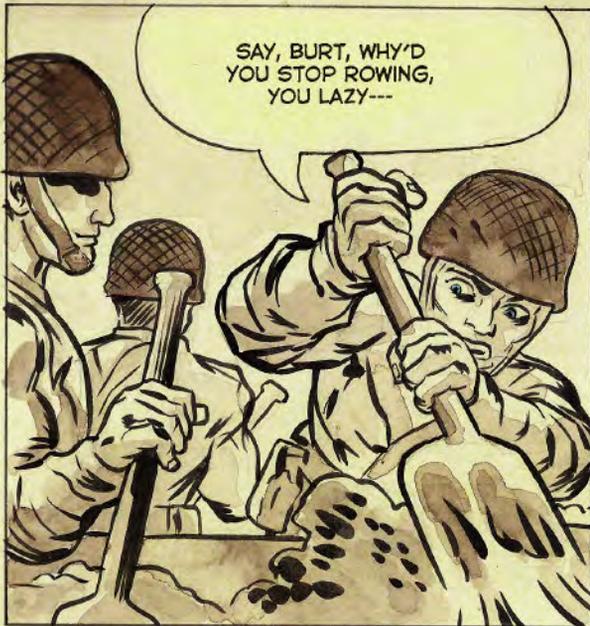
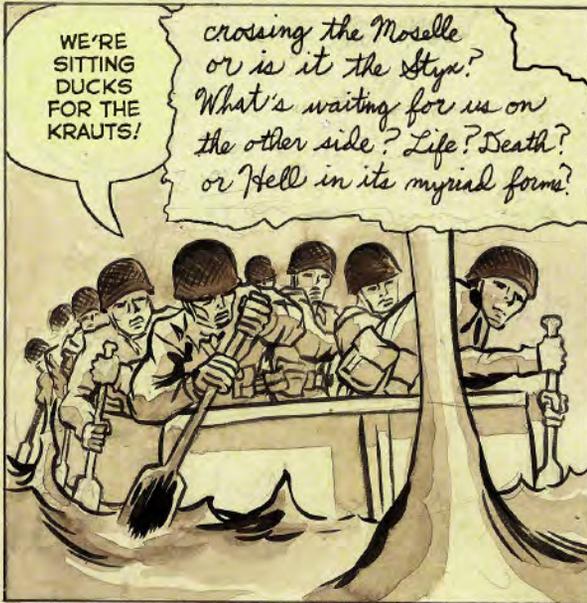
SEZ
YOU.

WE'RE
GOING.

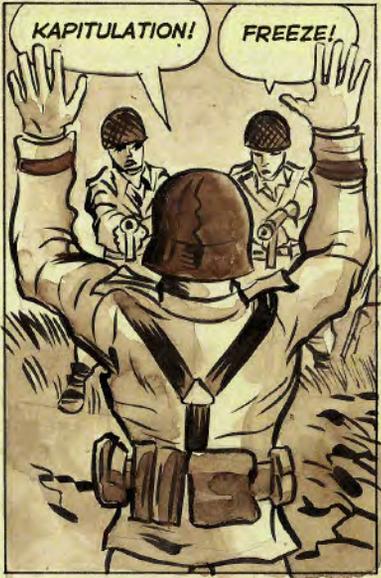
OKAY, FELLAS,
THIS IS IT...
WE'RE MOVING OUT!

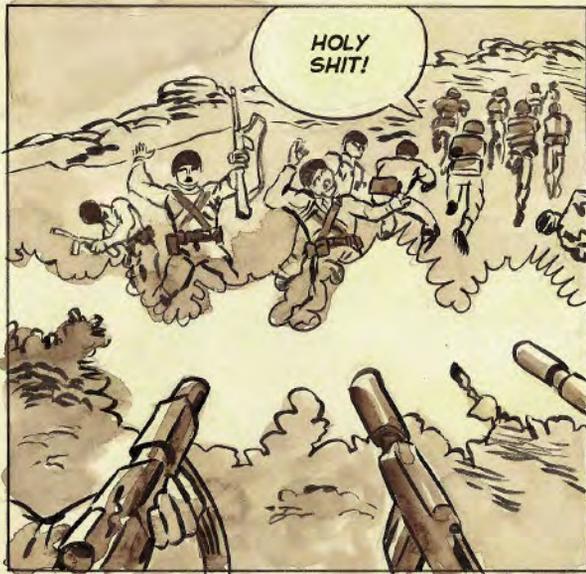


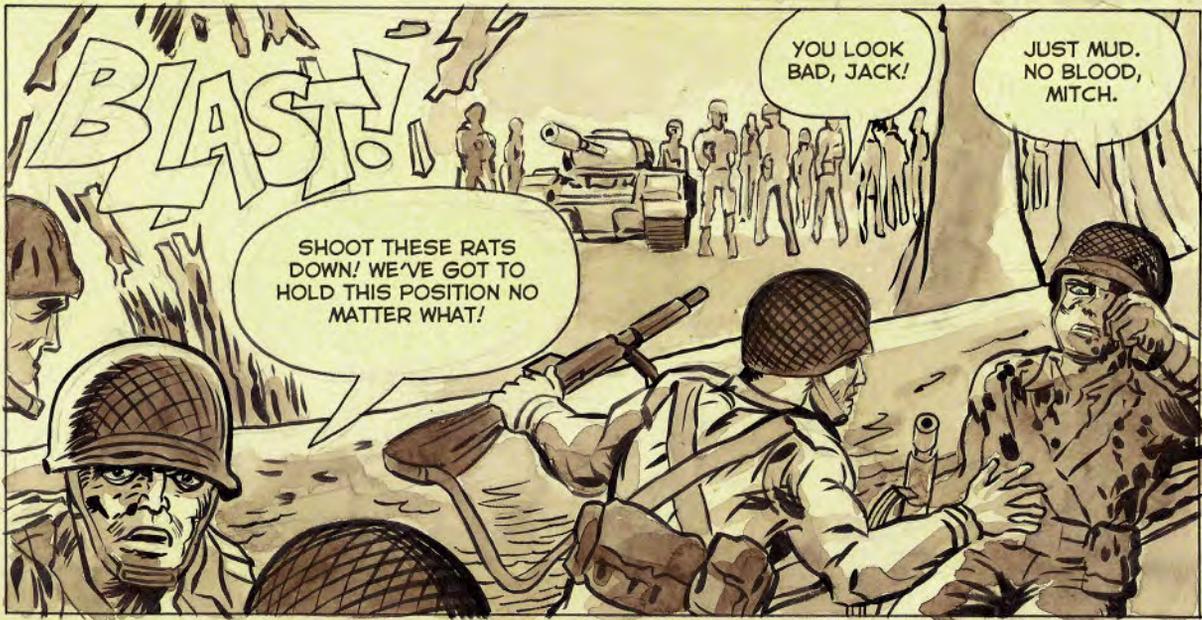












SHOOT THESE RATS DOWN! WE'VE GOT TO HOLD THIS POSITION NO MATTER WHAT!

YOU LOOK BAD, JACK!

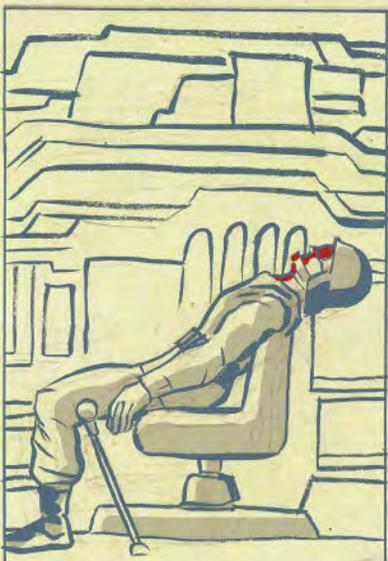
JUST MUD. NO BLOOD, MITCH.



I'M GONNA SCORE MYSELF A TANK.

YOU'RE OUTTA YOUR MIND, MITCH!

GET DOWN!
NOW!!!



BULLSEYE!

WAY TO GO, MITCH!



WE'RE NOT FINISHED WITH THEM YET, PETE.

RIGHT, JACK?

NOT BY A LONG SHOT.

WE'VE GOT ARTILLERY BACKING US UP NOW.

EVERY MAN DIGS A FOXHOLE AND FIRES ON MY COMMAND.

GET COZY! WE'RE DIGGING IN FOR THE NIGHT.

YES, SIR, BUT WE WON'T LAST LONG AGAINST THEIR PANZERS.

DON'T WORRY. HQ KNOWS THE DEAL HERE. REINFORCEMENTS ARE COMING.

DIGGING DITCHES? A GHETTO KID LIKE ME? THIS IS FOR FARM BOYS, MITCH.

DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL! I HOPE WE'RE NOT DIGGIN' OUR OWN GRAVES.

AMEN!

Frightened...

calm down...

close my eyes... but don't fall asleep

hungry... thirsty...

how long has it been?

must have fallen asleep...

BAKOO!!!

cold and soaked... still raining...

dangerous...

no rest for the weary... or the dead...

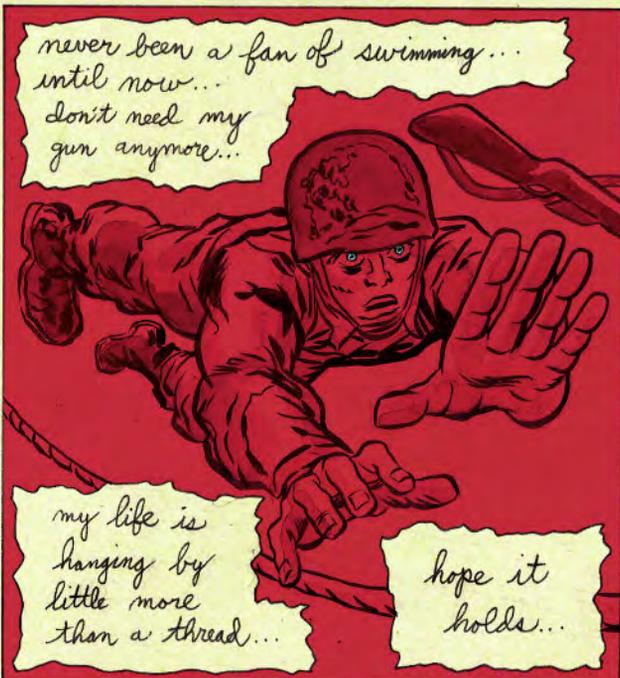
ready...

BLAAM!

HERE THEY COME AGAIN. FIRE!!! GIVE THEM ALL YOU'VE GOT!!!

SEPTEMBER 9TH
IRON HORSE FOREST
10:12 AM

how many times did I fall asleep...



Print the complete address in plain black letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, no pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. _____ From _____
 To _____ (Sender's name)
 _____ (Sender's address)
 _____ (City)

(CENSOR'S STAMP)

Dear Roz,

Last night we went for a midnight swim. Quite refreshing!

Mitch and the guys are doing well. No worries, Darling, I'm fine.

Love,
 Jackie

V...-MAIL



Jack's wartime friend, Mitch Sytkowski, and (below) the sketch Jack did of him during WWII; the brick factory where he drew it, still standing today, is now a restaurant.

**INTERVIEW WITH TOM SYTKOWSKI
(SON OF JACK'S FRIEND,
VETERAN MITCH SYTKOWSKI)**

TJKC: When was your father drafted? What was his job before? Where did he receive his military training?

TOM SYTKOWSKI: He was drafted November 12, 1941. Before that, he was employed by MacWhyte Wire Rope making cable. His training was at Camp Custer, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

TJKC: When did he go to France? Where did he arrive?

SYTKOWSKI: He arrived in France on Utah (Sugar Red) Beach, July 1944.

TJKC: When did he meet Private Jack Kirby (Jacob Kurtzberg)?

SYTKOWSKI: He met Kirby in Corny, France. Probably in October 1944. Kirby was a replacement.

TJKC: What was Jack like physically? What sort of man was he?

SYTKOWSKI: Dad said he was just a regular guy.

TJKC: What sort of Infantryman was Jack? The obedient/rebel sort? Did he socialize well?

SYTKOWSKI: Dad said he fit in well with the other men who had been together since basic training. A good man.

TJKC: Your father was usually with him. Did they get along well?

SYTKOWSKI: Kirby and Dad got along very well.

TJKC: Was Jack mentioning his wife Roz with Mitch then?

SYTKOWSKI: I do not know.

TJKC: Did they fight alongside each other?

SYTKOWSKI: Yes, they did fight together from Corny to the final attack on Metz.

TJKC: Do you have anecdotes from your father concerning Kirby? On the battlefields? During campaign life?

SYTKOWSKI: My father got to know Jack Kirby quite well while in Corny (France), after the September Moselle River Crossing. They were staying in a brick factory... Kirby asked Dad: "Do you mind if I sketch you, so I can stay in practice?" After seeing the result, my father said, "Hey! That's pretty good! You should be drawing for *Stars and Stripes*, not carrying a rifle!" Of course, my father at this time had no idea Kirby was a professional artist!



TJKC: Was Jack drawing often? Do you have some sketches he did back then, portraits or anything else?

SYTKOWSKI: No, Kirby did not draw often. I do however have the sketch Kirby did of my father while in the brick factory in Corny France.

TJKC: Do you remember the circumstances of his repatriation? He and Mitch suffered from trenchfoot.

SYTKOWSKI: Records from Pete Tyson show Kirby and my father being removed from the front line on November 14, 1944, both with trench feet.

TJKC: What happened to your father after November 20th, 1944? What did he do next?

SYTKOWSKI: My father and Kirby were evacuated to Paris, then to England for recovery. Due to his severe case, Dad was close to having both feet amputated. After a long recovery, he rejoined Company F in, I believe, March 1945 and fought to the end of the war, at which time he stayed after as army of occupation in Austria.

I do not know what happened to Jack Kirby. Perhaps he elected to join the replacement pool and went to another unit? ★





A scene from *Our Fighting Forces* #155.

THE ADVENTURES OF PVT. KIRBY

by Jean Depeley, extracted from his full Kirby biography

After his involvement in the tragic Dornot bridgehead, his many fights during the campaign of Metz in Patton's 5th Army during the Autumn of '44, Jack Kirby was suffering painful chilblains on his legs...

On November 14th, 1944, Jack Kirby and Mitch "Mac" Sytkowski were repatriated behind the front lines. Jack woke up at the field hospital. There, victims of the cold were categorized in 3 groups: those for whom a drip was put in, those for whom nothing could be done, and those to whom some whiskey was given. Jack was in the second category.

As the doctors didn't know what to do with them, Jack and Mitch were

transported to Verdun by train. Amputation was strongly considered. There, suffering considerably, he still found the will to produce some art and, as requested by the doctors who learned about his talent, Jack produced anatomical drawings of wounded feet, taking model on the soldiers around him... detailed gouaches in the lively colors, useful for the medical profession, but absolutely disgusting for everyone else. Jack was in a wheelchair, with his legs still swollen and purplish.

Jack and Mitch were finally sent to a hospital in Paris by truck, with six pregnant WACs (Woman Army Corps). From his hospital bed, on November 19th, Mitch wrote a V-mail to Pete Tyson and the other guys from Company F (shown at right, with a wartime photo of Mitch).

In Paris, Jack met Eddie Herron, his former writer at Fox, who was then editor for *Stars & Stripes*; and Murray Boltinoff, an editor at National Periodicals. They proposed that he visit the city by night with them, but Jack couldn't walk! Besides, he preferred being repatriated



(Sender's name)

(Sender's address)

Nov. 19, 1944
(Date)

No.

To

LT. BOB HERRON

(CENSOR'S STAMP)

Dear Pete,

Paris, France

Yup, here I am in Paris. Surprised? I'll bet you

Dear Pete,

Yup, here I am in Paris. Surprised? I'll bet you are!! I didn't expect to get this for myself, but here I am, and I'm finally getting the kind of rest I dreamed of. I'm diagnosed as a mild case of trench feet. My feet are pretty sore, but otherwise I'm okay. Jack Kirby is here with me so I do have a little company from the gang. If you've noticed, my return address is the same, so I guess you better use your own judgment about the mail situation. I think I'll have a set address for you in a few days. I hope you and Chet are still okay as also the rest of the gang. Say "hello" to Chet, Richmond, Deppeler, and the rest of my pals for me. Well kid, best of luck, and I'll be seeing you. So long!

Did you get the film and the German field glasses out of my pack? Hang on to them please!

Your old pal,
Mac

Did you get the film and German field glasses out of my pack? Hang on to them please!

V-MAIL

The anatomical drawings are lost, but not the portrait "Little Woman" of November 23rd, 1944, drawn at the French hospital.



and returning home, as quickly as possible.

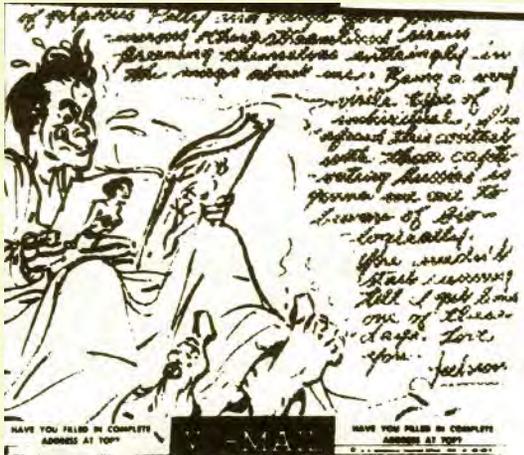
Jack and Mitch were then transferred to Hereford in England. On the way back, Jack's pack was ransacked, and all the letters from Roz disappeared, leaving only the German revolver he found on a battlefield. His legs were still purple and the English surgeons were also considering amputation.

Roz received a call from the hospital. She hadn't had news for weeks and was extremely relieved to hear about Jack. Learning of her husband's condition, she had the courage to put the situation in perspective: with his job, it was better to



Murray Boltinoff in the 1960s.

(below) V-Mails Jack sent to Roz Kirby.



FROM 228667Y
 TO: MRS. ROZALIND KIRBY
 2820 BRIGHTON 7TH ST.
 BAYLN, N.Y.
 PVT. JACK KIRBY
 CO. B. 5TH PLATOON
 APO, 19417 - HQ
 76 POSTMASTER N.Y.

Howy Duden!
 Life aboard the line continues with its "abandon ship" drills - crew calls and whatever forms of passing the day we can find. Lots of reading matter and games and muskets rendered by some of the boys who have scrouped together a variety of instruments. Hard to share with dull water, my soap won't whip up a lather. Bought a box of cigars from the ship's PX which we must order thru the sergeant. Indulge in occasional cheating and have passed out money a few times. Did some copan on return too. Keep thinking about you and home and can visualize you very vividly. Frankly, you don't seem far away at all. I doubt if we will ever actually be apart from each other. Stayed but still yours - Jackson

lose his feet than his hands!

Fortunately, Jack eventually recovered. He was spending most of his time drawing. One day, an English officer asked him to draw a pornographic piece of art, featuring Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. He first declined, but the officer insisted and he had to comply, producing his only known risqué drawing, which hasn't reappeared since.

Having already survived the Lower East Side of New York, he got through the world conflict. Jack was a survivor.

While his fully-recovered friend Mitch eventually returned to France, Jack was repatriated to the USA.

He was to return to America aboard the Queen Mary steamship, but he fell ill and had to stay in England a few weeks more, finally going aboard a small sanitary tugboat, dragging itself at a very slow speed of 9 knots an hour.

The conditions were terrible; the nurses were nowhere to be seen on board. Surrounded by war veterans with severe facial injuries, and amputated soldiers, Jack was seasick and starved during the nine days of travel.

One night, he was almost happy to fall off his bed and hurt his knees and elbows, as it thwarted the diffuse aching of his seasickness.

His only pleasure was to smoke Roi Tan Falcon cigars, which he traded drawings for from officers—a first step towards his return to civilian life.

Still in his wheelchair, he tried to keep as busy as he could by playing poker with paratroopers—but they couldn't accept losing the game to him! Afraid for his life, he preferred giving up his money, leaving the brutes fighting for it.

He arrived in the New York Harbor in January 1945, and was sent for six months



A motley crew playing cards in Sgt. Fury #7.



to Camp Butler (Raleigh, North Carolina, left), via Richmond, Virginia, to finish his military service.

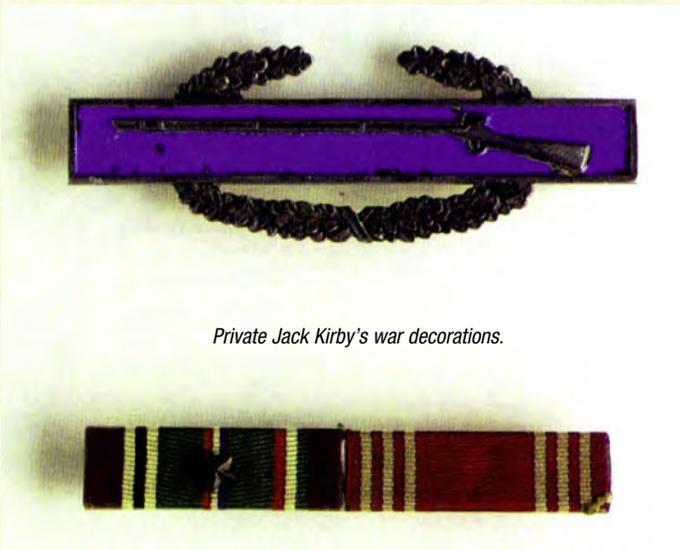
After his hospitalization ended, he was appointed to truck engine maintenance... to his greatest pleasure! In April, Roz finally obtained a pass to

visit him. But Jack had no furlough. He falsified his insurance card as a pass card and managed to go out to find Roz. They had not seen each other in nearly a year. Roz barely recognized him. He had lost almost 45 pounds since he was drafted... and Jack left with Roz.

The couple was found in Richmond a few days after, and the desertion was mentioned in his military file... so what?

And, on July 20th, 1945, Jack was finally released from his military duties.

He was promoted First Class and received the medal of the fighter in the Infantry, the "European Theater" ribbon with the Bronze star, and a mention on behalf of his regiment. His personal file stipulates: "has killed enemies and destroyed equipment armed with his rifle, mortar, machine-gun, rocket launcher, rifle grenade launcher, hand grenade and bayonet. Has participated in fights and in reconnaissance patrols. Has produced observation drawings for the Command Staff. Has settled



Private Jack Kirby's war decorations.

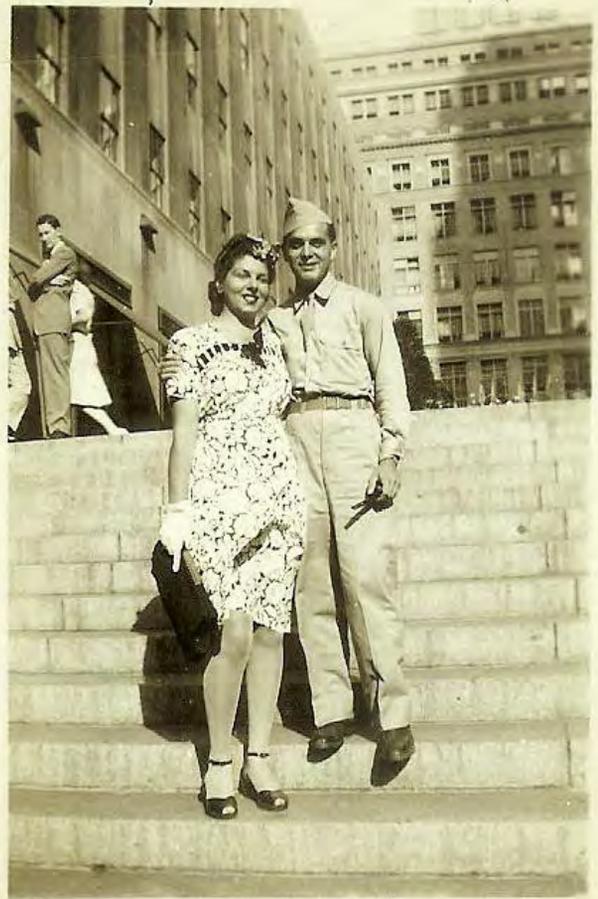
automatic equipment on the ground. Has used camouflage and dissimulation to protect himself."

He finally took the train to New York. Roz was waiting for him on the station's platform.

Roz was pregnant with Susan; their daughter was born at Roz's parent's home, on December 6, 1945.

Jack returned with his wife to his parents-in-law's apartment in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, where his wife had lived after his departure to save money. After a few weeks of rest, he put his drawing board in the bedroom and went back to work.

When Joe Simon was finally released from active duty at the



(above) Jack, slimmer, in his uniform, with Roz.

(below) Jack returned to Brighton Beach in Summer 1945.

end of 1945, both families met in New York in a restaurant, to celebrate the return of the soldiers. According to Joe, during the dinner, Jack showed to everyone the anatomical drawings, which he had produced during his stay at the French hospital. The horrible paintings spoiled Roz and all the friends' appetites.

Wartime was finally over for Jack and Joe: they were back together. ★



An allegory of Jack's desertion in Young Brides #3.



JACK'S ASSOCIATES DURING THE WAR



Stan Lee [left], the young editor-in-chief at Timely publications, anticipated the call in 1942 and gave his position to Vince Fago, who remained there till the end of 1945. Stan fulfilled his military duties in New Jersey, where as a

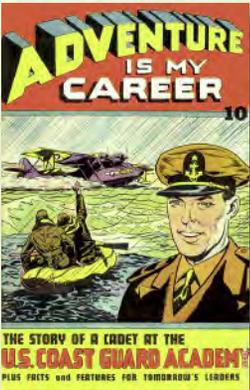
sergeant, he wrote screenplays for military training movies.

Joe Simon also stayed in the USA, serving in the Coast Guard. At first, as a rider, he was patrolling Barnegat Island Beach, near Atlantic City, New Jersey. He received his military training in Baltimore, where he spotted a poster of the *Adventures of Captain America* serial on the front of a cinema—which made him very



angry toward his ex-employer Timely. Then, he was transferred as a draftsman to the Combat Art section, based in Washington DC. There, he lived in the former Egyptian embassy. He produced *Adventure is My Career*, a propaganda comic distributed on the newsstands by pulp publisher Street and Smith in 1945, and *True Comics*. This comic strip was praising the Coast Guard and was distributed through all the country in the newspapers' Sunday pages.

Joe met his friend and publisher, now Captain Al Harvey [center above], in Washington DC. There, they planned editorial projects for the post-war years. In 1945, Joe produced



(above) *Adventure is My Career* cover and page 15.

(left) The story "Foxhole Sailor" from *World's Finest* #20, published by DC Comics.

(right) A page from *48 Famous Americans*.



some stories for National Periodicals from the Combat Art Section.

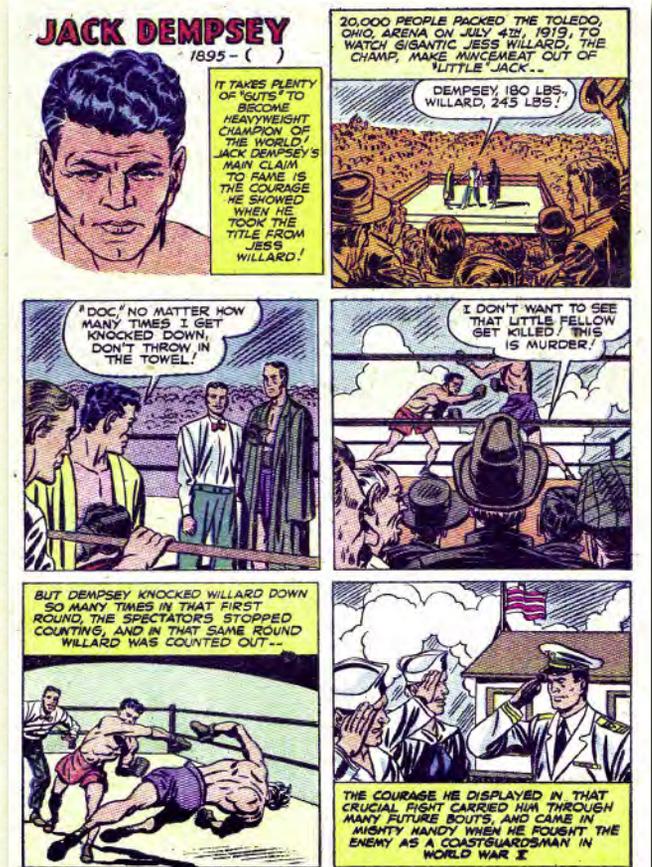
There, he met Bill Draut [left] and Ken Reilly, whom he would later employ in S&K's future studio. On the spot, Joe also met Will Eisner, who was producing illustrations for military magazines.

Joe was liberated from military service after Kirby and Al Harvey, at the end of 1945. At his return to New York, he was invited to Harvey's publishing house, where the boss made him a proposition

which he couldn't refuse: a very interesting price per page (50 dollars), along with a 50% sharing of the profits between the publisher and Simon and Kirby. There, Simon also met Harriet Feldman [right], Harvey's attractive secretary. His answer was as rapid as affirmative. His bonds with Harvey became stronger: already a godfather of his younger son, he would become the husband of his pretty secretary, on June 3rd, 1946.

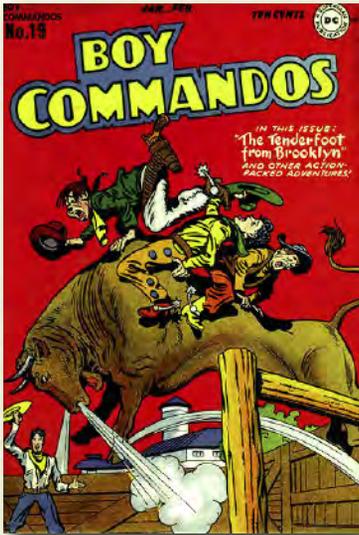


With the help of Kirby, Joe quickly set up two new titles for Harvey (*Stuntman* and *Boy Explorers*), which would not meet their expectations for success. Later on, Joe contacted Leon Jason, the boss of the Jason Comic Art Studio, and collaborated with Jack on a giveaway booklet called *48 Famous Americans* for J.C. Penney, a customer of Jason, which came out in 1947. It featured the biographies of some major American figures of the Second World War. ★



JACK KIRBY'S WAR COMIC BOOKS AFTER WWII

As documented in the four previous chapters of my biography, describing the period when Kirby was in General Patton's 5th Army in Metz (between August and November 1944), this experience was more than traumatizing. Kirby survived numerous fights, such as a tank attack in Novéant, the famous Dornot bridgehead, the patrols in Corny... he freed a prisoner of war camp in Ars on Moselle. He was repatriated because of a severe case of trenchfoot, risking amputation, and he got back to civilian life on July 20th, 1945. Such memories were bound to find their place in his production after the conflict.

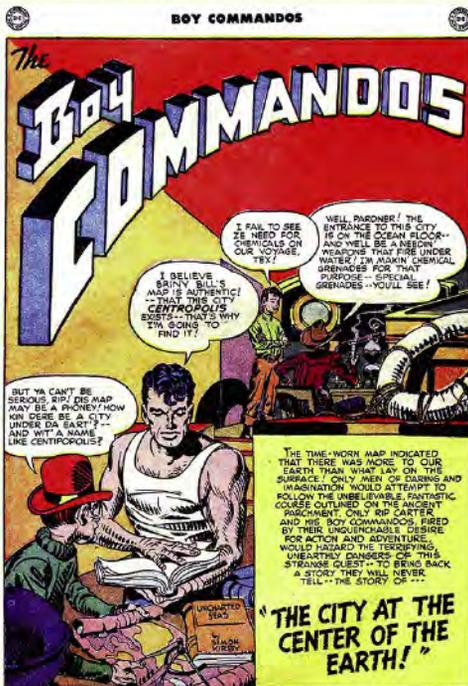


When Jack went back to New York, he contacted Jack Liebowitz and had his former assignments at National Periodical back, starting in August 1945. Just in time because, a few weeks earlier, his last DC inventory pages had been published, and the money saved by Roz on their sale had run out.

Actually, a law protecting pre-war jobs forced control-freak editor Mort Weisinger to rehire Jack, despite their artistic differences. Kirby resumed *Boy Commandos* (starting at #15, May 1946) as well as on the

"Boy Commandos" back-ups in *Detective Comics* (some episodes between #110-150) and *World's Finest Comics* (#21-38). These episodes were often produced alone (Joe Simon was still in the military). Jack may have been assisted by Louis Cazeneuve and pitched by writer Bob Feller on some of them (unless those still were inventory pages). Jack was to continue until May 1949 (*Boy Commandos* #33). "The City at the Center of the Earth" in *Boy Commandos* #29 (September 1948) was reworked from another story, initially planned for *Boy Explorers Comics* #3, that remained unpublished after that Harvey Comics title was cancelled.

But, following the veterans' example, the public wanted to forget the war, and *Boy Commandos* finally stopped at issue #36



(November-December 1949).

Some pre-war episodes from Simon and Kirby were reprinted at DC in the '70s by Kirby, who at that time was his own editor.



Two issues of *Boy Commandos* came out in 1973, as well as some back-ups in *Mister Miracle* (#4-8).

In 1947, along with Joe Simon, Jack produced "The Flying Fool", a series of realistic adventures for Hillman's *Airboy* comics. The seven episodes tell the exploits of US

aviator Link Thorne, who became a mercenary after the Pacific war.

There was also *Foxhole* for Mainline, the company created by Simon and Kirby in 1954-55. On its six issues (four published at Mainline and two at Charlton, after the bankruptcy of their publishing house), S&K and their studio (including Mort Meskin, Jerry Robinson and Bill Draut) produced almost autobiographical stories. Some were even signed "P.F.C. Jack Kirby, 5th Div, 3rd Army, 1942-45."



(top left) One of the last *Boy Commandos* inventory covers (from #19).

(above) Splash page of *Boy Commandos* #29 which cannibalized an unpublished episode meant for *Boy Explorers* #3.

(top right) Panel of "Boy Commandos" from *Detective Comics* #65.

(lower right) Splash to "Flying Fool" (*Airboy* V.4 #5), and cover of V.4 #4.

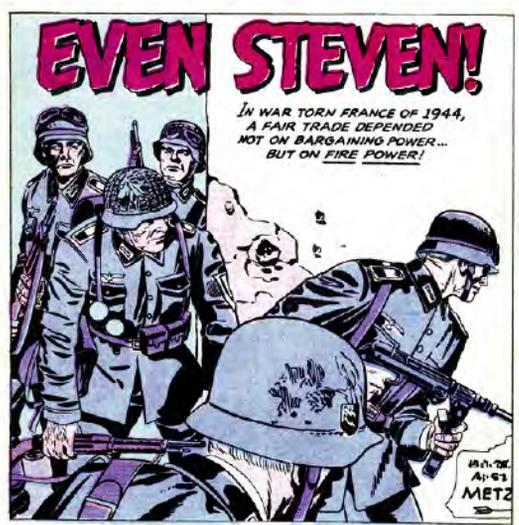


Here, the naïve patriotism of pre-war stories (those of Captain America or Boy Commandos) has disappeared, replaced by a terrible realism, exorcising some difficult memories. The cover of issue #4 was even refused by the young Comics Code Authority. But Jack was pragmatic: if he held a good story, he had to tell it and, according to Roz, he loved this kind of stories. Most of these war stories were reprinted at Charlton in the '80s.



After Mainline ceased publishing, Jack occasionally did covers for *Warfront* (#28, 29, 30, 34) at Charlton. In 1956, Jack, now as a freelance artist, came back to Atlas (ex-Timely) and drew a war story for *Battleground* #14.

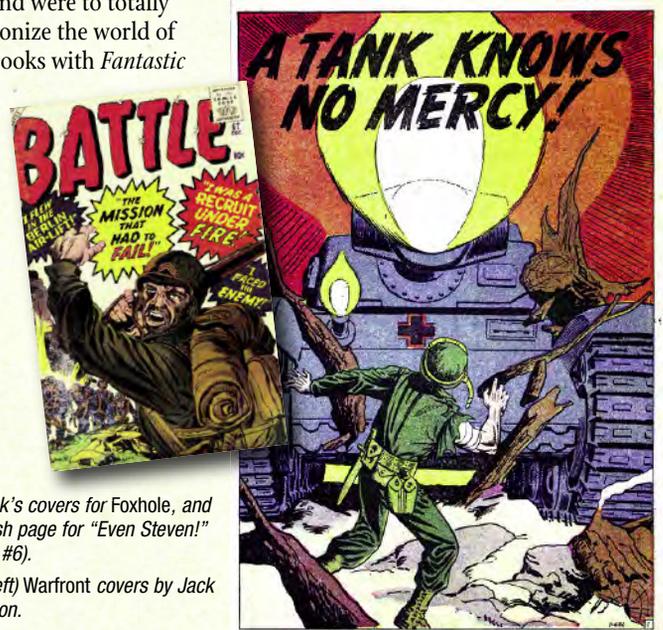
We can easily imagine Jack's reluctance to restart collaborating with his former publisher—but Jack was pragmatic. After a short stay at DC in 1958-59, he worked hard for Goodman's publishing house, producing a dozen war stories (at Stan Lee's direction?) and covers for



Battle (issues #64-70).



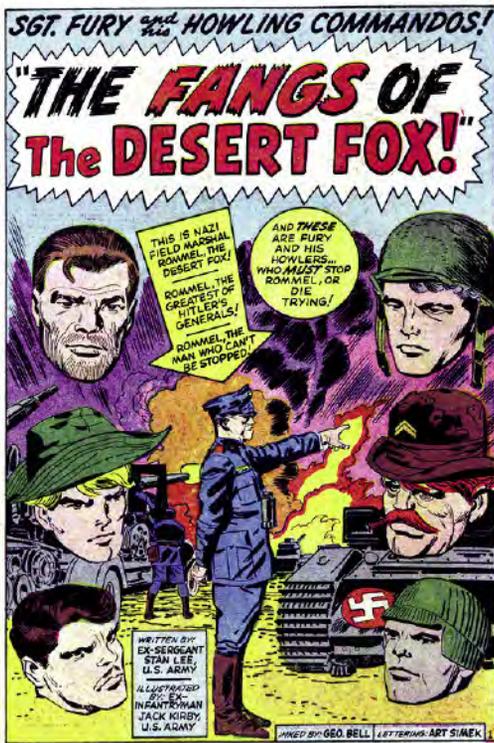
In 1961, after four years of imagining giant monsters, romances and westerns, Jack and Stan Lee tried the super-heroes trend again, and were to totally revolutionize the world of comic books with *Fantastic Four*.



(top) Jack's covers for *Foxhole*, and the splash page for "Even Steven!" (*Foxhole* #6).
(above left) *Warfront* covers by Jack at Charlton.

(left) Page 2 of *Battleground* #14.

(lower right) Cover of *Battle* #67 and "A Tank Knows No Mercy" from *Battle* #70, inked by Ditko, and reminiscent of Jack's fight at Novéant on September 7th, 1944.



His companions of the "Howling Commandos" (Irishman "Dum Dum" Dugan; Gabriel Jones, the first black character of the Marvel universe; Italian Dino Manelli; Jewish "Izzy Cohen"; "Rebel" Ralston; and "Junior Juniper") undoubtedly resulted from fellow conscripts of diverse ethnic groups met by Jack at Camp Stewart. Historical characters (Rommel, Hitler, Lord Haw Haw) were also present, eclipsing the usual comics villains (Baron Strucker) and giving a certain realistic approach to the series.

