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2ND BIG 1950s

3-D ISSUE

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GAINES & FELDSTEIN
SIMON & KIRBY
MESKIN &



\$8.95
In the USA

No. 126

July
2014

TOR™



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On Our Cover: For adventure-hero fans, there were really just two high points amid the 3-D comics of the 1950s: Joe Kubert's prehistoric stalwart Tor, and Joe Simon & Jack Kirby's Captain 3-D. Our first 3-D issue (#115) sported a Captain 3-D cover, so we thank the Kubert family (and Joe himself, who long ago gave us his okay to use any of his artwork in our mags, as long as we didn't importune him to draw anything new!) for permission to adapt one of Ye Editor's all-time favorite splash pages, from St. John Publishing's 3-D Comics #2 (Sept. 1953), which was indeed the second 3-D comic book ever. Love this art in 3-D as Roy T. does, he's happy it's also been printed in color, most recently a few years back in DC's Tor Archives series. [© Estate of Joe Kubert.]

Above: On the opposing side from Joe Kubert, Norman & Leonard Maurer, and Archer St. John in a 1953 3-D-comics-related lawsuit were EC publisher Bill Gaines and one of his editors, Al Feldstein. So here are two famous panels from EC's first 3-D effort, Three-Dimensional EC Classics #1 (Spring 1954)—from writer/editor Harvey Kurtzman and artist Wally Wood's masterful collaboration "V-Vampires!" in Mad #3 (Jan.-Feb. 1953), as totally redrawn (and re-paced). Both versions were, like the title says, classics—illustrated! [© William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.]

This issue is dedicated to the memory of
Nick Cardy & Carmine Infantino

SPECIAL 3-D NOTICE:

Many of the illustrations in this issue of A/E, like those in #115, are best viewed with two-color 3-D glasses. Print or digital readers can receive a pair of 3-D viewers by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

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Trials And Tribulations —In Three Dimensions!



The 1953 Legal Dispute Between EC Comics & St. John Publishing

An Examination & Analysis by Ken Quattro

(Left:) Art from *Three Dimensional EC Tales from the Crypt of Terror* #2 (Spring 1954) by Joe Orlando. Thanks to Rod Beck. [© William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.]

(Right:) Art from St. John Publishing's *3-D Comics*, Vol. 1, #2 (Oct. 1953). Thanks to Rod Beck. [Tor art © Estate of Joe Kubert.]



A/E

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: *Back in issue #115 (March 2013), Alter Ego carried a feature-length article by the late Ray Zone on the 3-D*

*comics of the brief period in 1953-54 when, on the heels of a spate of 3-D movies beginning with *Bwana Devil*, St. John Publishing Co. launched a series of "three-dimensional" comics. The fad lasted, at the outside, only nine months... yet, along with phenomenal sales followed by spectacular returns of unsold copies, a true boom-and-bust mini-cycle, 3-D comics even managed to cause a colorful lawsuit between two major comic book publishers, one that also involved the patent-holder of a 3-D process. At this point, we'll step aside and let Ken Quattro relate the story at length, while we content ourselves with illustrating the tale with images from the various companies that published 3-D comics, as well as a few key documents provided by Ken. We think you'll find the whole bizarre yarn well worth the ride. (Oh, and because Ken typed them that way and they were too much trouble to change, quotations in this article will generally be in italics, just this once....)*

Part I – Two Views Of 3-D Comics

In the physical world, seeing in 3-D is easy. Our brain combines the images projected onto the eye's retina with various visual cues (such as perspective, shading, and relative size) allowing us to understand the world in its three-dimensional glory.

But to perceive a flat image three-dimensionally requires two eyes. The binocular disparity between our two ocular orbs perceives everything from a slightly different vantage point. Optimally, the brain takes these two differing views, combines them, and comes away with the perception of three dimensions.

In much the same way, there are two differing views of the creative story behind 3-D comic books, and it takes both views to get a complete picture.

As the tale of 3-D comics was inexorably tied to St. John Publications, I covered aspects of it when writing "Archer St. John and the Little Company That Could" [a version of which can be found in *Alter Ego* #77]. Since my history was obviously St. John-centric, I began my research by contacting artist/writer/editor Joe Kubert and Leonard Maurer.

Leonard (aka Leon or Lenny) was an eclectic, colorful, and somewhat eccentric individual. His lengthy bio listed accomplishments from musician to engineer, from philosopher to inventor. It was in that last role, and as the brother of comic book creator Norman Maurer, that Leonard is vital to the story of 3-D comic books. It is, in fact, his telling of that story upon which everything else herein hinges.

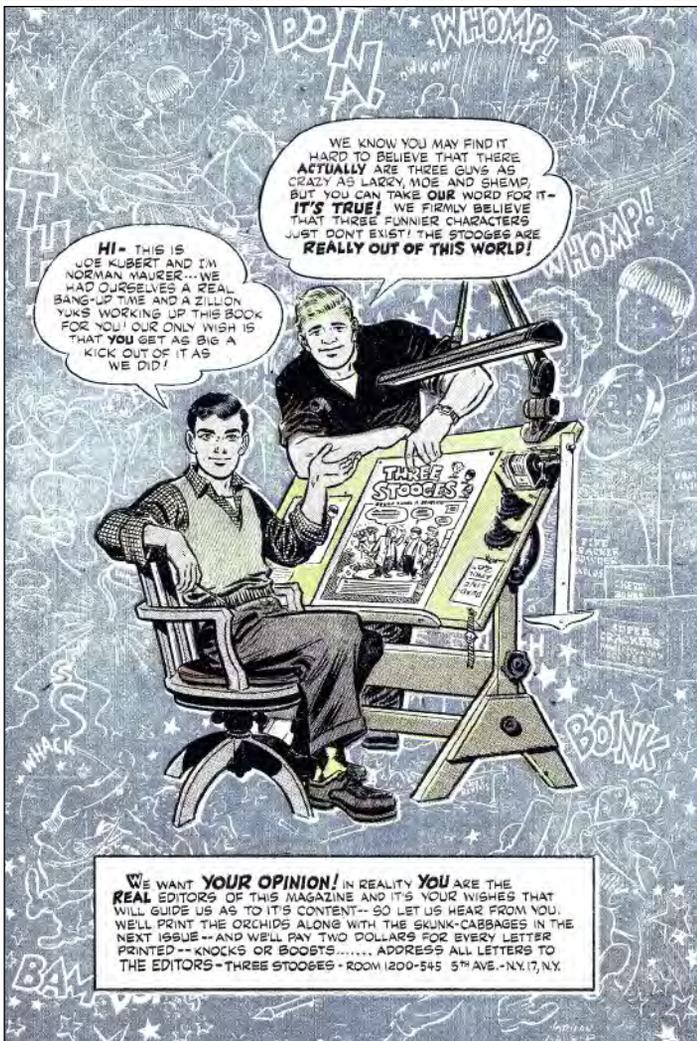
Through Leonard Maurer's Eyes

It began for Leonard Maurer when he and Norman, along with their pal Joe Kubert, happened to be driving by the Paramount Theater in Times Square, New York City. Joe, according to Leonard, looked up at the marquee touting its latest attraction, Arch Oboler's 3-D exploitation epic *Bwana Devil*, and said, "Gee, wouldn't it be great if we could make a 3-D comic book?"¹

It sounded simple enough.