Even if it is the first Marvel comic in which one of the heroes died for good ("Junior Juniper" in #4), the dialogue's thoughtlessness and the manicheism behind the stories were not to everyone's taste. A furious reader sent a letter threatening to kill the staff because

In May 1963, Jack and Stan co-produced *Sgt. Fury* #1. According to John Severin, the series was inspired by an unsold comic strip project by Kirby from the late '50s (although no trace of it has been found to this day). As Kirby, Fury was from New York's slums and was drafted to Europe. And like Lee, Fury was a sergeant.

of the too obvious anti-German bias.

Kirby drew 8 issues of *Sgt. Fury*, plus about twenty covers and some bonus pages on the weapons used during the war.

Jack's real-life experience in the war and Lee's eloquence eventually scored. The

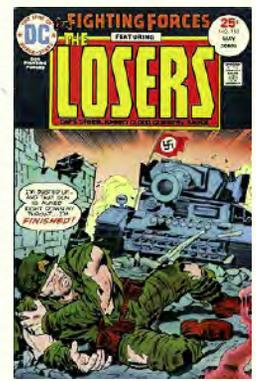
magazine persisted until 1981 (with #167), bringing a new craze for war stories and the publishing of companion magazine *Captain Savage and his Leatherneck Raiders* (over 19 issues), during the '70s. Lee and Kirby also produced a "contemporary" series featuring Nick Fury's adventures, "Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.", taking place in the '60s,



starting in *Strange Tales* #135.

In 1964, Stan and Jack brought Captain America back to life, first in a World War II context, in *Sgt. Fury* (#13, December), as well as in his own series in *Tales of Suspense* (#59-77, November)—an opportunity for Cap to face the Red Skull again or to meet Hitler himself.

Kirby came back to war comics at DC in 1974-75, working on the "Losers" series in *Our Fighting Forces* (#151-162, inked by Mike Royer or D. Bruce Berry), giving him the opportunity to exorcise in a magnificent way some painful episodes of his war time ("A Small place In Hell" in #152, "Mile-A-Minute Jones" in #159)—certainly the best war stories he ever wrote.



AUTHENTIC ~ RARE AND KNOWN
SUB-MACHINE GUNS
OF WORLD WAR II!!
 YOUR PERSONAL WAR SOUVENIRS... SAVE 'EM

UNITED STATES H. & R. REISING M55

CALIBER.....45 A.C.P.
 SHOTS.....20
 LENGTH.....21 1/4"
 WEIGHT.....6 3/4 LBS.
 ACTION.....RETARDED BLOWBACK... FULL AND SEMI-AUTOMATIC

BRITISH EMPIRE AUSTEN SUB-MACHINE GUN

LENGTH.....33 1/4"
 WEIGHT.....8 3/4 LBS.
 CALIBER.....9 MM LUBER
 SHOTS.....32
 ACTION.....BLOWBACK... FULL AND SEMI-AUTOMATIC

GERMANY M.P. 43 (KAR 44)

CALIBER.....7.92 MM SHORT
 SHOTS.....30
 WEIGHT.....10 1/2 LBS.
 LENGTH.....30"
 ACTION.....BLOWBACK... FULL AUTOMATIC

WEAPONS of WAR

US COMMANDOS KNOW THESE DEAF-SHOOTERS LIKE WE KNOW OUR FIRST NAMES? AND, IF YOU ARM-CHAIR BATTLE-BUFFS EVER WANNA BE REAL HOWLERS, THEN HERE'S SOMETHIN' TO DRUM INTO YOUR SKULLS... THAT'S AN ORDER!

MORE AUTHENTIC WEAPONS NEXT ISSUE!

<p>REVOLVER M 92</p> <p>CALIBER.....8MM SHOTS.....6 DOUBLE ACTION REVOLVER</p> <p>FRANCE</p>	<p>PISTOL M 25</p> <p>CALIBER.....8MM SHOTS.....8 SHORT RECOIL SEMI-AUTOMATIC ACTION</p> <p>JAPAN</p>
<p>NAGANT REVOLVER</p> <p>CALIBER.....7.5 MM SHOTS.....7 DOUBLE ACTION REVOLVER</p> <p>RUSSIA</p>	<p>MAUSER PISTOL M 98</p> <p>CALIBER.....7.63MM SHOTS.....10 SHORT RECOIL SEMI-AUTOMATIC ACTION</p> <p>GERMANY</p>
<p>WEBLEY PISTOL M 1913</p> <p>CALIBER......455 SHOTS.....7 SHORT RECOIL SEMI-AUTOMATIC</p> <p>BRITISH NAVY</p>	<p>STEYR PISTOL M 11</p> <p>CALIBER.....9MM SHOTS.....8 SHORT RECOIL SEMI-AUTOMATIC</p> <p>AUSTRIA</p>

(top left) Splash to *Sgt. Fury* #6 with Rommel.

(left and right) A bonus page on World War II weapons from *Sgt. Fury* #1, and a page on WWII weapons from *Our Fighting Forces* #152.

From a thematic point of view, Kirby's World War II trauma is visible in his work with his totalitarian villains, at Marvel (Dr. Doom, Red Skull, Baron Zemo, the Hate Monger) and especially at DC, with his "Fourth World".

In this vast epic saga combining four titles (*New Gods*, *Mister Miracle*, *Forever People* and *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen*), Darkseid and his troops symbolize the German army and its Führer; Metron, the scientist and architect of the Nazi party Albert Speer; and Granny Goodness' orphanage, the hitlerian Youths.

And "The Death Wish of Terrible Turpin" in *New Gods* #8 (April 1972) presents some obvious biographical elements. In the destructive war on Earth between the gods, a simple man from Brooklyn stands, opposing Darkseid's troops with his bare hands: policeman Dan Turpin. This "man in the street's" courage and abnegation, so close to Kirby, lead Turpin to the ultimate sacrifice... and reminds us of Jack's own implication in the world conflict, which stakes largely exceeded his simple existence.

Moreover, the four elements (fire, water, rock and air), so often present in Jack Kirby's work—in particular in his *Fantastic Four*—probably came from these nightmarish moments, branded in his flesh, when, hiding in a muddy fox-hole during the harsh winter (under the wind, the rain or the snow), Second Class Kirby was under the enemy's fire. The confrontation of these elementary forces obviously foreshadows the super-heroic fights Jack developed with Stan at Marvel in the '60s.

But, artistically speaking, the strength of the elements themselves will forever remain in Jack's drawings, through famous small



black spheres: the so-called "Kirby Krackle."

Jack was traumatized by his war time for the rest of his life, recurring nightmares sometimes awaking him, as his wife Roz said. Very prodigal with anecdotes, Jack did not hesitate to share them, but their violence made his family uncomfortable. That was why most of the time he kept silent. Nevertheless, along his massive production, Jack indirectly told what he was not able to say, evacuating in a positive manner his terrible demons, as you can see with the illustrations accompanying these articles.

During the first San Diego Comic Con in 1970, Jack explained: "There have been times when it just scared the living daylight out of me, but I have lived through those times, I can look back at them almost fondly. So you say, 'Well, I've handled that.' I've bloodied my axe in some way, and I've handled it. So that's not so bad. I came away from it. Looking back on it, I had a great time, really. That was a great experience, although at the time, in this context, I couldn't understand it in its context. So, what I do is, take whatever I feel about all these things, and put it in my drawing, and maybe entertain you in some way."

Kirby also said: "I often asked myself the question, what I was doing there (on the European battlefields)... The only sensible answer I was able to find, I had it by seeing the extraordinary young generation which followed."

In spite of the war's sheer horror and violence, in spite of the men he had to kill on the European battlefields, Jack's profound humanism prevailed and still graced his uncountable pages after the conflict. ★



(top) Portraits of the Hate Monger, Baron Zemo, Darkseid, Metron and Granny Goodness.
(left and above) The graphic and elementary conceptualization of the four elements' energy: Kirby Krackle, Jack's own artistic fractals.

JACK KIRBY MUSEUM

Newsletter

www.kirbymuseum.org

Kirby Museum helps assemble an art exhibit at Angoulême Festival in France!

Every January, the French city of Angoulême hosts Europe's largest comics festival, and in 2015, there will be a Jack Kirby exhibit. In addition to original art, the

exhibit will feature approximately 100 original art images from the Kirby Museum's Digital Archive. The expectation is that the show will travel after the Festival ends, so we'll keep an eye on where and when. Stay tuned. We couldn't be happier to help with what looks like a wonderful exhibit, and expect there will be more to come as Kirby's Centenary in 2017 gets closer.



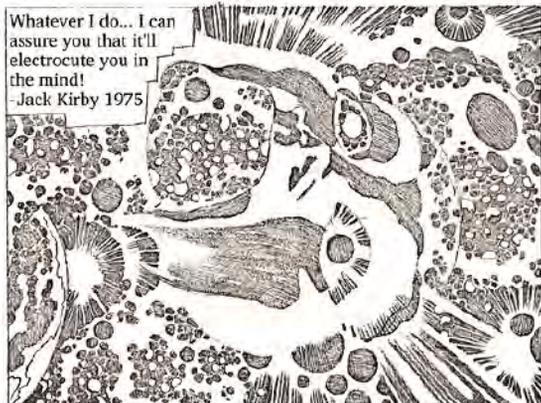
The mini-pop-up at the Florida SUPERCON.

Mini pop-up at Florida SUPERCON!

We were happy to be able to set up a mini-pop-up exhibit at Florida SUPERCON over the Fourth of July weekend. Thanks to the event's organizers for helping to make this happen.

Sculpting an unforgettable 100th birthday celebration for Jack...

Speaking of the Kirby's 100th, we've been working with renaissance man and Museum member Guy Dorian who's suggested and volunteered to bring about a very special, monumental project to celebrate Kirby's 100th. Guy's a comics artist, a martial artist, a sculptor, an architect, and a huge Jack Kirby supporter; stay tuned for more details!



Buckingham, Arthur Brown, Brian Hurrst, Lex Passaris, Richard Harrison, Doug Peltier, Ian Matthews, Jean Depelley, Scott Rowland, Noah Ramos, Gary Panucci, Clay Fernald, Guy Dorian.

Rand Hoppe's family kindly asked for donations to two non-profits in memory his father Will Hoppe who passed away in late May. One of the non-profits was the Jack Kirby Museum, so we'd like to thank these people for their generous contributions: Bob, Nema & Mick Mallow, Carl & Nancy Gropper, Ellen Ferelli, Hubert & Michael Ann Gainer, Jaclyn Cherubini, Jeanne Dennison, Lois Dilivio, Lynda Stadtmueller, Mark Heinold, and Mary Beth Whritenour.

For their help with our programs, we like to thank Richard Howell, Tod Seisser, Bechara Maalouf, Lisa Rigoux-Hoppe, Bev Hoppe, Mitch Jomsky, Breanna Jomsky, Mike Broder, Scott Dunbier, Albert Moy, Mike Burkey, Hans Kosenkranius, Anthony Snyder, Frank Giella, Kat Kraft, Mike Thibodeaux, Pete Koch, John Plauche, Srihari Naidu, and Scott Eder.

As always, Rand thanks fellow Trustees Tom Kraft, John Morrow, and David Schwartz, and many thanks to the Kirby Estate for their support!

**Please add \$10 for memberships outside the US, to cover additional postage costs. Posters come "as-is" and may not be in mint condition.*

TJKC Edition Fall 2014

The Jack Kirby Museum and Research Center is organized exclusively for educational purposes; more specifically, to promote and encourage the study, understanding, preservation and appreciation of the work of Jack Kirby by:

- illustrating the scope of Kirby's multi-faceted career,
- communicating the stories, inspirations and influences of Jack Kirby,
- celebrating the life of Jack Kirby and his creations, and
- building understanding of comic books and comic book creators.

To this end, the Museum will sponsor and otherwise support study, teaching, conferences, discussion groups, exhibitions, displays, publications and cinematic, theatrical or multimedia productions.

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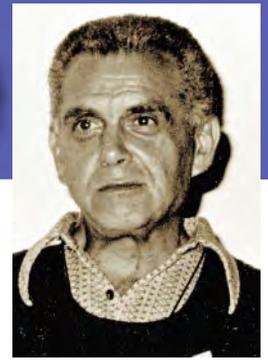
			
Captain America—23" x 29" 1941 Captain America—14" x 23"		Strange Tales—23" x 29" Super Powers—17" x 22" color	

with one of these posters: \$50*

		
Marvel—14" x 23"	Galactic Head—18" x 20" color	Incan Visitation—24" x 18" color

KIRBY ON KIRBY: 1974

Jack Kirby interviewed by Jerry Connelly on September 18, 1974



(below) Kirby pencils from page 6 of Captain America #101 (May 1968), and the published version (opposite).

(next page, bottom) Jack's 1960s unused redesign for Cap.

[Jacob Kurtzberg was born on New York's Lower East Side on August 28, 1917, to parents who had recently emigrated from Austria. He grew up to become Jack Kirby, a legend in the world of comic books, introducing to that world such seminal characters as Captain America; The Boy Commandos; The Newsboy Legion; Kamandi, the Last Boy on Earth; and OMAC, the One-Man Army Corps.

A prolific artist and writer, Kirby was virtually a one-

man comic book factory who created most of his own stories, then illustrated them in his distinctive muscle-bulging, action-crammed, panel-packed style. When he died in 1994 at the age of 77, he was revered by comics fans of all ages as the "King of the Comics." I was privileged to interview Jack Kirby on the evening of September 18, 1974, in a live, 60-minute radio broadcast in the studios of KNJO, Thousand Oaks, California. What follows is a condensed version of our conversation.]

JERRY CONNELLY: Let's talk about Captain America, probably your most famous creation. Captain America was first published in March 1941, about eight months before the United States got into World War II. On the cover of that first issue, you showed Captain America slugging Adolph Hitler right in the chops. Was Captain America created specifically to fight World War II?

JACK KIRBY: Yes, I believe it was a spontaneous reaction on my part and my partner Joe Simon. We discussed it at the time. There was patriotic fervor everywhere. It was just the climate for that kind of thing. Captain America was a super-hero of his own, specific type. There were many other super-heroes that were being developed at the time, and Captain America was the first to have a patriotic theme. My style was particularly adaptable to that kind of super-hero, and it went very well.

CONNELLY: How did Captain America's powers differ from those of Superman?

KIRBY: Captain America was a super-acrobat. His powers weren't that extreme. He couldn't stop a locomotive, but he could certainly get out of the way fast enough. [laughs] And that did the trick for him. He was as dramatic as I could make him. If he got into a fight, it was with 50 guys. If he jumped from a roof, he just knew how to roll right and avoid injury. He was a man with super-reflexes.

He couldn't fly. He didn't have any of the super-powers of the ultimate super-hero. The ultimate super-heroes had super-powers that were extraordinary. The only thing extraordinary about Captain America were his reflexes, his intuitiveness, and his incisive sizing-up of the situation. His mind was very facile, and his muscles went right along with it.

CONNELLY: What was the origin story?

KIRBY: It was a scientific experiment in which a certain chemical caused physical changes that were necessary to change a subject that the scientists had selected. The subject, of course, was a 4-F. [laughs] He was in pretty bad shape,



which was perfect, because you had two extremes there. They were going to take a man in very poor physical shape and turn him into an extremely fine physical specimen—which this chemical did. And, of course, there were dramatic consequences which developed the theme and the hero.

CONNELLY: What were your reasons for selecting the elements that made up Cap's costume?

KIRBY: Of course, the American flag is unbeatable for color combination and appeal. So that was a must. The chain-mail business was strictly the warrior theme carried to modern times. The wings suggested themselves because they indicated the speed with which he moved at all times.

Everything on the costume was symbolic of the character himself. He was a patriotic character: a speedy, hard-hitting type of hero.

CONNELLY: The costume itself could be concealed under his regular clothes—except for those huge boots. Where did he keep the boots when he was in his street clothes?

KIRBY: [laughs] We intimated that the costume was extremely strong but very, very flexible. It folded easily. And, of course, we took a little license with that kind of thing. We even gave him a flexible shield, which he hid on his back under his jacket.

CONNELLY: The shield started out as a triangular piece of metal in the first issue and afterward, it became round. Why?

KIRBY: I made it round because it would be easier for throwing. I knew that in some of the sequences, he'd have to throw the shield to get himself out of some tight spots, and a round shield would be a more rational object to devise for that kind of thing.

CONNELLY: He also used it for fending off bullets.

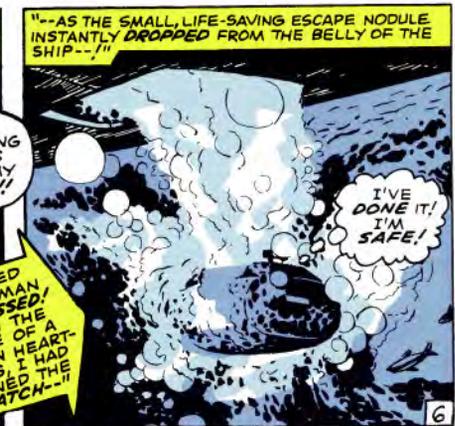
KIRBY: Yes, the shield was impervious to bullets.

CONNELLY: But it was also light and flexible. That's terrific! What a great shield!

KIRBY: Yes. I always had the feeling that someday they would make clothes like that. We'd have armored clothes that could protect us in some way from harm.

CONNELLY: Tupperware underwear, for example.

KIRBY: Well, super-heroes are called "underwear characters" in the trade. And, of course, that's what they are. They're longjohns, and they're built for action. You'll never get fouled up with longjohns. Acrobats are unencumbered by any kind of flapping material. I'll never draw a super-hero with material



that might get in his way. I always realized that a super-hero has to have extreme freedom of movement, so I'm not going to give him any flouncy costumes. He's gonna have tight-knit longjohns that are gonna give him the best possible freedom to do what he has to do.

CONNELLY: It's also more aesthetic, isn't it, just simply as a picture? To have the limbs sharply defined in these tight costumes?

KIRBY: Aesthetically, it's perfect. It gives you the chance to do the kind of figure you want. You can do the best possible things for the human figure when it's unencumbered.

THE VILLAIN

CONNELLY: What kind of a man was the Red Skull?

KIRBY: The Red Skull was typical of the amoral man. He, of course, felt that he had his own virtues. And he was ruthless in following up whatever he planned. He was the type of man who would become a Nazi. He was the type of man who would carry out a Nazi-type of situation. In short, The Red Skull was a Nazi.

Essentially, he was a universal crook. He could be used in situations where, if Fu Manchu had to go about in mufti, he'd still act like Fu Manchu. And The Red Skull was himself at all times. The Red Skull was a purist. In other words, he was a villain dedicated to villainy.

And, of course, that was a virtue to him. He was a thorough professional and he could be just as dangerous as the hero. So you always had these antagonists who created the kind of drama you wanted by being their own extreme selves.

CONNELLY: Worthy of the hero.

KIRBY: Yes, the clash was more pronounced, if the opposing characters were more extreme.

CONNELLY: The Red Skull's facial accoutrements: Was that a mask or was it him?

KIRBY: No, it was a mask. But, of course, it was symbolic of the man himself. It became the man when the man was in action or when the man was involved in some kind of a scheme. The mask reflected his own facial expressions.

And I believe that in itself is a kind of truism: Our clothes are a reflection of ourselves. Our clothes become what we are, by the colors we pick, by the fashions we pick, by the things we wear. They reflect our own personalities. If I'm a bland person, I'll probably wear bland material. If I'm an outgoing personality, of course, my material might be a little more flashy. And it might be a little more in fashion, too.

Being the conservative guy I am, I wear no clothes at all.

CONNELLY: [laughing] Yes, I thought you had a blue suit on, but you're just cold.

Was Captain America successful right away, or did it take a while for him to catch on?

KIRBY: Instantaneously. Somehow, he had the appeal of all the elements that go into making a successful thing



(above) Splash page art to Fighting American #1 (April 1954), and the published page (left).

(next page) Joe Simon spearheaded the "Shield" revamp Double Life of Pvt. Strong #1 (June 1959).



in any venture. All the elements were there, and they operated beautifully. We were just elated, because we had a vehicle for ourselves. I'm talking about Joe Simon and myself. We had a vehicle with which we could work and operate and we had a wonderful time with Captain America. He was suitable for any kind of story. We had subjects ranging from crime to witchcraft to spy stories. It was an extremely flexible character, and we had a fine time with him.

IMITATORS

CONNELLY: Did Captain America's success set off a wave of flagrant imitations?

KIRBY: The industry abounded with super-heroes. There were all types of super-heroes at that time. The super-hero thing itself was new, and there were new types of super-heroes created in every publishing house.

Yes, Captain America had his imitators. There was a Mr. Justice. There was even a feminine imitator called Liberty Belle, which followed the same pattern except that it was a female character. When the war came, there were many patriotic super-heroes being drawn. But Captain America had a strong image, and he was well out in front, I can tell you.

CONNELLY: The publishers of Captain America, Timely Publications, were so incensed about the wave of imitations of Captain America that they published in one of their comics a warning that they would sue any imitators. Did they mean to carry that out?

KIRBY: Well, yes, that kind of thing was carried out. If a thing got close enough to your own format, I suppose there was a clash of interests.

It was strictly out of my hands. That kind of thing was always up to the publisher, if the publisher felt that the rival publishing house was encroaching too finely on the character. In other words, the competitive character would have to do the same things, get involved in the same situations, have a costume that's similar, just another step from your own—why, then you began to worry about it because it might be mistaken for the same character on the newsstands, and the reader might be buying the other magazine instead of yours.

So the publisher always had to be wary of that kind of thing. He'd make threats from time to time, and it kept the competition from getting too close to the kind of thing he had.

CONNELLY: Wasn't the feature copyrighted?

KIRBY: Of course. All of the new characters were copyrighted. But copyrights notwithstanding, a rival publisher could come pretty close to the type of thing you had and maybe make more money than you do.

CONNELLY: And the change only has to be very slight to get around the copyright law.



KIRBY: Yes, there are many ways—not to bend that law and not to skirt it, either, but to not be affected by it.

CONNELLY: In his book *The History of Comics Volume One*, Jim Steranko wrote: "Captain America was not an embodiment of human characteristics, but a pure idea. He was not a man, but all men. Not a being, but a cumulative god that symbolized the inner reality of man. He was the American truth." How do you feel about that statement?

KIRBY: It's absolutely true. He had to symbolize every American virtue. He was typical of the kind of people we are. He was forthright. He was quick to enforce his own convictions.

CONNELLY: At the time you were creating Captain America, did you think you were creating a metaphor for "the American truth" or were you just creating a comic book character?

KIRBY: Oh, I was too young to think in those complex terms. I felt I had a good character. I myself thought in black and white. A man was either all good or all bad. Not having the full experience of maturity, I didn't think in complex terms. I made the character in as wholesome an image as I could envisage.

CONNELLY: How old were you when you created Captain America?

KIRBY: I was 22.

CONNELLY: And you had already been in the business for a number of years, hadn't you?

KIRBY: I got my first professional job at 17. I was with the Max Fleischer Studios doing the *Popeye* animated cartoons. That would have been about 1937, 1938. Possibly around then, maybe earlier. I was animating *Popeye*, *Olive Oyl*, and *Wimpy*.

CONNELLY: Did that have any bearing on your later depiction of action in your characters?

KIRBY: It's bound to. It's bound to make you want to make your characters move. It becomes an instinctive thing. It's impossible to draw a stilted character after you've done animation. I basically made my figures ready to move at all times—and to move from various points of view. My experience in animation, I believe, helped me put the kind of action in *Captain America* that it demanded.

CONNELLY: Captain America was a super-patriot in those super-patriotic days of World War II. How do you think the original Captain America would fit into today's [1974's] political and social climate?

KIRBY: He would fit in it like any other American. He would reflect the consensus, whatever that is.

CONNELLY: There doesn't seem to be a consensus today.

KIRBY: Well, I don't know what it is. But I think Captain America is symbolic of all Americans—would think like all Americans. He might be mixed up, for all I know, and he might be trying to find a consensus.

CONNELLY: In those days, Captain America had difficulty knowing "where he was at."

KIRBY: That's true. Nobody did.

CONNELLY: But the issues were more clear-cut.

KIRBY: Yes, they were.



(above and next page) These variations on a them resulted in two of Kirby's most iconic covers, for *Captain America* #106 (Oct. 1968), and (next page) *Daredevil* #43 (August 1968), inked by Joe Sinnott as a replacement for Gene Colan's original version (inset).

This ad for a TJKC-style publication ran in an early 1970s issue of *Rocket's Blast* Comicollector. Teenager Paul Tiburti had produced earlier fanzines, and planned *The Magic of Kirby #1* to include "Vision" stories from the Golden Age, but alas, it was never produced. The sketch of *Fighting American* was from Paul's collection; today, he's the attorney for *Diamond Comics Distributor's* founder Steve Geppi.

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SIMON & KIRBY

CONNELLY: You said you created Captain America while working with Joe Simon, and the two of you continued working together over the years, creating dozens of other successful characters and working on many other characters that had been created by other people. The byline was always "Simon and Kirby," and it was a familiar one to young comic book fans of the time. How did you and Joe Simon get together?

KIRBY: We met when the comic book field was young. The field was just developing. There were various artists working at various publishing houses, and there were no contracts at the time, so we'd be working at one publishing house and then working at another. The artists who were working in the field began to meet each other, and Joe and I got together. Joe, of course, was older than I am and bigger than I am, and he kinda cowed me in a way, which every big guy did. That's how we got the "Simon and Kirby" thing going.

CONNELLY: That's why he got his name first.

KIRBY: [laughing] Yes, that's right. At that time, I respected size and age. In deference to Joe, I was glad to work with him because he's an extremely competent man.

CONNELLY: Did he help out on the art or did he do the scripts and the stories, and did you do all the art?

KIRBY: Joe did the inking and he did the lettering. Joe was an editor in his time. He had journalism experience; he was with the *Syracuse Journal*.

Joe was an accomplished man in his trade—certainly much more than I at the time—so I was glad to be associated with him. It gave me a lot of experience that I needed and it brought me into the atmosphere where competent people circulated. I was fortunate to make the association and I did well at it.

CONNELLY: When did the Simon and Kirby partnership end?
KIRBY: It ended in the late '50s. Like a lot of other things, things come to a point where a parting was probably the best thing to do. And we did it, that's all.

CONNELLY: Captain America lasted well past World War II but ended up fighting monsters and being sort of a front man for other characters. And he finally disappeared completely in 1949. What was responsible for the end of such a popular and imaginative character?
KIRBY: The audience got older and it faded, and the strip was ready for a new audience—which it got. Captain America was revived, and it's thriving today.

CONNELLY: Were you doing the strip in '49?
KIRBY: No, I had just come back from the service. *Captain America* had been done by other artists while I was in the service, and, when I came back, I was no longer with that particular publishing house; I was working for another. In fact, I was still doing *The Boy Commandos* at National. I was waiting for Joe to get out of the service so we could continue the partnership. I worked very well with him. And, when he did come out, we went to work for another firm.

CONNELLY: Did you and Simon, as creators, benefit from any sort of royalties while you were not working on the strip?
KIRBY: Yes, there were benefits, and we got the advantage of them. I have no beefs about our association with the publishers. They treated us nicely, and I can say no more about it.

THE REVIVAL

CONNELLY: Did you have anything to do with the revival of Captain America in the '60s?

KIRBY: Yes, I did. I went back to Marvel, I got them to revive it, and the character did very well. We made a transitional strip, and it seemed to work. It was a kind of adjustment from the past to the present. We made it smooth, and the character went right on living again.

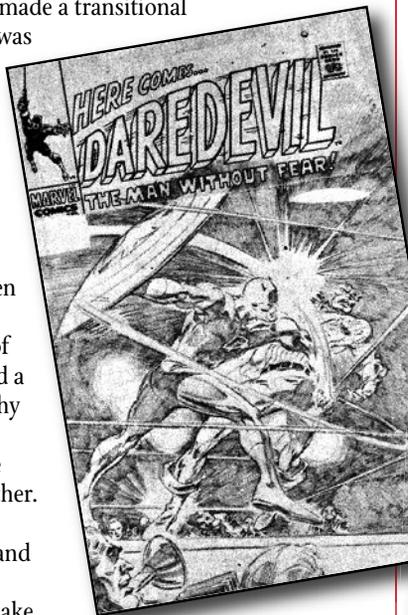
CONNELLY: Captain America had a boy companion named Bucky. Batman had Robin, Green Arrow had Speedy, and The Human Torch had Toro. Most of the great comic book heroes had a boy companion or assistant. Why was that?

KIRBY: Speaking for myself, I've always missed having a big brother. I've always missed the kind of a brother that would protect me and I've always missed the kind of companionship which would make reality of the fantasies I had.

And I believe that's what the super-heroes did for their younger partners. They gave them an association with the kind of fantasies that went on in their minds. And the younger people responded to it.

They related to it, and it kind of gave a dimension to the super-hero himself. Because he had to respond to that relationship and he responded in a wholesome way. It made the relationship between the super-hero and the younger character a wholesome merger, which could broaden the adventure.

You were able to split up a situation in which one character could come to the aid of another. So you added to the context of your story.



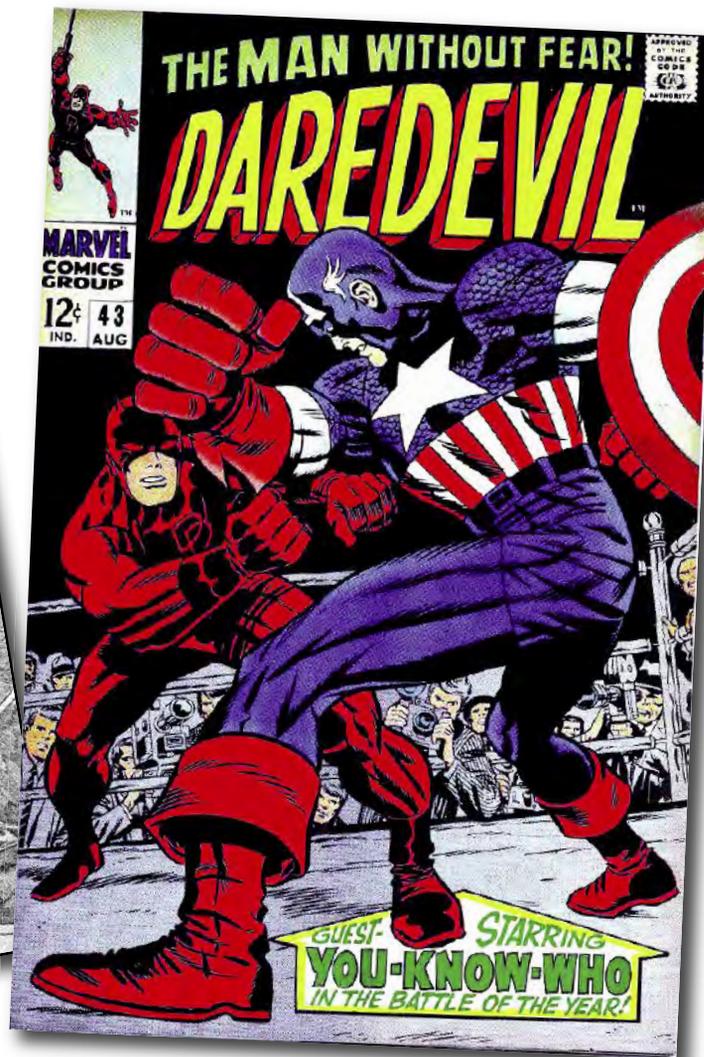
INFLUENCES

CONNELLY: Did the movies have any influence on you and other comic book artists?

KIRBY: Yes, of course. I believe that my generation was brought up by Warner Brothers. I know that I'd see movies maybe six, seven times a day. My mother would go from movie house to movie house trying to find me. I suppose it becomes part of your thinking and I injected that kind of thing into the comics. A comic book is nothing more to me than a frozen movie.

CONNELLY: What were some of the movies that influenced you the most?

KIRBY: Not any in particular. All the movies influenced me. I like movies in general. Movies reflected the same kind of themes that comics had. They were simple themes. You had the gangster movies of the time, which certainly were very popular. You had the Westerns, which were very popular. I never thought one was any



better than the other. They all had the kind of appeal that certainly drew my attention. I didn't know a kid on my block who didn't go to the movies.

CONNELLY: Would you appropriate things like camera angles and composition from the movies and use them in your own work?
KIRBY: All the time. I'd try to do that in my comics. It creates a nice balance in the strip, because it eliminates monotony. A prime hazard in comics is creating monotony so the reader's eye can become detached from the story.

What the artist tries to do is balance out his page with a variety of angles so the eye is completely engaged at all times. It keeps the reader on the story, keeps the thread of the story from breaking, and it delivers the kind of entertainment you're there to expedite.

CONNELLY: What other comic strip artists influenced you in your early days?

KIRBY: The masters in comics, certainly, are the ones in the newspaper field: Milton Caniff with *Terry and the Pirates* and Alex Raymond, who did *Flash Gordon*. There were the fellows who did the funny strips, too. They all influenced me because their product had such appeal.

CONNELLY: How about Will Eisner, who created *The Spirit* and whom you worked for, for a while. What did you learn from him?

KIRBY: Well, from Bill I learned storytelling. He had a good storytelling quality in his stuff, and I gained a lot from him in that respect. Bill himself certainly is an articulate man. He knew his trade, and I learned a lot of the trade from Bill. He's an older man than I am and he certainly had more experience in the field, and I gained from him a lot in that respect.

COMICS IDIOSYNCRASIES

CONNELLY: In dialogue in comic books, the sentences always ended with an exclamation point instead of a period. Why was that?

KIRBY: As I said, comics is a frozen movie. It can't move. But everything in a comic has to make it move, even the dialogue. The exclamation point is handy in that way, because it lends emphasis and movement to what you're trying to portray.

The character not only has to be extreme in his movement, but the dialogue has to be curt so it can come across quickly. You have to make your point quickly, and that adds to the movement of the story. It's a short thing, really, in itself, but it has to make sense, it has to have substance, and the exclamation point is part of the mechanics of the entire product.

CONNELLY: In the book *The Great Comic Book Heroes*, Jules Feiffer says that "the team of Simon and Kirby brought anatomy back into comic books. No one could put quite as much anatomy into a hero as Simon and Kirby. Muscles stretched magically, foreshortened shockingly. Legs were never less than four feet apart when a punch was thrown. Every panel was a population explosion, casts of thousands all fighting, leaping, falling and crawling." Why did you concentrate on anatomy and action? That was the Kirby style, wasn't it?

KIRBY: Yes. It's the kind of thing I have an affinity for. I can't draw anything that doesn't have a crowd in it. I never do a panel that doesn't have a battle scene in it. I just draw crowds of people in the picture because it's the natural thing for me to do. I don't know why I do this. I'm not qualified to analyze it, but I love doing it. It seems to me that the world is full of people; I have to draw those people.

CONNELLY: But you try to get them all into one panel.

KIRBY: Yes, I try to get them all into one panel. I wish I could simplify this type of thing, because then I could take a vacation once in a while. But I never seem to be able to do it.

A 1977 *Boy Commandos* commission drawing.

(next page) A *Newsboy Legion* pencil drawing done for the 1971 Kirby Unleashed portfolio.



THE PROCESS

CONNELLY: Would you describe the process that a comic book story goes through to get from the idea stage to the printed four-color page? It starts with a script, right? Written by somebody, not necessarily the artist.

KIRBY: Well, speaking for myself, I create my own script. I draw the story from the subject that I have in mind.

I have enough experience to break down the story into segments, each segment leading to a climax, and each climax leading to a conclusion. I draw this. I do it in pencil. When the pencils are complete, I send these completed pages to a man who inks them in black ink. When these inks are completed, it's returned to me. I check them—as editor of the magazine, I check them for grammatical mistakes, I check them for technical mistakes. When this process is completed, I send them back to the office.

At the office, they're sent to the engravers. It goes through a technical process which is kind of complex to describe, but I can only say that they're photographed. From these photographs, plates are made. These plates are sent to the printer. The printer runs these plates off on large rolls of paper, just like a newspaper. Color masks are made, which eliminate certain colors and add others, and the color is put on from color guides which are given to the printer.

CONNELLY: Do you have any control of the color in your work?

KIRBY: I can if I want to, but it's the kind of thing that these people have so much experience with that I just leave it to them. They're extremely competent and they've been coloring comic books for years, so I just eliminate that from my schedule. They put in the color, the printer completes the book, he binds the book, and the book is shipped from the printer to the distributor.

CONNELLY: Today you write all your own stories.

KIRBY: Yes.

CONNELLY: Did you write them all and draw them all—you and Joe Simon—in the days of Captain America's infancy?

KIRBY: Yes, I wrote them then, too, except I'd talk them over with Joe, and Joe would inject some of his ideas into the story. I would just put them down on paper and break the synopsis down, break the theme down, and come out with a refined product which I penciled out.

CONNELLY: What does the script look like? Does it describe the action and also give the dialogue?

KIRBY: Yes, they're very similar to movie scripts or even radio scripts. The characters are described, the situation is described. Each panel has its own action, and that action is described. The atmosphere—of course, you have to have that. You've got to give the reader some image of where he is or where the character is. There are many strips where the atmosphere, the background is eliminated. They might have one or two panels which reflect the location where the action is taking place, but it's good enough to give a more rounded image to the reader, and he's able to visualize the story better.

CONNELLY: You and Simon came up with at least two comics series about kids' gangs that were published one right after the other: "The Newsboy Legion" in April 1942 and "The Boy Commandos" in June 1942, both for the same publisher: National. Why did you do two similar stories so close together?

KIRBY: Because they became popular. *[laughing]* I don't know what the lifestyles are today, but where I came from, that was a very common lifestyle. The kids were always out on the street. They would always band together. Different types would circulate within their own groups. Having come from that kind of an atmosphere, I knew the kids that I drew. They reflected very, very common types and, of course, whoever read them, related to them. I was one of them. In that respect, I lived what I drew.

CONNELLY: So you drew on your own boyhood experiences on the streets of New York for "The Boy Commandos" and "The Newsboy Legion."

KIRBY: Yes, I did, right.

CONNELLY: Speaking of boyhood, how did you get interested in drawing?

KIRBY: Comics at that time had an appeal for me. Comics was a new medium, and it was very, very attractive to me. Somehow, I felt that I'd like to do comics. I saw an ad for a correspondence course in comics and I asked my father if he might be interested in financing a couple lessons. I got a rather curt reply. *[laughs]*

CONNELLY: In the negative?

KIRBY: Yes, in the negative. We fought it out and I finally got one lesson, which I worked on for years. I never got the rest of the lessons. *[Kirby briefly studied art at the Pratt Institute.]*

CONNELLY: That one lesson must have been a lulu, because you've done pretty well in your profession.

KIRBY: Well, it was a stimulant and kept me interested in the subject. I think that's what it takes. It takes sustained interest in whatever kind of thing you're trying to do. In my own case, I had a sustained interest in comics. I just wanted to do 'em. I liked to do 'em and did 'em.

Of course, it didn't help me with my parents much. They wanted me to be an auto mechanic. They felt an auto mechanic in those days had status, and an artist never really amounted to much. But I suppose in those days we were at loggerheads with our parents, as the children are today.

CONNELLY: As they always have been. Did you read a lot when you were a kid?

KIRBY: Yes, I did. I read pulp magazines. I was an avid reader of pulps, which are very much like comics.

CONNELLY: The comics came out of the pulps.

KIRBY: Yes they did, and I felt that comics were kind of a reaction to



pulps. The adventure comics of that day, I felt, were a reaction to pulps, because it was an attempt at visualizing what the pulps were printing.

CONNELLY: And the comics were geared to a younger readership. The pulps were more for adults.

KIRBY: No, not necessarily. I remember reading pulps at 13. When science-fiction first came out, I was reading science-fiction. I didn't dare to tell people about it, because science-fiction was in disrepute at the time. They kind of made you the village idiot if they found you reading one.

CONNELLY: It certainly paid off. Did you read any of the classics?

KIRBY: I read the classics, but I somehow didn't understand them as well as I do today. I just didn't have the insight. You don't have the insight into a thing, you don't enjoy it as much. I didn't enjoy them as much as I do today.

1974

CONNELLY: Jack, what are you working on today, in 1974?

KIRBY: I'm working on *Kamandi, the Last Boy on Earth*, which is a variation on the doomsday theme; I've got *OMAC: the One-Man Army Corp*, which is a projection of what may happen with the problems that we have today.

CONNELLY: He fights the establishment?

KIRBY: He doesn't fight the establishment. He tries to be an answer to a lot of things that may be bugging us today.

CONNELLY: How are the comic book heroes of today different from, say, the comic book heroes of the Golden Age in the '40s?

KIRBY: The comic book heroes of today are living in complex times and run into complex situations. These complex problems are reflected in their adventures. Their adventures involve, not only relevance, but dramatic projections of the type of problems we live with. Actually, the hero has a tougher job today than he did then. There are no clear-cut issues, nothing is in black-and-white. It's got to have a more mature approach, which we try to inject into the characters and stories.

CONNELLY: Does the hero have to be more human?

KIRBY: Yes, he's got to be more human, he's got to be more dimensional. You've got to know him better. He's got to have a little more fallibility. I feel that people today know a little more about themselves, and that kind of thing has to be part of the super-hero, too.

CONNELLY: Are the villains still just "bad guys" or are they more human, as well?

KIRBY: The villains today are more human, too. Villains, after all, are a reflection of people gone bad, people with distorted motives. The reader demands to know what those motives are—why he's like he is, what made him the way he is. Of course, the villain can't see that, but the reader wants to see that because the reader has to judge him. He has to know why we have to either stop him or restrict him or eliminate him. So the motives have to be clear-cut. The artist has a big responsibility on his hands in defining the villain.

CONNELLY: So in his own mind, the villain is actually doing the right thing, as far as he's concerned?

KIRBY: I think villains always have thought they've been doing the right thing.

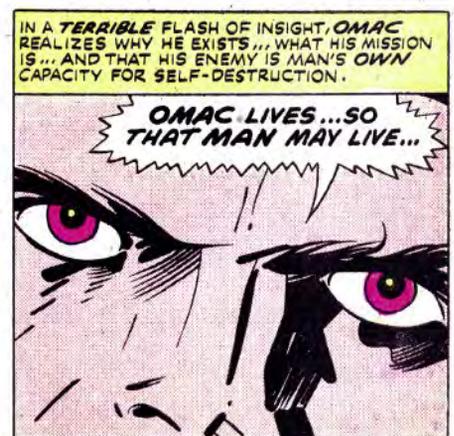
FINAL THOUGHTS

CONNELLY: You always liked comic books. You never looked down on them.

KIRBY: No, I never have. And I've tried to do it as effectively as a professional can.

CONNELLY: Well, I've read a number of books on the history of comic books—and you and Joe Simon are always mentioned with great admiration as two of the outstanding practitioners of comic book art. That's another reason it was really great have one of the top guys in comic books on the show tonight.

KIRBY: Thank you for that, too. ★



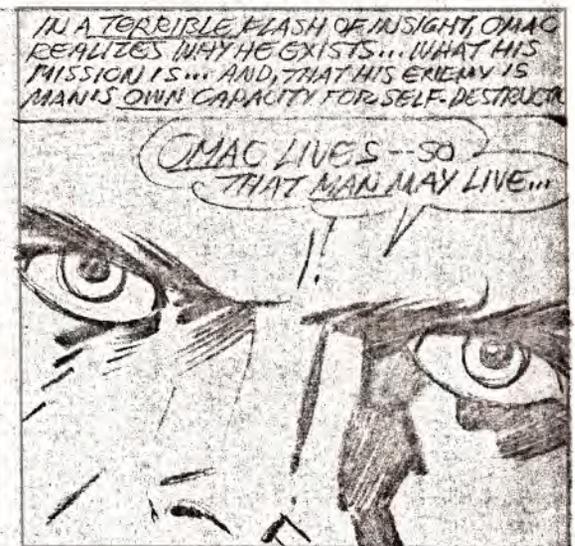
SUPERIOR WORK

Super-soldiers with super '70s and '80s pencils • Commentary by Shane Foley

(this page and previous page) OMAC #1, page 19: A near-future super-soldier! OMAC—formed from an unsuspecting, and perhaps unwilling, Buddy Blank—near the end of his first case. Had Kirby another 20 issues or so, would he have explored the pros and cons of this super-soldier and his 'Big Brother' creator and director? Did Brother Eye ever make mistakes in choosing his targets? Did OMAC even have the ability to disagree or question Brother Eye? This is a super-soldier series that brought the concept of power and authority clearly to the fore.

(pages 32-33) Our Fighting Forces #151, page 10 and OFF #152, page 5: Idealized super-soldiers of World War III! Not the Super Captain America kind, nor even Sgt Fury's Super over-the-top Howlers, the Losers were still the tough, loyal and committed-to-the-end type of soldier that everyone hoped American troops to be. The beautifully detailed pencils of the Losers' strips always showcased authentic looking uniforms and equipment and totally convincing European surroundings—with 2 perfect examples here. (I know what I will say now will be heresy to many, but I wish, for this series, that John Severin had been tapped to ink Kirby. Perhaps some 'true' Kirby would have been lost, but what he would have added would, I think, have contributed greatly.)

(pages 34-35) Captain America #209, page 2 and 3 spread: The perfect American super-soldier. Perfect American Science combined with the perfect American attitude. A superb double-spread showcasing one of Kirby's last great villains for Marvel. As he did occasionally, Kirby photocopied these pages before he finished all the background. On page 2, the palm leaves and tree trunk behind Cap and Donna Maria are virtually absent here, and the foliage behind Doughboy is absent. Notice too how Jim Novak repositioned Zola's final word balloon to good effect, moving it away from Zola's body to a more 'dead' area.





MISSION FOR THE LOSERS... BOUT LEAUVILLE...
IT'S EITHER A RIGIDLY CRAMPING GROUND FOR A TIRED NAZI GUN
CREW --- OR,

A SMALL PLACE IN HELL!"



WHAT BEGAN AS A TROPIC MISADVENTURE HAS SUDDENLY SPROUTED A FANTASTIC SPIN-OFF!-- RIO MORTE (THE RIVER OF DEATH) HAS YIELDED ITS SECRET, -- A MAN-LIKE MONSTER WHICH LIVES IN ITS DEPTHS... BUT, IT EXISTS ONLY, TO SERVE THE BIZARRE BEING IN COMMAND OF ITS DESTINY!!!

LOOK! HE SUMMONS
YET ANOTHER MONSTROSITY!
I-IT DRIFTS DOWN FROM THE
SKY LIKE SOME UGLY
BALLOON!!!

I-I AM FRIGHTENED!
-- FRIGHTENED!!

I UNDERSTAND,
DONNA MARIA... THIS
IS NO LONGER A MERE
CASE OF "GOOD GUYS"
VERSUS THE "BAD
GUYS!"

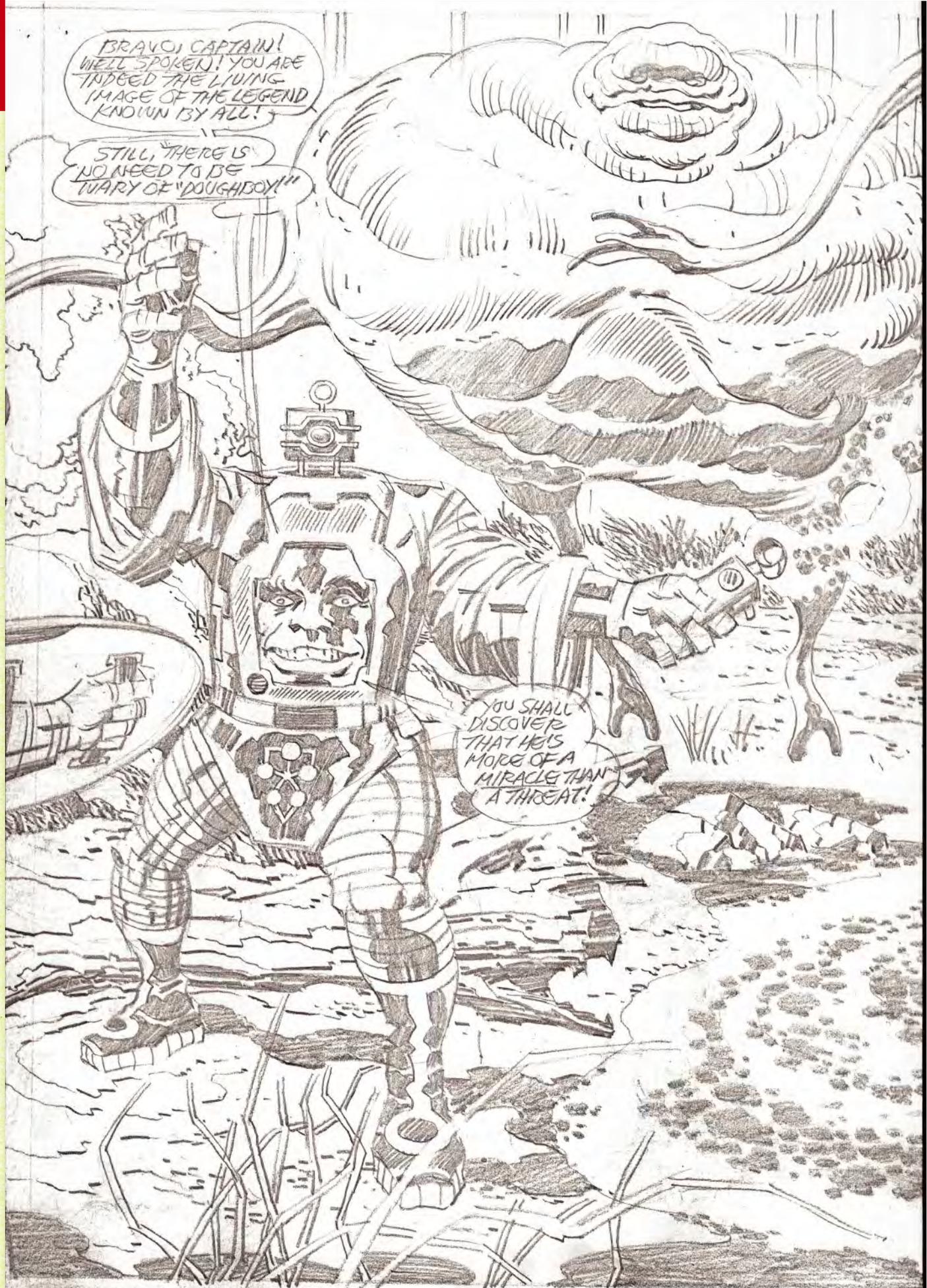
BUT, KEEP YOUR
COOL!! KEEP YOUR
MIND FREE FOR
ACTION!!



BRAVO, CAPTAIN!
WELL SPOKEN! YOU ARE
INDEED THE LIVING
IMAGE OF THE LEGEND
KNOWN BY ALL!

STILL, THERE IS
NO NEED TO BE
TUARY OF "DOUGHBOY!"

YOU SHALL
DISCOVER
THAT HE'S
MORE OF A
MIRACLE THAN
A THREAT!



(Page 36) Captain America's Bicentennial Battles inside back cover: The super-individual beneath the super-soldier uniform. The highlight of this filler piece is that Jack actually remembered and drew Batroc and Hydra again, even if just for this one-off illustration. The Red Skull is here too, and he must have ignited something in Jack, because unlike most other old villains, he was written perfectly back into Cap's storyline by Jack.

(page 37) 2001: A Space Odyssey (Machine Man/Mr. Machine) #8, page 11: An artificial super-soldier. As per usual, no focus is lost or story action is unclear on this page, even though the first panel has 11 figures in it. Much of this series hinted at what it means to be human and to be ostracized because you are different. As with OMAC, I would like to know where Kirby would have gone with this series—and believe that had relations with Marvel not soured, it would have been as long lasting as Kamandi. Note that Royer omitted Kirby's quotation marks from the word "swat" in panel 1, preferring to simply embolden the word. Note also this is numbered as page '11', which means the discarded page shown in TJKC #45 had already been ejected (otherwise this page would have to be '12').

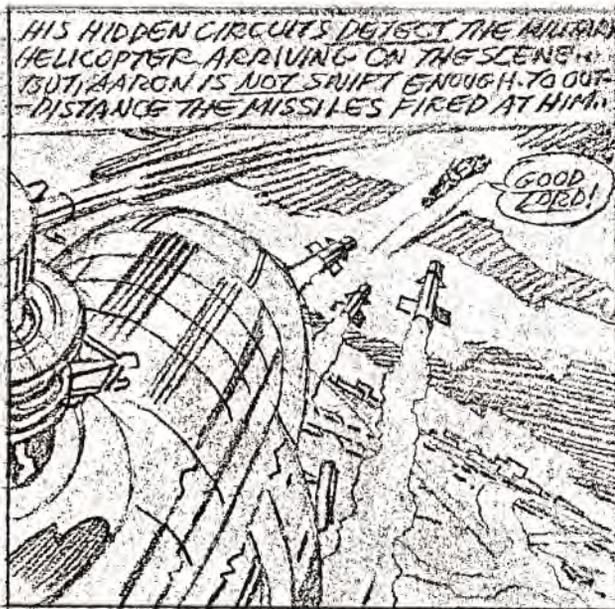
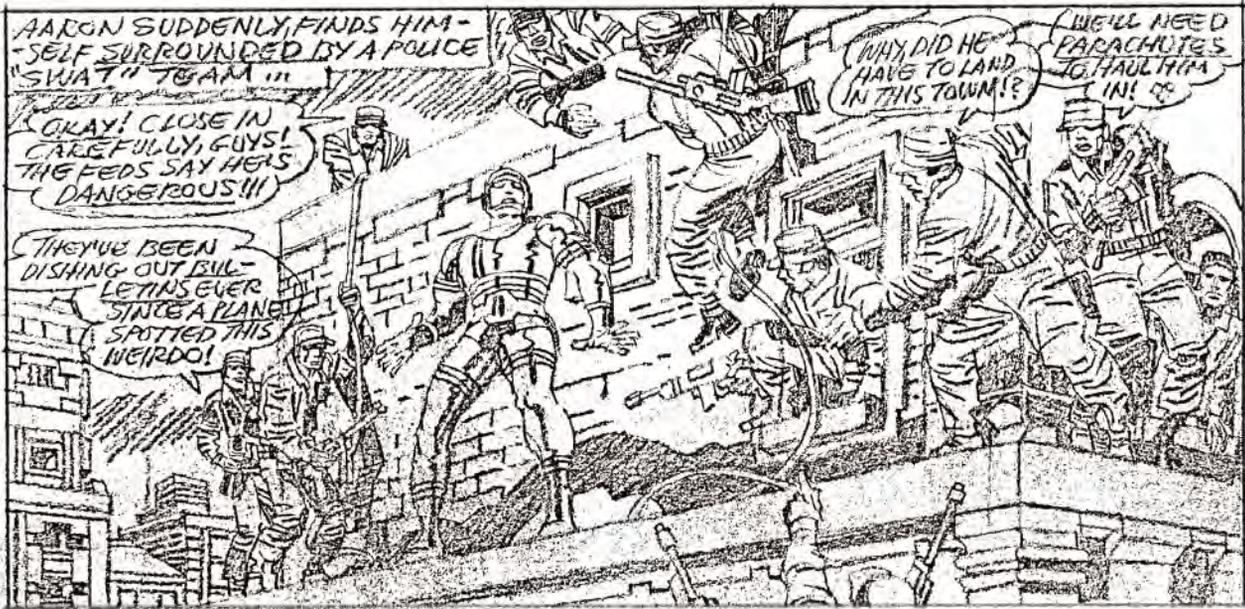
(page 38) Captain Victory #1, page 5: A galactic super-soldier. A mid-'70s page (despite its '80s release) with more exquisite detail (17 figures in one panel this time!) yet with total clarity as to what the action is and who is the subject. Victory is another example, like OMAC, of a super police force that can impose its might anywhere 'for the greater good'. That Kirby wrestled with the conundrum of the necessity of such authority and power on the one hand, and its likelihood to be manipulated and corrupt on the other, frequently surfaces in his many series of super-soldiers.

(page 39) Silver Star #2, page 10: A mysterious super-soldier. The 'Others' are amongst us, and Kirby takes the idea of mutants living in our midst on his unique tangent. Again, the idea of power used and abused forms the basis of this super-soldier storyline. This atmospheric page is haunting in a way only Kirby can draw it. No one did fire or 'Krackle' or symbolic shadow as he did. The hooded Drumm (top left) and the gruesome burning figures are perfectly hideous and wonderful examples of



drawing where 'less is more'.

(page 40) Julius Ceasar: Kirby's interest in the military didn't stop with modern-day armaments and weaponry; when asked to design the costumes for a 1969 stage play of William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, he went all-out designing realistic looking outfits that could be easily constructed by the University of California at Santa Cruz's drama department. While these were "Jack's version", they still convey a sense of what ancient soldiers adorned themselves with. You can find more of these designs at: <http://kirbymuseum.org/blogs/effect/caesar/> ★



SOUND - WOOOM!! WAAAM!!



I HAD THIS CHECKED OUT, SIR! ITS TUNED UP AND READY TO HEAR!

GOOD!! ITS TOUGH TO RUN A SHIP WITH-OUT ONE!

THIS IS A RED ALERT! ALL COMBAT PERSONNEL ARE ORDERED TO THEIR POSTS!!

LIFT UP!! LIFT UP!! ITS DOUBLE TIME ALL THE WAY!



BUT WHY TAKE THIS PORTABLE 'COMMAND POST' TO THE BRIDGE, SIR? YOU KNOW--!!

I KNOW! I KNOW! ITS BOUND TO TAKE HEAVY FIRE!!!



THE ENEMY HATES YOUR GUTS, SIR!! THEY'LL KILL YOU FOR SURE!!

I KNOW THAT TOO! BUT I MUST BE ON THAT BRIDGE!



FLOYD CUSTER
WON'T BE
HERE! -- HE'S
BURNING
IN HELL!!



HAHAHAHA
HAHAHA
HAHAHA!!

THOSE IMAGES ARE
"PROJECTIONS" FROM
DRUMM!! HE'S -- HE'S
KILLED FLOYD!!!

DRUMM IS WITHOUT
PEER IN THE
ART OF
CRUELTY!

THAT
LAUGHTER! --
IT'S
HORRIBLE!

EFFE



HE
FLAUNTS
IT AT US! --
OPENLY
-- AND --
WANTONLY!

-- LIKE --
-- SOME
SAVAGE
CHILD!



YOU'RE A LOUSE,
DRUMM! -- DO YOU HEAR
ME? I'LL TRACK YOU
DOWN, DO YOU HEAR
ME?

I'LL LEARN
HOW TO DO IT --
AND TRACK YOU
DOWN!



JULIUS CAESAR
MILITARY
(CIVILIAN WILL BE
FORTHCOMING)

Jack Kurlaf

JACK F.A.Q.S

A column of Frequently Asked Questions about Kirby



(below) An example of "my work" by Ditko, self-inked, on Amazing Spider-Man Annual #1 (1964). Compare that to "their work" on a property he wasn't personally attached to, such as Rom: Spaceknight (right). Even though the inks were handled by an arguably more refined, illustrative inker (in this case, P. Craig Russell), the final result doesn't achieve the same level of purity and expressiveness as when Ditko handled the full art chores.

A few columns ago, I talked about the various inkers who finished Jack's pencil art and how they were chosen for those assignments. More often than most folks think, the selection was a matter of who was available at the moment who could handle it. Chic Stone, for example, wound up as the main inker of Jack Kirby pencils for a year or two there, not because Stan Lee actively recruited him or even because Mr. Stone sought the job. It was because one day, Stone went up to the Marvel offices to see if he could get any penciling work. Stan didn't have anything to give him but at that moment, there was an urgent need for someone to ink a *Thor* story.

As any follower of comics knows, there are some artists who always or usually always pencil and others who always or usually always ink. There are also artists who always or almost always ink their own pencils. This is sometimes a matter of the artist's preference... and that preference may be for aesthetic reasons or it may be for financial reasons, or it may simply be a matter of personal satisfaction. Or as it was in the case of Mr. Stone, it was a matter of him needing work and Stan saying something like, "Look, all I've got to give you is inking."

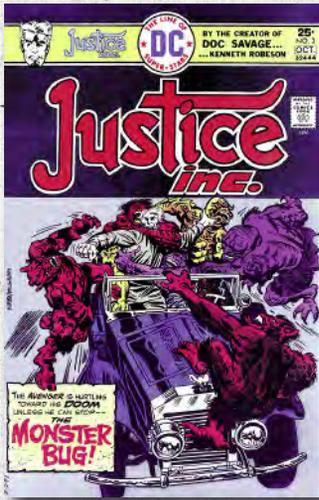
Stone told me he didn't like inking other artists and only did it until he found penciling work elsewhere. He was happier penciling (and if possible, inking his own pencils) than he was inking other artists, regardless of the money involved. Don Heck felt the same way. A lot of artists did.

Steve Ditko had an interesting take on the matter. When I met him in 1970, he explained to me that he more or less divided the jobs he did into two categories, which he described as "My Work" and "Their Work." He was not using those terms to denote ownership of the property, except perhaps in a creative sense. "My Work" was what he did on strips of his own creation... features where he felt possessive about a strip's direction and storylines. "Their Work" was what he did on comics where he didn't have that control; where someone else created the feature and Ditko was handed a script to draw.

"My Work" to Ditko was features like the Charlton "Blue Beetle," "The Question," *The Creeper*, *The Hawk and the Dove* and, certainly, "Mr. A." "Their Work" would be something like *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents*, the Charlton "Captain Atom", stories for the Charlton ghost comics or *Creepy* or *Eerie*. It might be said that part of the problem that drove Ditko away from Marvel in 1966 was that he was more and more regarding *Spider-Man* and "Dr. Strange" as "My Work" and Stan Lee was regarding it as "Our Work."

Anyway, Ditko always insisted on inking his own pencil art on "My Work." On the other kind, it wasn't important. If the editor wanted someone else to ink the book, that was generally fine with him. He didn't necessarily think it always resulted in a better finished product than if he'd inked it himself.





COVER Sent with Bill
3-11-75

SLE # 3

PG #

Kirby pencils from the cover of Justice Inc. #3. (Sept. 1975). Al Milgrom would ink this cover, while Mike Royer inked the interior art.

(next page) Splash page pencils from Black Panther #3 (May 1977). Notice Jack's writing takes up the majority of the page, leaving less room for the art than on his earlier Marvel and DC work.



That might depend on the skill of the inker and also on the rightness of the inker to be the deciding hand. For example, if Ditko penciled a *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* story, it was not inappropriate for Wally Wood to ink it and dominate the end-product. *T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents* was, after all, Wood's strip. When Ditko penciled books like *Get Smart* and *Hogan's Heroes* for Dell and Sal Trapani inked... well, those were jobs where the editor hired Trapani and then Trapani sub-contracted the penciling to Ditko. So it was right and proper that Trapani inked and that the finished comic looked a lot like his work. If Wood or Trapani had inked an issue of *The Creeper* for DC in 1968, that would have been different. (It probably tells us something

about the way Ditko regarded the work he did upon his return to it in 1975 that he didn't, on this run, ink.)

Jack was quite different in all these regards. He viewed almost everything he did as "My Work." (The main exceptions after about 1960 would be DC comics like *Richard Dragon*, *Kung Fu Fighter* and *Justice, Inc.* where he was working from a full script written by someone else, and was practically forbidden to rewrite it.) He did not want to ink either kind of work.

Prior to the dissolution of the Simon-Kirby team in the mid-Fifties, Jack often inked his own art. It was not the part of the process he enjoyed the most, but he was not just an artist in that environment. He was co-boss and, usually, a partner in the financial success (or not) of the material.

When he and Simon split, Jack found himself working on material for which he had no official editorial control and no profit participation. From that point on, inking was something he only did when he needed work and wasn't able to get enough penciling to do. He had very little interest in it and usually had his wife Roz help him with it.

(In case you haven't read earlier pieces I've written about this: It's a common misconception that Roz inked all or most of this work—a misconception that Jack and Roz furthered because Jack gallantly gave her solo credit for work on which she assisted. What she did was to take a pen with a mostly-static, unchanging line and then trace Jack's pencil lines, outlining everything. Then after that ink dried, the pencils would all be erased and you'd have something that looked like a coloring book with thin outlines on everything. Jack would then take a brush and go over this work, heavying-up lines and putting in black areas and textures. Most of what got onto the printed pages was his lines, not hers.)

In the time Jack spent inking a story, he could pencil another one. He preferred the penciling for three reasons. The least important one was probably that it paid a bit better.

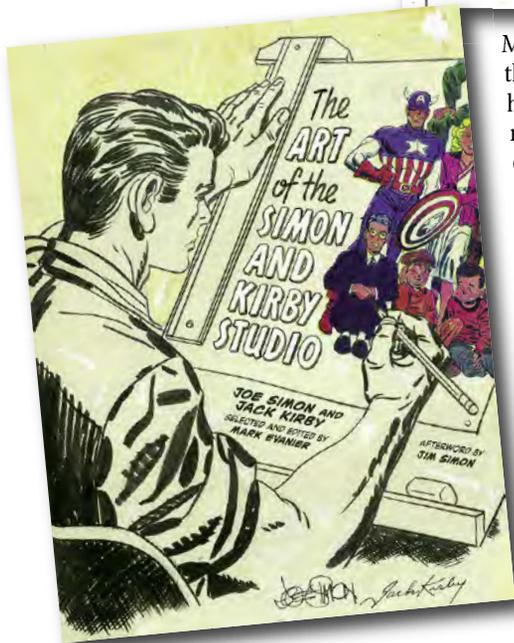
The second most important was that storytelling mattered more to him than rendering. Jack was never about illustration. He was always about conceiving stories in pictures and telling them on paper. As I believe I've mentioned elsewhere, Jack would sometimes, on his own accord, erase an entire panel or page he'd drawn and do it over. When he did this, it was never because he thought he could do a better drawing of the same scene. It was always because he decided he'd drawn the wrong scene or the wrong angle. He thought he hadn't served the story properly.

And the main reason Jack stopped inking was this: Jack was a little different from most other comic artists in that his work was always to some extent about trying to take comics—and the fortunes of the company paying him for his labors—to the next level. He did all his work for Marvel in the Sixties and for DC in the Seventies with a firm belief that he could bolster the publisher's entire line, and that that financial success would trickle down to him in some way.

His goal was always to make his publisher recognize how valuable Jack Kirby was and to compensate him accordingly. That never happened to the extent it should have happened, but Jack never abandoned that mission.

He believed he made a far greater impact on sales by penciling than by inking. A Kirby comic inked by Dick Ayers or Joe Sinnott or just about anybody had just as much sales potential as a Kirby comic inked by Kirby. By not inking, he could do twice as many comics and have twice as much impact on the line. He also doubled his chances of coming up with the next breakout hit.

By the time he returned to Marvel in the Seventies, the three reasons may not have been in the same order. By that point, the "bolster the line" motive was probably less important than the second reason given above. He felt so removed from



Marvel, both geographically and simply distant on a personal level from the current staff, that he didn't think he could help the whole company. He just wanted to be left alone to do his books his way. Clearly, the writing interested him a lot more than the drawing and he really had zero interest in inking his own work. There was also the matter of some failing eyesight.

I do wish though, that when he was at his artistic peak, Jack had done a little inking of his own pencils. In the Sixties, he finished a cover or two and there was one short story in one of the western comics. I came to that thought while assembling the new book from Harry N. Abrams, Inc., the *Art of the Simon and Kirby Studio*. As I studied all those wonderful pages from that period where Jack inked himself, I came to have a new appreciation of his work when he did that. As with many artists, there was something wonderful in his art when he did all of it that wasn't there when even the best inkers inked him. ★

[Hey, I could use more questions for this column. If you have one, visit my website—www.newsfromme.com—and use the link there to send me your query. If you scour the site, you may find that I've already answered it.]

(left) *The Art of the Simon and Kirby Studio*, edited by Mark Evanier, is now available from Abrams ComicArts. It clocks in at a whopping 384 full-color pages, with over 350 illustrations from Jack and Joe's fabled studio.

KIRBY

OBSCURA



A regular column focusing on Kirby's least known work, by Barry Forshaw

KIRBY'S COVERS

Stan Lee was no fool, as he proved by asking Jack Kirby to create so many attention-grabbing covers—even for books in which the illustrator did not contribute to the interiors. And as this column has occasionally looked at such Kirby-free books (apart from the cover, that is), let's take a quick glance at *World of Fantasy* #17 (April 1959) which has a particularly arresting effort from The King—a futuristic scene in

which an angular blue robot in the foreground pulls a lever while a bearded elderly man in a cape tries to stop him.

The strapline reads “Who was the guardian of the stars?,” and the story itself is drawn in baroque style by Steve Ditko rather than Kirby. It's a typical Stan Lee effort of the period, in which unthinking prejudice—in this case that of the whole planet Earth—is (as usual) shown to be ill-thought-out, as the robot, Earth's satellite-located guardian, is unreasonably discriminated against by angry people who want a human being in that role (needless to say, the robot proves its worth by the end of story). But striking though Ditko's work is, his robot in the story itself is a rather uninteresting figure, not at all as creatively designed as the one that Kirby drew for the cover. In fact, seeing Kirby work like this always makes me slightly regret the fact that gigantic monsters subsequently took over all of Stan Lee's fantasy titles prior to the superhero era—looking at something like the cover of *World of Fantasy* #17, you really had no idea what was to happen in the story from the provocative, mysterious cover, and I shelled out my cash, like legions of other schoolboys (both British and American) eager to find out. Gigantic monsters, however inventively they were drawn by Kirby? Well, we quickly knew how the story would go—wholesale (and picturesque) destruction for five or so pages (with nary a human casualty—this was the era of the Comics Code at its most Draconian) before the creature bit the dust. How much more interesting—and challenging to Lee and Kirby—were the diverse fantasy and SF tales before Fin Fang Foom and his monstrous ilk became the template. The rest of *W of F* #17 is nicely drawn, with work from such stalwarts as Joe Sinnott, but it's not top drawer Atlas SF. Nevertheless, that Kirby cover alone buys it a place in any self-respecting Silver Age collection.

STILL NOT TOP-DRAWER

“All that glitters is not gold,” said Shakespeare, and that probably applies to the next issue, #18, of the Marvel/Atlas book *World of Fantasy* (June 1959) which sports a striking Kirby cover: Spacemen from Earth and simian aliens (the spacemen in strikingly designed Kirby outfits) run in panic from a gigantic creature covered in orange fur (with a faintly ludicrous cyclopean visage). In fact, the cover story in the issue, “Xom! The Menace from Outer Space!” is drawn not by Kirby, but in perfectly workmanlike fashion by Joe Sinnott. And while it has a nostalgic kick for this reader (who would avidly consume such Sinnott tales along with his stablemate Jack Kirby in the shilling 68-page reprints we were accorded in Britain), it is frankly nothing special. Writer Stan Lee is clearly on autopilot, and even in my younger years I would have seen the revelation in this story coming a mile off. However, there are compensations in the issue; an intriguing Steve Ditko time travel story, with one of his strikingly designed time machines (which almost always, in Ditko's case, were circular, glass globe-enclosed devices with baroque chairs for the time traveller; see “The Little Things” which the artist drew for Charlton, a rip-off of Ray Bradbury's “A Sound of Thunder”). And, finally, there is a





exactly swear that these are New York City cops and not just generic ones, but in a few short years, Stan Lee would be setting most of his stories in the Big Apple). Sadly, however, this cover (however eye-catching) is Kirby's sole contribution to the issue, and the title story is handed to Don Heck—always an efficient enough illustrator, but simply not a patch on the company's star artist when it came to sheer imagination. You want proof? Look at Kirby's creature on the cover of this issue and compare Don Heck's wooden, pedestrian one rendered on the splash panel (a close-up of the intergalactic Gargoyle's head is shown here—think what Jack would have made of that!).



The story itself is clearly written by rote, and sorely in need of the visual panache Kirby would have brought to it (it's the chestnut about the benign alien unfairly judged by we quick-off-the-trigger earthlings on the basis of his monstrous appearance—one of Stan's most-off-re-used and familiar plotlines; see the first paragraph of this column). But it's the editor's Star Artist Number Two who saves the second story, "Deluge", as Steve Ditko does his best with a massively overwritten piece by providing some dramatic renderings of a waterlogged planet. Al Feldstein would often cheerfully admit that he overwrote some of his EC Comics work, but even Al at his most verbose would make this piece look as spare as a haiku. Nevertheless, Ditko does the best work in the issue. The rest of the book is routine stuff with illustrations by Joe Sinnott and Carl Burgos, and there is strong evidence that Stan had already given up on the title, and was just churning it out. But caveats aside, there *is* that Jack Kirby cover, which true believers will have to have in their collection. ★

story by Jack Kirby, "To Build a Robot", but once again, it is Stan Lee's less-than-stellar writing that lets down the side, with a tale which is quite as predictable as the title story. Nevertheless, Kirby salvages what he can with a splash panel featuring a futuristic office so full of ingenious detail in terms of design, that it's clear that Kirby could have had an alternative career in this line if he'd wanted.

THE LAST GASP

The short and not particularly glorious life of Atlas's *World of Fantasy* was to be extinguished with issue #19 (and it's something of a shame that Martin Goodman did not allow Stan Lee to at least round off the run of the title, however moribund it was, to twenty issues, for neatness' sake); but there is a rationale—albeit a slim one—for taking a brief look at this final issue. And that rationale (you won't be at all surprised to hear) is some artwork by Jack Kirby. The cover strapline for the final issue of *World of Fantasy* shouts: "I saw him! I saw him! The Gargoyle from the Fifth Galaxy!", and, yes, the eponymous gargoyle is rendered by the King; it's a spotted, pink-skinned, horned monstrosity in a futuristic-looking brown outfit, breathing fire and shrugging off a hail of bullets from New York City cops (I can't



Barry Forshaw is the author of *British Gothic Cinema* and *The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction* (available from Amazon) and the editor of *Crime Time* (www.crime-time.co.uk). He lives in London, where this magazine's editor had a delightful dinner with Barry and his wife Judith in Summer 2013.



EARLY CAREER MOMENTS

Compiled by Eric Nolen-Weathington

Continuing our look at key moments in Jack's life and career from *TJKC* #59 and #62-63 (which covered 1960 through the 1990s), we present this timeline of key moments that affected Kirby's early career, through the 1940s. Of invaluable help were Rand Hoppe and Alex Jay for their research, as well as Mark Evanier's book *KIRBY: King of Comics* and Ray Wyman's *The Art of Jack Kirby*.

This isn't a complete list of every important date in Kirby's early career history, but should hit most of the main ones. Please send us additions and corrections. Next issue, we'll present pivotal moments in Jack's 1950s career with Joe Simon.

Our rule of thumb: Cover dates were generally two-three months later than the date the book appeared on the stands, and six months ahead of when Kirby was working on the stories, so we've assembled the timeline according to those adjusted dates—not the cover dates—to set it as close as possible to real-time.

1916-1930s

- August 12, 1916: Rosie Bernstein and Benj Kurtzberg are married in New York City. On the certificate, Rosie's father's given name is Jacob.
- June 5, 1917: Benj Kurtzberg, living at 147 Essex Street on Manhattan's Lower East Side, registers for the WWI draft. Jacob was born almost three months later. Until we see a birth certificate—which the family does not have—this is our best guess at Kirby's birthplace.
- August 28, 1917: Jacob Kurtzberg is born on New York's Lower East Side. Jack's younger brother David would arrive on January 22, 1922.
- 1920 Federal Census: Bennie, Rose, and Jacob are listed living at 131 Suffolk Street, Manhattan.
- 1930 Federal Census: Ben, Rose, Jack, and David are living at 172 Delancey Street, Manhattan.
- Early 1930s: Kirby (still Kurtzberg) joins the Boys' Brotherhood Republic, and gets his first publishing experience working on the club newsletter.
- Mid-1930s: Kirby gets his first professional job as a cel opaquer for Max Fleischer's animation studio, the producer



of *Popeye* and *Betty Boop* cartoons. He soon works his way up to assistant animator. With a possible studio strike or relocation looming, he takes a position at Lincoln Newspaper Features, drawing strips and one-panel cartoons such as "Laughs from the Day's News," "Cyclone Burke," "The Black Buccaneer," and "Socko the Seadog."



- September 1938: *Jumbo Comics* #1 appears, reprinting some of Jack's earlier strip work. This is the first time his work appears in a US comic book.
- 1939: Kirby joins Victor Fox's studio as a staff artist.

1940

- 1940 Federal Census: Ben, Rose, Jack, and David are living at 30 Banner 3rd Road, Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. The 1940 census also asked where the family lived in 1935, and the Kurtzbergs answered "same place."
- January: The *Blue Beetle* newspaper strip debuts with uncredited Kirby work.
- Early 1940: Kirby meets Joe Simon in the Fox offices, and in May, Kirby and Joe Simon collaborate for the first time in *Blue Bolt* #2. Kirby's first work for Timely appears in *Red Raven* #1 (August cover date), in the "Mercury" feature. It is the first time Kirby signs his work "Jack Kirby."
- Summer: Jack Kirby meets Rosalind Goldstein.
- Fall 1940: *Marvel Mystery Comics* #13 features the debut of Simon and Kirby's "The Vision."
- December 1940: Simon and Kirby's *Captain America Comics* #1 is published and sells nearly half a million copies.

1941

- Early 1941: Simon and Kirby (along with several inkers) frantically produce *Captain Marvel Adventures* #1, the first book devoted solely to Fawcett's new sensation. But because they believed the book would bomb, Simon & Kirby left their credit lines out of



THE BLACK BUCCANEER



By Jack Curtiss

what would soon become one of the top selling titles of the era.

- February: Stan Lee's first professional writing appears in Simon and Kirby's *Captain America Comics* #3, a text piece. Soon he would be writing stories for them.

1942

- Benjamin Kurtzberg's WWII registration card lists his address at 3142 Coney Island Ave, Brighton Beach, Brooklyn.
- Early-to-mid 1942: The Simon and Kirby team debuts at National (DC) with *Adventure Comics* #72 (cover date March), their Sandman revival. Part of their contract with National guaranteed a minimum number of pages, something few creators received at the time. Simon and Kirby then debut more new features: "The Newsboy Legion" in *Star Spangled Comics* #7, and "Manhunter" in *Adventure Comics* #73, and "The Boy Commandos" in *Detective Comics* #64.
- May 23: Kirby marries Rosalind Goldstein. He legally changes his name to "Kirby" around this time.
- Summer: Due to its popularity, the Boy Commandos get their own solo title.