Kubert has stated on several occasions that the idea first came to him when he was in the Army, "in Germany (1950/51) and saw a 3-D (photo) mag. I suggested a 3-D comic book. Norm Maurer and I worked it out."²

Norman Maurer elaborated: "We worked all night, and I'll never forget how we waited on the street for Woolworth's store in mid-town Manhattan to open, because we figured we could get red and green cellophane from lollipop wrappers. We bought two packages and made a funny pair of glasses which, believe it or not, worked perfectly."³



But between the inspiration and the execution there was the critical technical process. That's where Leonard Maurer came in.

Following Kubert's speculative musing in front of the Paramount, Leon had a revelation. "Later, while driving home to Queens over the Midtown bridge, the whole process [of] depth shifts suddenly popped into my head," he told interviewer Ray Zone. "With the idea fully formed in my head, I immediately turned around, picked up some acetates, went back to Norm's

Three Who Jump-Started 3-D
(Clockwise from top left):
Leonard ("Lenny") Maurer at a 1950s advertising trade show, promoting the 3-D Illustereo process he had developed. This photo appeared in Craig Yoe's 2011 book *Amazing 3-D Comics*. Thanks to Craig Yoe & Clizia Glussoni.
His ad for the Illustereo process; thanks to Ken Q. for this scan and the next.
A short piece about Illustereo from a 1953 issue of *Advertising Age* magazine. [© the respective copyright holders.]
Norman Maurer (seated) and Joe Kubert, as drawn by the former for St. John Publications' *The Three Stooges* #1 (Sept. 1953), which came out one month before the 3-D comics craze took over. Thanks to Craig Yoe. [© Estates of Norman Maurer & Joe Kubert.]

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IN THE HISTORY
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DRAWINGS!

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Comics, advertisements, premiums and books lend themselves to this lifelike method of illustration. Characters and messages appear to LEAP INTO SPACE.

Our service is designed to produce the maximum effects for your particular job. For information on the use of the ILLUSTEREO method and our special Technique, write, wire or phone us now . . .

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hotel room, and explained the process to him. We then collaborated on a short, short story, and he went immediately to work with pencil, brush, ink, and paint following my technical instructions, while I did the opaquing. Around 2:00 A.M. we finished the real World's First 3-D comic book page, entitled "The Three Stooges in the Third Dimension," starring Moe, Shemp, and Larry."⁴

■ The 3-D Illustereo process which is being licensed by American Sterographic Corp. has been used with success by St. John Publishing Co. in its *Mighty Mouse 3-D Comics*. It employs two-color printing, which, when viewed through 3-D glasses, takes on a great deal of depth. While subjects do not have depth in themselves, the illusion of a third dimension is created by establishing a number of "planes" which are clearly separated from each other. It is possible, for example, to have a row of poles which, although lacking roundness, appear to actually be one behind the other. In most cases, there is seemingly more depth in such illustrations than in 3-D photographic illustrations.

Certainly the concept wasn't new. British physicist Charles Wheatstone put forth the idea in the 1830s and soon began producing reflecting-mirror stereoscopic devices that allowed the viewer to see his slightly offset drawings (and soon after, photographs) in apparent three dimensions. Not long after, in 1853, Wilhelm Rollmann of Germany described a technique using complementary colored images viewed through glasses fitted with red and blue filters to achieve the three-dimensional effect. Frenchman Louis Arthur Ducos du Hauron refined this anaglyphic technique for photographs, a technique that eventually provided the basis for the 3-D comic books.

Was Leonard Maurer aware of any of the previous efforts using anaglyphs? Or did the idea come to him "fully formed" as his recollection suggested?

In any case, the three men took their sample page to publisher Archer St. John, for whom they were already producing several titles. Norm Maurer recalled that St. John "almost fell out the window when he saw the drawings which literally popped from the paper."⁵

St. John was on board, with a 25% stake in the new company named American Stereographic which brought with it a guarantee of a six-month exclusive license to their 3-D process. The comics were produced in secrecy to prevent anyone from stealing the process and beating them to the newsstand. When they were ready, the date was set. It would hit the stands on Friday, July 3rd, as the country was going into the holiday weekend.

In the August 1953 *Writer's Digest*, writer Aron M. Mathieu recounted the frenzy that accompanied the release of *Three Dimension Comics* #1, featuring *Mighty Mouse*.



"The telephone switchboard of the Roxbury News Company flashed two red lights, and before the PBX operator inserted her first plug, two more lights beamed red at her. "Holy Cripes," she sang out to the bookkeeper who was passing her board. "I bet you billed Glamour to all the newsdealers again and forgot to send the magazine. Now I listen to them raise hell."

"This is Stop 56," said the first voice, *Schultz's by Main Street*. "We're outta 3-D. I can use 16 more."

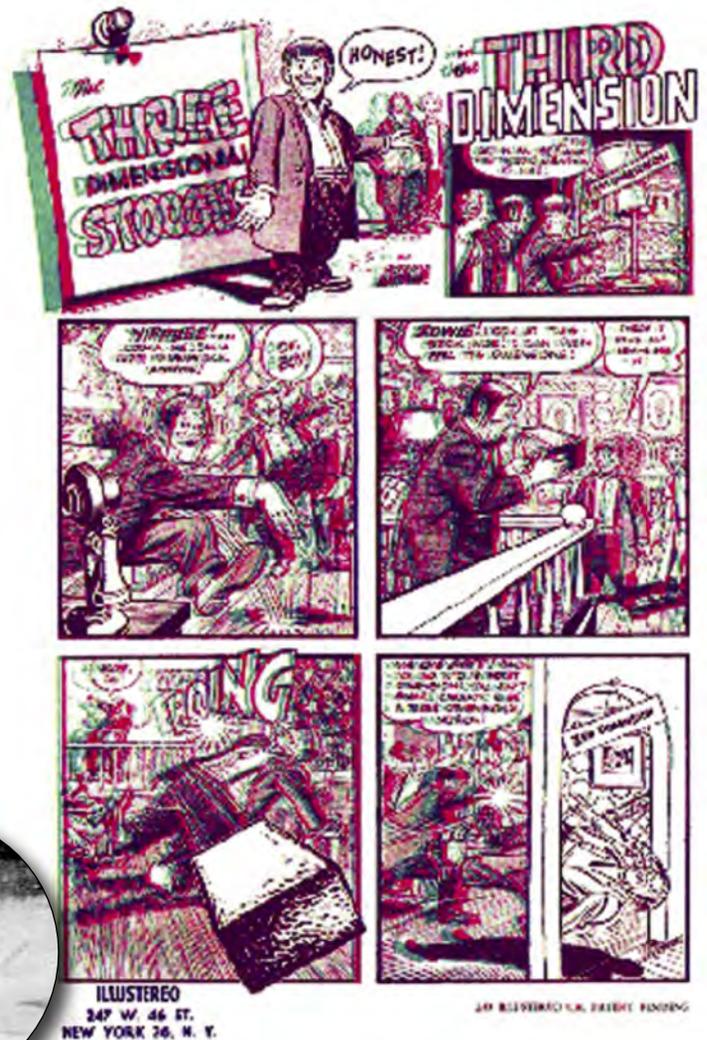
"I'm Bellfontaine, your Stop 187," said the next voice. "Finally you got something we can sell so you give me 4. I need 18 more 3-D right away."