1943

- Early 1943: Joe Simon enlists in the Coast Guard.
- June 21: Kirby reports for military duty to Camp Stewart, Georgia, where he is trained as an infantryman and mechanic.

1944

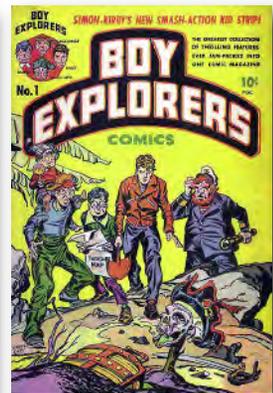
- August 17: Private 2nd Class Kirby leaves for Liverpool, England to serve as a replacement.
- August 23: Kirby lands on Omaha Beach (Normandie, France) and is sent to Verdun to join General Patton's Army on its rapid offensive eastward. Once there, Kirby is assigned to the machine gun platoon of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 11th Regiment, 5th Division of Infantry, 20th Corps of the 3rd Army. The 5th Division is sent to the south of Metz, while the 95th makes its way to the north, to expunge the town's German resistance. Kirby sees his first action while liberating Gorze and Novéant, two villages south of Metz.
- November 14: Kirby, suffering from trenchfoot, awakens in a French and British field hospital. Patients are categorized into three groups: those receiving a drip, those for whom nothing can be done, and those receiving some whiskey to ease their pain. Kirby falls into the second category.

1945

- January: Kirby returns to America. He spends six months at Camp Butner

(Raleigh, North Carolina) finishing his military service.

- April: Roz finally obtains a pass to visit Kirby, who has no furlough. Kirby falsifies his insurance card as a pass card and is able to leave camp and see Roz. Kirby, having lost about 45 pounds since being drafted, is barely recognizable to Roz. Kirby leaves with Roz. They are found in Richmond a few days later, and the desertion is added to his military file.
- July 20: Kirby is officially "honorably discharged" from service and awarded several military honors, including the Bronze Battle Star.
- December: Daughter Susan Kirby is born.



1946

- Simon & Kirby's first post-war creations debut at Harvey Comics: *Stuntman* #1 and *Boy Explorers* #1. Unfortunately, the post-war paper glut means too much competition for comics on the newsstands, and both books are soon cancelled.

1947

- My Date* #1 for Hillman debuts, as a precursor to their successful romance comics to come. Also, *Headline Comics* #23 for Prize appears, with their first work in the Crime genre.
- Summer: Their first true romance comic, *Young Romance* #1, is published by Crestwood/Prize, launching a highly copied new genre in the industry. *Justice Traps the Guilty* #1 debuts, also from Prize.

1948

- May: Son Neal Kirby is born.

1949

- The last Simon and Kirby work for *Boy Commandos* appears in issue #33. The title would be canceled three issues later. ★

Some of Simon and Kirby's super-soldiers and super productions, revisited by Jerry Boyd

(below) Davy (bare-handed, yet!) leapt toward a large bear on the cover of *Western Tales* #31.

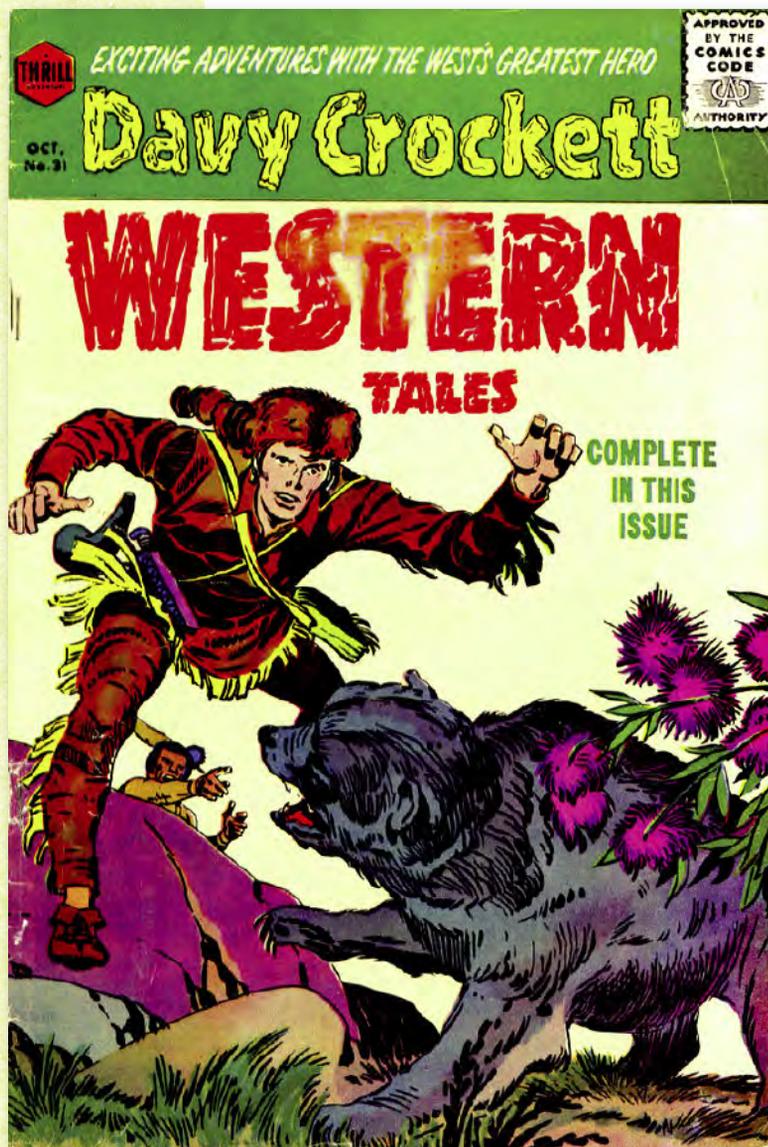
(right) Crockett took on "devil rapids", Indians on the warpath, greedy gunrunners, bears, and so on. This S&K splash comes from WT #31.

Once upon a time, there were no new lands for Americans to explore. There were still cravings, however, in the hearts of young people, to see what lay over the distant vistas and oceans that bordered their imaginations. Exploration meant adventures, adventures meant danger. Adventure and danger in the minds of Kirby and Simon meant... comic excitement.

THE GREAT FRONTIER

The perils of frontier exploration and settling were tough challenges fit only for the strongest Americans. The Native Americans had tamed their world over the course of time, but the new U.S. "westerners" had a lot to learn. Only the strong would survive the journeys to come.

Davy Crockett survived and would become the stuff of legend in his own time. In the early 1950s, Walt Disney produced his studio's take on the great 9th



Century trailblazer. The "real Crockett" was an Indian fighter and a hero of the Alamo, among other accomplishments. Disney took part of Crockett's rich history and made a multi-part TV program for his wildly popular television show. Fess Parker [below] was the folksy, likeable hero and Buddy Ebsen (a few years before his Jed Clampett role in TV's *The Beverly Hillbillies*) was his sidekick. The show was a sensation—so much so that kids throughout America flocked to department stores to buy the newest craze: coonskin caps.

Dell Comics (naturally for them) seized the moment and put out *Davy Crockett*, *Indian Fighter* for their *Four Color Series* (#631, May 1955).

In October of '55, Simon and Kirby unveiled their Davy Crockett for *Western Tales* #31. Typical of their



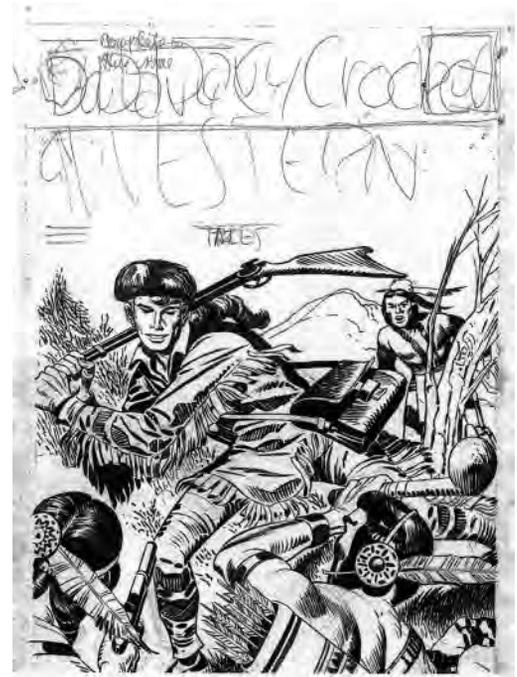
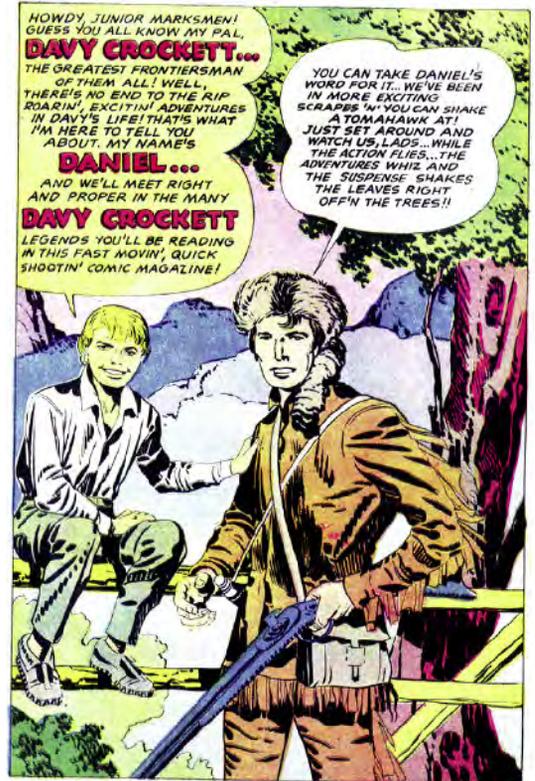
other battling heroes, S&K's Davy was resourceful, self-sacrificing, and completely fearless. He fought hostile Indians while striving for peace between the races. The War of 1812 provided a backdrop for some of his adventures (making him officially one of S&K's 'super-soldiers') and Davy assisted General Andy Jackson with a coonskin-capped kid partner, Daniel. Kirby and Simon produced Crockett tales for *Western Tales* #31-33. Their *Boys' Ranch* efforts, at least two of them, were reprinted in the last two issues.

Since the Davy of legend could handle bears (that was pronounced 'bars' in old Tennessee) and mountain lions with ease, it's not surprising that the sole Kirby cover for *WT* #31 depicted a barehanded Crockett leaping toward a large bear.

The Simon and Kirby Crockett yarns weren't remarkable in their writing, but they were just as eye-catching as the team's other '50s endeavors in the artwork. Perhaps the team was constrained by their main character's history. True western heroes, when brought to the public in the 1950s, had their histories line up closer to actual events than in decades past. Wyatt Earp on TV's *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp*, and in the superb *Gunfight at the OK Corral* (Paramount Pictures, 1957) began the trek toward the real truths behind the marshal's cow-town and silver town days. *The Left-Handed Gun*, also released in the late '50s, starred a young Paul Newman as Billy the Kid (in a role set-up for James Dean before his untimely death) in a story much closer in authentic detail than film efforts in years past. But with Crockett, Joe and Jack may have felt locked in. Jack loved to branch out into all the possibilities his characters offered. Crockett couldn't go on forever. Even Disney's Crockett wasn't given a happy Hollywood ending. Fess Parker swung his empty rifle about as Mexican Army regulars crept closer to him in the final chapter of the Alamo...

Jack and Joe also produced backwoodsman yarns for another 'super-soldier', Jim Bowie, who also made appearances in *Western Tales*. A house ad by the team announced that "his true story" would be presented. (Well, that couldn't be right—one item on the page said Bowie was a "winner of a thousand duels". That's highly unlikely, but it was interesting.) Like Crockett, he was killed at the siege of the Alamo.

Jack and Joe moved on to other projects. So did Parker. He returned to television in the early 1960s in the title role as *Daniel Boone* and donned a similar hat and buckskin outfit. He got an Indian sidekick—singer Ed Ames as Mingo. This proved to be a popular series. I remember starting up the 'Dan'l Boone Fan Club' in my elementary class in Oxford, NC. Dues were a penny. Thrilling to the exploits of heroic frontiersmen hadn't gone away.



(top inset) This scan of the original art for Davy and Daniel's debut (*Western Tales* #31) showed the S&K team wasn't completely satisfied with the look of Davy's face or his dialogue.

(right) Davy laughingly swings Ole Betsy at menacing Native Americans in this *Western Tales* #32 cover.

(above) Joe and Jack offered a crossover of sorts in this *Boys' Ranch* splash where Clay Duncan tells the lads about the Siege of the Alamo.



THE NEW FRONTIERSMAN

An unknown Kirby strip unearthed by Jean Depelley, with Bernard Joubert

As strange as it seems, it is not in the USA that our story happened, but in France! And the info arose from two Kirby-related investigations in this country...

First, the *Strange* comic magazine from France, which *TJKC* readers may be familiar with (as it already published many Kirby-related subjects and rarities) is currently gathering a French Kirby checklist. This checklist won't be as huge as the American one, but it is quite big nonetheless! So, with publisher Reed Man and a couple of contributors (including Jean-Michel Ferragatti, François Soulodre and Dominik Vallet), we have lately been searching for Kirby art in the enormous production of comic maga-

zines which have come out in France since the end of WWII. Quite a task! But even if we made interesting finds, none seem likely to startle the American Kirby followers.

The second event leading to that discovery was the release of a documentary film (*Marvel 14: Superheroes Vs. Censorship*, directed by Philippe Roure and I, explaining why Marvel Comics were banned by Communists and Catholics in France in the early '70s—a film also dealing with Kirby by analyzing Marvel's successful style). So, Philippe Roure and I were attending L'Étrange Festival, a famous genre movie festival, where the film had been shown. As the production invited the people interviewed for the documentary, our friend Bernard Joubert, a noted comics historian and editor, was present at the show.

After the film (which was enjoyed by the audience, thanks!), Bernard, Reed and I had

a moment to chat, and naturally, we discussed Kirby and the Checklist. Bernard told us he remembered an obscure Kirby Western that came out in the late '60s. As we weren't familiar with it, two days later, Bernard sent me the exact references of the French pocket magazine (the so-called *Zoom* #15, Oct. 1968, published by Jeunesse et Vacances) and its content. The Kirby piece in it was a Davy Crockett story. Naturally, I immediately associated it with the comic book series published in Harvey's *Western Tales* #31-33. But Joubert was not convinced: "No, I really think it was a daily strip. It reads as one... Kirby's art just took over someone else's work... There is a copyright to a Syndicate and some dated credit boxes."

Next he e-mailed me some scans of the aforementioned story and wrote: "Here are the 14 pages of Kirby art + pages before





and after Jack's run. They are copyright Columbia Features Inc. You'll notice the change of artists in the middle of the story and the dated credit boxes, which clearly identify it as a daily strip. It seems unlikely the French publisher put a comic book story right in the middle of a continuing strip. This strip is certainly the US "Davy Crockett, Frontiersman" strip by McArdle."

After finding a copy of the French magazine (no easy task), reading it and comparing it with the *Western Tales* stories from Harvey, I had to admit Bernard was right, of course, and after a new search, here are the conclusions on this new entry to be added to the American checklist:

"Davy Crockett, Frontiersman" by Jay McArdle was syndicated by Columbia Features Inc. Writer Ed Herron (of Red Skull fame and future Challengers of the Unknown

collaborator) scripted it. "Davy Crockett, Frontiersman" started as a daily strip in early 1955, right in the middle of the Davy Crockett craze (in fact, at the same time *Western Tales* came out), and was presumably cancelled in 1959 (even though it is said to have been available from Columbia up to 1972).

In January 1957, it was "ghosted" by Kirby for less than three weeks. Jack was certainly given the job due to his tenure on *Davy Crockett* in *Western Tales* and his friendship with Herron.

Jack started on a single strip on Thursday, January 10th, 1957 (probably as a try-out) and went back to it for an 18-day tenure, from Monday, January 14th up to Saturday, February 2nd (with only one strip the weekend). He inked the whole run, except the last three strips which seem to be delineated by Roz.

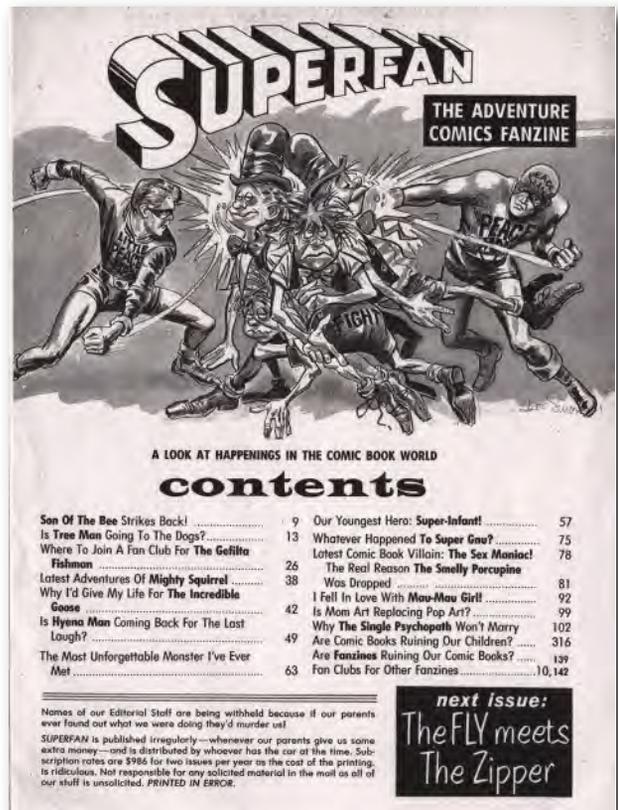
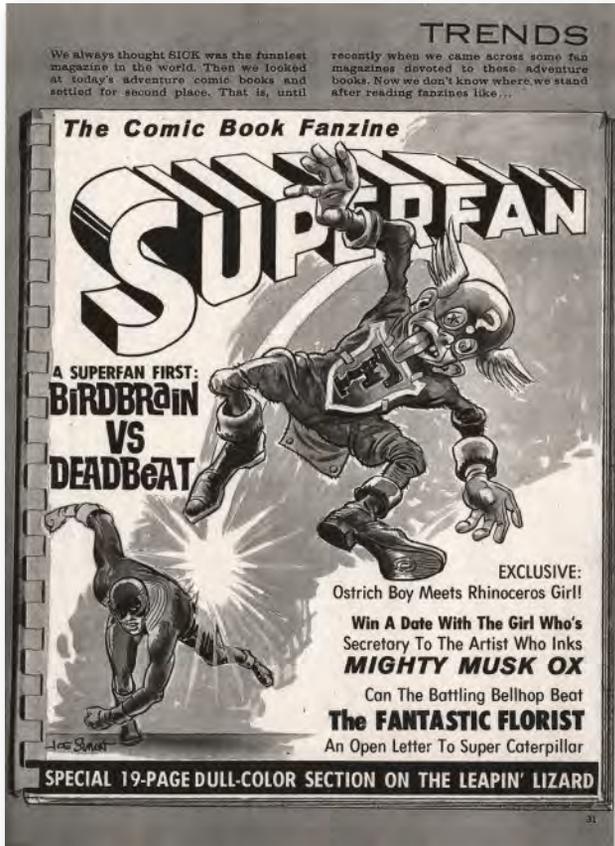
When Jack left the assignment in early February, the art was taken over by Jim Christiansen (on the Monday, February 4th strip), who eventually signed it with his name and Herron's (look at the dated credit boxes). A few months after, Herron & Christiansen were to drop the Davy Crockett strip for another Columbia Features Inc. property: the detective Nero Wolfe (whose daily strips and Sunday pages they produced between Fall 1957-early 1958).

So here are some unknown Kirby pieces from the late Fifties. Even though they have been terribly mistreated by touch-ups for the French magazine, it is still pure Kirby, inked by himself. Now, it is up to American collectors to track down unaltered strips, so that we can rediscover them in all their glory. ★



JOE SIMON'S SICK SUPERHEROES

One of Mr. Simon's jobs in the 1960s was editorship of *Sick Magazine*. *Sick* was one of those parody-satire b&w magazines youngsters couldn't get enough of while *Mad Magazine* was booming. While there, Joe must've gotten great amusement skewing the grand idols of the day as well as comic company characters, and in some cases, their creators! In the "New Age of Comics" [below], he presents the busy offices of a company on Madison Ave. where a haggard artist named 'Dripko' is turning in a



(above and left) As editor and sometimes artist for Sick Magazine, Joe got the old S&K magic on the cover and contents page. 'Peace Man' and 'Little Peace Man' look a lot like Fighting American and Speedboy.

completed job to an ever-smiling 'Sam Me', his writer and editor. Stan Lee was shown the script in advance and reportedly said, "Very funny."
In another issue, Joe presents a heroic pair in a satire on fanzines (who bear strong resemblances to Fighting American and Speedboy). Another gag panel pokes fun at Lee and Kirby's Thor and the team's Captain America and Bucky. Simon may have seemed to be far away from the cape and cowl set, but these examples showed he hadn't lost his humor over the industry's foibles.

The New Age of Comics



IN LOVE WITH JOE SIMON

One of the wonderful things about being a contributor to fanzines is coming across rare art or unpublished interviews with creators. Thankfully, I got in touch with online buddy John Lustig (of *Last Kiss Comics* fame) and it turned out in our communications that he had interviewed Mr. Simon by phone in 2002. This unpublished interview revolves mostly around romance comics and Mr. Lustig was kind enough to let me use it for this piece. He has my thanks and that of TwoMorrrows for sharing this interview with us.

Transcribed by Christopher Irving on October 16, 2002

JOHN LUSTIG: You created romance comics when the industry was in one of its slumps. World War II was over, and superhero comics were dying out. How big were romance comics?

JOE SIMON: I heard that there were well over 400 titles. I never went around counting them, but they took up most of the comic book output in those days.

LUSTIG: Did romance comics save the industry?

SIMON: Save the industry? I think every idea has saved the industry to some extent. I think it gave great impetus to the industry. I've been quoted as saying comics have been dying for 60 years. It really brought it back from one of those 'deaths.' I'm sure of that. When you think of the volume of all the titles, every publisher in the industry had a romance comic, or three or four.

LUSTIG: I assume, when you were creating the romance comic, you were going after new readers, rather than trying to save your old readers. They were created for female readers, right?

SIMON: Before romance comics, we never acknowledged that the comics audience was in any part female, and it turned out to be a huge market. We were all wrong about that. It spanned all ages, too.

LUSTIG: On the cover of *Young Romance*, it said it was for 'the more adult readers'.

SIMON: They made us take that line off after the first issue. They said they thought it was too sexy, really. Martin Goodman was crying to Harry Donenfeld, our distributor, Independent News [owned by the parent company of DC Comics]... and Martin says, "They're going to kill the whole comics field with this sexy stuff."

There was nothing sexy about it. It was all mild. We had a story "I was a Teenage Hitchhiker," and the whole thing was about one kiss, so it was very, very innocent. Everybody had grudges against everybody in the business, and Martin was mad at us for leaving him and going to DC, when we'd been doing *Captain America* [for Marvel].

Anyways, Harry Donenfeld was not a very sober person, and his response was, "Take that top line off and make everybody happy." It didn't matter to us, and didn't make any difference at all.

The ironic part was that Martin Goodman came out with 20 or 30 titles of his own romance comics. To our credit, none of his books ever approached ours in sales.

LUSTIG: When you did the first *Young Romance*,

did you write the whole book?

SIMON: Yeah. We prepared the whole first issue before I showed it to a publisher, because they were a bunch of thieves, and they still are... most of them... some of them. [laughter]

LUSTIG: Gotta be careful! [jokingly]

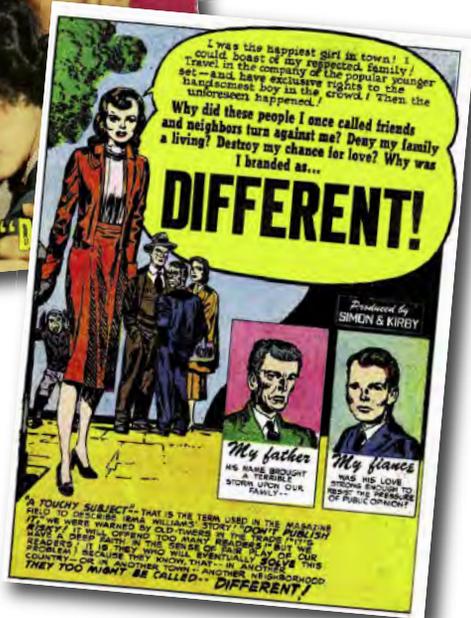
SIMON: I know a couple good guys: Paul Levitz, and the guys at DC are pretty good guys, so who's left?

I had a bunch of artists who were depending on me to keep them busy. I gave them jobs to do, and I didn't have any place to place them at certain times, when comic books were very weak. Yes, it was a very weak market, and that's why we did the book, because we were just about out of work. We had money, and put the stuff aside.

One of [the stories] that really didn't fit into the romance/confession field was the weird story that Bill Draut inked. He was one of the legends of comics.

Anyway, I brought him in from Washington, D.C. He was a Marine there. I brought him in to do comics that would keep him





busy, so this is one of the things I had him draw. The person telling the whole story was seen through his eye sockets. That wasn't a confession story, but it was colorful and I liked it, so I put it in there.

LUSTIG: That was in the first issue.

SIMON: Yeah, that was in the first issue. Whatever I had... I just stuck in.

If it's interesting, what the hell—if it's a confession story or not—you're doing your job for the reader. It wasn't like we were publishing *The Saturday Evening Post* at the time, and had a million dollar staff. It was just a couple of guys putting out comic pages...

LUSTIG: After the first issue, did you do much of the writing?

SIMON: Oh, yes.

LUSTIG: Did you do most of it?

SIMON: I had my brother-in-law, Jack Oleck, do a lot of our writing. He was doing promotions for a company that put out yellow pages, advertising classified ads and the yellow pages ads. It was not the yellow pages but... a rip-off. Their company was in and out of court, and getting away with it. That's where Jack worked. I got him into comic books, and he was with us for many, many years.

LUSTIG: I know this is kind of a broad question, but what makes a romance story work?

SIMON: I just didn't want to be dull and boring. I'd put anything in there. If it had a boy and a girl, and a spark of love and a kiss, and if I had an opening, I'd put it in there.

I didn't think too much [about] what worked and what was formula... But then, later, it got to be a real confession magazine, [stories were told in] the first person, from the girl usually—99%.

It was a big jump for me when I did a couple stories from a man's point of view.

If it was entertaining—good, and if the drawing was nice... that's all we were looking for.

LUSTIG: For whatever it's worth, I consider the Simon & Kirby romance comics some of the best of the [genre.]

I know romance comics were inspired by the confessions magazines. It was a norm in confessional magazines to sensationalize on the cover and in the title of the stories. But the actual stories were usually tamer and didn't live up to the lurid titles.

SIMON: I don't think I ever read through one of those stories.

LUSTIG: I've only barely looked through them. I know there was a certain... sensational aspect to the titles, but the stories themselves were not nearly as...

SIMON: They were very innocent.

LUSTIG: Especially by today's standards.

SIMON: We were trying to get a shock from the titles of the stories, and it all lead up to a peck on the mouth...

LUSTIG: How about other companies? Did they go any farther than you?

SIMON: Sure. Bill Gaines and all of them went farther than us.

When we were doing comic books in those days, we were distributed by DC Comics. We couldn't pull anything. Or have extreme horror—or any sexual acts.

Gaines went very far, but he was a friend of mine, and I don't hold it against him.

LUSTIG: You're talking about his horror comics more than his romance comics?

SIMON: I'm talking about romance comics.

LUSTIG: Oh, really!?

SIMON: Yeah.

LUSTIG: I've been reading some of those, and they don't seem too far out to me. Reading it 50 years later—I guess... it isn't the same thing.

SIMON: Once again, people would send me odd panels here and there that were shocking. I didn't do anything about them, and didn't want to do anything about them. It wasn't my business.

LUSTIG: It seems ironic that... some people are collecting romance comics now for the "Good Girl Art"—the sexy art. Yet it was being written and drawn for girls. I never sensed that boys were reading the romance comics. Did you ever get the feeling that they were?

SIMON: Yes, I think so. Sure. I think boys would get off on them. Later, they started drawing these voluptuous women.

LUSTIG: I was talking to a comics dealer about romance comics, and



(top) Kirby and Simon took on anti-Semitism in *Young Romance* #30.

(above) Joe jabs 'Sam Me' (a thinly-disguised Stan Lee) in this "Sick Simon Satire." 'Dripko' was obviously a play on Steve Ditko's name; could Plotsky be Sol Brodsky?

he said they sell well to gay men because—at least according to this guy—gay men put themselves in the women’s place, and it’s all about emotion.

SIMON: No, I never thought of the subject matter. If it helps—good.

LUSTIG: It’s odd because, in men’s magazines, they always have sexy pictures of women. And in women’s magazines they have sexy pictures of women. Then, in romance comics, you’d have sexy pictures of women. It just seems like, no matter if it’s for male or females, they show attractive women.

SIMON: It never hurts, right, John?

LUSTIG: It never hurts! *[laughter]* We were talking the other day about how you rewrote a story? *[Re-using art from one romance comic and re-dialoging it. Sort of [a] precursor to Last Kiss!]*

SIMON: Do you have my book? *[Joe Simon: My Life in Comics: The Illustrated Autobiography of Joe Simon]*

LUSTIG: Yes, I do.

SIMON: That’s all in there.

LUSTIG: Did both versions *[of the story]* ever get printed?

SIMON: Yeah, they both got printed! It was a desperate act.

LUSTIG: I know the feeling. You don’t know which issues they were in?

SIMON: No, if I did, they would’ve been blocked out of my head a long time ago. I do have some interesting stories about Jack Oleck. We were just about out of comics. *[Oleck]* was picking up work from Marvel Comics, and he came over and borrowed my bound volumes of *Young Romance*, *Young Love*, *Western Romance*, and so forth. He was writing stories for Marvel. He would *[re-use]* the plots of the *[Simon & Kirby]* stories. He used dozens of plots that he’d previously written for us. Then he’d put these yellow pieces of paper in the bound volumes to mark out what the plots were, and where he used it again.

Actually, he returned the bound volumes to me, and he still had those notes in them. The funny thing is that all those stories he’d written for Marvel, were eventually credited with Stan Lee’s byline on them. I thought that was a beautiful story.

LUSTIG: *[Oleck]* wrote them, and Stan Lee put his byline on them?

SIMON: Yes, *[Oleck]* wrote them from previous ones that he’d sold to us. *[Oleck]* was my brother-in-law, so I didn’t give a damn. They appeared in the Marvel books with Stan Lee’s byline on them.

LUSTIG: In your book, you reprint a story you did for *Sick Magazine*, featuring someone who sure sounds a lot like Stan Lee.

SIMON: It is Stan Lee, it’s “Stan Me.”

LUSTIG: It was very funny. Any comments about Stan?

SIMON: Stan’s a good guy. I don’t want to say anything bad about anybody. Stan’s okay, I have nothing bad to say about him. I’ll tell you one thing: whatever negative thing I may say about Stan, I’ve already said to his face in a nice way.

LUSTIG: I have a lot of respect for Stan.

SIMON: I do, too.

LUSTIG: In your book, you wrote that you were never able to find any women to write romance comics, and it was mostly written by guys.

SIMON: We had a couple of good women artists: Anne Newman, who was a good artist...



Love was in the air—except when heavy drama pushed it to the side. Here’s a typical scenario from Jack and Joe romance comics.

LUSTIG: You said there was another woman?

SIMON: There must have been, but I remember Anne.

LUSTIG: She was doing romance comics?

SIMON: Yeah, and she became one of our writers at one period of time, and even did a couple of covers.

LUSTIG: I know that DC had a female editor, Dorothy Woolfolk.

SIMON: Yeah, Harvey had a female editor, too.

LUSTIG: For the romance comics?

SIMON: Yeah.

LUSTIG: By far, most of the romance comics are written by guys, and that strikes me as ironic.

SIMON: I used to write the lovelorn letters... what was that name? Whatever it was, I used to write those letters.

LUSTIG: "Nancy Hale."

SIMON: Right, and it turned out there was an authoress named Nancy Hale that was pretty well-known, not in comic books but in the respectable stuff. *[laughter]*

LUSTIG: I was surprised, reading your book, that a lot of the letters were actually real?

SIMON: Oh, yeah, all of the letters were real. We didn't have any shortage of letters.

LUSTIG: I was very surprised by that. I don't know why, but I'd always just figured that they were fakes.

SIMON: Oh, no. We had plenty of letters. I'm not going to sit down and write letters.

LUSTIG: Were they difficult to answer?

SIMON: No, very simple. I could give you love advice, too.

LUSTIG: Oh, please do! *[jokingly]* Did you consult anyone, your wife, or just did it yourself?

SIMON: It was a job.

LUSTIG: I really do understand, but to get you to explain certain things, I have to ask you. Did you get any far-out letters, or anything you wouldn't print?

SIMON: Did we get any critic letters? No, I don't remember getting any of those.

LUSTIG: You didn't get any terrible...

SIMON: These little girls were all serious.

LUSTIG: You didn't get anything too intimate or lurid to print?

SIMON: Maybe there were one or two, but I can't remember.

LUSTIG: I was going to ask you what your weirdest letter was, but it sounds like they were all pretty run-of-the-mill.

SIMON: We didn't get any strange letters, or any wise-guy letters.

LUSTIG: I'm not talking about you, necessarily, but the impression I've gotten about some romance artists is that they enjoyed doing them. The impression I got about writers doing romance stories is that they didn't care to do them. Did you like doing romance stories?

SIMON: It was very easy, and in that sense I liked them.

LUSTIG: You didn't consider it a step down from

doing superheroes?

SIMON: Anything in comic books was a step down. We were at the bottom of the totem pole. I was talking to a guy who ran an advertising agency, and he said, "You guys are at the bottom of the totem pole of the art business..."

The idea was these guys (who worked at an advertising agency) were at the top of the totem pole. But we were making more money than they were.

LUSTIG: I enjoyed the romance stories, from what I've read. Is there one that sticks out in your mind that you're particularly proud of?

SIMON: There's one story in the first issue that, I don't know if it came out that well, but it captured the entire flavor. It had a Polish name in it, I thought it really told the whole story.

LUSTIG: Romance comics were really big in the Fifties and late Forties. Why did they die out in the Seventies; do you have any idea?

SIMON: I think the whole comic book field was going through some pains at that time. They were dying out during the Senate's Kefauver investigations [1954].

LUSTIG: The Senate investigations, I think, were more about the horror comics.

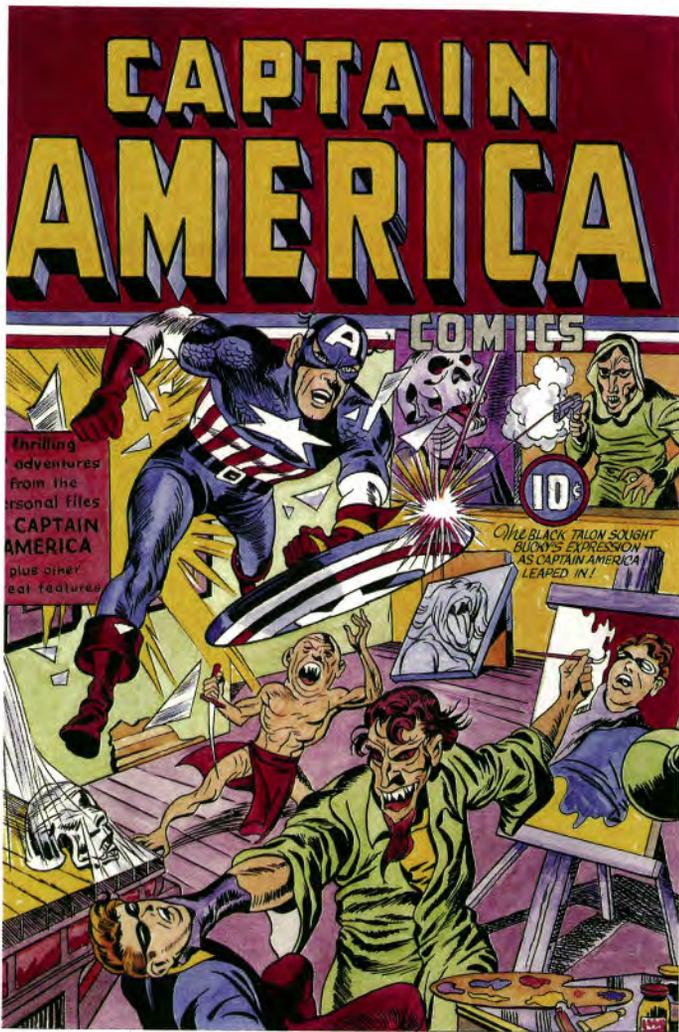
SIMON: But in a way, it was about the whole business.

LUSTIG: I'm just wondering... comics did continue but, as a genre, romance comics died out. I'm wondering where that audience went?

SIMON: They didn't die with a bang. They died more with a whimper, a very slow death. I don't know.



Fighting American and Speedboy send an armed baddie flying in this unused cover illustration for Fighting American #4.



LUSTIG: When DC reprinted *Young Romance* #1... does DC own the rights, or do you own the rights?

SIMON: I don't want to get into that. My lawyers have all the copyrights and all else. They called me before they did it, and paid me royalties, and did a beautiful job. I have a good relationship with Paul Levitz, and I'm not going to start suing everybody.

LUSTIG: I was just curious... I know that this interview focuses on the romance work, but you've worked in almost every genre and format:

war, superheroes, romance, horror, western, political comics, *Sick Magazine*... were there one or two of these genres that you enjoyed the most?

SIMON: No, I think that the book I am most proud of was *Boys' Ranch*. *Fighting American* was a great book, but I think *Boys' Ranch* was my favorite. I talked to Jack [Kirby] about it at one point, and he said *Boys' Ranch*. But towards the end, Jack didn't know what the



hell he had done and hadn't done. He kept saying he never worked from a script... it was kind of frustrating.

LUSTIG: You've been credited with a lot of innovations in your career. Comics are in a slump again—do you have any thoughts about where comics should be going these days?

SIMON: I really can't figure it out. In fact, I don't spend a lot of time thinking about it. In the second place, I haven't read a comic book in many years.

LUSTIG: You and Jack Kirby worked a lot together. As I understand it, you did most of the writing?

SIMON: Yeah, I did something. [laughter] He said I was a bookkeeper or something, in the end. [laughter]

LUSTIG: At the same time, Kirby has a huge reputation in the industry. SIMON: And well deserved.

LUSTIG: Did you ever feel slighted that you didn't get more recognition than you did?

SIMON: I think what separated us was that Kirby was involved with the explosion of the '60s, where most of today's older fans got their interest in comics, and I was publishing *Sick Magazine*. Kirby was getting the fame, and I was getting the money. I took the money, but now you ask me questions like this and I don't have the answer.

Joe Simon and Jack Kirby, "knights of the art table", are both gone now, but will never be forgotten by comic book historians, fans, and devotees of the uppermost heights sequential art storytelling can reach. If there was a Mt. Rushmore for comic magazine creators, these two giants would surely have their faces etched in stone upon it. ★



(top) Joe's recreation of the cover of *Captain America Comics* #9, and (above) a *Simon Cap* painting, both circa the late 1990s.

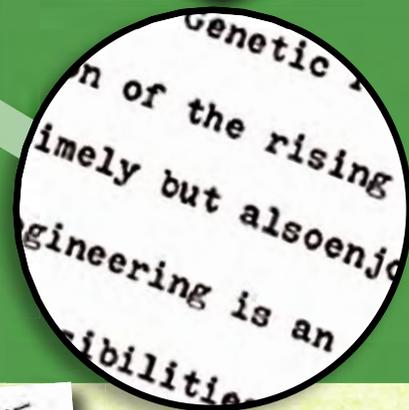
(left) Joe and Jack in their late 1940s glory days.

FROM COMICS...

TO PROSE!

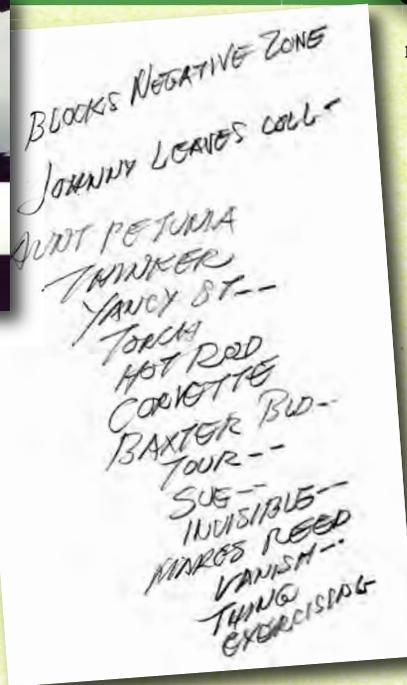
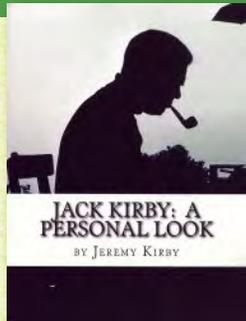
INCIDENTAL ICONOGRAPHY

An ongoing analysis of Kirby's visual shorthand, and how he inadvertently used it to develop his characters, by Sean Kleefeld



Jack Kirby is, of course, known for his comics work—he did a vast amount of it, after all. But his imagination wasn't limited to comics, and we've highlighted in this column and other places in *The Jack Kirby Collector* other avenues where he pursued his creative visions. One that isn't talked about frequently is his prose, which should come as no surprise since he wrote so little of it by comparison to just about anything else. But since Jeremy Kirby recently saw fit to publish *Jack Kirby: A Personal Look*, a wonderful book which includes Jack's screenplay for *The Frog Prince*, I thought it might be interesting here to see how Jack translated his visuals to nouns and verbs.

The Frog Prince is the story about Clay Chapman, who has recently returned home from the hospital, where he had been

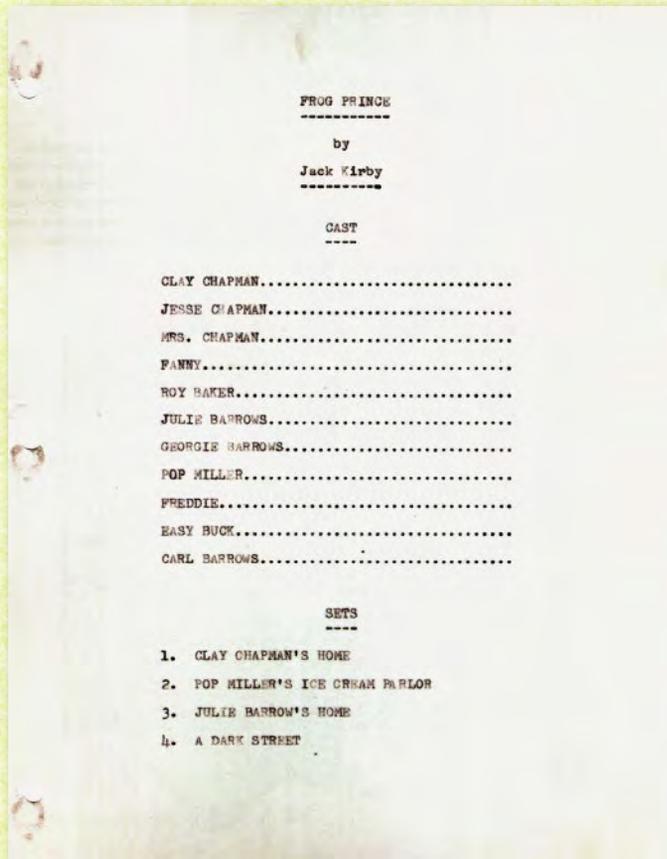


recovering from an auto accident. His face was radically disfigured as a result of being knocked through a storefront window, and he spends a decent amount of time trying to find who was responsible. Though I've seen occasional references to this as simply a play, Jack included a number visual effects and camera directions in his script to show that he was clearly thinking of it as a story to be filmed.

The story opens with a photograph of Clay from before the accident. Jack writes that he was, "...an extremely

handsome man. He bears a languid smile, a casual self-assuredness in his eyes, the signature of controlled arrogance which does not in any way mar the striking quality of the well modeled features." The description is a bit vague here, despite Jack's placing the audience's attention squarely on the picture. And while he does drop a few more notes about the image of the photo later, we're left to infer the imagery here by the contrast he provides in describing a post-accident Clay...

"But this face of living human tissue has not withstood the severe blow it has evidently suffered. On this



(above) First page of the *Frog Prince* script. Inspiration could hit Jack almost anytime, anywhere, and he'd jot notes down as ideas hit. At right are *Fantastic Four*-related notes he made on the back of a stat from *Tales of Suspense* #93.

face, the bits and pieces of sudden tragedy have been hammered deep and the mutilated ego is a writhing, helpless outraged creature that stares bitterly from the eyes in that broken face. This is a king-size ego! The indestructible Prometheus caught and chained to the rock! The mighty Achilles brought to earth with an arrow protruding from his heel. Clay Chapman in a cage of damaged bone and lacerated tissue. His face is neither repellent or grotesque. But his nose has lost its classic outline. In fact, he is not unlike a fighter who has been through the mill. This gives his face a most rugged appearance— and this [is] not the face of the picture.”

These descriptions both occur in the first three pages of the script. We get some minor additional details about Clay’s appearance peppered throughout the remainder of the story...

“The rugged crags of his facial topography are shrouded in brooding silence like the desolation of some remote volcanic area.”

“Clay’s eyes are bright steel agates set in the unmoving boulder of his face.”

“He is a grotesque figure made misshapen by his torn disarrayed clothes, the inhabitant of a nightmarish dream, given the dimension of reality.”

And, of course, there’s the basic metaphor of the entire story, comparing Clay to the Frog Prince, a handsome man who wallows with the “mean-lookin’-dirty” frogs in the mud.

What strikes me about the piece is that Jack’s descriptions, both of Clay and the other characters, have the same type of qualities that he put into his illustrations. There are a few key, very defining characteristics, but many of the details are left a bit open. Jack’s illustrations, as I’ve repeatedly shown in this column, generally focus on a few key signifiers but leave details flexible from comic to comic, or sometimes even panel to panel.

The overall way Jack writes points to that idea as well. He sets the key descriptions right up front, and then makes small adjustments as he sees fit throughout the story. This would be fine in a typical prose novel, but in a screenplay, where the characters are shown visually, it would make sense to describe the pre-accident Clay’s “classic nose” that is shown in the photograph well before we learned that it is damaged and

(below) Jack continued creating other scripts throughout his career, including the 1975 screenplay for *Silver Star* that eventually became his Pacific Comics series. Below are his character descriptions for the main *Silver Star* characters.

MORGAN MILLER---- He is Silverstar, inheritor of a genetic package which glows within him like a Pulsar. He represents a new and radical step for "Man" as we know him. Emotionally, Morgan is sensitive and well-adjusted and no more, nor less, a product of his time.

BRADFORD MILLER--- Morgan's father, a lone wolf researcher in the field of Genetic Engineering and developer of the Genetic Package. His work is the source of the first generation of "super-normals."

KATHY LORRAINE---- Morgan's girl.

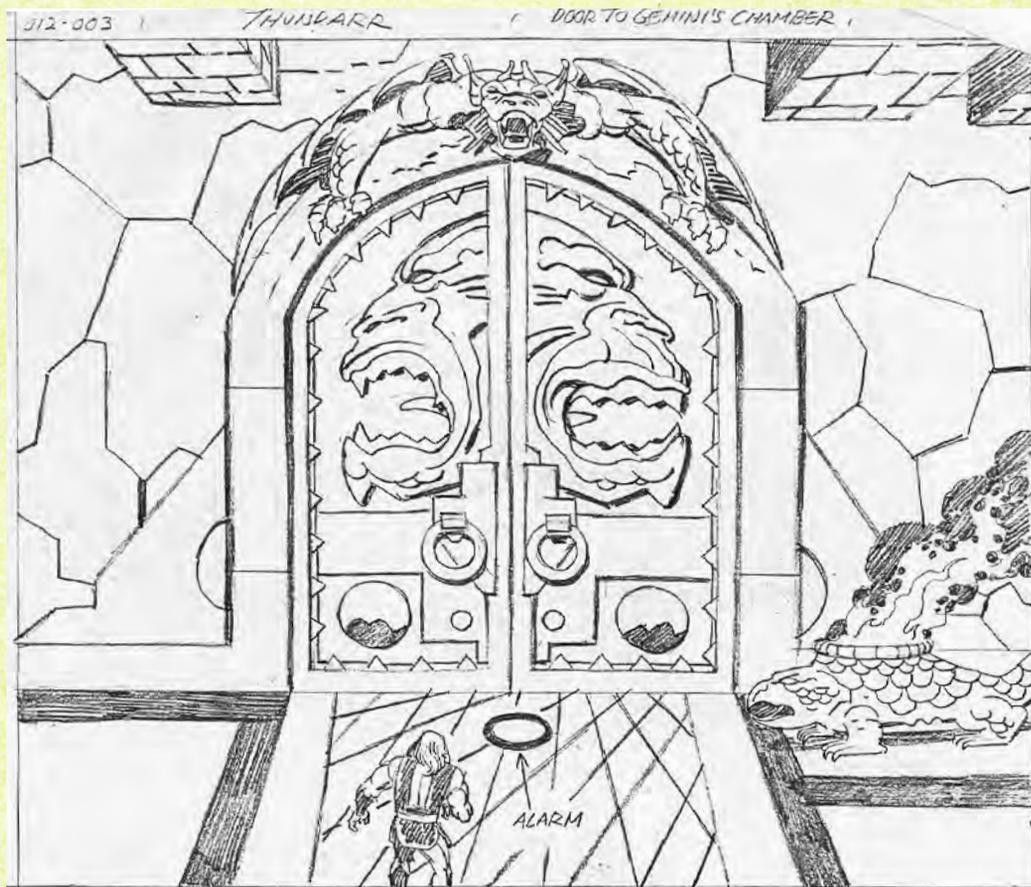
COL. WALTER HAMMER, M.D. -- While on military duty, he discovers the secret of Morgan's extraordinary potential and creates the identity of Silverstar. He also proves to be an old friend of Morgan's father.

DARIUS DRUM----- Possibly, the most terrifying villain of all time. An early subject of Bradford Miller's genetic structuring, Drumm is raised in a rigid, unbending, near-violent religious fanaticism which frustrates and warps him into a creature of frightening malevolence.

JAYNE DAVIDSON---- Another "bearer" of the "package". Endowed with the ability to resist enormous stress, she earns her living as a stunt-woman.

JOHN LAWRENCE-----Colonel Hammer's executive officer.

FLOYD CUSTER-----An officer in "Army Intelligence."



altered now. Despite the obviously visual approach Jack used in writing *The Frog Prince*, Jack’s sense of character iconography worked against the format. It’s not a bad story at all, and the dialogue flows very smoothly and naturally for Jack’s alleged “tin ear,” but how Jack tended to think of how his characters looked isn’t particularly well-suited for the screenplay format. The loose and slightly shifting iconography would make it difficult to nail down for a single actor! ★

The handsome/ugly face motif of *The Frog Prince* played out throughout Jack’s work, from the *Hulk* and *The Thing*, to *Orion*, and even to his later work on the villain Gemini on the *Thundarr the Barbarian* animated series. At left is a *Thundarr* concept drawing by Jack.



AND SO... TO BATTLE!

A pair of old Kirby war stories looked over, by Michael Stewart

(below) Page 3 from *Battle* #65 tracks the quick development of guided missiles.

(next page, top) On the final page to "Ring of Steel," the Hungarian uprising is smashed, Alamo-style, but Kirby would use this type of bold stance later in *Sgt. Fury* and other war comics.

Ever since warfare's existed, each side has sought to find an advantage over its enemies. The Egyptians used fast-moving chariots. Hannibal the Great of ancient Carthage employed a number of elephants to crash through Roman lines. (Europeans hadn't seen elephants, so for a time the tactic worked.) Medieval castle defenders utilized catapults and boiling fluids poured from huge metal vats. Armor was worn by knights.

On and on it went until the Manhattan Project (began under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt) researched atomic power, split the atom, and "the bomb" was invented.

Guided missiles meant those bombs could streak to an intended area and detonate tons of explosive power. Jack Kirby drew an opening story in the August 1959 issue of *Battle* (Atlas Comics) that told of the short history and development of the guided missile.

It had to be a chilling document of the times. The U.S. had won its war against the North Korean Communists (because, according to the Truman Doctrine—the NATO Alliance was to "contain and prevent the spread of Communism"), but the Red Chinese and North Koreans



the Red Chinese and North Koreans

were still active at the conflict's end. The Russians slyly looked for other openings. The Berlin Wall was put up, dividing Germany in two.

Young people who bought *Battle* # 65 had come to live with the sobering likelihood that the Cold War could erupt anywhere... and that they may be called to answer their country's call... to battle.

Still, Jack's story here diminished the human warriors. It began with a three-panel segment about a Joe putting a Nazi Tiger tank out of operation with a bazooka.

Later, the Nazis had a "Nebelwerfer 41!" (The writing was done almost completely in schoolbook-like captions and in this particular panel, Jack drew a crouching German soldier nearby the aforementioned artillery. The caption read in part: "Our combat veterans still recall it as "Screaming Mimi"!")

German buzz-bombs followed—the V1 and the V2, the first of the guided missiles, and they were extremely deadly. A later caption read: "The Navy (ours) built an improved version of the V1 and fired it from the submarine "Carbonero".... They named it the "Loon"..."

The guided missile was really on its way! Throughout the story, Jack pencils the warriors implementing these new technologies as dwarves compared to the rockets and machines. Why not? This was a fine cinematic-style device to symbolize the huge power of the machines over its creators.

Page 4 announced what was in 1959 general knowledge—that Soviet Russia had the atom bomb. The first panel's caption seemed to shout at the reader: "The hunting dogs of the rocket era were not fully grown and perfected for the ultimate in their destructive field!"

Kirby drew the Americans' advantages in blasting enemy hunter missiles out of the skies—the "Lark", the "Roc" (guided by television, controlled by radio), the "Gorgon" (air-to-air hunter of the enemy), and "Little Joe" (a ship-to-air missile guided by radio to the target). Nuclear submarines and their Polaris missiles with atomic warheads earned a mention, also. The story was called "Find 'em—Chase 'em—Blast 'em!" Appropriately enough, the last page ended with these same words in a call to the American military services to never relax its vigil.

Another story followed and that was followed up by a nice two-chapter history of the Battle of Bataan done by Atlas ace Joe Sinnott.

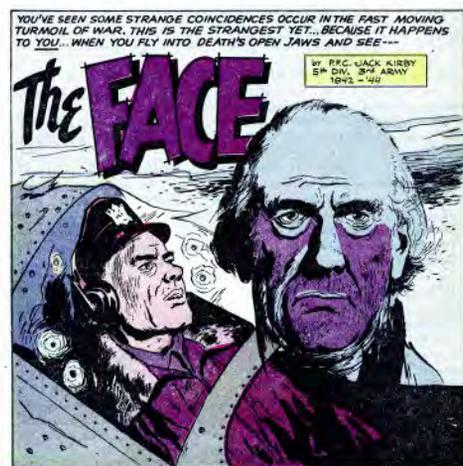
Then the comic ended with another Kirby story. It was titled "Ring of Steel" and it dealt with the 1956 revolt of freedom-loving Hungarians against their Russian oppressors.

If Kirby's first story was a depressing reminder of the Cold War's realities, then this five-pager had to offer some hope for the future. The Hungarians initially swarmed over the occupiers and forced them to leave their capital city, but the Commies regrouped and converged on a tense populace on page 2.

This time Jack used close-ups, medium close-ups, and even extreme close-ups to emphasize the plight of the Hungarians. They came out with rifles, hand grenades, and whatever they had against the Soviet tanks and regular army. The Russians were dehumanized, faceless aggressors in slowly moving tank formations. When they showed themselves, their faces were done in hard lines with eyes as soulless slits. Jack knew well how to get certain effects from a few pencil strokes if need be.

Tanks fired pointblank on apartment buildings and rooftops where the brave but outmanned and outgunned defenders played a desperate strategy of hit and run. To further emphasize the courage of the Hungarians, they were constantly called "the freedom fighters." Women participated along with citizens of all ages, a caption tells us. One panel showed a slender blonde loading a rifle.

History tells us the Communists won. The ring of steel closed in on the Hungarian positions and on the last page, a radio announcer of "Free Hungary" is shot down at his post, defiantly predicting the "final victory" over the tyrants in Moscow. He gets to have the last words and the closing caption reinforces them.



Machines of war... and fighting men.

In seeking advantages over enemy forces, armor and chariots became bullet-proof shielding and jeeps (or planes), and flaming arrows and spears became guided missiles and bombs. But the people's heroism and wisdom to temper their warlike urges or fight for the right remains a constant. Also, it's the people who inevitably endure when the tyrants are gone.

1959 was a long way from 1985, but I've often wondered if Kirby thought of the "freedom fighters" of Hungary when the "Hunger Dogs" of Apokolips toppled great Darkseid. ★

(left) Splash pages from Foxhole #3 and #5. While the art's not by Kirby, these stories are credited as written by "P.F.C. Jack Kirby, 5th Division-3rd Army, 1942-1944" (although Kirby joined the Army in 1943). Jack was notorious for recounting war stories in person, but we're not sure if these came from his recollections, or someone at Mainline just used their on-staff veterans' names to give these tales credibility. Foxhole had other artists' names listed, including Art Gates and Bill Draut. Thanks to Shaun Clancy for submitting these.

THE CAPTAIN AMERICA PANEL

Conducted at the 1975 San Diego Comic-Con, featuring Jack Kirby, Steve Englehart, Don Rico, and Jim Steranko • Transcribed by Brian Morris and edited by John Morrow

(This panel was conducted during the 1975 San Diego Comic-Con, held July 30-August 3, 1975 at the El Cortez Hotel. The moderator is unknown. At right is Will Eisner's cover for that year's program book.)



MODERATOR: What we'd like to do is to have these folks offer their opinions about the book and their ideas about the comic strip and the character itself. And of course, we'll open it up to questions. Unfortunately, we do only have one microphone so we'll have to pass that back and forth, but we can get things rolling now. So I'll let them take it from here. Look, why don't we make all four of them welcome? [applause] We could start with some opening comments from the creator of Captain America and then take it from there. Here's Jack Kirby. [more applause]

JACK KIRBY: Well, thank you very much. It's certainly a pleasure to be here and talk to you and possibly give my version of how I see Captain America, what Captain America means to me. And also, these gentlemen also worked on Captain America and he meant something to them, and I think that's the essential part about any comic character. We all see him as a real person. Sometimes we see him as a symbol and of course, a person and a symbol merge and they mean something to us individually because we're all different people, we're all individuals and we all have our own version of seeing things. But naturally, Jim has his own take on Captain America, different than a way I might have viewed him. I know Don has worked on it and Steve has done a good job on him, but if you read the strips in their individual context, you might see a—you might see Captain America with another facet.

You might see him in a dimensional view, and I think that's a good thing for a comic strip. I

(above and next page) Pencils and published version of the splash page to Captain America #102 (June 1968), with a Steranko-redrawn Nick Fury head. This issue appeared the same month as Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD #1. (next page, bottom) Steve Englehart's acclaimed run on Cap included Steve Roger's short stint as the Nomad.

think if a comic strip manages to be rotated in some fashion between a variety of people, I believe that you'll get a view of him that is very rare, because you'll get a rounded picture of a real human being. And I think that's a good opportunity because it's entertaining in itself. It's like a version of the truth. So I would like to pass this on to the other fellows and have them give their versions first. And perhaps you might see Captain America as you've never seen him before, perhaps in a different light. So I think the proper thing to do would probably be—start with Steve and have it go down the table to Don. And I would like you to give us your attention because the next time you read *Captain America*, you may have your own view on him, and who knows? Perhaps that may be the most entertaining view of all. I think we all have a little ego of our own and I think if we see the character as we like, I think we get the most entertainment out of it and the most satisfaction. So I'd like to thank you for your attention and I'll start with Steve, who I think certainly has his own version of that type of theme. So Steve, why, just take it away. [audience applauds]

STEVE ENGELHART: I don't really know where to take it. I'll just sort of give you an idea of what I saw in Captain America and then I guess the other people can do the same, as Jack said. I don't know, when I took him—when I first started working on *Captain America*, it was a superhero who had something to do with America and I did, basically, a superhero thing for about a year. And then I started thinking, "Well, you know, anybody can leap around, whatever. What really makes him Captain America?" He has the name and he has the symbolism going for him. And it had always been tacitly assumed that he represented America, but he wasn't really doing anything that represented America at the time that I

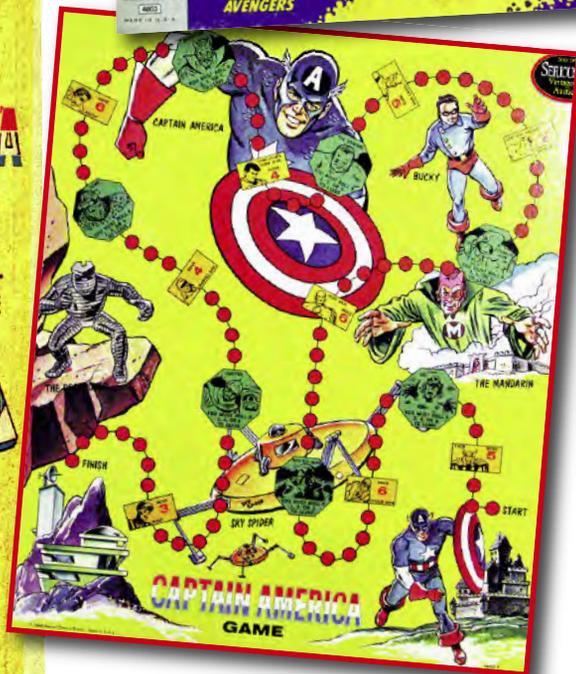


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was working on it. He was just fighting super-villains. So I set out to try and make a little clearer what he felt about America, and it certainly was a different approach from what had been done; and I don't know, I guess I took it more from a personality kind of thing, rather than from a symbol or a Hero—capital "H"—kind of position. And I don't know I have too much more to say about it; I'll pass it on to Jim.

JIM STERANKO: Thank you, Steve. [audience applauds] Thank you very much. It's really been no secret that Captain America was and is my all-time favorite comic book here. [scattered applause] You'll be glad to hear it, yes. Captain America; I wonder why? I was just trying to think of it, why Captain America is—you know, why I feel that particular way about him since when I grew up reading all those comics, there were a lot of heroes at that time, and the first thing that came to mind was Superman. I liked Superman, I guess, just as well as anybody else. But Captain America was special because you couldn't be Superman, you had to be born Superman. Krypton, I mean just—there was just no way you could ever really associate with that character, get that kind of feeling. But Captain America was just Steve Rogers—plain, ordinary 89-pound weakling. You know, that Charles Atlas ad, he'd get sand kicked in his face. "I lost my girl at the beach again. I've got to do something about this. I'll volunteer for the Army," you know? And he got the injection and all of a sudden, there he was, Captain America. It's possible, you know. It almost happened. One shot of

(below) Ad for the rare 1966 Captain America board game by Milton Bradley, released in the wake of the Krantz (ie. Gantray Lawrence) Marvel cartoons, and featuring repurposed Kirby art. The actual board (shown below) featured non-Kirby illos of Captain America, Bucky, The Mandarin, and the Destroyer. In 1977, during Kirby's Cap run, Milton Bradley produced another Cap game (right), essentially the same as the '66 version, but featuring Captain America and the Falcon, with Kirbyesque box art (shown at right).



(next page, top)
A 1976 Kirby
Cap sketch, done
during Jack's visit to
Lucca, Italy.

(next page, center) A 1940s ad for Captain America Comics, possibly by Don Rico.

(bottom) Chuck Norris was a guest at the 1975 Comic-Con, and here Jack poses with him, and a Kirby sketch of "Super Chuck Norris."

LSD—*bang!*—you're Captain America. [audience laughs] And I suppose that may have had something to do with it.

Frankly, I don't know if I'm any more or less patriotic than anybody else that's on this panel, but Captain America had that something special. And I asked Stan when I joined the Marvel Bullpen if I could do that character sometime. The first time I asked about it, Stan said he'd like to give me the book, except that Captain America was appearing currently on TV in the first film version, the animated version, the Krantz films. Did I say "animated?" They weren't quite animated. They were something else again. In any case, Stan told me a story that Jack's daughter, Lisa, happened to see the cartoons on TV and she said, "Daddy, those are your characters," and Jack decided to sort of pay it off by taking the strip over again. In a way, I was sorry not to do it at that time because I wanted to do it very badly. It's something that I always had in the back of my head, a little fantasy. But I was even more pleased that Jack was doing the character himself because nobody ever does Captain America like Kirby. He's got a way about it.

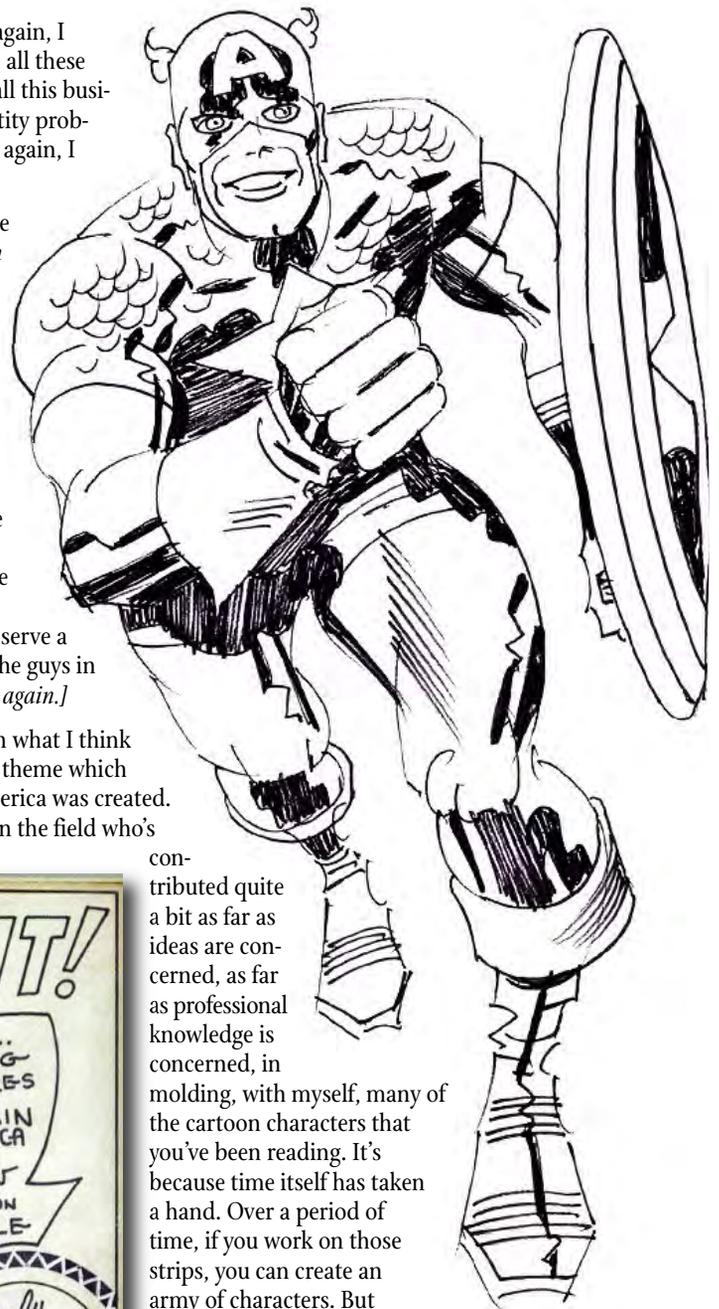
Much later, a year or two after I was done with the *SHIELD* thing, I'm switched over to *Captain America* and I had the image of Kirby's Captain America in my head, because to me, this is *the* Captain America. But there were a lot of great guys who did the strip like Syd Shores, and so forth, back in the '40s and on through the '50s and '60s. To me, it was always the Captain America Kirby did

that stuck in my mind, because it was even more noble, more heroic. He was that personification of the ideal American hero. He's Mr. Clean and somehow, I felt that I failed when I did that strip because it never came out like the Kirby Captain America, although I tried. Somehow, it came out as a kind of a bastardized Steranko/Kirby version. Now, I said this the other day—and Don and Steve will verify—no matter how good you are, there's nobody in the world that's better than Jack Kirby. But even Jack Kirby will take five issues to get into the personality of a comic book character, or maybe ten issues or more. Whatever it is, you can never find it in the first issue. You have to do it again and again and again until finally, you develop a personality, a character. And I had three issues to do *Captain America* and maybe that was just not quite enough, so there's still a little bit left, and maybe sometime in the future, I'll be able to do *Captain America* again [audience applauds] and maybe show you the kind of Cap that I wanted to do. I would have liked to have done this with him; I had to work, using someone else's plotline. When I took over, that plotline was imposed over my stories. I had certain suggestions, but I still had to work with this. The part that—they somehow wanted to drop the Steve Rogers identity and then they wanted him to be—to have an alter ego again, and I was caught in this damned difficult situation. It was just pure stupidity. "We will give him an alter ego, we will make him a Secret Identity Guy." A couple of weeks ago, before the last *Mediascene* when we discovered that Jack had

re-signed a contract with Marvel and he would be doing *Captain America* again, I called him on the telephone and I said, "Jack, how are you going to resolve all these secret identity problems between Steve Rogers and Captain America and all this business?" And Jack said it absolutely perfectly. He said, "I never had any identity problems with Captain America," and he was right. So now that he's back on it again, I think you will see *the definitive Captain America*. Don? [audience applauds]

DON RICO: Well, as usual, in deference to Steve and with all due deference to you, anything I add is very personal. I never asked Stan to draw *Captain America*. Stan said, "Draw." And I said, "How do I do it?" He gave me the first two issues. I'd known Jack's work before this, and all I could do with his work was envy it and, you know, wonder at the good luck, the fortune that comes in this business. This is not to say he was the best, but he was the one person [that stood out]. The rest of them in those days were also great; very young, but very crude. But Jack was so unique, you could feel the figures explode. And among my other references, I'd go back to my art school days and drag out my Bridgman book on anatomy, and that's where a lot of the inspiration comes from. But what inspired me so far as Jack's work is concerned—I was very, very published before I'd inked some of his pencils. I'd never inked anyone else's pencils in my entire life, but I loved inking his, because they were truly an adventure. They inspired me to look at my own style, which is not like Jack's. We all had to serve a very, very fine apprenticeship in that field. I was younger than the rest of the guys in that field. [There is a break in the audio recording here, and Jack begins talking again.]

KIRBY: I thank you gentlemen for contributing a lot of your own insight on what I think is a very important landmark in comics, because it instituted the patriotic theme which comics were ready for at that time. I figure it's the reason that *Captain America* was created. I also wish that Joe Simon was here, and he's one of the few professionals in the field who's

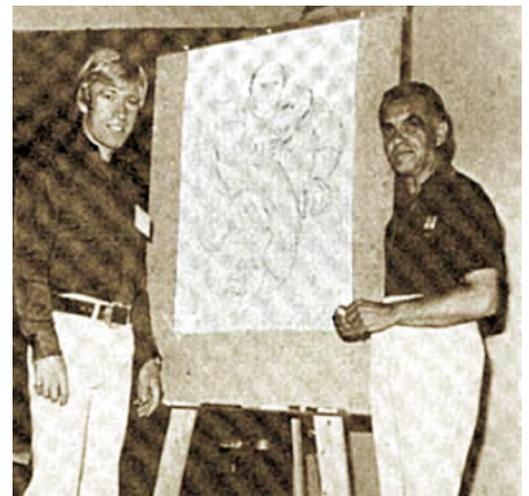


contributed quite a bit as far as ideas are concerned, as far as professional knowledge is concerned, in molding, with myself, many of the cartoon characters that you've been reading. It's because time itself has taken a hand. Over a period of time, if you work on those strips, you can create an army of characters. But *Captain America* for us was kind of a landmark in our own lives, because it did well, it was a very, very valid theme, and it gave us a chance to exercise our own



fantasies—because we believe in the validity of comics, because we believe that every one of us has to balance whatever we see in reality, with a little bit of fantasy. I believe that's how we live. Speaking for myself, I'm never gonna battle it out with six or eight guys, [laughs] because I know if I do, I'm really gonna get clobbered and I'll land in some dismal ward where some 300-pound nurse is going to take care of me. [audience laughs] And I won't enjoy it at all.

But I know that in doing *Captain America*, I can take a lot of license, and experience that kind of thing and have a lot of fun with it. *Captain America* was really a sort of choreographed ballet, especially in the fight scenes. It avoided the ugly part of life, and distilled what I thought was a fine part of human endeavor in any situation. It was an enjoyment for me to do, especially when I came back to Marvel during the late 1950s. When I began to do *Captain America* again, I had the opportunity of doing him as a human being, because he had been gone for a certain period of time and revived, and I had to create a link between this span of time. And I had the opportunity of creating another facet to his



character. I enjoyed doing that.

So *Captain America*, for me, as for these gentlemen, has been a personal experience, and perhaps it's been a personal experience to you too because the artist and the writer can't do without the reader—I feel that comics is a total experience between the reader and the people who produced the comic. I feel that each of you actually has his own version of Captain America and really should be given an opportunity to do it, to do whatever character that you like in comics. So I believe Captain America is really a part of all our experiences and has done some good for all of us, because in putting down what we think of a character, or in reading a character and in our

thoughts, instilling in that character our own version of what he should be, I feel that we are sort of finding ourselves, finding out what we think and what we'd like to see, and therefore finding out much more about ourselves. I feel that Captain America himself has contributed to that part of our lives. So I can only thank you for following Captain America and following the Marvel characters, because they've all got this kind of theme for helping to perpetuate the experience of learning more about ourselves. So that's my angle on the thing, and I feel it's a very, very valid angle, and I'm certain that the gentlemen with me have kind of said the same thing in their own way. Had Jim done ten *Captain Americas*, you would have seen a



relevant version of Steranko himself. And had Steve Engelhart done more *Captain Americas* than he had participated in, you would have seen a more dimensionally rich Captain America. And certainly Don Rico, you would have seen Don Rico reflected in the character. And in your own minds, I know that you see your own version, and seeing all these versions, we see our own potentials in these things, and that's why reading them, I think, is a very, very rich experience.

So if you have any questions, or if you have any insights that you'd like to voice yourself, I think this opportunity... Jim would like to add a little to what I've said.

STERANKO: Thank you, Jack. While you were talking, I had an idea and I wanted to sort of follow through with it if—I mean with the indulgence of this group. One of the things that makes Kirby what he is, he's a very modest man and I hope I'm not embarrassing you by saying this, Jack. But Kirby is, very simply, the world's greatest comic book artist. Not only now, but he's the greatest comic book artist who ever lived ever, any time in history. *[sustained audience applause]*

KIRBY: Now I—no, I'm not going to follow that with anything because I feel that the definitive word on Captain America or any other comic character is your word. And I really applaud you because you've seen so many comics, and that's why I respect your work and I respect my colleagues and I respect anybody who really has an interest like you, so I applaud your interest.

STERANKO: Would you like to see him draw? *[audience applauds again]*

Let me just elaborate on something I said earlier about—I mean, there's a reason that Jack is called "The King." I don't know who started that, but everybody in the business agrees that Kirby's the very best.

MODERATOR: If you have any questions, we'll be glad to answer them, and do our best. This young man here.

AUDIENCE: Will you be working on

Jack nailed down Cap and the Falcon's personalities pretty well in just his first 1970s issue. Shown above are page 2 pencils from *Captain America* #193 (January 1976). On the next page is the published version, with inks by Frank Giacoia. Note the complete rewriting of Leila's dialogue by Marvel's editorial staff.



the kind of guy whose mind has to be kept on what's to be done next. So I'm thankful for Jim being present.

Yes, just one more question. This young lady.

AUDIENCE: [asks about the personality of Captain America, and whether Jack "becomes" the character for the short time he's working on a story]
KIRBY: Yes, I'll give you the definitive answer on that. I am Captain America in that instance. I feel that whoever is involved in it, and is sincerely trying to create something good, will put himself in that specific situation, and come up with a very human solution. Because it would be their particular solution—their very own. ★

[Following this, the panelists drew on large easels for the audience. Alan Light's company Dynapubs released a 33rpm LP featuring recorded excerpts of this panel in 1976, thought not the full panel. That album cover, shown at top left, featured a photo of Kirby and Steranko working at the easels.]

Captain America again?

KIRBY: Yes, I'm doing *Captain America* now. [applause]

AUDIENCE: Will you be using the Falcon in the book?
KIRBY: I'm keeping the Falcon as a teammate. I feel that the Falcon is important. [applause] The adventure they're engaged in now, and I hope you follow it, is slanted toward the Bicentennial. The climax of it will occur when the Bicentennial comes about. Like I told a few people, it's going to be gloriously violent, [laughter] and they're gonna wind up waving the American flag, and I think you'll probably stand up and cheer when you're reading it, wherever you are. [laughs]

AUDIENCE: [asks question about the Silver Surfer]
KIRBY: Well, I have my own ideas about the Silver Surfer, and I won't discuss them myself until I talk with Stan about them, and when the opportunity arises, I'm certainly going to give him my views, and accept his views, and possibly we'll come up with something very, very interesting. Like I say, I would follow the Marvel magazines, and we might spring some surprises on you.

AUDIENCE: [asks about Kirby's schedule, and producing so many pages and stories]
KIRBY: Well, strangely enough, you get to the point where you never leave the drawing board. You can get up and walk away from it, but you never leave it. Because there's always some unsolved situation which stays in your mind, and it stays there until it's resolved. So you could be bowling, you could be sleeping, you could be taking a bath; that situation stays with you, and that situation is part of your work. So you take your work with you wherever you go. I do three pages a day comfortably. I could possibly do more, but I'd rather not. I feel that kind of thing constitutes a full schedule for me, and I'm happy to do that much, and come up with a full schedule.

I feel that one more question should kind of tie this thing up. I know that you people would like to see other things, and go to other places. [Jim Steranko whispers to him] Oh, listen, we're gonna draw. I forgot all about that, so just stick around for it. [applause] I'm glad Jim is here, because my wife isn't. [laughter] I'm



GERBER, BABY!



During his battle with Marvel Comics over ownership of Howard The Duck, Steve Gerber enlisted Jack Kirby to help create Destroyer Duck, a feathered super-soldier, whose comics helped fund Gerber's legal defense. In that spirit, we present more of Steve Gerber's February 18, 1983 panel breakdowns and partial dialogue for Destroyer Duck #3—continued from TJKC #61.