But Stop 56 and Stop 187 didn't get any more, for the nation's craziest, zaniest fad, *Three-Dimension Comics*, had both kids and newsdealers by their ears as they fought to buy 40,000,000 copies in one month, with only a fraction of the desired supply available.⁶

While Mathieu's number is a gross exaggeration, the excitement stirred up by the comic's release was not. Others began to take notice. He continues:

"The competition, *Ace*, *Dell*, *Goodman*, *National Comics*, *Pines* and all the others who missed the boat were burrowing into printing techniques trying to issue their own 3-D comics before the kids ran out of quarters or their parents raised hell because of eye strain."⁷

"After terrific take-off of *Mighty Mouse*, 1st 3-D comic," stated the July 31, 1953, edition of American News Company's newsletter, *The Lookout*, "St. John is readying six companion pieces for August bow."⁸



3-D-Licious!

(Above:) This page of 3-D art may well be the very "Three Stooges in the Third Dimension" page that the Maurers and Kubert produced to sell publisher Archer St. John on the project! *A/E* reader Lawrence Kaufman, who worked on projects with the late Ray Zone, sent us the above scan. He says this page "was given to [Ray] by the late Leonard Maurer. Ray used it on his website. Ray was always convinced that was the first [sample] page, because Leonard had told him that in their conversation"—which, you've got to admit, is a point in its favor! Still, since this page doesn't contain the try-out panel seen in Craig Yoe's book *Amazing 3-D Comics* (and reproduced in *A/E* #115), maybe the 1953 trio whipped up more than one sample page? Thanks in part to the 3-D Film Archive website of Bob Furmanek, and to Lawrence Kaufman. [© Estates of Norman Maurer and/or Leonard Maurer.]

(Left:) Archer St. John in the early 1950s. From a photo provided for *A/E* #37 by Fred Thompson & Matt D. Baker.

The August 28th issue of the same publication breathlessly noted the "Flood of 3-D titles to hit the stands in Sept. St. John's *Mighty Mouse* leading the pack with a first issue sellout of 2,500,000 and starting 2nd issue with 2,300,000; additional 3-D Comics on the way are St. John's *Three Stooges* and *Whack!*; Toby's *Felix the Cat*; Archie's *Katy Keen* [sic]; Fiction House's *3-D Circus* and *Sheena*... Independent coming out with *Superman*, a 3-D book, not a comic."⁹

Throughout it all, Kubert maintained a pragmatic view.

"We estimate that the first 40,000,000 comics we print will sell and then it will all be over," he was quoted in the *Writer's Digest* article. "Whoever gets his books out first wins. Publishers who

AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
 22 EAST SIXTIETH STREET
 NEW YORK 22, N. Y.
 ELBORADO 2-4517
 July 14, 1953

Mr. William Gaines
 Entertaining Comics Group, Inc.
 225 Lafayette Street
 New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Gaines:

You no doubt know of the instantaneous success achieved by the first Mighty Mouse 3-D comics, produced under our exclusive ILLUSTEREO process. We are enclosing a copy--in case you have not seen it. Please accept it with our compliments.

For the first time in the history of printing it is now possible to produce a multiple plane depth effect from drawings--by a practical method suitable for quantity production. This ingenious invention, developed and owned by American Stereographic, permits the economical creation of a printed sheet from which characters--or messages--appear to leap into space. The special ILLUSTEREO technique transforms a single page into what appears to the eye to be four, five or any number of planes--with figures or script on any or all of the planes, one behind the other.

We are now in a position to issue licenses under the ILLUSTEREO process, to publishers, engravers and producers of printed material. Coupled with our license is our service of directing and supervising the process to produce the maximum effects for the particular job.

It is our policy to make our invention available to all reputable and established firms, on a fair and reasonable business basis,--as well as vigorously to protect our rights against infringement.

If you are interested in employing the ILLUSTEREO method and our special techniques, please let us hear from you. We shall gladly answer all inquiries.

Very truly yours,
 AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
Leonard Maurer
 Leonard Maurer, General Mgr.

Encl. ILLUSTERO

AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
 22 EAST SIXTIETH STREET
 NEW YORK 22, N. Y.
 ELBORADO 2-4517
 July 17, 1953

Mr. Freeman H. Owens
 600 West 116th Street
 New York, New York

Dear Mr. Owens:

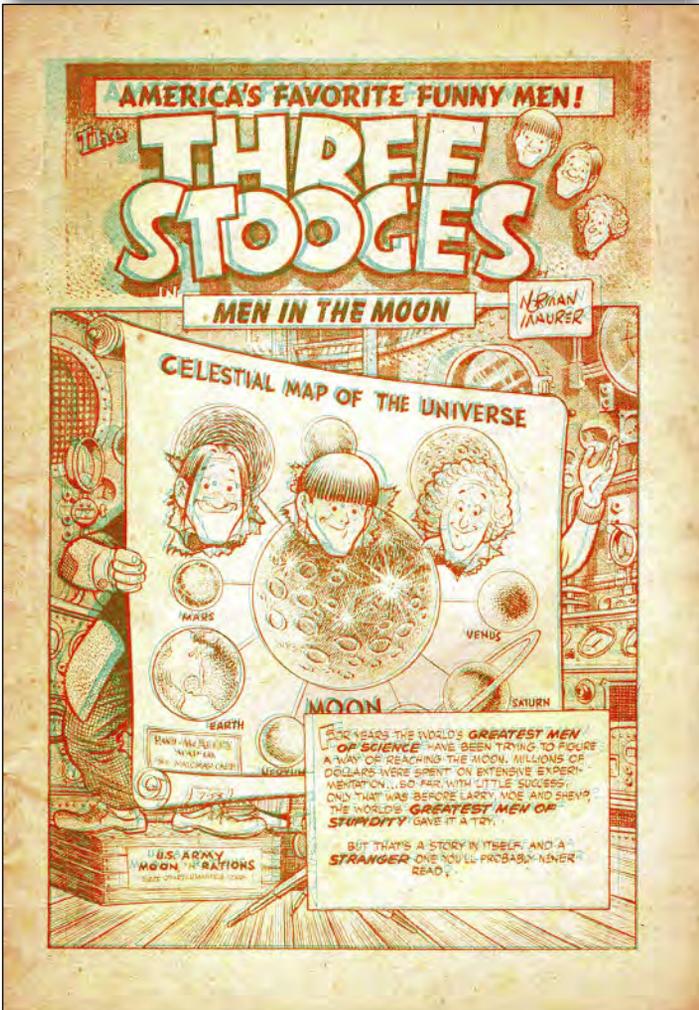
In reference to your letter of July 10, 1953, we know of no patent which we are infringing, although we have made an exhaustive search.

We note that you have omitted to state in your letter the number and date of the patent to which you refer. Our counsel informs us that without such information, your charge is meaningless.

We suggest that you send us the number and date of the patent, so that we can look into it.

Very truly yours,
 AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
Leonard Maurer
 Leonard Maurer
 General Manager

LM/vp



ST. JOHN PUBLISHING COMPANY
 545 FIFTH AVENUE
 NEW YORK 17, N. Y.
 MURRAY HILL 7-6023
 July 20, 1953

Freeman H. Owens
 600 West 116th Street
 New York City

Dear Mr. Owens:

We have just received your letter of July 14th in connection with our Three Dimension Comics.