PAGE SEVENTEEN

(1)

INT. BERYL'S APARTMENT - ANGLE PAST DUKE AND BRAD TO BERYL

As she walks toward the file cabinet, she tosses aside her robe, revealing a bodybuilder's physique! Her outline is still distinctly feminine, but she has the muscular definition commonly reserved for male superheroes! (NOTE: She is wearing her exercise outfit, a plain black dancer's leotard, under the robe. Her arms and legs are bare.) Duke and Brad are gaping.

BERYL: (GIST: MAYBE YOU SAW GODCORP PRESS CONFERENCE TONIGHT? NOT ENOUGH TO TORTURE OPAL...NOW THEY'RE SENDING HER TO HOQOOM -- ENDANGERING HER LIFE FOR SOME PURPOSE OF THEIR OWN)

(2)

ANGLE - THE FILE CABINET

Beryl has opened the top drawer and is reaching in to take out a large spherical object.

BERYL: (THEY'VE GONE TOO FAR. AND NOW THEY'RE GOING TO PAY.)

(3)

CLOSER ON BERYL

As she takes the CHERRIES JUBILEE helmet out of the file cabinet. Its cold, hard, anonymous face is staring right at us...and Beryl is wearing exactly the same expression!

BERYL: (THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE THEIR SISTER ACT AFTER ALL. "CHERRIES JUBILEE" IS GOING TO HOQOOM -- AND MY LITTLE SISTER IS GOING TO BE FREE -- OR THEY'RE GOING TO BE DEAD)

(4)

DUKE AND BRAD

Duke has his arms folded over his chest, looking grim and determined. Brad is quaking, shocked, terrified by what he's heard.

(4, cont)

BERYL: (FROM OFF-PANEL: WELL, STILL ON MY SIDE...?)
DUKE: (ANSWERS AFFIRMATIVELY)
BRAD: (UH.)

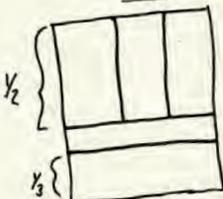
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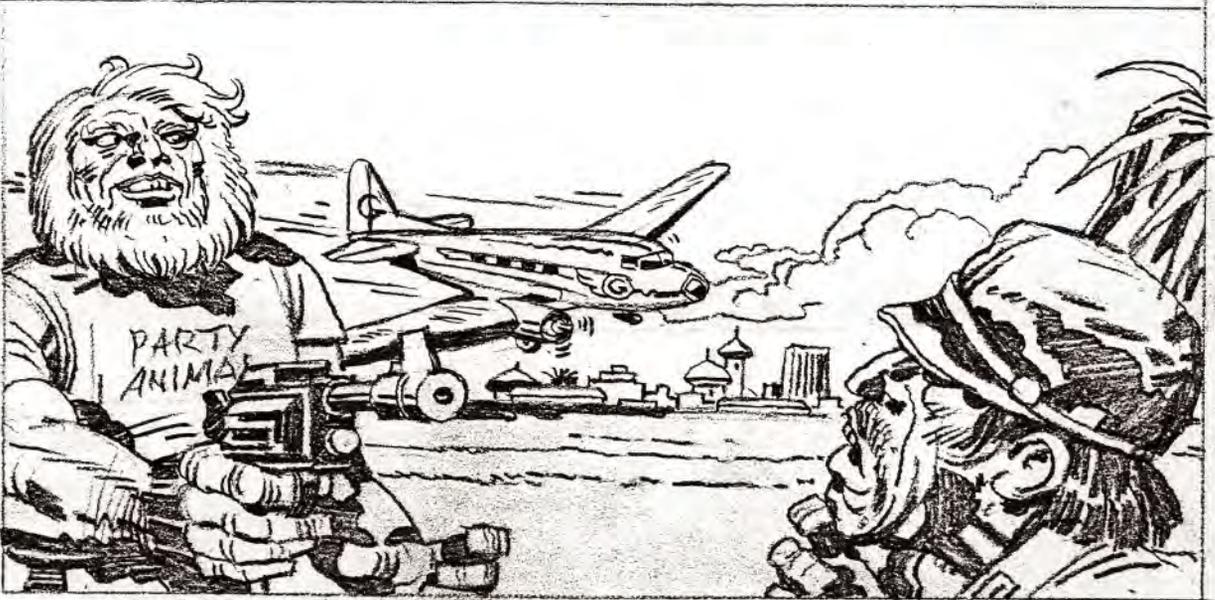
CUT TO: EXT. DESERT AIRSTRIP IN HOQOOM - NIGHT

The stars twinkle in the cloudless desert sky. In b.g., the lights of Hoqoom's skyscrapers and minarets. In the mid-ground, a DC-3 is coming in for a landing on the tiny airstrip. In a f.g., seen in profile at left of panel, gazing out at the plane, page 5, panel 5), is BOOSTER COGBURN, wearing his smiling enigmatically. (NOTE: Cogburn is still wearing his "Party Animal" t-shirt, from page 17 of last issue, Jack.) He is holding a gun on GENERAL ABUUK, the Hoqoomite terrorist, who stands at right of panel, also in profile, facing Cogburn. Abuuk is staring at Cogburn incredulously, sputtering inanities, as if he were seeing a ghost.

BLURB: (TRANSITION CAPTION)
COGBURN: (THERE'S THE PLANE THAT'LL TAKE US ON THE FIRST LEG OF THE TRIP TO SWITZERLAND, GENERAL -- FOR YOUR MEETING WITH MR. UPWIND)
COGBURN: (YOU SHOULD FEEL HONORED. GODCORP'S CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD DOESN'T MEET WITH EVERY PISSANT TERRORIST THAT WANTS HIS EAR)
ABUUK: (YOU DIED. WE RIDDLED YOU WITH BULLETS, SAW YOU FALL 23 STORIES AND LAND ON YOUR HEAD. YOU CANNOT BE ALIVE.)

Layout





(1)

ANGLE - ABUUK AND COGBURN

Abuuk in the lead, Cogburn a couple of steps behind him, they walk toward the off-panel plane. Cogburn is still holding the gun on Abuuk's back, but he's looking off toward right of panel. He hears something.

(2)

COGBURN'S POV - TOP OF DUNE

A jeep is coming over the dune, carrying FOUR PAKHMANI TROOPERS. As on this issue's cover, their heads are covered with BRIGHT YELLOW MASKS. There are no eyeholes in the masks, only HUGE, CUT-OUT GAPING JAWS WITH SHARKLIKE TEETH. The masks look like a horror-movie version of PAC-MAN! All of the Troopers except the driver are standing in the jeep, firing machine guns at the off-panel Cogburn and Abuuk!

(3)

ANGLE - PAST JEEP TO COGBURN & ABUUK

The jeep is seen from back as it comes rumbling toward them. They are at the hatch of the plane. A little staircase has been folded down from the hatch to allow them to board. Cogburn is shoving Abuuk up the staircase and into the plane. Bullets kicking up sand all around them.

(4)

ANGLE - PAST COGBURN TO JEEP

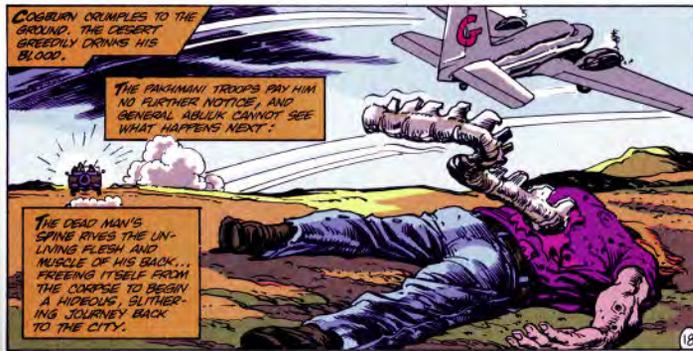
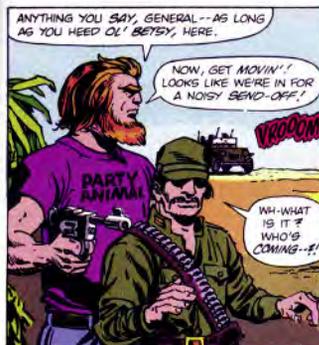
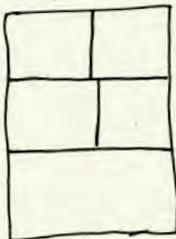
Jeep, now seen from the side, is rumbling right in front of him, the Troopers continuing to fire! Bullets are ripping right through the back of Cogburn's t-shirt, tearing him to pieces. His knees are buckling; he is starting to crumple to the ground.

(5)

EXTREME WIDE ANGLE - FEATURING COGBURN

Rising toward upper left of panel, the DC-3 is taking off into the desert sky. Rumbling toward right of panel, the jeep is disappearing over the top of another dune. In the extreme foreground, of panel, Cogburn lies face down in the sand, dead...and his spine is again starting to tear itself out of his body, in the same snakelike fashion as it did last issue!

Layout





(1)

ANGLE - PAST DUKE AND BRAD TO CHERRIES JUBILEE

Duke and Brad are seen from back, standing shoulder-to-shoulder. We're looking through the space between their heads at Beryl, now in full Cherries Jubilee regalia.

The cherry-shaped helmet completely covers her head. She has changed into a form-fitting white leotard. She wears net stockings on her legs. Covering her calves, coming up almost over the knees are tall, red, bulky high-heeled boots.

Around her neck she wears a chain with a cherry-shaped pendant dangling from it. The pendant is about the size of a baseball and is made of solid steel. She calls it her "cherry jawbreaker". Slung low across her hips, she wears a chain belt...and dangling from its links are little cherry-shaped grenades!

Cherries is holding the heavy necklace pendant in one hand, extending it forward for Duke and Brad to admire. Her other hand rests on her hip, near one of the "cherry bombs" dangling from her belt. She is posed menacingly...but, in an odd way, provocatively.

BERYL: (DESCRIBING HER WEAPONS: "JAWBREAKER" MADE OF SOLID IRON; WHEN THEY SEE HER USE IT, THEY'LL KNOW HOW IT GOT ITS NAME.)

BERYL: ("CHERRY BOMBS" ON HER BELT CAN REDUCE HUMAN FLESH TO FLAMBE)

DUKE: (IMPRESSIVE, BUT HOW DOES SHE PLAN ON GETTING TO HOQOOM? BRAD SAYS ITS HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD FROM HERE.)

(2)

ANOTHER ANGLE - CHERRIES JUBILEE

strides toward the door of the apartment with Duke at her heels. She's glancing back over her shoulder, speaking to him as she walks. Duke looks worried, wonders if Cherries has all her marbles, or cherries, or whatever.

BERYL: (ENIGMATIC: PEOPLE LIKE ME, REMEMBER? I'VE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN CERTAIN...FAVORS. THERE'LL BE NO PROBLEM GETTING TO HOQOOM)

VOICE: (OFF-PANEL, FROM THE DOORWAY: WRONG!)

(3)

ANGLE - THE DOOR

Cogburn, the same guy we just saw getting shot full of holes on the desert, stands framed in the doorway, blocking her exit!! He is dressed in a safari jacket, khaki pants, and heavy boots, and is holding a mammoth pistol in each hand!

COGBURN: (YOU GOT A LARGE PROBLEM, HONEY-PIE, AN' I'M IT!)

BERYL: (GASP! A COGBURN!!)

(4)

ANGLE - COGBURN AND CHERRIES JUBILEE

She does a Rockettes-style high-kick, and boots the gun out of Cogburn's hand! The gun goes flying back over her head, toward...

(5)

DUKE

The gun is dropping into his hand, which is extended in such a way that his finger wraps around the trigger as he catches the weapon!

DUKE: (THREATENING REMARK TO COGBURN)
VOICE: (OFF-PANEL; FROM DIRECTION OF WINDOW: C'MON! THE DUCK'S IN THERE, TOO!)

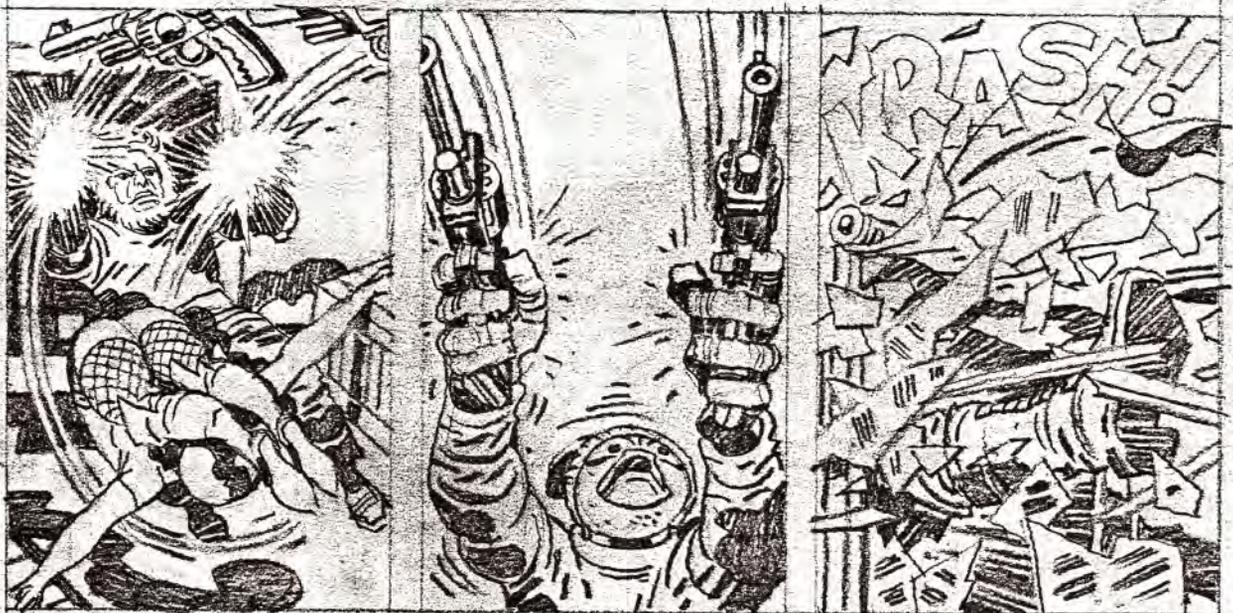
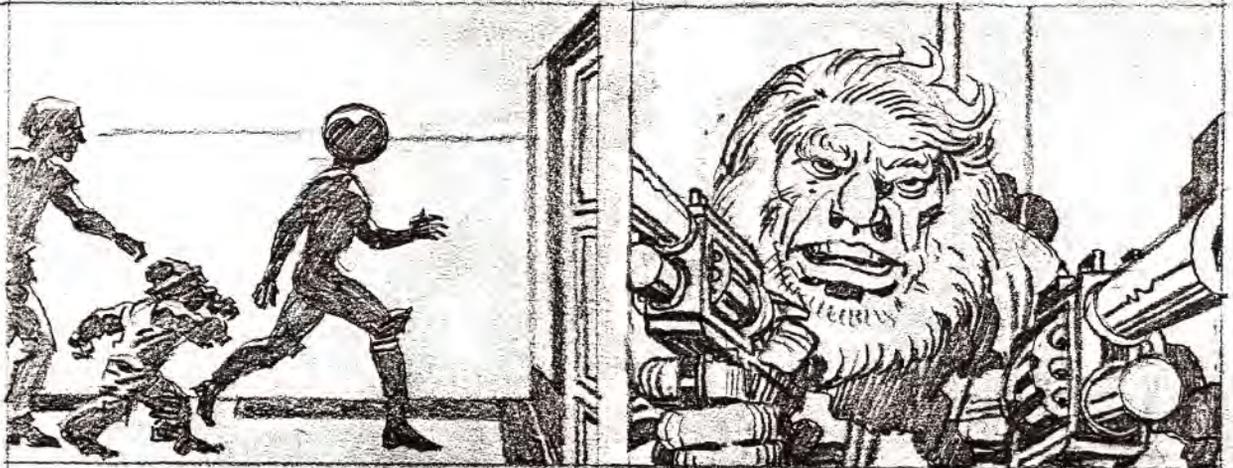
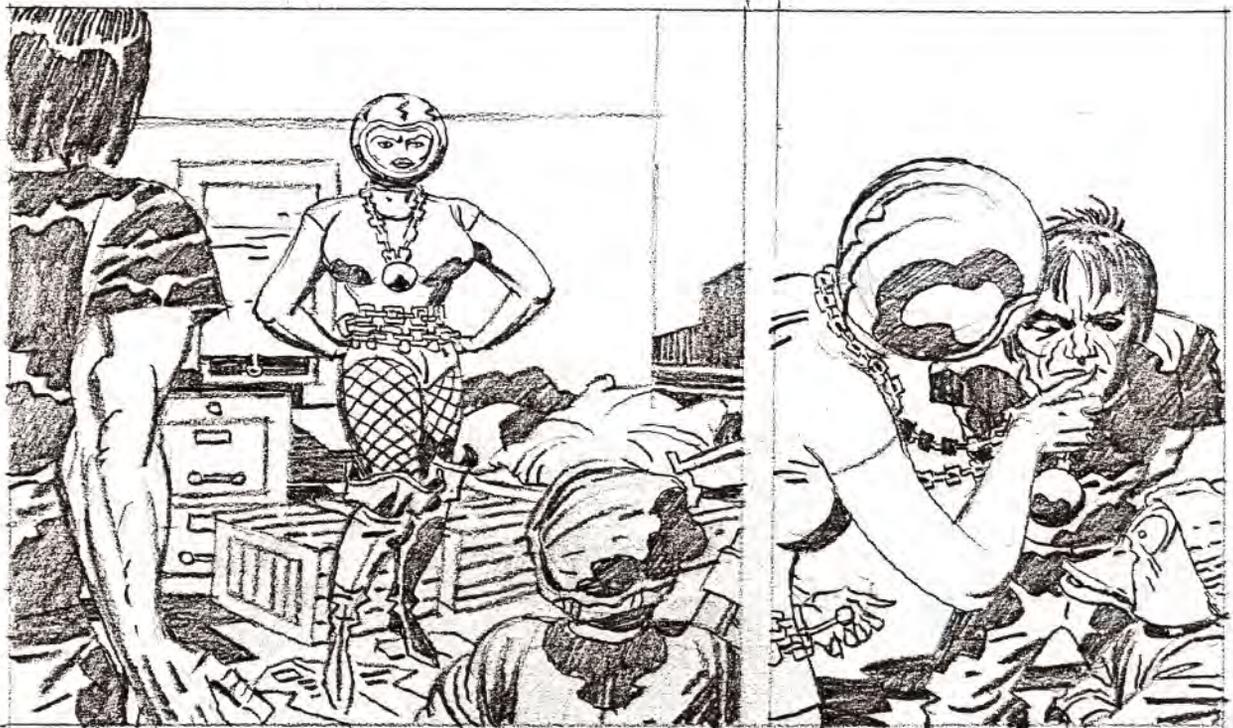
(6)

ANGLE - PAST DUKE TO WINDOW

As a heavy black workboot comes smashing through the window, ripping the drawn shade down, sending a shower of glass into the room! Duke has jerked his head around in the direction of the window. He's shielding his eyes from the spray of glass!

Layout





(1)

ANGLE - CHERRIES JUBILEE AND COGBURN

Startled, she has whirled in the direction of the window. Cogburn is throwing a crushing bear hug around her from behind, pinning her arms to her sides!

(2)

TWO-SHOT - DUKE AND BRAD

They gape at the off-panel window. Duke's beak hangs open in amazement. He can't believe what he's seeing. Brad is scared out of his wits. He's dropped to his knees, making him approximately the same height as the duck, and he is gripping Duke's shoulder with both his hands.

(3)

HIGH ANGLE - THE APARTMENT - LARGE PANEL

Looking down from an angle that lets us see most of the room. At one side of the room are Cogburn and Cherries. She's writhing in his pulverizing bear hug. Dead center in the panel are Duke and Brad. Brad is staring at the door, at Cherries's peril. Duke is looking bug-eyed at the window, trying to figure out where to point his newly-acquired gun.

THREE MORE COGBURNS, all armed to the teeth, each dressed differently (one in a "Nick Fury-type wetsuit with bandoleros; one in "survivalist" guerilla togs; one in a skin-tight "muscle shirt" and dark slacks) are coming in through the shattered window from the fire escape!!!

LEAVE 3/4" STRIP ACROSS BOTTOM OF PAGE FOR NEXT ISSUE BLURB

Layout





Know of some Kirby-inspired work that should be covered here? Send to:

Adam McGovern
PO Box 257
Mt. Tabor, NJ 07878

KIRBY As A Genre

A regular feature examining Kirby-inspired work, by Adam McGovern



Onward, Satanic Soldier

Every person, every fan mattered to Jack Kirby; an endless queue of enthusiasts were welcomed through his home studio as he took questions and kept drawing, and his best books were almost always ensembles—kid gangs, extended post-nuclear families and pantheons in which each character counted.

So even his most passing creations can grow to fill a book of their own, and Klarion, the mischievous “witchboy” from two issues of Kirby’s occult page-turner *The Demon*, is one who has stayed undispelled for a surprisingly long time. From antagonist on the *Young Justice* cartoon to star of one of Grant Morrison’s *Seven Soldiers* miniseries, the punk Puritan manchild has acquired a fitting cult.

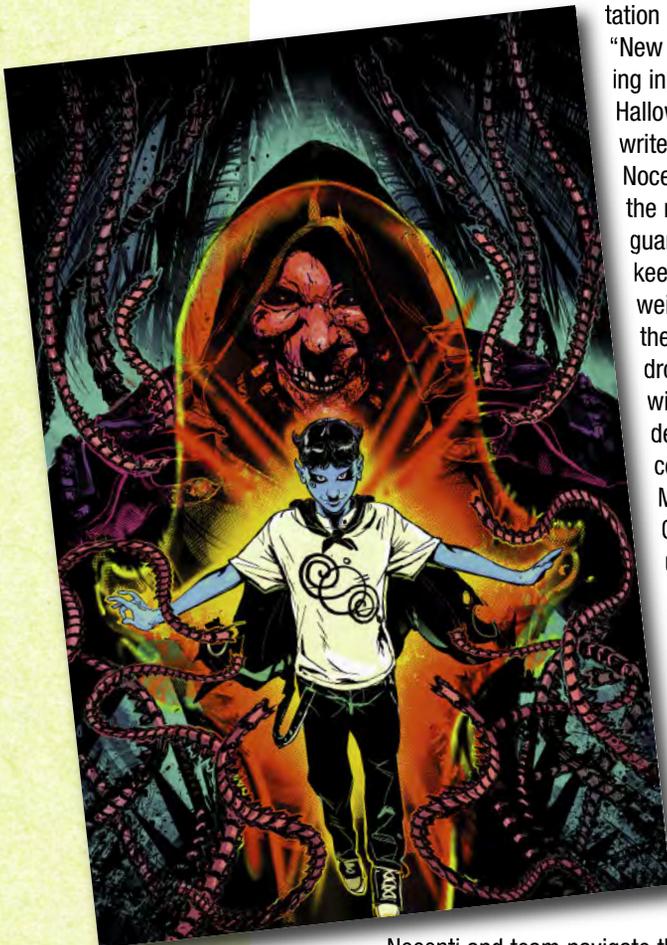
His first manifestation in DC Comics’ “New 52” is debuting in the month of Halloween from writer Ann Nocenti, one of the main guardians of keeping comics weird and seeing the world wondrously, working with transcendental artist and colorist Trevor McCarthy and Guy Major, under editor Harvey Richards. The boundary between magic miracles and technological marvels was a line Kirby often crossed, and Nocenti and team navigate that border in



the new book; speaking by email on September 8, 2014, *THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR* talked with her about the trade secrets of this exciting new series.

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR: Kirby would always follow the curves the market threw him, but would then cut a new road through a mountain—he did *The Demon* after the *Fourth World* books were cancelled, which vaguely served the then-viral horror-comics craze, but it was so atypical for him as to be avant-garde. It’s significant that a relatively throwaway character like Klarion has endured as a recurring cult favorite. Does this fit your own affinity for outside-of-margin characters (or unorthodox treatments of “major” ones)?

ANN NOCENTI: It’s interesting to contemplate what Kirby’s plans were—if any—for Klarion. Was he a toss-off character or did Kirby toss him out into the world for a purpose? So often when you’re building a



Nocenti and team navigate that border in

(This page, top) Variant cover for *Klarion* #1 by Frazer Irving, and (below) the main version by artist Trevor McCarthy.

(next page) Detail of the *Witchboy* from original art for *Demon* #14, and Jack’s cover pencils for that issue.

(following page) Cover art for *Klarion* #2 (left, by Trevor McCarthy) and #3 (top right, by Felipe Smith).

Characters TM & © DC Comics.

story you try out a minor character, have some future plans for that character, and for whatever reason the story gallops forward and leaves that character behind. The first time I saw Kirby's Klarion, I thought—what a curious face, what an ornery brat! So I knew I didn't want to make Klarion "likeable" or "heroic" as he clearly was envisioned as a snarky curveball, which is why I like him. I imagine I'm trying to channel where Kirby would have taken Klarion next, as if that were even remotely possible!

TJKC: What aspects of previous comics are you picking up on, and what outside of comics are you drawing on that makes sense for how you see the character and his context?

NOCENTI: I gobble comics, film, art like candy, so it's hard to go back and pinpoint influence. But Klarion definitely reminded me of some powerful Colin Wilson occult books I read when I was about Klarion's age. And for the tech-horror aspects of the comic, I think



of a few films I watched when I was too young really to see them, like Hitchcock's *The Birds* and Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby*. Both those films terrified me when I was young in a visceral way, but watching them as an adult the deeper messages of each film hit me. So *Klarion* on the surface has the occult pagan versus tech-wizard war, but underneath the stories are based on real human fears that people have of how much they bond with their technology. Other than that, I'm very influenced by the first month of Harvey, Trevor and I all rocketing images and ideas to each other. I felt that our initial impulses for what direc-

tion to take *Klarion* in were good impulses.

TJKC: Is this a good chance to do world-building and world-exploring? The ways you played with the Gotham Underground in

Catwoman were fascinating as both a tall-tale terrain and a psychological backdrop. Will we see those kinds of uncharted landscapes as the canvas for *Klarion*?

NOCENTI: The *Klarion* comic is from a subjective POV and Klarion is an unreliable narrator, something I think was a strong part of *Rosemary's Baby*. Every shot in that film was from Rosemary's POV, so the question is: did her husband sell her first-born to the devil, or was she crazy? And at first I was thinking Klarion's oddity would contrast



with a normal, mundane, realistic world, but as Trevor designed the pages to be drenched in the occult, I began to see it as Klarion's subjective POV.

TJKC: You haven't entirely left the world of feline adventure since Klarion has a familiar, Teekl—will you work well with animals as well as kids in this new series?

NOCENTI: There are things in the comic just for Klarion fans. Not sure what newcomers will make of Teekl's debut, but I am hoping Kirby fans get a kick out of Klarion's familiar and his journey in the tale.

TJKC: Kirby was a quintessentially visual thinker, being both his writer's penciler and his artist's scripter :-)—how are you interacting with the artist of this book, and what ideas is each half of the creative team influencing in each other?

NOCENTI: We'll toss around ideas, and I go with the ones Trevor likes and drop the ones that aren't grabbing him visually. When thinking of where I wanted Klarion to land first, I remembered a visit I made to the Mutter Museum in Philadelphia when I was young. Mutter has a collection of "medical oddities" and "morbid anatomy" specimens. It felt like an occult place of mystery for me. And having been raised by a scientist I have a fascination and curiosity for medical oddities. So I thought all these powerful little specimens in jars would make for great ingredients for spell-casting and decided to have Klarion find what we're calling The Moody Museum. This all ties in with Teekl's place in the story. Trevor ran with that in such a brilliant way—the early pages of *Klarion* #1



foreshadow things to come...

TJKC: Klarion seems like a barometer of American cultural attitudes toward youth. Kirby's version recalled "bad seeds" like the kid in "It's a Good Life" or *Star Trek*'s "Charlie X"; Grant Morrison's version was more the innocent adrift, an analogue for millennial kids grasping at how to do good. You showed similar identification with uneasy young heroes in *Green Arrow* and *Catwoman*. Will your *Klarion* reflect on the state of (gothic, well-meaning) youth?

NOCENTI: One of the most fascinating aspects of Klarion is his moral ambiguity. Just how bad is he? Or is he not as bad as he and others think he is? Now that we're working on issue #3, I find Klarion is "speaking" to me—he keeps wanting to do rotten things! And who am I to refuse him?

TJKC: What that you do best will *Klarion* make use of, and what that you're excited and terrified to do will be new in how you handle and conceptualize this comic?

NOCENTI: I'm flat-out scared of and in love with technology. I think about it all the time. Every time I read a news story about a digestible tech, or implant tech, or wearable tech, I get both queasy and excited. These are amazing times to be living in. Cars that drive themselves? What will that be like? Part of me thinks these things are great, and another part of me thinks of Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*. And Klarion's journey will take him through multiple dimensions and timelines. So, is that exciting and terrifying enough? ★

THE WALRUS WAS A SWINE

by Richard Kolkman



It's been said "you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." However—is it possible to make a Swine out of a Beatle? Over the years, Kirby readers have drawn the comparison between the villain in *Captain America* #206-208, "The Swine" (Hector Santiago), and his resemblance to former Beatle John Lennon. Was Jack Kirby inspired by some malevolent Beatles villainy? Circumstantial evidence may shed some light on this—or it may just lengthen the shadows.

It begins with a book—or two. The best-selling book *Helter Skelter* by Vincent Bugliosi was the basis for a heavily anticipated television movie event in April 1976—based upon the murderous exploits of Charles Manson's "Family" of drop-outs and delusional drug fiends in the Summer of 1969. In

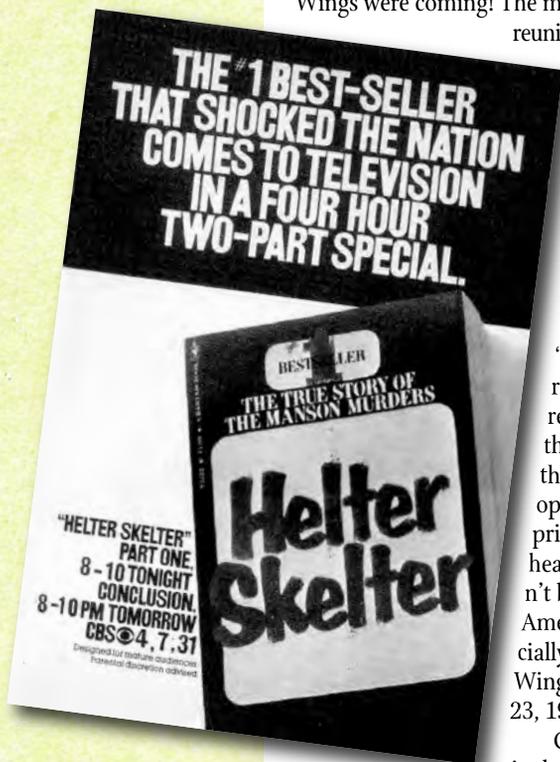
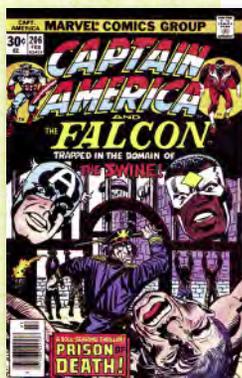
the Spring of 1976, tension was in the air of Los Angeles. The co-mingling of hype for CBS TV's *Helter Skelter* movie, with the heralded arrival of Paul McCartney (a Beatle!) performing live in L.A. (for the first time since August 1966) was creating a local fascination or "flash-back" around the Beatles and the words: "Helter Skelter"/"Pig"/"Death to Pigs"/"Rise" (the phrases found written on the walls at the Tate/LaBianca murders). It felt like the 1960s again—but darker.

Helter Skelter resonated with TV viewers (April 1-2, 1976) like the Kirbys in Thousand Oaks, California (Los Angeles)—because they lived only 11 miles from Spahn Ranch (Manson's hideout) in nearby Chatsworth. Everyone watched *Helter Skelter*. It felt like the Zodiac killer had his hand on your shoulder—again. In April, Jack would have been drawing *The Eternals* #4 (Oct. cover date), where Sersi turns Ulysses and his crew into pigs in "The Night Of The Demons"—a story about helpless citizens being terrorized by unknown demons. At night. In a city.

Meanwhile, it was being heralded: Paul McCartney and Wings were coming! The media's relentless thirst for a Beatles reunion and the pounding of Beatlemania drums was hypnotic. Yet, the only way to see Beatles films were their spotty late night showings on local TV stations. Your two choices were: *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) and *Help!* (1965). This was long before today's 24/7 downloads of everything—from all rock epochs, at the push of a button.

Capitalizing on the emerging "Beatles Boom," ABC TV (USA) premiered a 60-minute film, *David Frost Salutes the Beatles*—regarded as one of the first Beatles documentaries, the special aired six days before Wings released their *Venus and Mars* album on May 27, 1975. In 1976, the only Beatles films other than *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help!* were tied up in legal limbo—unavailable for broadcast in the USA. This was the case of *The Beatles at Shea Stadium* (1965) and *Let It Be* (1970). The option for *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967) was held by Japanese Television. Despite this, enterprising promoters in L.A. screened Beatles films at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium at a heavily promoted event called *Moonstar Euphoria* in February 1976. Baby Beatlemania; it hadn't been long since *Yellow Submarine* (1968) made its USA network television debut in 1974. American media commentators agreed: "...he (McCartney) will eclipse all attendee marks, especially in L.A. where he could sell-out for two weeks." Paul *did* end up playing three nights in L.A. Wings' triple album live set *Wings Over America* (1976) was recorded on the third evening—June 23, 1976—the night after Jack saw them.

Coincidentally, in April, Capitol Records planned to release the Beatles' "Helter Skelter" as a single (Capitol P 4274), but abandoned the idea as a tasteless ploy to exploit a TV movie about serial murderers. Capitol (Apple) had not issued a Beatles 45 in the USA since "The Long And Winding Road" (Apple 2832) in 1970. With the official dissolution of The Beatles & Co. on April 9, 1975, Capitol was free to release anything by The Beatles it wanted. "Helter Skelter" was issued instead, as the B-side to "Got To Get You Into My Life" (a paean to



THREE EERIE PARALLELS:

- In 1968, both John Lennon and Charles Manson had compositions found on the B-sides of 45 rpm singles: Lennon's "Revolution" backed the Beatles' hit "Hey Jude", while Manson's grim ditty "Never Learn Not To Love" was the flip-side of the Beach Boys' "Bluebirds Over The Mountain." Both 45s were on Capitol Records subsidiary labels: Apple and Brother, respectively.
- Roman Polanski (husband of Manson gang victim Sharon Tate) filmed the satanic *Rosemary's Baby* at the historic Dakota apartment building on New York City's Central Park West. The Dakota was John Lennon's residence (1973-1980), and where he was killed. That's one evil piece of real estate!
- In 1917, Jack Kirby was a "Rosemary's baby"—born to Rosemary and Ben Kurtzberg in New York City. As a small child, Jacob Kurtzberg underwent an exorcism rite conducted by Rabbis. Other definitions of "Demon": a genius, or a person with great energy, drive.
- The lead ape in the beginning of Stanley Kubrick's movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* (later adapted by Kirby) was Dan Richter—who also choreographed the ape sequences in the film. Dan Richter was later the Lennons' personal assistant—at the Dakota!

cannabis on Capitol 4274)—a song that flew into the Top Ten, and into the hands of teen pop fans. If they couldn't afford the new double album Beatles collection, the much-hyped "*Rock 'n' Roll Music*"—they bought the single. Don't ask—just buy it! Helter Skelter was coming down fast, all around us.

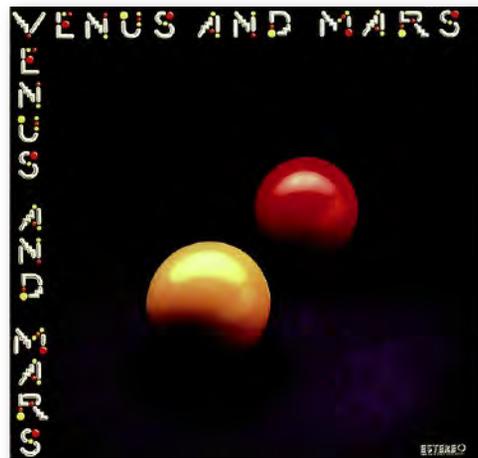
Topping the bill of media frenzy was Los Angeles promoter Bill Sargent's offer in January of 1976, of \$50 million to the Beatles for one reunion concert. The offer *should* have been irresistible, considering most concerts netted the Beatles \$3,000 a night in their prime (1964). A Wings concert was as close as we could get... The "Beatles Boom" had started in England with the re-issue of the Beatles' 22 singles. This earned the Beatles the top ten spots in the UK record chart. Six years after the group disbanded, they were again on top, and headed to our shores. Beatleswingsmania was at our doorstep—at a fever pitch. (So bad was Beatles fever that Wings' tour publicity firm Solter & Roskin was fired by Paul when it was discovered that they represented the "International Committee to Re-Unite The Beatles"!)

As recounted in *The Jack Kirby Collector* #43, Gary Sherman tells the story of how he arranged for the Kirbys to attend the Wings concert at the Los Angeles Forum on the night of June 22, 1976. Even if Jack wasn't the biggest Wings fan, he saw how highly Mr. McCartney was regarded by his friends, and Paul brought joy to them through music. All good. It's not hard to see that Jack Kirby would admire a man like Paul McCartney—a man at the top of his profession.

Wings LPs were crafted to please the senses—invoking love ("Silly Love Songs"), celebrating life ("Maybe I'm Amazed"), old age ("Lonely Old People"), Super-Heroes ("Magneto And Titanium Man"), and the cosmic wonders of interplanetary space travel ("*Venus And Mars*" / "Rock Show"). Did the bi-spherical *Venus and Mars* album cover remind Kirby of the twin worlds in his *New Gods* mythology—New Genesis and Apokolips? Wings' brand of rock was easy on the ears of a man of Kirby's generation. Indeed, Wings' "You Gave Me The Answer" is evocative of the big band era. And Wings made Jack's daughter Lisa happy—nuff said.

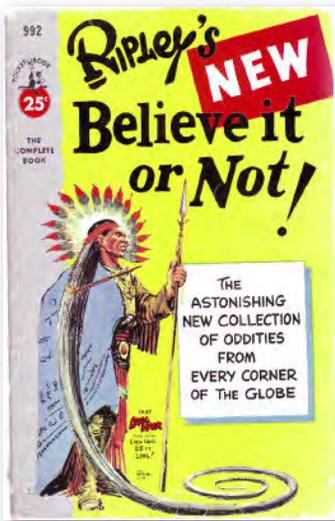
A loud rock concert would be an exhilarating experience to a vintage homebody like Jack, and unforgettable. To have Paul McCartney call out Jack by name in honor of his creations—"Magneto And Titanium Man"—from a stage festooned with cosmic imagery, was acknowledgement of Jack's creativity from the biggest, brightest stage of the day; much bigger than the bones thrown to Jack on Marvel's Bullpen Bulletin pages. It was a celebration of the visual artistry of comics, witnessed by thousands in the glow of the mute backdrops of Titanium Man and Crimson Dynamo (by George Tuska).