We made a very thorough search of patents before undertaking the publication of this magazine and found nothing whatever in conflict with our process for obtaining the effects of a third dimension.

If you will provide us with more dates, we will be able to give further consideration to the matter.

Very truly yours,
 ST. JOHN PUBLISHING CO.
Archer St. John
 Archer St. John

ASJ:bl

The Four Stooges?

(Clockwise from top left:) Leonard Maurer's first letter to William M. Gaines (7-14-53), offering him a chance to license the Illustereo process—his 7-17-53 reply to Freeman Owens' letter which is quoted on p. 6 of this issue—plus Archer St. John's reply that same date to Owens' first letter to *him*. Ere long, the Maurer brothers, St. John, and Kubert must've felt like the Three Stooges (plus one) as seen in this 3-D splash from *Three Stooges* #2 (Oct. 1953)—i.e., waiting for someone to throw a pie (or worse) at their heads! Thanks to Ken Quattro for the scans of the letters, and to Rod Beck & Bob Bailey for the art scan. [© Estates of Norman Maurer.]

Buffalo Press was located, where EC was printing its comic books, to talk to them about how to print this and how to mix the paints... to print the inks, rather... to effectively work with our glasses, which we had, these green glasses, which they were making.

It was all pretty wild. That's my story of 3-D.

Dueling Letters

Freeman Owens' July 10th letter to American Stereographic set off a chain reaction. At the same time Kubert and the Maurers were trying to peddle their "3-D Illustereo" process, they became engrossed in an escalating war of dueling letters with Owens.

Apparently unaware of Freeman's relationship with Bill Gaines, Leonard Maurer sends the publisher a letter introducing him to their Illustereo process and offering him a chance to license it for his own comics.

Meanwhile, Owens (through his attorneys) ups the ante by next sending a letter to St. John Publishing informing them of his claim of patent infringement. [A/E EDITOR'S NOTE: See p. 8.]

Maurer reacts to Owens' first letter by denying knowledge of any patent they may have infringed upon. He further requests that Owens send him the number and date of the patent he was referring to.

Archer St. John gets into the action by parroting Maurer's letter. He, too, asks for Owens' patent number and its date.

Owens responds to Maurer with his patent number and its date.

Maurer acknowledges receipt of the patent information and informs Owens that he has ordered a copy. In the meantime, Maurer requests that Owens meet with him to discuss the matter.

Owens sends St. John the same patent information he sent to Maurer previously.

Owens (and presumably his attorneys) decide to swing for the fences. Their next letter goes out to the powerful distributor, American News Company. This cease-and-desist letter was likely designed to interfere with the newsstand distribution of the St. John 3-D comics.

Taking it even further, Owens contacts St. John's largest advertiser—Lionel Corporation—and informs them of his patent claim. It's unknown whether Owens knew that Lionel and Archer St. John had a longtime connection going back to his days as their advertising manager.

Even after a month of ever-increasing threats from Owens, it appeared that Maurer was still unaware of the inventor's connection to Gaines.

A lawsuit seemed inevitable. But even if the Maurers, Kubert, and St. John were bracing for that likelihood, surely they never could have suspected what would occur on August 3rd.

Endnotes for Part I:

- 1 Zone, Ray, "Leonard Maurer: 3-D Comics Pioneer," www.ray3dzone.com/LM.html
- 2 Kubert, Joe, letter to author, March 31, 2004.



The Monster From The Third Dimension

Not all the stories in *Three Dimensional EC Classics #1* were from comics written and edited by Kurtzman. "The Monster from the Fourth Dimension" was beautifully redrawn by Bernard Krigstein from the Feldstein-edited *Weird Science #7* (May-June 1951), where the original drawings had been by Feldstein. Story by William M. Gaines, script by Feldstein. Thanks to Rod Beck. [© William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.]

- 3 Lenburg, Jeff et. al., *The Three Stooges Scrapbook*, pg. 119 (1982).
- 4 Ray Zone, op. cit.
- 5 Jeff Lenburg, et. al., op. cit., pg. 125.
- 6 Mathieu, Aron M., "3-D Comics Knock 'Em Dead," *Writer's Digest*, Aug. 1953.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 The Lookout staff, *The Lookout*, (July 31, 1953).
- 9 The Lookout staff, *The Lookout*, (Aug. 28, 1953).
- 10 Aron M. Mathieu, op. cit.

Additional general information obtained from the *New York Times* archives; *Arkansas Biography: A Collection of Notable Lives* by Nancy A. Williams and Jeannie M. Wayne; *Selected Attempts at Stereoscopic Moving Pictures and Their Relationship to the Development of Motion Picture Technology, 1852-1903* by H. Mark Gosser; "Seeing in Three Dimensions" by Jonathan Strickland; "Anaglyphs Perfected" from *Photographic Times*, July 1896 issue.

[Continued on p. 15.]

Freeman H. Owens
600 West 116th Street
New York, N.Y.

July 24, 1953

American Stereographic Corporation
22 E. 60th Street
New York 22, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

In reply to your letter of July 17th, 1953, please be advised that the number of my patent is 2,057,051 issued October 13th, 1936.

Very truly yours,

Freeman H. Owens

AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
22 EAST SIXTIETH STREET
NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

July 27, 1953

Mr. Freeman H. Owens
600 West 116 Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Owens:

This will acknowledge your letter of July 24, 1953 in which you indicated your patent number. I have ordered this patent but since it may take a few weeks to arrive, I shall be glad to see you and discuss this matter in person. Please phone me for an appointment.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
L. H. Maurer
L. H. Maurer
General Manager

LEM/vp
Telephone: Eldorado 5-4617

FREEMAN H. OWENS
600 West 116th Street
New York, N. Y.

July 29, 1953

St. John Publishing Company
545 Fifth Avenue
New York 17, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

In reply to your letter of July 20, 1953, please be advised that the patent I claim you have infringed was issued to me on October 13, 1936 and bears United States Letters patent No. 2,057,051.

Very truly yours,

AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
22 EAST SIXTIETH STREET
NEW YORK 22, N. Y.
ELDORADO 5-4617

July 30, 1953

Mr. William Gaines
Entertaining Comics Group, Inc.
225 Lafayette Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Gaines:

The great interest and activity in 3-D reproduction which is at present being exhibited in the comic and other publishing industries has spurred us to offer a special service which will be of particular interest to you in connection with your comic publications.

We are now in a position to produce engraved plates for your special 3-D requirements, including the complete 3-D art conversion from your original pencil drawings.

The nature of this service is such that we can offer you, by means of our technique and know-how, a job that has the same finesse and quality as some of our licensed productions employing our well-known ILLUSTEREO process.