Even if Jack couldn't tell the Beatles apart (as Gary Sherman stated), there are surprising similarities between Jack Kirby and Paul McCartney. Both men worked and rose to the top of their respective professions—but lost ownership of their greatest creations. Both men had one brother. Both men married Jewish girls from New York. Both first marriages lasted until death parted them. Both men raised three girls and one boy. Both men had strong family values—always surrounded by family. Jack once said that "Ramon de Flores" would have been his pen name of choice. Paul chose "Paul Ramon" for a 1960 Scottish tour—which inspired Dee Dee of The Ramones! As inspiration for a Kirby villain, Paul McCartney didn't fit the part; but the Beatles were still on our minds. The inspiration for villains



had to come from—other villains!

I believe a man as curious as Kirby would have read and collected the *Ripley's Believe It or Not!* series of books (as we all did). For instance: In *Ripley's New Believe It or Not!* (3rd book, 1950)—the story of “The Man in the Golden Mask,” (Farid Ed Din, Grand Vizier of Bokhara, Asia) who wore a mask of solid gold for 84 years because his own face was abhorrent to him. He was even buried wearing the mask. Does that sound like any Kirby villains we know?



In the same book is the account of Juan Vicente Gomez (below), dictator of Venezuela for 27 years (1908-1935). It was said, “There never lived and never will live a man as *cruel* as Gomez.” Could the round glasses, squinted eyes, mustache, and military uniform that appear in the Ripley’s book be reminiscent of someone else—some-



one in Sgt. Pepper’s band?

When “Beatlemania 1976” was in the air, and one was lucky enough to catch *A Hard Day’s Night* on the local TV late night movie, a patient viewer would see, at the very end of the movie, 13 seconds of dialogue between roadie Norm (Norm Rossington) and Beatle John Lennon:

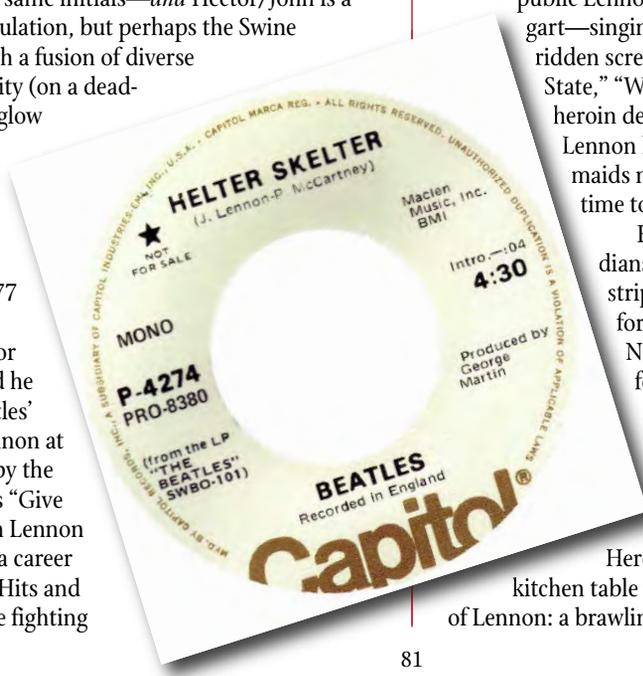
Norm: “Now there’s only one thing I’m going to say to you, John Lennon.”

John: “What?”

Norm: “You’re a Swine.”

(Note: all 13 seconds of this famous exchange is captured on YouTube, for you diehard Swine fans.) It’s puzzling: Hector Santiago and “Helter Skelter” share the same initials—and Hector/John is a pig. (ie: swine). This is all speculation, but perhaps the Swine concept came together through a fusion of diverse inspiration points—as creativity (on a deadline) usually does. In the afterglow of Wings’ USA tour, Kirby would have drawn “Face To Face With The Swine” (*Captain America* #206) in July 1976, for a November publication date (and Feb. 1977 cover date).

If Kirby felt admiration for Paul McCartney, then how did he regard the flip-side of the Beatles’ coin—if he regarded John Lennon at all? Far from being forgotten by the fans and media, years after his “Give Peace A Chance” bed-ins, John Lennon was drowning in the chaos of a career unburdened by Number One Hits and sold-out concert arenas. While fighting



deportation efforts by the US government, Lennon was surveilled by the FBI for activities related to “cultural subversion”—for his association with Yippie activists Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, and persecution hard cases like John Sinclair.

Some images are hard to forget. The naked album cover by John and Yoko in the blissful state of new love, *Unfinished Music No. 1*.

Two Virgins (Apple, 1968) was the defining moment when Lennon artistically declared he was no longer a pop star. Since then, Yoko Ono was deemed a contributing factor to the demise of the Beatles, and the ultimate distraction of Lennon from his pop music duties. Instant Karma Nudism.

“When two great saints meet it is a humbling experience. The long battles to prove he was a saint.”
—John Lennon (*Two Virgins*, 1968)

“(John) was an old soldier, and he fought *with* me.”
—Yoko Ono (1988)

“(Lennon) was both a saint and a bastard.”
—George Harrison (December 1974)

In stark (naked) contrast to the admiration of Mr. McCartney, a man of Kirby’s generation would likely have had little regard for the public Lennon: a long-haired, loud, insecure extrovert braggart—singing (ie: primal screams) mentally anguished doped-ridden screeds such as “Power To The People,” “Attica State,” “Woman Is The N***** Of The World,” and the heroin deprived strains of “Cold Turkey.” Culturally, Lennon had made his own bed (even though Hilton maids made his bed during the bed-ins), and now it was time to sleep in it.

Enter: the Smothers Brothers: folk singer comedians Tom and Dick at the Troubadour Club on the strip in Los Angeles. Fueled by Brandy Alexanders, former Beatle John Lennon and singer Harry Nilsson heckled the Smothers Brothers and then fought their way out into the parking lot with photographers. On the morning of March 14, 1974, readers of *The Los Angeles Times* were greeted with a large photo of a drunken, disheveled, violent Lennon with the headline: “Swinging Beatle in Troubadour Melee.”

Here, on the front page of Kirby’s newspaper, on the kitchen table next to his orange juice, was the indelible image of Lennon: a brawling, drunken man-child (at 33), concerned only



for his own insatiable appetites for public despair and heedless violence. Mean drunk Lennon had disrupted the Smothers Brothers—and separated from his wife, was going down. Lennon would only be saved later by five years of seclusion; raising a son, and then murdered on December 8, 1980 by an assassin's bullets. (Note: Lennon later apologized to the Smothers Brothers and the owner of the Troubadour Club.) In 1976, a public persona was a much more difficult thing to repair. The best villains are based upon flawed reality—think Funky Flashman, or Doctor Doom, or Juan Vicente Gomez.

Don't misunderstand: The goodness of John and Yoko was less known; beside their mission to promote world peace, the Lennons raised thousands of dollars for charity—helping unfortunate children and other humanitarian causes over the years. Yoko Ono is a strange, brilliant woman who showed John Lennon a brighter, artistic side of life: Life as art project.

"I thank Yoko, I've always thought there's a great woman behind every idiot."

—John Lennon (1976)

Kirby's "Swine" (Hector Santiago) lives up to his reputation as the sadistic comandante of a South American prison, and has a brunette companion (cousin) named Donna Maria, who, it is said, "She fans the fires that will some day destroy him." Consider this: at what other time did a Kirby villain have a raven-tressed female companion—who could destroy him? Was Donna Maria a Yoko Ono Trojan Horse? I'll have to agree with Rex Ferrell's idea (in *TJKC* #29) that Donna Maria's name could have been inspired by *Donny and Marie* (Osmond)—a smash TV show on ABC that debuted in January 1976. Was it possible: the Kirby household was "a little bit country and a little bit rock 'n' roll?"

In "The Tiger And The Swine" (*Captain America* #207, March 1977) Kirby states in the opening splash that, "(super villains)... are sometimes content with lesser spoils, and wield the power they possess to satisfy more *personal* demons." In *Captain America* #206-208, throughout the Swine's battle with Cap, he consistently refers to our favorite shield-slinger as "Tiger."

"He went out tiger hunting with his elephant and gun..." ("The Continuing Story Of Bungalow Bill"; *The Beatles* (white album), 1968)

"In the warped mind of the Swine, there is no sense of evil in (his) deed. He knows only triumph and a need for haste." ("The River Of Death" [Rio de Muerte]; *Captain America* #208, April 1977)

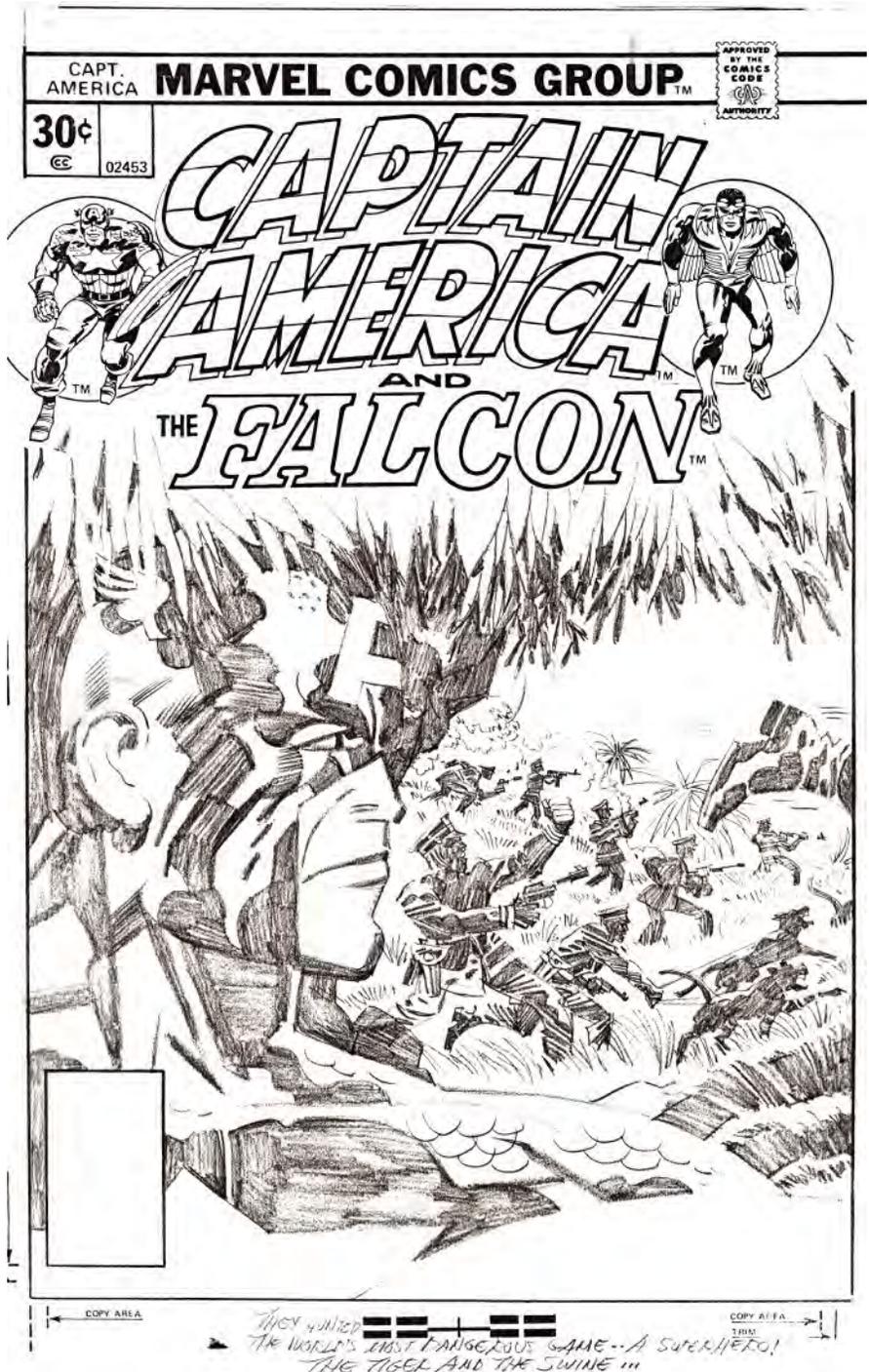
And finally—in *Captain America* #208, the cruel, small-time prison official Hector (Helter?) Santiago meets his demise. Donna Maria comments, "He was a sick and tormented mind—which has finally found peace", while contemplating the Swine's boots sticking up out of the river (of death).

From *The Blue Beetle* (1939), to *The Silver Spider* (1954), to *The Silver Beetles* (1960)—and beyond, the parallels (and links) between the careers of Lennon/McCartney and Lee/Kirby are drawn by historians for two distinct reasons: (1) The timeline of both creative partnerships almost virtually overlap, and (2) the careers of both teams re-defined their art form and earned them the critical respect of their peers. Both partnerships ended acrimo-

nously in anger and puzzlement.

THE TIMELINE

- In July 1956, after Kirby turned over his first late 1950s stories to Stan Lee upon his return to Atlas/Marvel (*Astonishing* #56, *Strange Tales of the Unusual* #7), it wasn't long before John and Paul met in a churchyard—and formed a skiffle/rock band called The Quarry Men (July 1957). And from "rock minors" to rock miners (quarry men)—strangely enough: the main work detail that the unfortunate inmates of the Swine's prison endure is mining rock boulders!
- On August 8, 1961, when *Fantastic Four* #1 hit the newsstands of America, the Beatles' first contracted record was being mixed by Polydor in West Germany for release as their first single: "My Bonnie"/"The Saints" (Polydor 24 673) with singer Tony Sheridan.



- And... on March 6, 1970—when ashen-faced Stan Lee was putting down the phone in his office after Kirby had quit, an ocean away; the Beatles' final single "Let It Be" (Apple R 5833) was being released in England—on the same day!

THE CAREERS

Mark Alexander said it best—in his excellent book *Lee & Kirby: The Wonder Years* (TJKC #58; TwoMorrrows, 2011) when he openly borrowed *New Musical Express*' reviewer Alan Smith's characterization of the Beatles' *Let It Be* (LP): "A cheapskate epitaph, a cardboard tombstone, a sad and tatty end to a musical fusion which wiped clean and drew again the face of pop music." Mark was evaluating *Fantastic Four* #102, and cleverly using one of rock's well-known timeworn statements. Hiding in plain sight, are the parallels of four men.

In conclusion, I expostulate this analogy of Lee and Kirby in punk rock terms: If Stan Lee was the "Malcolm McLaren" of Marvel, then Jack Kirby was "The Ramones" of Comics. To the enlightened, the analogy is apt. There is no absolute way to quantify inspiration. It's not an exact science. The pursuit of tying cultural threads together to weave a plausible theory is half the fun of getting there, on the voyage through comics' (and rock 'n' roll's) long and storied history. ★



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He is the caretaker of The Jack Kirby Checklist, and is the purveyor of comics research and production at: www.serio-comics.com



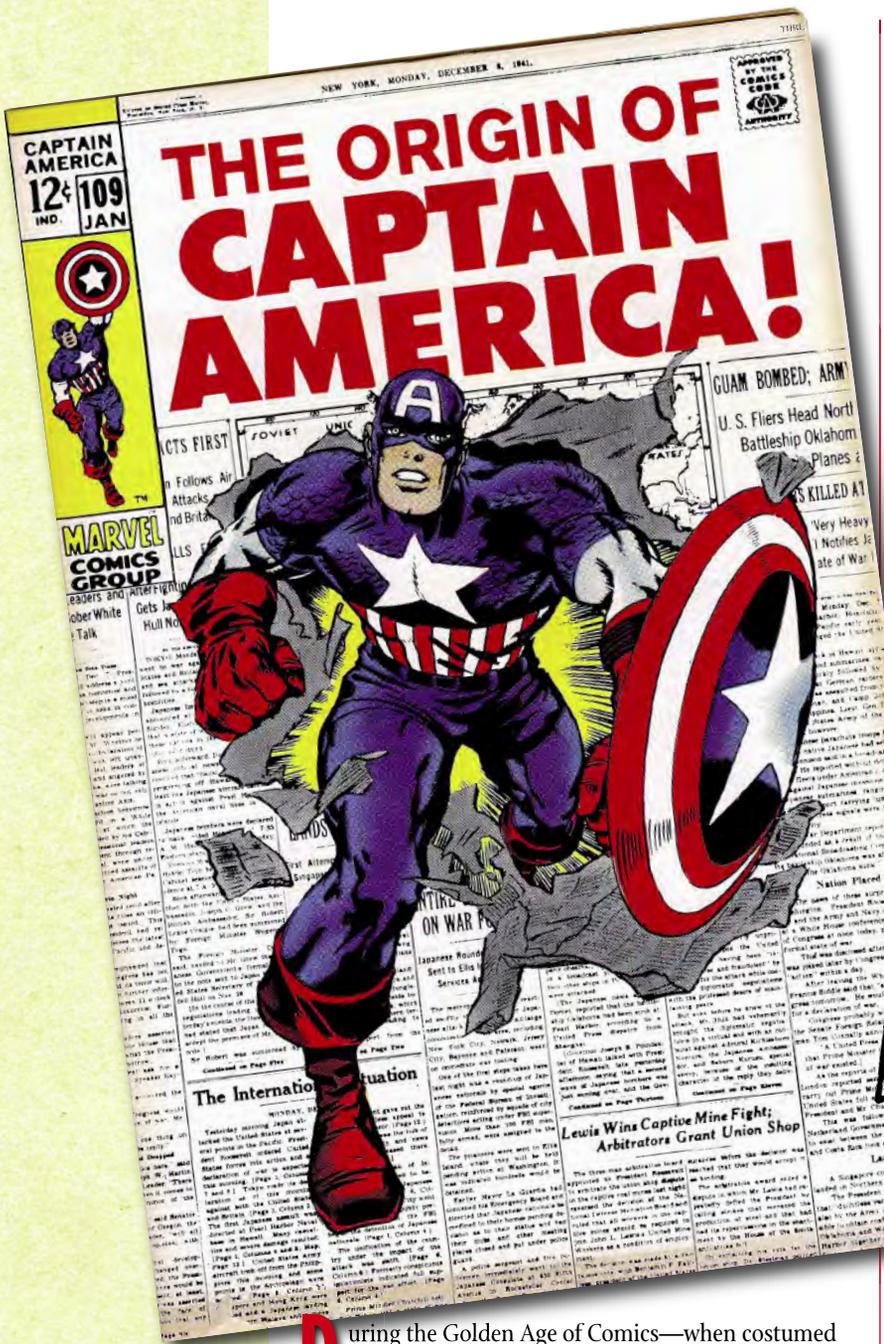
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- *The Jack Kirby Collector* #43 (Sum 2005); "The Sherman Brothers Speak" by Steve and Gary Sherman (TwoMorrrows)
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(above and previous page) Cover pencils, and original inks, for the cover of Captain America #207 (March 1977). At right is John Romita's reworked face for Cap, which was on the final cover (above).

A PATRIOTIC PANEL DISCUSSION

Captain America, Bucky, and Fifth Columnists, examined by Jerry Boyd



Sam was made for audiences equally depressed, fed up, and antagonistic toward the Hitlerites abroad; it proved to be a tonic in red, white, and blue for the four-color fans of the nation.

Carmine Infantino praised the comic over the phone to me a few years back as a Simon and Kirby masterpiece that "...invigorated everyone who saw it—a call to patriotism..."

And shortly after gaining his special abilities, young Steve Rogers was on his way. One panel proclaimed his achievements in newsprint, and also accented his mystery:



As the origin was retold by

Kirby and Lee in the '60s in *Captain America* #109, the King went back to the one-panel way of promoting Cap's 'Year One' [right]. This one-panel-says-it-all technique put costumed men and women of mystery in the company of legends, cementing their mythologies among lesser mortals. One panel screamed success, triumph, boldness, vigilance, and determination. And vigilance was particularly important...

(above) Extra, extra! Read all about Cap's exploits on the cover of *Captain America* #109 (Jan. 1969), and the interior panel from same, both of which mimic the panel from *Captain America Comics* #1 (center).

During the Golden Age of Comics—when costumed crime fighters (the term superheroes came later) were in their glorious infancy, it quickly became commonplace shortly after their origin tales to present a 'panel or two' with their earliest exploits splashed across the newspapers of the day.

Even some of the movie serials devoted to colorful adventurers (comic magazine-based or not) picked up on this idea and ran film with a punch or two going across a bad man's jaw with the spinning newspaper headline capsuling the event. Rinse and repeat.

Captain America Comics #1 was a runaway hit in March of 1941. The image of a power-packed, shield-wielding dynamo that looked like a nephew of his Uncle



FIFTH COLUMNISTS...

In Europe, political dissidents were targeted, rounded up, deported, beaten, harassed, and/or killed by Mussolini's Black Shirts, Hitler's Brown Shirts, and Stalin's KGB. Those who had the wherewithal to leave

dictator-controlled nation-states did. In the U.S., freedom of expression/free speech meant that Nazi sympathizers and American Nazis could rally and spread propaganda inspired by Dr. Josef Goebbels, the Fuehrer's Minister of Propaganda and Information.

The young Jack Kirby and Joe Simon looked ruefully at the Bund groups and large gatherings of American Nazis that spewed their hateful bile at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Jack and Joe produced a tale in an early issue of *Captain America Comics* where a violent Bund faction met the flying fists of the Sentinels of Liberty.

On the very first page of *Captain America Comics* #1 [above], Mr. Simon's caption points to "...the dreaded Fifth Column...". Americans were wise to be wary of foreign infiltrators, and the action in the story begins with American Munitions, Inc. being blown up by obvious (from the dialogue) German saboteurs.

Again, Simon and Kirby were near Bund activities and Fifth Columnists. Jack was even challenged to a let's-go-to-this-place-and-settle-it by some pro-Nazi New Yorkers. (See *Kirby Collector* #38.)

Steve Rogers' baptism under fire came with a fight he didn't intend on having so soon after Dr. Erskine's formula—and a Fifth Columnist was involved. You can talk Vita-Rays, or an injection, or



Mike Royer inked this Kirby piece, which Jack drew in pencil in his personal bound volume of *Captain America Comics* #1-10.

(right) Joe Simon drew this send-up of der Fuehrer for *George Roussos* in 1942.



Ted White's protracted training period with the super-soldier solution at the end (from his wonderful novel *The Great Gold Steal* in '68, left), but Rogers becomes an instant dynamo and dispatches Erskine's killer. Mr. White broke down the serum's advantages nicely: Steve would have greatly added strength, stamina, speed, and his body would adapt quickly to desert terrain, snowy areas, or humid jungles. The American super-soldier would have a leg up on the enemy in combat. Rogers would know all of that in White's novel, but under Simon, Kirby, and Lee, he, like lots of Golden Age 'instant heroes', would just jump into action, and pummel the killer of the professor.

You could say the assassin was as much a spy or saboteur as he was a Fifth Columnist. He wasn't out to confuse the masses or disseminate misinformation. He wasn't out to take classified U.S. secrets back to Germany. His mission was to end Operation: Rebirth. Going back to that headline-filled panel, Cap showed he was looking out for the people's interest.

And for good reason... the threat of spies and saboteurs—before the attack on Pearl Harbor and before *C.A. Comics* #1—was real.

SPIES...

In the '30s, Americans had watched movie newsreels of fascists establishing the beginnings of "The New Order" in regions and nations they'd occupied. America's doughboys had helped force the Austrians and Germans to sue for peace in The Great War in November of 1918, so America was in the vengeance-obsessed Hitler's sights.

There was no Dept. of Homeland Security in 1939, but U.S. citizens of those days knew their neighbors, liked their neighbors, and trusted those in other states to be vigilant in their collective sense of Americanism, to keep an eye on those who came off as suspicious and untrustworthy.

A lot of people felt safe, despite the probable presence of spies and saboteurs...

On that subject, Stan Lee, a teenager in '39, told me, "Truthfully, I was never fearful of a big German saboteur attempt on New York City. I was too busy writing stories and then joining the Army. I felt our armed forces and police could handle any sabotage efforts the enemy might try against New York."

War broke out in Europe in the Fall of 1939. Americans moved past their trepidations and part of the national consciousness was to keep silent. The slogan "Loose lips sink ships" came later. Who was a traitor? Who wasn't? Who could be trusted? Would Bund workers and Nazi sympathizers move to undermine the U.S. and later, the war effort?

The Red Skull came from abroad. A master spy (and a master of disguise early on) and a top saboteur, he served his Fuehrer well, killing Army officers and serving up as much high-tech



destruction as Joe and Jack could dream up! If Cap was the embodiment of the Yankee won't-say-die spirit, then the Skull was the American nightmare. His mask symbolized the ugliness of the military aggressors overseas, who were bent on the brutal conquests of liberty-loving peoples.

Captain America and Bucky spent most of their Axis-smashing days at Fort Lehigh in the States under the Jack and Joe team. But there were excursions into Japan and Germany. With these two super-soldiers and a host of Timely stalwarts protecting our shores, Hitler, Tojo, and Mussolini never got close to NYC.

The Red Skull, the Fuehrer's 'super-soldier', could wreak havoc for the better part of a story, but in the end... well, you know.

However, Simon and Kirby realized the American nightmare in



the pages of *Star-Spangled Comics* #19, 1943 (right). This short story spotlighted a Brooklyn-based traitor nicknamed 'Gashouse' (left). Impossibly, the Axis Forces have taken over NYC and Gashouse has been made a head of the local Gestapo by Hitler himself! Gashouse

is not a fan of the news kids or the Guardian, and as a 'judge', adds to their tribulations because of their two-fisted opposition to the occupation. Along the way, Yankee Stadium becomes an outpost of further Nazi aggression. S&K were really laying it on thick! Still, their misgivings weren't far off, at all. Hitler and Goering mused openly among their cronies about "hundreds of Luftwaffe fighter planes and bombers roaming over the steel canyons of Manhattan".



...AND SABOTEURS!

Outside of the comic universes, there were no costumed super patriots in the real world to combat the foes of freedom. But J. Edgar Hoover's FBI agents and the U.S. Coast Guard put an end to two of Hitler's most ambitious espionage efforts.

In late 1939, the Abwehr (the Nazi intelligence organization) pressured a German-born American citizen named William Sebold (visiting his family in Germany) into working with an Abwehr spy ring already stationed in and around NYC. Sebold worked it out quickly. He reasoned that a refusal from him might result in reprisals against his family in the Fatherland. He decided to tip off the authorities in his adopted land instead. On Manhattan's 42nd Street, Sebold installed himself as a consulting engineer where he began to work with the Axis agents, with all the information gathered going to the FBI over a 16-month period that began in February of 1940.

To prove Sebold's 'complicity', the FBI authorized him to transmit to Germany harmless, meaningless, or incorrect reports. FBI cameramen were also filming the Nazi agents in Sebold's office, behind a one-way mirror, and by June 1941, enough evidence had been gathered to arrest 33 enemy agents (left). Every one of them was convicted and received prison sentences. This was catastrophic for the Abwehr; a "death blow" as one Nazi sympathizer put it, ending German espionage in America.

Or did it? Hitler was reportedly furious at the debacle, and ordered a new mission which would strike directly at railways, strategic bridges, munitions factories, and aluminum plants. Aluminum was needed for the aircraft industry.

Eight German saboteurs were trained for the job. Reaching the US aboard U-boats, one group of four went ashore in Florida and the other on Long Island, NY. (Stan and/or Jack may have remembered

the Long Island drop-off spot—it's in *Captain America* #109 as the drop-off spot for the agent who killed Prof. Reinstein!) The saboteurs had enough money, fuses, and explosives to keep them active for a few years.

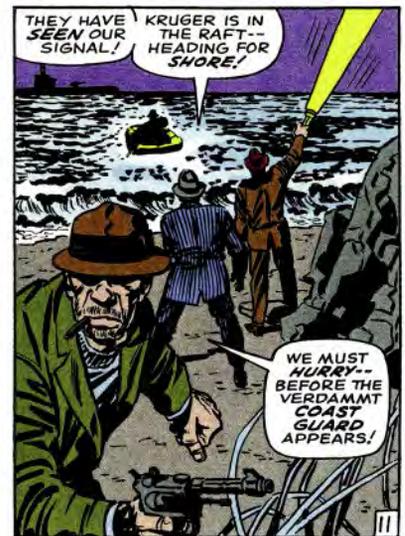
A Coastguardsman on his patrol spotted the Long Island group right after they'd changed their clothing. He accepted a \$260 bribe and went on his way... for 'a New York minute' as it turned out. At his base, he reported the incident and the FBI was on the trail.

For reasons still unclear, one of the would-be saboteurs, George Dasch, turned himself in to the FBI! He gave up the team of four in Florida, and revealed enough information to fill up over 250 pages. Six of his co-conspirators were convicted of sabotage and electrocuted; Dasch and Ernest Burger (who also cooperated) got prison sentences.

In Berlin, Hitler wailed to the Abwehr chief, "Those poor young fellows, all decent members of the party! Next time you can send Jews and criminals!"



(above) Original art from *Captain America* #109, where the Nazis make moves to end "Operation: Rebirth". Notice that the caption says the shore landing was "off the coast of Long Island--".



How far did those news items of potentially devastating attacks on U.S. soil travel in those days? It's hard to measure; the FBI may have kept the lid on the secrets they uncovered or the news media may have suppressed it in order to avert a panic. But the 'Long Island' landing in *Cap* #109 is telling. Why would the guys have used it at all if it didn't hold some significance? The aborted sabotage may have made the real newspapers in '39 or Lee and/or Kirby came across the incident sometime later and used the area for their fascist killer.

Whatever came out of it then, Jack and Joe's first issue collection-of-headlines-in-a-single-panel of Cap's capture of a "spy ring" and Jack and Stan's similar scenario with Cap trapping a "sabotage ring" speaks volumes... in both history and comic magazine excitement. ★

Special thanks to Stan Lee and Mike Royer.

KIRBY KINETICS

by Norris Burroughs

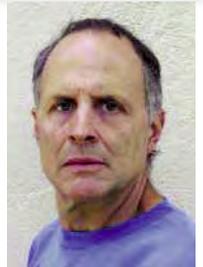
An ongoing examination of Kirby's art and compositional skills

CAPTAIN AMERICA'S SEQUENTIAL AGILITY

Kinetics is the science of motion, and Jack Kirby's art exemplified motion. Kirby's work exploded out of the panels and raced at breakneck speed from page

to scintillating page. A consummate storyteller, Kirby evolved an illustrative process that is unmatched in graphic art.

In 1964, Marvel Comics reintroduced Joe Simon and Jack Kirby's Captain America to the world. The character was first brought back as a sort of teaser, appearing with the



Human Torch in *Strange Tales*, but he was an imposter: a criminal known as the Acrobat was impersonating Captain America, and the focus was on his amazing agility.

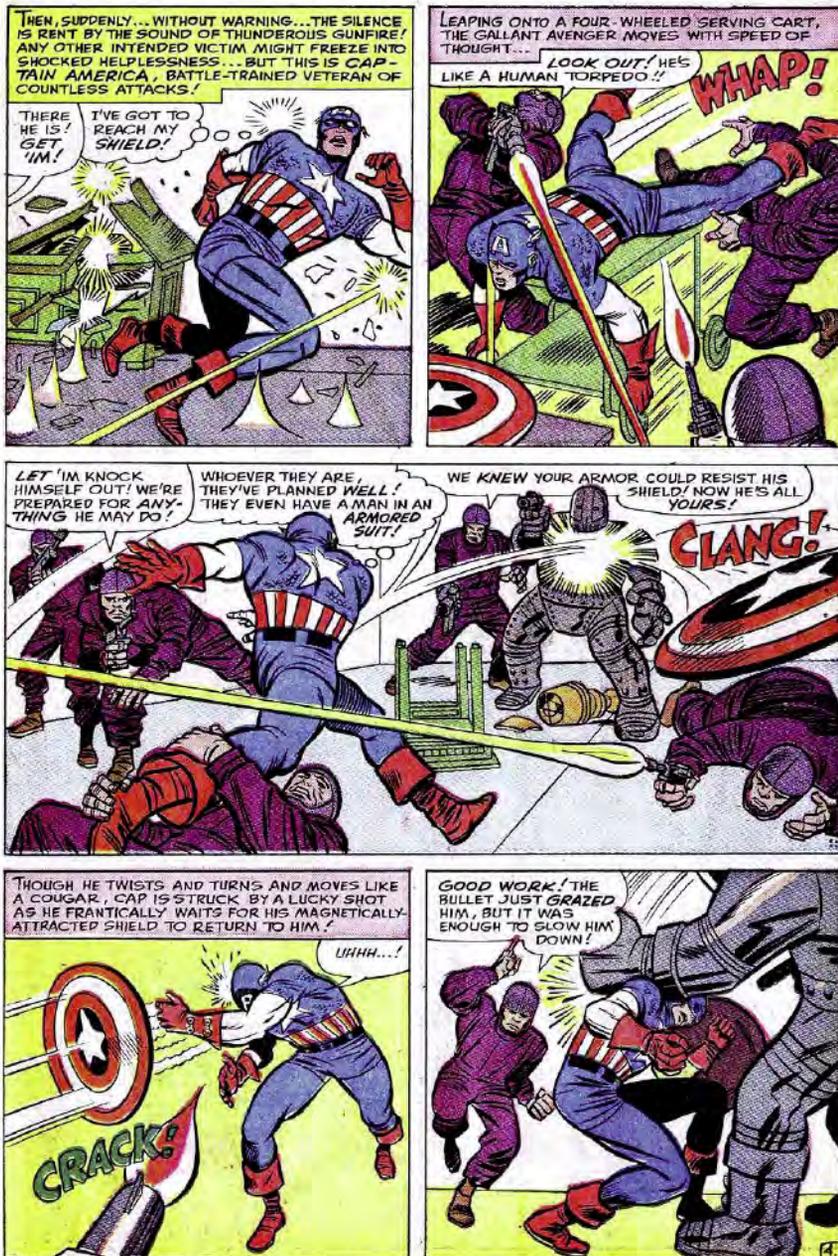
The real deal returned from suspended animation in *Avengers* #4, and Kirby's artwork again stressed the amazing gravity-defying athletic feats the Captain was capable of. The immediate appeal of this particular hero was that he was obviously a mortal man with no super powers, although later we did learn that he had initially been chemically enhanced. Despite that advantage, Cap had developed the majority of his strength and agility through sheer will power and persistence.

When Captain America was finally given his own series in *Tales of Suspense* #59, Jack Kirby presented us with a run of issues featuring some of the most amazing fight sequences ever seen in comics. Kirby described his approach in an interview:

"When I was a very young boy, I used to wait for three guys to pass and figure out how to beat them up. How does one guy fight three? I would do it in Captain America. How does one guy fight ten guys? And that's how it came out in that story. That was an element in Captain America I felt everyone would connect with."

Kirby kicked off the new series showing just how well his hero would fare against such a challenge, as Captain America faced one team of villains after another in the succeeding issues. The first entry featured a gang of thugs invading the Avengers mansion when Cap was on duty. The gang leader assumed that because Captain America had no super powers, he would be a pushover. Kirby proved just how wrong these villains were by demonstrating how formidable a highly trained human being could be, and how exciting the spectacle was when he rendered it.

Over the years, Kirby had worked out ways to depict action sequentially. By drawing on his limited early experience as an "inbetweener" for Max Fleischer's animation studio, Kirby experimented by using various poses in conjunction with structural elements in the panel, to try to make the action as





perspective of a room. This is Kirby at his best, using the positioning of Cap's multiple foes to best advantage.

We can see how Kirby uses the design of the page to direct the reader's eye to where he wants it to go. All the positions of the figures function for this purpose, as well as for the total kinetic effectiveness of the panel.

The three thugs in the left corner of the panel anchor Cap's dynamic pose as he flings his shield at the armored man. The shield's downward slanting trajectory directs the eye to the supine figure firing the pistol. The gunshot brings the reader's eye across to page left, but the eye stops at Cap's extended right leg and travels down to panel four.

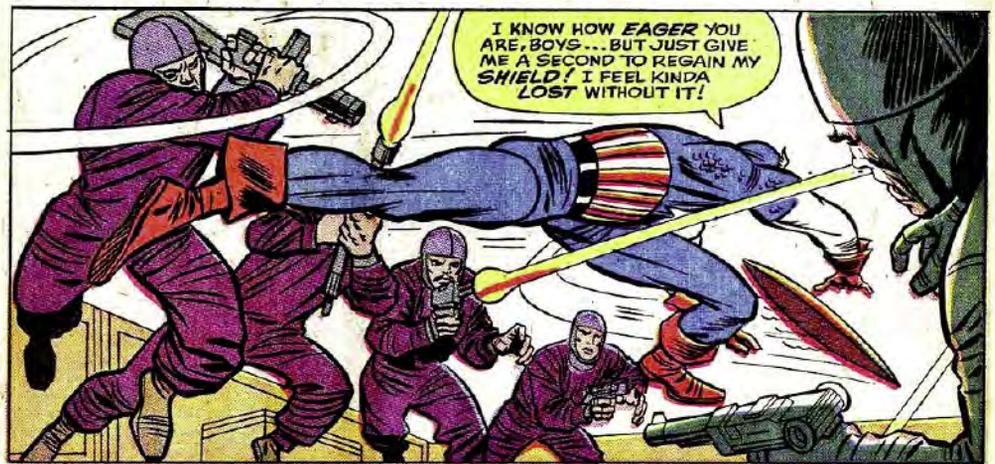
Several of the pages in this series have a five-panel arrangement with a full tier third panel. Many of these shots utilize deep space perspective and multiple figures to emphasize Captain America's hyper-extended body, and Kirby nearly always uses a pose or a gesture to bring the reader's eye to the next panel.

Cap is soon restrained and tied up by his attackers, but manages to free his arms. On page six [left] we have a nearly seamless action-to-action sequence, with the hero vaulting over his foes and positioning his legs perfectly in order for one of his assailants to accidentally free them with a flame-thrower. Kirby's skill at depicting the transition between movements shows his obvious skill as an animator. There is a beautiful harmony in the positioning of the three Cap figures from panel one through three with the splayed leg pose in the center being the focus of the entire page.

Notice that in panel three on page seven [below], Kirby constructs a 3-D

effective as motion picture editing techniques.

As the mob first attacks in the first panel of page four [previous page], Captain America springs instantly into action, his body moving diagonally towards the right edge of the panel. His trajectory matches the movement of his figure in panel two, as he maneuvers a serving cart, racing in a downward angle to the left towards his appearance in panel three. The third panel is an amazingly complex arrangement of figures in the deep space



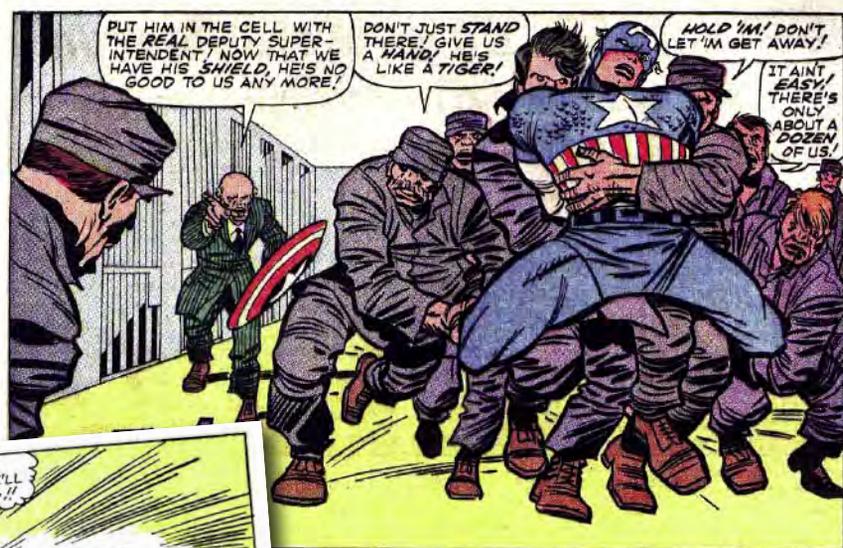


Kirby's drawings convincingly depict the weight of Cap's attackers as they pile on top of him. The massive back of the man on the right balances Cap's seemingly impotent flailing legs. The same attacker's leg directs the eye to the right and the beginning of the circular motion of the two men being turned upside-down. Cap's rearing figure moves the eye to the focus of the third panel.