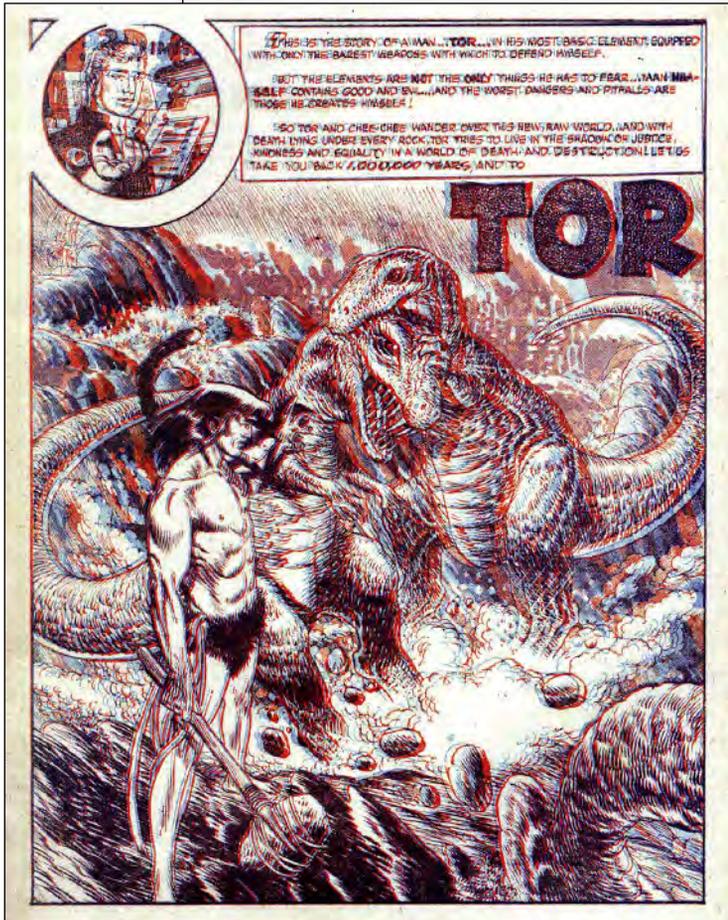
Our charges for the complete job are reasonable and worthy of your further investigation.

If you are interested in the above arrangements, kindly phone us for further information.

Very truly yours,
AMERICAN STEREOGRAPHIC CORPORATION
L. H. Maurer
L. H. Maurer
General Manager

LEM/vp

ILLUSTERO

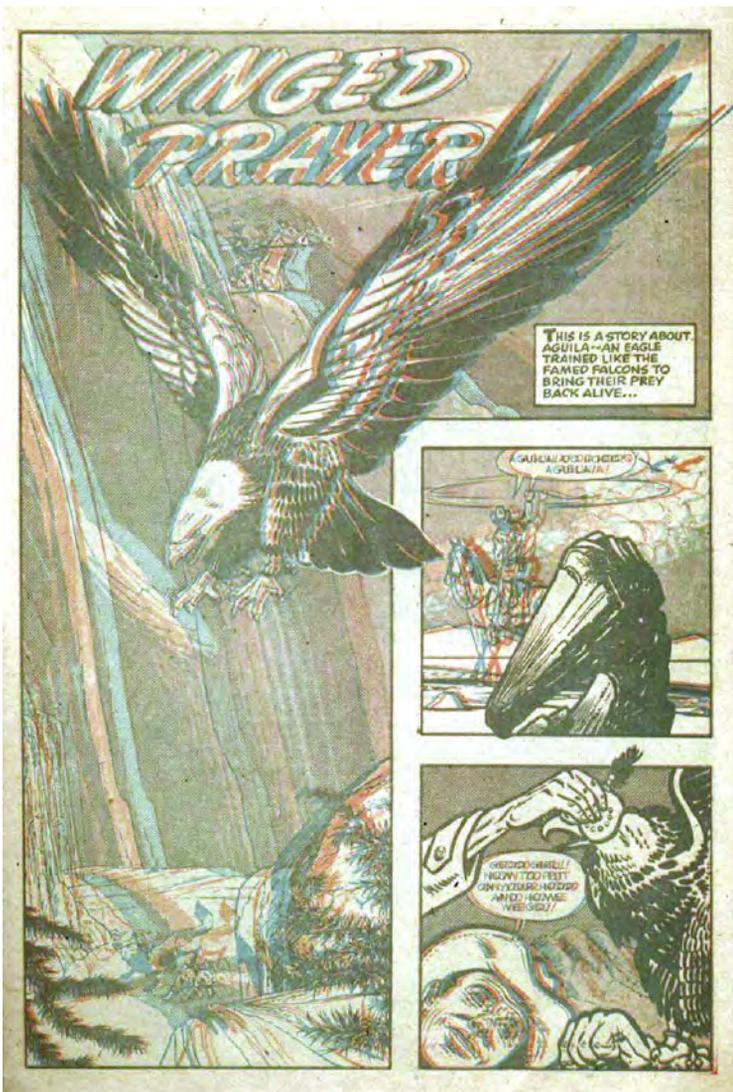


Spectator Sport—1,000,000 Years Ago!
 (Clockwise from top left:) On 7-24-53 Owens sent a letter containing the patent number on his 3-D process to Leonard Maurer at American Stereographic... on the 27th, Maurer responded (pardon the slightly warped scan), then sent another business-seeking letter to Gaines on 7-30-53, as if nothing had happened! Meanwhile, Owens wrote a second letter to Archer St. John (dated 7-29-53), announcing that he did indeed feel the comics company had infringed on his patent. Thanks to Ken Quattro.
 Joe Kubert, who'd drawn himself into 3-D Comics #2 (Oct. '53), starring his caveman hero Tor, must have felt that he and his buddies were engaged in a life-or-death struggle with Gaines, Feldstein, and Owens that paralleled the one between the two carnosaurus! Thanks to Ken Quattro for the letters scans, and to Rod Beck for the art scan. © Estate of Joe Kubert.]

On Sept. 1, 1953, the attorneys for the opposing parties appeared before Judge Irving R. Kaufman at 10:30 a.m. to argue the case. Emanuel Posnack, who represented American Stereographic, the corporation formed by brothers Norman and Leonard Maurer, their friend Joe Kubert, and publisher Archer St. John, requested more time to prepare his case. Martin Scheiman, representing inventor Freeman H. Owens as well as Gaines, fought that request. Judge Kaufman heard both attorneys and granted a one-week delay. The case was rescheduled for the following Tuesday, after the Labor Day holiday.

The attorneys next appeared before Judge Edward A. Conger on September 9, 1953, which was a Wednesday. In a quick hearing, Scheiman requested to be heard as soon as possible. It was indicated that Posnack could not make it the next day (Thursday). Court was adjourned and convened once more at 10:30 a.m., Friday, September 11th.

Scheiman immediately asked the judge for permission to serve Posnack with additional papers. When the court asked why, Scheiman launched into a long story explaining how Posnack served him with papers late in the afternoon the previous Wednesday. Since it was so late in the day, and the following Thursday was a Jewish holiday, he wasn't able to serve Posnack in turn. The judge cut Scheiman short and allowed him to serve Posnack with additional papers. The court briefly adjourned.



The Plaintiffs

When court finally resumed at 12:15, Scheiman began.

*"If your Honor please, this is a motion for a preliminary injunction in connection with a suit for the infringement of a patent issued to one Freeman H. Owens, on October 13, 1936. The patent will expire on October 13 of this year."*¹

"Then it will be moot on October 13th," reasoned Judge Conger. Scheiman agreed, and after noting all the parties involved, he pointed out the uniqueness of Owens patent, *"to provide a set of complementary stereographic pictures from a flat drawing."*

Scheiman continued, *"Lest your Honor be in any way misled by what I say, I want to impress upon you that no claim is made by the Owens patent or by the plaintiffs that Mr. Owens invented anything new in the sense of stereoscopy as a science, which has been long and well known for perhaps a hundred years or so; what he did do in his invention was to make it possible to make an ordinary drawing and by a unique*



True Adventures In 3-D

All four issues of the two great Harvey 3-D anthology titles, *Adventures in 3-D* and *True 3-D*, were drawn by Bob Powell and members (past and present) of his studio. Powell himself drew "Winged Prayer" from *Adventures in 3-D* #2 (Feb. '54), and Howard Nostrand illustrated "Pony Express" for *True 3-D* #1 (Dec. '53). Writers unknown. For several full stories from these titles, seek out Craig Yoe's book *Amazing 3-D Comics* (see ad on p. 42). Thanks to Rod Beck for the scans. [© the respective copyright holders.]

My Comic Mom!!

Golden Age Artist VEE QUINTAL PEARSON Remembered

by Robyn Dean McHattie



A/E EDITOR'S INTRO- DUCTION:

Despite all the types of comics—even just “heroic” comics—with which *Alter Ego* has dealt in these past 126 issues of Volume 3, one area we had not yet touched on was the comic books and related magazines published under the auspices of the Catholic Church, especially in the 1940s and 1950s.

Treasure Chest was familiar to me from the late 1940s at least, since a few cousins we visited were Catholic, and I always enjoyed reading copies of TC at their home; we plan an article on them in the future. But the other comics published by and primarily for Catholics—such as Topix Comics, mentioned and depicted recently in our serialization of Amy Kiste Nyberg’s history of comics censorship and related matters—were pretty much a complete unknown in these quarters. Ditto the comics material contained in magazines such as *The Catholic Boy*, *The Catholic Miss*, et al.—and, far more surprisingly, the full-scale color comic book titled *Heroes All*, which ran for the larger part of a decade. Thus, when I established contact with Robyn Dean McHattie on the subject of her artist mother Vee Quintal Pearson, I was happy to offer her space in *A/E* for what amounts to an abridgement of her recent ebook *My Comic Mom!!* (See end of article next issue for more about this ebook.) At this point, we’ll let Robyn speak for herself... and for her mom....

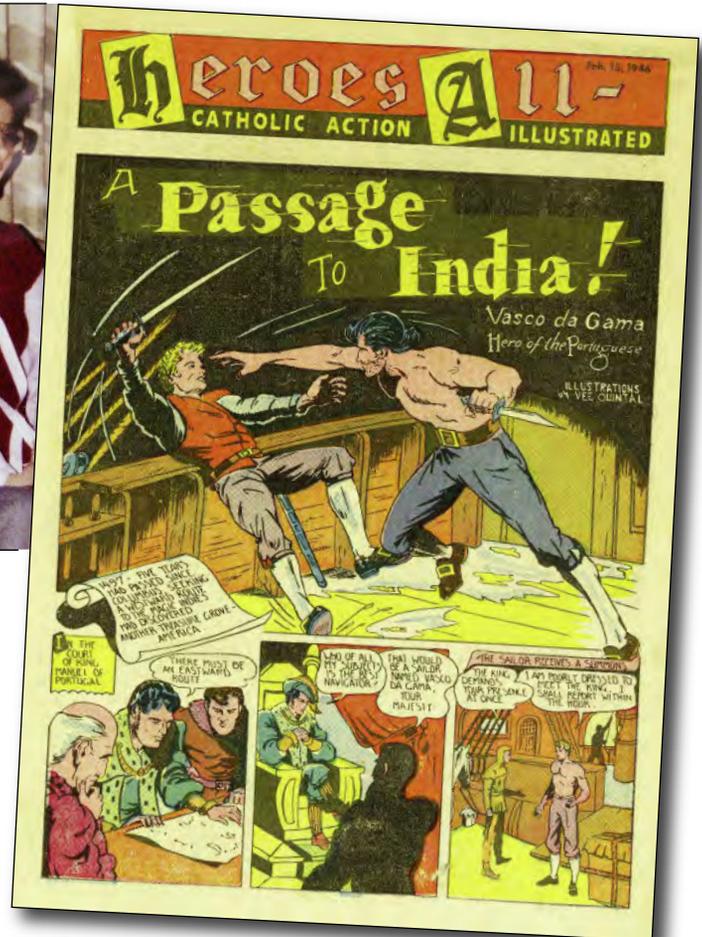
My mother is so glad she is dead. Trust me on that. When her comic book career ended as her publishing house closed in 1948, she surrendered the next twenty years of her time to raising four children—and I wouldn’t say she was happy about it.

During the Golden Age, Vee worked within a unique fantasy world, as the illustrator of swashbuckling action comic book stories. Roman gladiators! Christians thrown to the lions! Knights and maidens! The Spanish Inquisition! Seafaring New World



Vee Is For Victory!

(Left to right:) Artist Vee Quintal Pearson, the artist who is the subject of this article, as photographed in 1944 by Lester Mattison—a 1979 photo of Vee and her daughter Robyn Dean McHattie, author of this piece—and her cover for Catholic Publications’ color comic book *Heroes All - Catholic Action Illustrated*, Vol. 4, #14. All photos and artwork accompanying this article were provided by Robyn. [© the respective copyright holders.]



explorers! Anything with noble actions, spirited horses—plus broadswords and armor—that was the adventurous landscape on my mother’s drawing board.

Virginia (Vee) Quintal Pearson was born in 1918 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Her last name is French, and you say it: *Quinn-TELL*. Not until long after her death in 1998 did I take complete stock of the comics she’d left behind. Stored since 1950 in a battered suitcase, the aging printed work held little interest for us as children. But in the summer of 2012, when I began to sort and catalog the work she had saved, I discovered rarely-boasted-of details of my mother’s commercial art career that spanned the ‘40s. The sheer volume of eight- and sixteen-page color comics, most running several different stories per issue—plus the sudden promotion at the animated film studio she worked at—revealed near super-human feats.

The earliest photo I have of Vee is sitting on her Uncle Ade’s motorcycle, three little girl cousins seated in the sidecar. Sgt. Eckstrand was the newest form of mounted policeman. The date: 1926. That made my mother eight years old. Pudding-bowl haircut,



The Wild One

Vee Quintal at age eight, 1926, seated in her policeman uncle's motorcycle, complete with a sidecar-full of cousins.

knee pants. Not some flimsy girl, my mother. An athletic tomboy. Adventurous. Dauntless.

Following the Stock Market Crash in 1929, the four Quintals took up residence in a garage at 3711 Penn Avenue in North Minneapolis. They squeezed into the one room, where they entertained each other acting out scenes from movies. And that love of Hollywood films is key to understanding Vee's visual influences and creative imagination. In 1936, when a 25¢ matinee ticket allowed a person to stay through all shows until closing, Vee clocked in at 32 viewings of *Rose-Marie*. Her favorite leading men and ladies would soon be starring in cameo roles in Vee's comic illustrations.