These stories in issues #59-62 are a wonderful lead-in for the hero's origin in issue #63. They showcase Captain America's legendary skills in an extraordinary way. In each story, Cap's foes would swarm over him, attempting to overpower him with sheer force of numbers. Kirby's ingenious compositions always convincingly showcased the ingenuity of the Star-Spangled hero as he maneuvered his way over, under, around and through them, as if they were tackle dummies, props and straw men. One minute they would have our hero hog-tied like this:

universe using the specific arrangement of Cap's antagonists as he leaps the length of the panel. The purple clad figures create depth by their size and placement. The lines where the wall joins the ceiling serve as coordinates that show Captain America moving further into the room. This sort of attention to detail, although apparently simple in its execution, goes a long way in emphasizing dynamism.

Through the next four issues of *Tales of Suspense*, Kirby utilized a similar format, pitting Cap against several teams of gangsters and assassins. For example, on this page in issue #61 [above], Cap is pinned down by two foes. With a dazzling action-to-action sequence of acrobatic leverage, our hero turns the tables on his assailants by neatly flipping them up and tossing them away.



One second later he would explode and break free of his opponents [left], sending them flying in multiple directions like the fragments of a grenade.

There was just no stopping Captain America, or his creator, the irrepressible Jack Kirby. ★



(The big news, just as we were going to press on this issue, is the announcement that Marvel Comics and the Kirby family have settled their legal dispute that looked to be headed for the Supreme Court. Far as I'm concerned, if the Kirbys are happy with their resolution, that's good enough for me! But my mission now is to make sure that, even if Jack's name is on everything Marvel produces from now till the end of time, people never forget just what Jack actually did. I hope the new environment, sans legal wrangling, will lead to a consensus among fans and readers of this mag, to continue to promote Jack's legacy, as well as those of Stan Lee and Joe Simon, without both of whom we wouldn't be seeing this monumental development. Now to letters:)

CAPTAIN AMERICA RISES SHAKILY TO HIS FEET AND REALIZES HOW SORELY HE HAS UNDER-RATED THE SITUATION! THE MADNESS SEEMS TO HAVE SUBSIDED... BUT, IN ITS WAKE IS A SCENE OF UTTER DISASTER!!!

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I notice from the KIRBY GOLD CHECKLIST that photocopies of nearly every page of Kirby's '70s run on CAPTAIN AMERICA exists. Someone on Marvel's editorial staff made changes to Kirby's dialogue, causing Kirby to complain to Stan Lee, who ordered the changes stopped [see example above from #193: "sorely" vs. "sorry"].

Since almost every page of the run exists in photocopied form, it would be an interesting project to try and reconstruct the issues exactly as Kirby wrote them, and convince Marvel to reprint the issues as Kirby intended.

Patrick Ford, Sarasota, FL

What a treat the Mark Alexander article (TJCK #63) was to read! As a boomer who was there in the beginning, FF #4 was the first Marvel comic I read; the article was such a pleasant and insightful view of Kirby's contribution to what is now considered pop culture mythology. While I did not agree with some of Mr. Alexander's negative assessments of Stan Lee's contributions, the article was still very entertaining and told with the passionate appreciation of a Jack Kirby fan.

Gregory Martinez, Sacramento, CA

I used to be a comic writer/artist in the late



'80s and early 1990s (using the pen-name "Peter-C-Knight"). I had the pleasure to meet Mr. Kirby at a con in NYC in 1990, and as a gesture of thanks, gave him a drawing of Captain America. I was recently watching the documentary "With Great Power: The Stan Lee Story" and at the 20-minute mark, saw a photo of Jack posing with MY artwork on his drawing board, as if drawing it. I was thrilled to see that he had kept it, and honored that he liked it enough to use as a stand-in for his own work.

Peter C. Ruggiero, Canadensis, PA

I always look forward to your KIRBY COLLECTORS, but in reading your newest about "A Universe A'bornin'," I just don't get why you'd print such a large article that is so consistently dismissive and derisive of so much of those early Marvel years. Sure, it's easy to look back with an historian's jaundiced eyes and be superior to much of the lesser material of those years. The thing that is not understood by this article is: to those who read those books at that time, and to this day, the material is bold, groundbreaking, and entertaining, even if they are not all masterpieces of fiction. And they were produced by real people, real artists and writers, who were working their brains



and guts out to produce classic material under poor conditions. Who else in our modern times has gathered together and created an entirely new empire of comic fiction to galvanize our industry? No one. These men did it in their time, and to be so smug about them is to do them a great disservice.

It's true that the article does offer high praise for the landmark achievements. But the consistent negative tone makes it difficult to overcome the personality of the author.

Bruce Zick, Corbett, OR

In MISTER MIRACLE #14, Jack announces for #15 the possible origin of Big Barda. But in #15, Shilo Norman was introduced, and only in Chapter Four does the title "The real Big Barda" appear, without any justification. What happened with this "lost Big Barda origin"?

Daniel Murillo Licea, Cuernavaca, MEXICO

Delighted, as always, when a new issue of the KIRBY COLLECTOR debuts. Even more to celebrate: the next one is promised for mid-May, not late July. Frequency, or the lack thereof, while not my only complaint, is certainly the main one.

This DC issue (#62) was great fun and wide-ranging. Easily my favorite part was the listing of issue order and approximate months, during Jack's five-year stay, that his stories were produced.

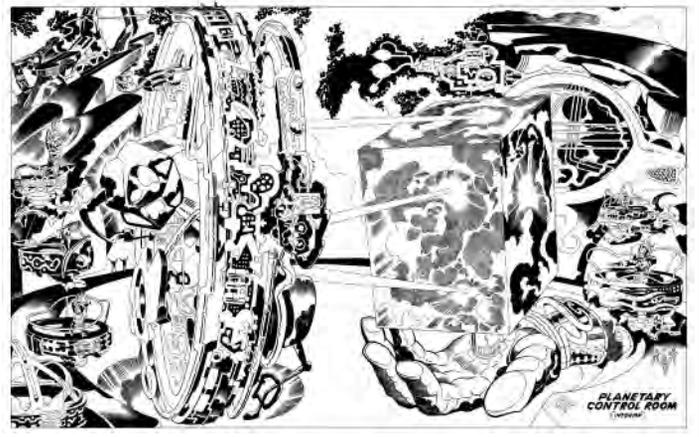
I found it amazing how OMAC was created

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earlier than I thought and, late in the run, languished for almost a year. I think #1 came out about the same time as KAMANDI #21, yet was produced around the time of #14.

It also is interesting in that there are still quite a number of unpublished stories: the second and third DINGBATS as well as TRUE DIVORCE CASES and SOUL LOVE (aside from what you've printed, over the years). Why DC would agree to the titles and then back out, without even bothering to test them, is beyond me. Hopefully, with much of his output back in print, those unseen stories can, likewise, be collected eventually.

In your editorial, you expressed the opinion, concerning Jack's '70s DC output, that for you, "there's not a dog in the bunch." Sadly, I can't agree. I love the great majority of it, too, but JIMMY OLSEN and the SANDMAN weren't favorites.

I thought Jack's take on JIMMY OLSEN was too crowded with comic relief, specifically the Newsboy Legion. Many of the ideas and characters (Hairies, Mountain of Judgment, Evil Factory, Morgan Edge, Superman's visit to New Genesis, etc.) were excellent but badly undercut by the reconstituted kids. The Sandman? Same problem. "Funny" sidekicks.

I also wasn't crazy about the Deadman issues of FOREVER PEOPLE and the abandonment of New Genesis themes in the later MISTER MIRACLE issues. But, otherwise, I think, like you, much of the Fourth World material was superlative.

I especially loved the resolution to the time travel story (FOREVER PEOPLE #7) where Sonny's life, trapped in the past, wasn't a tragedy but a triumph. He made the best of circumstances and was contended and admired. A wonderful twist ending to what had already been a fun storyline.

"Himon" was another gem.

Always loved KAMANDI and OMAC. In fact, I was saddened, at the time, when I read Jack'd be returning to Marvel shortly, as I realized his time on those two books was fading fast.

My consolation was I immediately loved his ETERNALS.

Your coverage of the DEMON was brief but hit on a high point: the two-parter with Klarion (#s 14 and 15) which was the highlight of the series. Tremendously exciting.

Enjoyed seeing that old ad for the debut issues of the FOREVER PEOPLE, NEW GODS and MISTER MIRACLE. I remember wondering what they would be like. Also enjoyed catching all the changes of the cover to MISTER MIRACLE #5.

As to elements overlapping with the FF and

Challengers, yes, but it's not confined to that. The Fighting American filmed a movie where he was attacked, just like the team in FF #9. Or in BLACK MAGIC, one of the stories involved a voodoo doll and someone falling to his end as with the Puppet Master in FF #8. That doesn't entirely shut Stan out—I'm sure he made contributions, too—but it does preclude him being the lone writer or creator. There were always two names in the credits, so why should only one of them be given the dignity of being associated with the success?

Aspects of #62 I didn't care for:

Speculation and odd interpretation of the OMAC premise. The writer finds far more sexual innuendo and reasons to dismiss the character as a hero than I imagined possible.

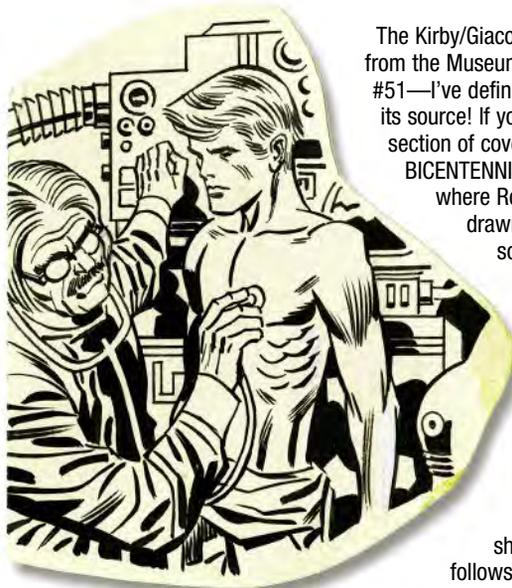
Tiny covers and art reproductions that I couldn't really read or see clearly.

"Kirby as a Genre." I'm more interested in Jack's output, than what those who come after do to his characters or in his style.

Finally, a question: If Jack wanted to return to Marvel earlier (September 1973) but was contractually obligated to stay, did Marvel make overtures? Have ongoing contact with him? Conversely, did DC, knowing of his dissatisfaction, attempt to placate him in any way or make him want to stay?

I sometimes get the impression that hiring him away from Marvel, initially, was seen as the victory rather than what he was capable of producing for DC. He had so much to offer and yet they had him, towards the end, doing SANDMAN and RICHARD DRAGON, KUNG FU FIGHTER?

Joe Frank, Scottsdale, AZ



The Kirby/Giacoia fragment from the Museum page in TJKC #51—I've definitely discovered its source! If you look at the section of cover on CA's BICENTENNIAL BATTLES

where Romita has drawn the colonial soldiers, that inked chunk fits perfectly in that spot. Look at the curved shape at the right of Rogers and Erskine—it is the same

shaped line that follows the leg and boot top of CA on the cover! The pencils presented in

TJKC #34 show CA and a boxer, and this must have been a requested patch that was also refused—after all, how exciting is a sickly man on the cover?

Richard Kolkman, Ft. Wayne, IN

#64 CREDITS:

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Rand Hoppe, Webmaster, Kirby Museum-er
Tom Kraft, What If Kirby-er
Tom Ziuko, Colorist Supreme

SPECIAL THANKS TO

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Tom Ziuko

and of course *The Kirby Estate, the Jack Kirby Museum* (www.kirbymuseum.org), and whatifkirby.com

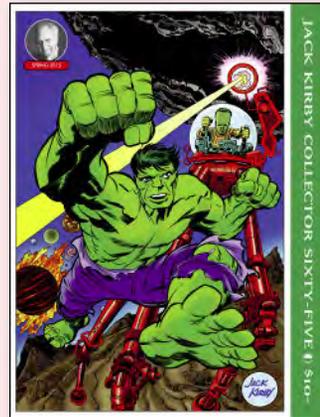
If we've forgotten anyone, please let us know!

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NEXT ISSUE: #65 goes all-out and all-in with our **Anything Goes (Again)** issue! This new potpourri issue covers anything and everything from Jack's 50-year career, including a head-to-head comparison of the creative genius of Kirby, against the design expertise and **ALEX TOTH!** Who will come out on top? Plus a lengthy Kirby interview, a look at Kirby's work with **WALLY WOOD, MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, unseen and unused Kirby art from **JIMMY OLSEN, KAMANDI, MARVEL-MANIA, Jack's COMIC STRIP and ANIMATION WORK,** and more, all behind a classic 1960s cover inked by **KIRBY** himself. Ships February 2015.

Here's a tentative list of upcoming themes, but we treat these themes very loosely, and anything you write may fit somewhere. So get writing, and send us copies of your art! **GOT A THEME IDEA? PLEASE WRITE US!**

#65: "ANYTHING GOES AGAIN!"

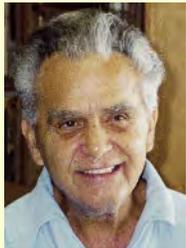
Another potpourri issue, with anything and everything from Jack's 50-year career, including a head-to-head comparison of the genius of Kirby and Alex Toth!

#66-ON: SEND US YOUR IDEAS!

In light of the Marvel/Kirby settlement, it's a whole new day here at TJKC, and we've decided to shelve our idea for #66's theme comparing Lee and Kirby's respective comments about "who did what" over the years, at least for now. So the floor's open to you readers: What would you like to see us cover? We've got some other themes in the works, but now's the time to submit your own ideas. So get crackin' with the Kirby Krackle!

THE JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR

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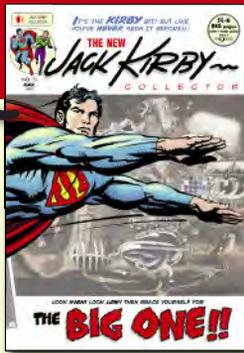


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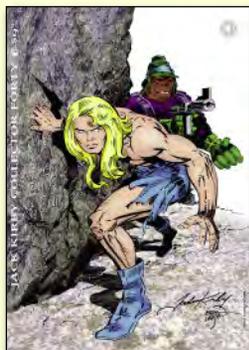
KIRBY COLLECTOR #38
"HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE KIRBY WAY!" PART 2: JOE SINNOTT on how he inks Jack's work, HUGE PENCIL GALLERY, list of art in the KIRBY ARCHIVES, MARK EVANIER, special sections on Jack's technique and influences, SPEND A DAY WITH KIRBY (with JACK DAVIS, GULACY, HERNANDEZ BROS., and RUDE) and more! Two UNPUBLISHED KIRBY COVERS!

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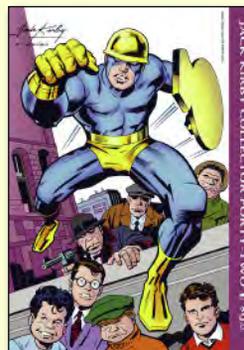
KIRBY COLLECTOR #40
WORLD THAT'S COMING! KAMANDI and OMAC spotlight, 2003 Kirby Tribute Panel (WENDY PINI, MICHAEL CHABON, STAN GOLDBERG, SAL BUSCEMA, LARRY LIEBER, and STAN LEE), P. CRAIG RUSSELL interview, MARK EVANIER, NEW COLUMN analyzing Jack's visual shorthand, pencil art gallery, and more! Kirby covers inked by ERIK LARSEN and REEDMAN!

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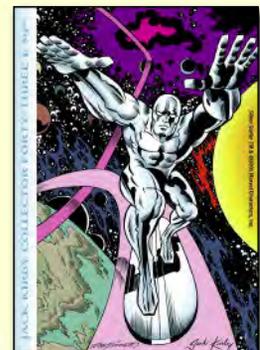
KIRBY COLLECTOR #41
1970s MARVEL WORK! Coverage of '70s work from Captain America to Eternals to Machine Man, DICK GIORDANO & MARK SHULTZ interviews, MARK EVANIER, 2004 Kirby Tribute Panel (STEVE RUDE, DAVE GIBBONS, WALTER SIMONSON, and PAUL RYAN), pencil art gallery, unused 1962 HULK #6 KIRBY PENCILS, and more! Kirby covers inked by GIORDANO and SCHULTZ!

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1970s DC WORK! Coverage of Jimmy Olsen, FF movie set visit, overview of all Newsboy Legion stories, KEVIN NOWLAN and MURPHY ANDERSON on inking Jack, never-seen interview with Kirby, MARK EVANIER on Kirby's covers, Bongo Comics' Kirby ties, complete '40s gangster story, pencil art gallery, and more! Kirby covers inked by NOWLAN and ANDERSON!

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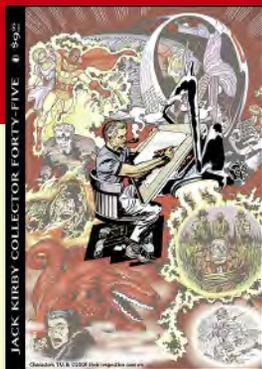
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KIRBY'S MYTHOLOGICAL CHARACTERS! Coverage of **DEMON, THOR, & GALACTUS**, interview with **KIRBY, MARK EVANIER**, pencil art galleries of the Demon and other mythological characters, two never-reprinted **BLACK MAGIC** stories, interview with Kirby Award winner **DAVID SCHWARTZ** and F4 screenwriter **MIKE FRANCE**, and more! Kirby cover inked by **MATT WAGNER!**

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #45

Jack's vision of **PAST AND FUTURE**, with a never-seen **KIRBY** interview, a new interview with son **NEAL KIRBY, MARK EVANIER'S** column, two pencil galleries, two complete '50s stories, Jack's first script, Kirby Tribute Panel (with **EVANIER, KATZ, SHAWI**, and **SHERMAN**), plus an unpublished **CAPTAIN 3-D** cover, inked by **BILL BLACK** and converted into 3-D by **RAY ZONE!**

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #46

Focus on **NEW GODS, FOREVER PEOPLE, and DARKSEID!** Includes a rare interview with **KIRBY, MARK EVANIER'S** column, **FOURTH WORLD** pencil art galleries (including Kirby's redesigns for **SUPER POWERS**), two 1950s stories, a new Kirby Darkseid front cover inked by **MIKE ROYER**, a Kirby Forever People back cover inked by **JOHN BYRNE**, and more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #47

KIRBY'S SUPER TEAMS, from kid gangs and the Challengers, to Fantastic Four, X-Men, and Super Powers, with unseen 1960s Marvel art, a rare **KIRBY** interview, **MARK EVANIER'S** column, two pencil art galleries, complete 1950s story, author **JONATHAN LETHEM** on his Kirby influence, interview with **JOHN ROMITA, JR.** on his Eternals work, and more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #48

KIRBYTECH ISSUE, spotlighting Jack's high-tech concepts, from Iron Man's armor and Machine Man, to the Negative Zone and beyond! Includes a rare **KIRBY** interview, **MARK EVANIER'S** column, two pencil art galleries, complete 1950s story, **TOM SCIOLI** interview, Kirby Tribute Panel (with **ADAMS, PÉREZ, and ROMITA**), and covers inked by **TERRY AUSTIN** and **TOM SCIOLI!**

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #49

WARRIORS, spotlighting Thor (with a look at hidden messages in **BILL EVERETT'S** Thor inks), Sgt. Fury, Challengers of the Unknown, Losers, and others! Includes a rare **KIRBY** interview, interviews with **JERRY ORDWAY** and **GRANT MORRISON**, **MARK EVANIER'S** column, pencil art gallery, a complete 1950s story, wraparound Thor cover inked by **JERRY ORDWAY**, and more!

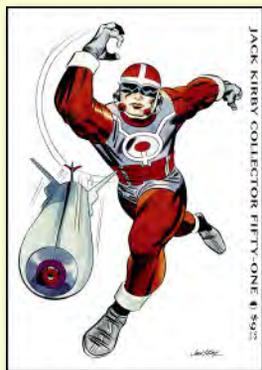
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #50

KIRBY FIVE-OH! covers the best of Kirby's 50-year career in comics: **BEST KIRBY STORIES, COVERS, CHARACTER DESIGNS, UNUSED ART, and profiles of/commentary by the 50 PEOPLE MOST INFLUENCED BY KIRBY'S WORK!** Plus a **50-PAGE PENCIL ART GALLERY** and a **COLOR SECTION!** Kirby cover inked by **DARWYN COOKE**, and introduction by **MARK EVANIER**.

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #51

Bombastic **EVERYTHING GOES** issue, with a wealth of great submissions that couldn't be pigeonholed into a "theme" issue! Includes a rare **KIRBY** interview, new interviews with **JIM LEE** and **ADAM HUGHES**, **MARK EVANIER'S** column, huge pencil art galleries, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, two **COLOR UNPUBLISHED KIRBY COVERS**, and more!

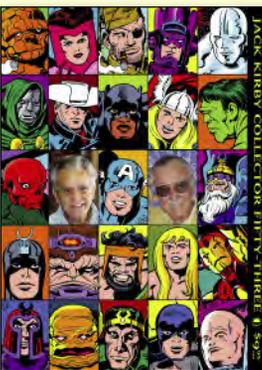
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #52

Spotlights Kirby's most obscure work: an **UNUSED THOR STORY**, **BRUCE LEE** comic, animation work, stage play, unaltered pages from **KAMANDI, DEMON, DESTROYER DUCK**, and more, including a feature examining the last page of his final issue of various series **BEFORE EDITORIAL TAMPERING** (with lots of surprises!) Color Kirby cover inked by **DON HECK!**

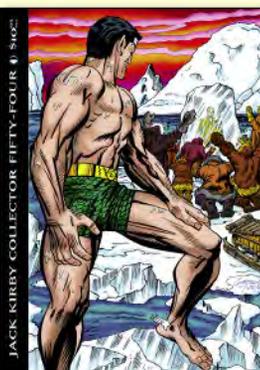
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #53

THE MAGIC OF STAN & JACK! New interview with **STAN LEE**, walking tour of New York where Lee & Kirby lived and worked, re-evaluation of the "Lost" **FF #108** story (including a new page that just surfaced), "What If Jack Hadn't Left Marvel in 1970?," plus **MARK EVANIER'S** regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, and more, behind a color Kirby cover inked by **GEORGE PÉREZ!**

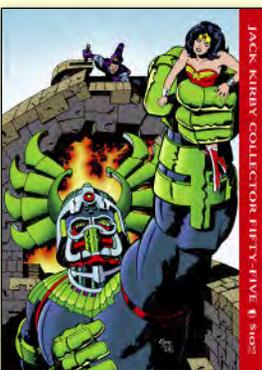
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #54

STAN & JACK PART TWO! More on the co-creators of the Marvel Universe, final interview (and cover inks) by **GEORGE TUSKA**, differences between **KIRBY** and **DITKO'S** approaches, **WILL MURRAY** on the origin of the FF, the mystery of Marvel cover dates, **MARK EVANIER'S** regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, and more, plus Kirby back cover inked by **JOE SINNOTT!**

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #55

"Kirby Goes To Hollywood!" **SERGIO ARAGONES** and **MELL LAZARUS** recall Kirby's **BOB NEUHWART** TV show cameo, comparing the recent **STAR WARS** films to New Gods, **RUBY & SPEARS** interviewed, Jack's encounters with **FRANK ZAPPA, PAUL MCCARTNEY**, and **JOHN LENNON**, **MARK EVANIER'S** regular column, a Kirby pencil art gallery, a Golden Age Kirby story, and more! Kirby cover inked by **PAUL SMITH!**

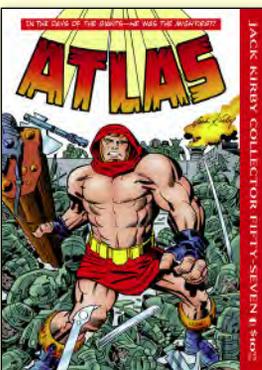
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #56

"Unfinished Sagas"—series, stories, and arcs Kirby never finished. **TRUE DIVORCE CASES, RAAM THE MAN MOUNTAIN, KOBRA, DINGBATS**, a complete story from **SOUL LOVE**, complete Boy Explorers story, two Kirby Tribute Panels, **MARK EVANIER** and other regular columnists, pencil art galleries, and more, with Kirby's "Galaxy Green" cover inked by **ROYER**, and the unseen cover for **SOUL LOVE #1!**

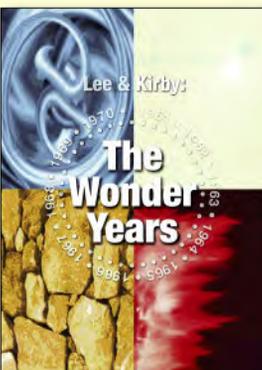
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #57

"Legendary Kirby"—how Jack put his spin on classic folklore! **TONY ISABELLA** on **SATAN'S SIX** (with Kirby's unseen layouts), Biblical inspirations of **DEVIL DINOSAUR, THOR** through the eyes of mythologist **JOSEPH CAMPBELL**, a complete Golden Age Kirby story, rare Kirby interview, **MARK EVANIER** and our other regular columnists, pencil art from **ETERNALS, DEMON, NEW GODS, THOR**, and Jack's **ATLAS** cover!

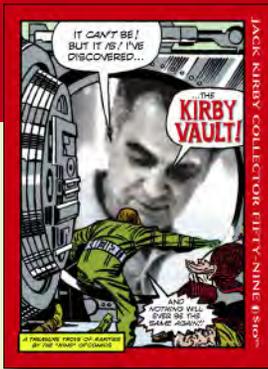
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #58

LEE & KIRBY: THE WONDER YEARS! Traces both men's history at Marvel Comics, and the events and career choices that led them to converge in 1961 to conceive the Fantastic Four. Also documents the evolution of the FF throughout the 1960s, with plenty of Kirby art, plus previously unknown details about Lee and Kirby's working relationship, and their eventual parting of ways in 1970.

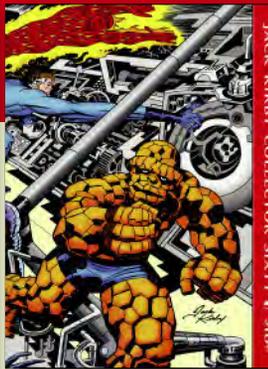
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #59

"Kirby Vault!" Rarities from the "King" of comics: Personal correspondence, private photos, collages, rare Marvelmania art, bootleg album covers, sketches, transcript of a 1969 VISIT TO THE KIRBY HOME (where Jack answers the questions YOU'D ask in '69), MARK EVANIER, pencil art from the FOURTH WORLD, CAPTAIN AMERICA, MACHINE MAN, SILVER SURFER GRAPHIC NOVEL, and more!

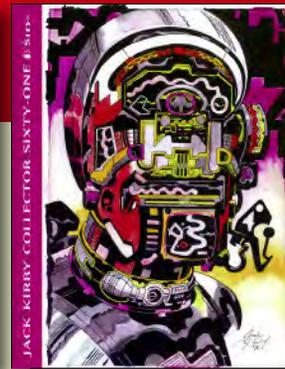
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #60

FANTASTIC FOUR FOLLOW-UP to #58's THE WONDER YEARS! Never-seen FF wraparound cover, interview between FF inkers JOE SINNOTT and DICK AYERS, rare LEE & KIRBY interview, comparison of a Jack and Stan FF story conference to Stan's final script and Jack's penciled pages, MARK EVANIER and other columnists, gallery of KIRBY FF ART, pencils from BLACK PANTHER, SILVER SURFER, & more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #61

JACK KIRBY: WRITER! Examines quirks of Kirby's wordsmithing, from the FOURTH WORLD to ROMANCE and beyond! Lengthy Kirby interview, MARK EVANIER and other columnists, LARRY LIEBER's scripting for Jack at 1960s Marvel Comics, RAY ZONE on 3-D work with Kirby, comparing STEVE GERBER's Destroyer Duck scripts to Jack's pencils, Kirby's best promo blurbs, Kirby pencil art gallery, & more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #62

KIRBY AT DC! Kirby interview, MARK EVANIER and our other regular columnists, updated "X-Numbers" list of Kirby's DC assignments (revealing some surprises), JERRY BOYD's insights on Kirby's DC work, a look at KEY 1970s EVENTS IN JACK'S LIFE AND CAREER, Challengers vs. the FF, pencil art galleries from FOREVER PEOPLE, OMAC, and THE DEMON, Kirby cover inked by MIKE ROYER, and more!

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KIRBY COLLECTOR #63

MARVEL UNIVERSE! Featuring MARK ALEXANDER's pivotal Lee/Kirby essay "A Universe A'Bornin'." MARK EVANIER interviews ROY THOMAS, STAN GOLD-BERG and JOE SINNOTT, a look at key late-1970s, '80s, and '90s events in Kirby's life and career, STAN LEE script pages, THOR, NICK FURY AGENT OF SHIELD, and FANTASTIC FOUR, and more!

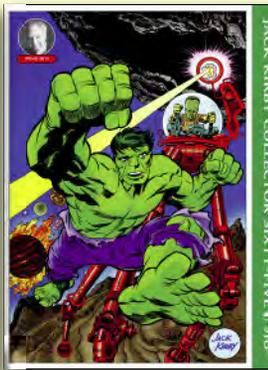
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #64

SUPER-SOLDIERS! We declassify Captain America, Fighting American, Sgt. Fury, The Losers, Pvt. Strong, Boy Commandos, and a tribute to Simon & Kirby! PLUS: a Kirby interview about Captain America, MARK EVANIER and other columnists, key 1940s-'50s events in Kirby's career, unseen pencils and unused art from OMAC, SILVER STAR, CAPTAIN AMERICA (in the 1960s AND '70s), the LOSERS, & more! KIRBY cover!

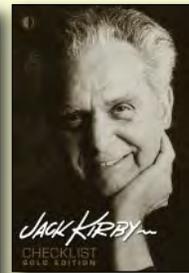
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KIRBY COLLECTOR #65

ANYTHING GOES (AGAIN)! A potpourri issue, with anything and everything from Jack's 50-year career, including a head-to-head comparison of the genius of KIRBY and ALEX TOHI! Plus a lengthy KIRBY interview, MARK EVANIER and our other regular columnists, unseen and unused Kirby art from JIMMY OLSEN, KAMANDI, MARVELMANIA, his COMIC STRIP & ANIMATION WORK, and more!

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JACK KIRBY CHECKLIST: GOLD

Lists EVERY KIRBY COMIC, BOOK, UNPUBLISHED WORK and more!

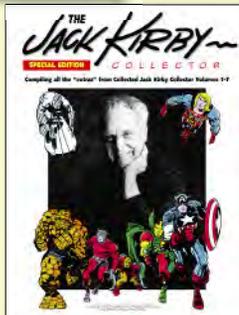
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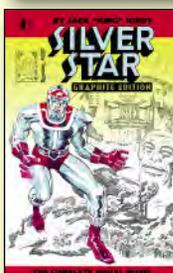
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JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR SPECIAL EDITION

Compiles the "extra" new material from COLLECTED JACK KIRBY COLLECTOR VOLUMES 1-7, in one huge Digital Edition! Includes a fan's private tour of the Kirbys' remarkable home (with photos), and more than 200 pieces of Kirby art not published outside of those volumes. If you already own the individual issues and skipped the collections, or missed them in print form, now you can get caught up!

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First conceptualized in the 1970s as a movie screenplay, SILVER STAR was too far ahead of its time for Hollywood, so JACK KIRBY adapted it as a six-issue mini-series for Pacific Comics in the 1980s, as his final, great comics series. The entire six-issue run is collected here, reproduced from his uninked PENCIL ART, showing Kirby's work in its undiluted, raw form! Also included is Kirby's ILLUSTRATED SILVER STAR MOVIE SCREENPLAY, never-seen SKETCHES, PIN-UPS, and an historical overview to put it all in perspective!

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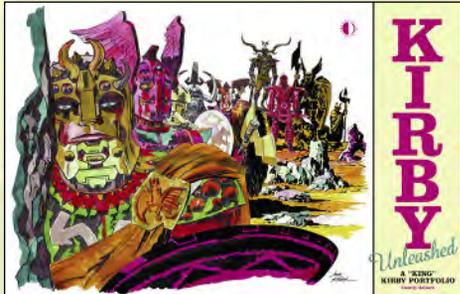
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KIRBY UNLEASHED (REMASTERED)

The fabled 1971 KIRBY UNLEASHED PORTFOLIO, completely remastered! Spotlights some of KIRBY's finest art from all eras of his career, including 1930s pencil work, unused strips, illustrated World War II letters, 1950s pages, unpublished 1960s Marvel pencil pages and sketches, and Fourth World pencil art (done expressly for this portfolio in 1970)! We've gone back to the original art to ensure the best reproduction possible, and MARK EVANIER and STEVE SHERMAN have updated the Kirby biography from the original printing, and added a new Foreword explaining how this portfolio came to be! PLUS: We've recolored the original color plates, and added EIGHT NEW BLACK-&WHITE PAGES, plus EIGHT NEW COLOR PAGES, including Jack's four 1972 GODS posters, and four extra Kirby color pieces, all at tabloid size!

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PARTING SHOT

On September 26, 2014, as we were going to press, Marvel Comics and the Kirby family jointly released this statement:

"Marvel and the family of Jack Kirby have amicably resolved their legal disputes, and are looking forward to advancing their shared goal of honoring Mr. Kirby's significant role in Marvel's history."

We'll have more on this next issue, but that statement sure makes it sound like Jack's finally going to get some form of official recognition from Marvel as part of this resolution, so it's cause to celebrate. Congratulations to both Marvel and the Kirby family on finding a way to put this dispute behind them. In that spirit, we present these unused pin-up pencils from the Captain America's Bicentennial Battles Treasury Edition, with a message for partisans on both sides.





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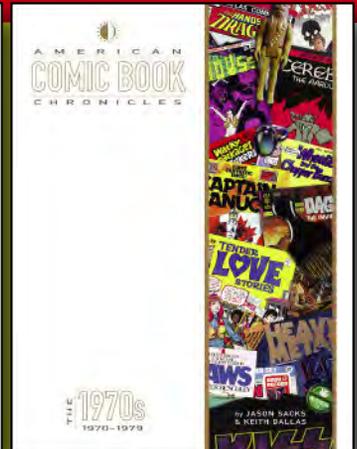
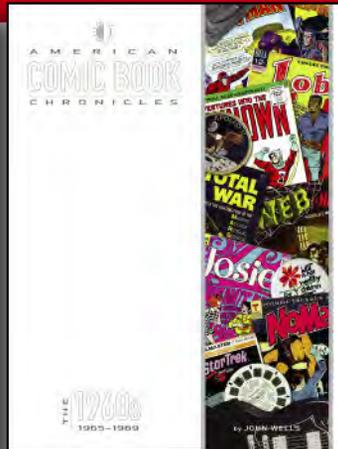
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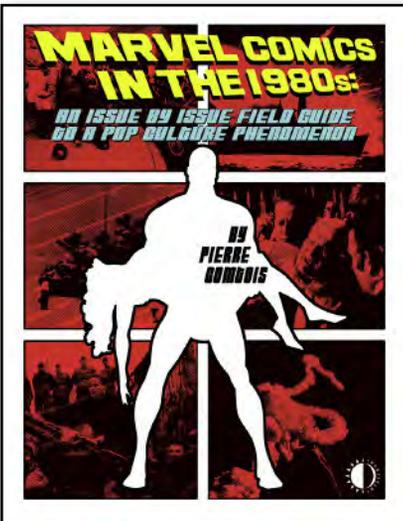
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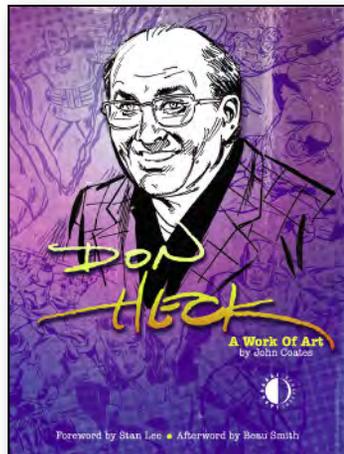
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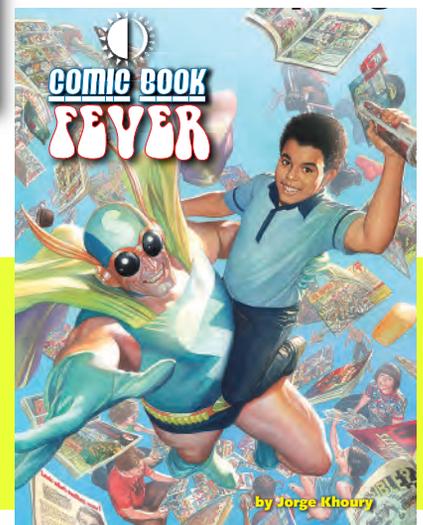
DON HECK: A WORK OF ART



DON HECK remains one of the legendary names in comics, considered an "artist's artist," respected by peers, and beloved by fans as the co-creator of **IRON MAN**, **HAWKEYE**, and **BLACK WIDOW**, and key artist on **THE AVENGERS**. Along with **STAN LEE**, **JACK KIRBY**, and **STEVE DITKO**, Heck was an integral player in "The Marvel Age of Comics", and a top-tier 1970s DC Comics artist. He finally gets his due in this heavily illustrated, full-color hardcover biography, which features meticulously researched and chronicled information on Don's 40-year career, with personal recollections from surviving family, long-time friends, and industry legends, and rare interviews with Heck himself. It also features an unbiased analysis of sales on Don's DC Comics titles, an extensive art gallery (including published, unpublished, and pencil artwork), a Foreword by **STAN LEE**, and an Afterword by **BEAU SMITH**. Written by **JOHN COATES**.

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PRINTED IN CHINA

"Stop the Panzers": The real super-soldiers of our world! That Jack Kirby regarded storytelling as highly as that of actual drawing is clear here, with his thoughts behind the illustration written directly onto this non-comics work. Coloring such a pencil piece is unusual—using this color scheme seems doubly so. Are these colors flashes from the surrounding explosive eruptions? Or are they perhaps the effect of a European twilight? Or a combination of both? Or something else entirely? Or are these the colors of 'feeling', reflecting an emotional and high adrenalin response to personal memories? Whichever it is, the piece certainly creates a powerful response in whoever sees it.

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THE AMERICANS - HOLDING THE LINE WITH RAW REPLACEMENTS, DID EXACTLY WHAT AMATEURS WOULD DO -- "..." THEY PREPARED TO

"STOP THE PANZERS!"



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