Like many young artists of the era, the new animated films and serial comic strips in the newspaper influenced Vee's artwork. Her earliest drawings were enlargement sketches of Donald Duck, Li' Abner, and her own colored pencil interpretation of a masked cowboy, dated 1934. Not the Lone Ranger himself, but the first sparkle of her own creative work. A large stack of original pieces dates back to Vee's high school years, before her training. Her art materials, humble stuff. School notebook paper, the backs of typing practice pages, and even printed circulars hold Vee's early work. Like many at the time, she clipped newspaper photos of movie stars for a scrapbook, used them for drawing practice as well.

Anyway, her start was awesome, even on scrap paper.

Most dabblers will copy printed art, and Vee did her share of study that way. In an interview for Trina Robbins and Catherine Yronwode's book *Women and the Comics* (Eclipse Books, 1985), Vee cited influence from the usual suspects: Alex Raymond's gorgeous men, Milton Caniff's heavy use of black, and especially Hal Foster's *Prince Valiant*, which Vee described as "so much fuller, greatly detailed, beautiful faces and scenery, more like a painting." As for Vee's

early female figures, the angular Marlene Dietrich made an impression on Vee—and on Caniff. (Ms.) Dale Messick's *Brenda Starr Reporter's* glamorous dames were clearly also a source for Vee to practice from. Copying is a nice way to spend the afternoon, but probably isn't going to develop many folks into career-track artists. Vee took the next step.

Vee studied lessons from real art professors at the Washington School of Art in Washington DC, via the post box. Their tiny "CAN YOU DRAW ME?" ad appeared on matchbook covers of the time. Vee's family pulled together and got her the postage stamps. This must have been about 1936, because her figure drawings marked January 1940 are the result of a lot of training and practice.

The course work consisted of four booklets of instruction, perhaps 48 pages each, if memory serves. There were lessons on perspective. Lettering. Advertising layouts. Proportions of the human figure. Heads and facial features. Hands. Feet. Even lessons on drawing caricatures, exaggerating features, using ink to create shading using only cross-marks.

The first lesson I recall vividly: draw a book, in perspective. Opened. Closed. Then, a stack of books. The work returned with red pencil marks everywhere you might improve, along with helpful comments like: *Good*.

A lot of budding artists would be satisfied with working through to the last lesson, and stopping. Not Vee. She drew every minute and probably dreamed of it in her sleep as well. Evidence: every cover of everything printed on paper that she owned, she embellished with shadowing, cartoons, etc. In this way, she perfected the practice by putting herself through additional paces. How would this same figure look from behind? Or if you saw him below your window on the street? Running? Sitting? Shorter? Fatter? Older? Wearing a different costume?

Her earliest art portfolio consisted of costume studies, most dated from Winter 1940. Dancing gals in green and lavender leotards and diaphanous skirts. Cowboys and Indians also twirl about. Uniformed soldiers from all eras, even some futuristic caped space travelers. And especially curvy gals in sailor outfits or riding gear, dashing men in tuxedoed eveningwear.



Scalping & Scuttlebutt

Two of Vee's early "costume studies"—cowboys, Indians, and a cutie in a sailor suit. This portfolio dated from Winter 1940, when she was about 22. The "gouache gal" on the right was done in 1939.

[© Estate of Vee Quintal Pearson.]



The Washington Senators Play Away

Two of the most prominent U.S. Senators in the spring 1954 comics investigations, which actually took place in New York City. (Left:) Senator Estes Kefauver, who is seated between Senators Langer (on left) and Mitler. (Right:) Senator Robert Hendrickson.

the Democratic presidential nomination. While he lost the 1952 nomination to Adlai Stevenson, Kefauver hoped that the hearings on juvenile delinquency, a much less politically sensitive issue, might provide a platform for another try at the presidential nomination (Gorman 84).

It was during the course of the Senate investigation of organized crime that Kefauver first turned his attention to comic books, gathering information on the comic book industry from a survey sent to judges of juvenile and family courts, probation officers, court psychiatrists, public officials, social workers, comic book publishers, cartoonists, and officers of national organizations who were interested in the issue. That survey was sent out in August 1950. The questionnaires were drawn up with the assistance of psychiatrist Fredric Wertham, who was acting as a consultant for the Senate committee. The survey included seven questions:

1. Has juvenile delinquency increased in the years 1945 to 1950? If you can support this with specific statistics, please do so.
2. To what do you attribute this increase if you have stated that there was an increase?
3. Was there an increase in juvenile delinquency after World War II?
4. In recent years have juveniles tended to commit more violent crimes such as assault, rape, murder, and gang activities?
5. Do you believe that there is any relationship between reading crime comic books and juvenile delinquency?
6. Please specifically give statistics and, if possible, state specific cases of juvenile crime which you believe can be traced to reading crime comic books.
7. Do you believe that juvenile delinquency would decrease if

crime comic books were not readily available to children? (Organized Crime Committee, Committee Print I)

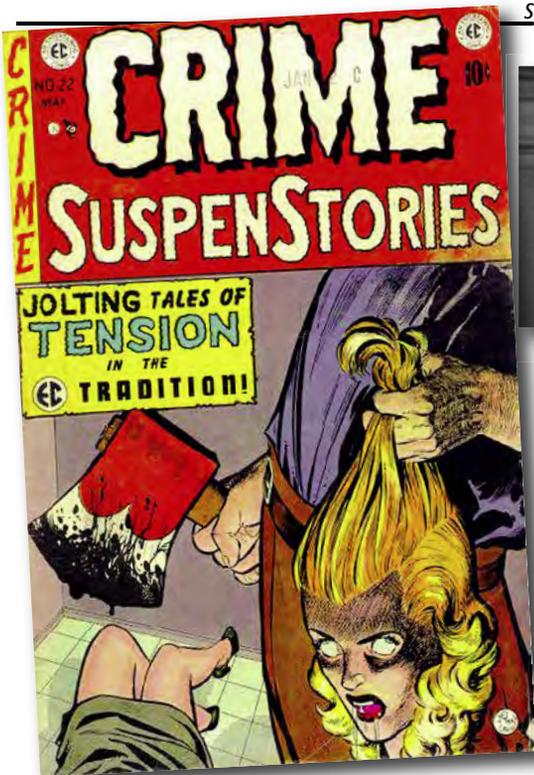
Of those responding to the survey, nearly 60 percent felt there was no relationship between comic books and juvenile delinquency, and almost 70 percent felt that banning crime comics would have little effect on delinquency. Since the report failed to make a strong case against comics, it was issued with little fanfare and the committee took no further action. Despite the fact that the earlier Senate investigation failed to produce any recommendations or action, it provided a starting place when the judiciary subcommittee on juvenile delinquency turned its attention to the mass media.

As is the case with most congressional hearings, staff members for the juvenile delinquency subcommittee conducted an extensive background investigation before the actual hearings began. The groundwork for the comic book hearings was done by Richard Clendenen, executive director of the subcommittee. He was the chief of the juvenile delinquency branch of the United States Children's Bureau and the bureau's leading expert on delinquency. Prior to his position with the Children's Bureau, Clendenen worked as a probation officer in a juvenile court and was an administrator at various institutions for emotionally disturbed children and delinquent children. In 1952, the new director of the Children's Bureau, Martha Eliot, made juvenile delinquency her priority and created a Special Delinquency Project that Clendenen headed. Eliot loaned Clendenen's services to the Senate subcommittee, partly because the subcommittee was underfunded and partly to give her agency a voice in the investigation; Clendenen joined the staff in August 1953 (Senate Hearings 4; Gilbert 57-58, 149). Clendenen began by requesting from the staff of the Library of Congress a summary of all studies published on the effects of comic books on children. He also sent several prominent individuals samples of the comic books under investigation and solicited their opinions on the effects of such material (Senate Hearings 10). He was aware of the work done by the New York joint Legislative Committee to study comics and that done by the Cincinnati Committee on Evaluation of Comic Books, and their reports were included in the committee's records.

The Post Office Department was given an extensive list of comic book titles, along with the names of publishers, writers, and artists, to investigate. The purpose of the Post Office investigation was to determine whether any of the titles listed had ever been ruled "unmailable" and whether any of the individuals listed had come under Post Office Department scrutiny (Senate Records, 'List of Names'). Postal regulations were sometimes used as a censorship tool by the federal government. The Post Office investigation failed to turn up any violations, and that line of inquiry was dropped. The subcommittee staff also conducted interviews with various publishers in order to learn more about the operation of the comic book industry. Publishers were asked to provide copies of the titles they published and circulation figures for each publication. In

*Information on the Senate hearings was drawn from a number of sources. In addition to secondary sources as indicated, I used the following: U.S. Congress *Juvenile Delinquency (Comics Books): Hearings before the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency*; 83d Cong., 2d sess., 21-22 April 1954 and 24 June 1954 (designated "Senate Hearings" in the text and followed by a page number); archival records, U.S. Congress, Senate, Records of the Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, Committee on the Judiciary, 1953-1961, National Archives (designated "Senate Records" in the text); the report on comics compiled by the committee on organized crime, U.S. Congress, Special Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce, *A Compilation*

of Information and Suggestions Submitted to the Special Senate Committee to Investigate Organized Crime in Interstate Commerce Relative to the Incidence of Possible Influence Thereon of So-Called Crime Comic Books During the Five-Year Period 1945 to 1950, 81st Cong., 2d sess., 1950, Committee Print (designated "Organized Crime Committee, Committee Print" in the text and followed by a page number); Estes Kefauver, Papers, Hoskins Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN; and the report issued by the Senate Subcommittee, U.S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency, *Interim Report: Comic Books and Juvenile Delinquency*, 84th Cong., 1st sess., 1955 (designated "Senate Report" in the text).



I'm Ready For My Closeup, Mr. Kefauver!

EC publisher Bill Gaines in front of the subcommittee—and the infamous Johnny Craig cover he clumsily attempted to defend:

Crime Suspense Stories #22 (April-May 1954). While Nyberg quotes Gaines (see first column, below) saying that he felt the art was in sufficiently good taste “for the cover of a horror comic” (technically, of course, *CSS* was probably better classified as a “crime comic”), she doesn’t add that when Kefauver asked his follow-up question of precisely what would constitute poor taste, Gaines responded: “A cover in bad taste, for example, might be defined as holding the head a little higher so that the neck could be seen dripping blood from it and moving the body over a little further so that the neck of the body could be seen to be bloody.” This observation was not of much help to the comic book industry. [Cover © William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.]

factor alone makes a child do anything,” he said. Other environmental factors were at work. But, he added, he had isolated comics as one factor of delinquency and his was “not a minority report” (Senate Hearings 87-90). Underlining where he differed from his colleagues, however, he contended the kind of child affected was “primarily the normal child... the most morbid children that we have seen are the ones who are less affected by comic books because they are wrapped up in their own phantasies [sic]” (Senate Hearings 83).

Despite Wertham’s reputation, it was Gaines’s testimony that was given wide play in the media—including front-page coverage in the *New York Times*—primarily due to an exchange between Gaines and Kefauver that served to demonstrate in the minds of many the absurdity of the comic book industry’s defense of what they published. Asked to defend his stories, Gaines stressed they had an “O. Henry ending” and that it was important that they not be taken out of context. When Chief Counsel Herbert Hanooh asked if it did children any good to read such stories, Gaines replied: “I don’t think it does them a bit of good, but I don’t think it does them a bit of harm, either.” He maintained throughout the hearings that comics were harmless entertainment.

Then Herbert Beaser, Hanooh’s assistant, asked Gaines: “Is there any limit you can think of that you would not put in a magazine because you thought a child should not see or read about it?” Gaines said, “My only limits are bounds of good taste, what I consider good taste” (Senate Hearings 103). With that statement, Gaines set himself up for the famous exchange with Senator Kefauver over a comic book cover. While questioning Gaines, Kefauver held aloft a comic book featuring a cover drawn by artist Johnny Craig for a comic titled *Crime Suspense Stories* and remarked: “This seems to be a man with a bloody ax holding a woman’s head up which has been severed from her body. Do you think that is in good taste?” Having just said that he would publish anything he felt was in good taste, Gaines had no choice. He answered, “Yes, sir, I do, for the cover of a horror comic.” When Kefauver held up another cover showing a man choking a woman

with a crowbar, Sen. Thomas Hennings halted that line of questioning, observing, “I don’t think it is really the function of our committee to argue with this gentleman” (Senate Hearings 103).

But the damage was done. Historian Maria Reidelbach notes that public sentiment turned decisively against the young publisher, as television and print news reports widely quoted the “severed head exchange” (28). The front-page story in the *New York Times* emphasized that testimony and carried the headline: “No Harm in Horror, Comics Issuer Says.” Such reports helped to confirm what comic book critics had been arguing all along—that comic book publishers were a decadent group out to make a profit at the expense of children, with little regard for the impact their crime and horror comics had on the youth of America. Common sense dictated that full-color comic book covers with gruesome illustrations were definitely not in good taste for children’s reading material.

While the “severed head” exchange received the most publicity, it was the discussion of the E.C. story “The Whipping” that really points to the essential difference between the positions that Wertham and Gaines took. In his testimony, Wertham accused Gaines of fostering racial hatred by using the word “spick” several times in one story. The story Wertham summarized for the senators was published in *Shock Suspense Stories* No. 14, 1954. In it, a Mexican family has moved into the neighborhood. One man, Ed, becomes enraged when his daughter Amy becomes involved with the son of the Mexican family, Louis Martinez. His efforts to turn his neighbors against the Martinez family fail, so Ed stirs up the men in community by telling them the boy had

tried to rape his daughter. The men put on hoods and break into the dark house, putting a large sack over the head and body of the person they find inside, whom they then drag outside and beat to death with a belt. In the next-to-last panel, Louis comes racing into the yard, calling the girl’s name. In the last panel, the men learn that they have mistakenly killed the girl, whom the boy had secretly married.

Wertham summarized the story, beginning with the statement, “I think Hitler was a beginner compared to the comic-book industry... They teach them race hatred at the age of four before they can read.” He then offered “The Whipping” as an example, noting that in New York City the integration of Puerto Ricans was a “great social problem.” He pointed out that in the story, a derogatory term for Puerto Ricans was repeated twelve times. He commented: “It is pointed out that a Spanish Catholic family moved into this neighborhood—utterly unnecessary. What is the point of this story? The point of the story is that then somebody gets beaten to death. The only error is that the man who must get beaten to death is not a man; it is a girl!” (Senate Hearings 95).

Gaines was angry at the way Wertham had represented the story, especially since Wertham had to have read the story “to have counted what he said he counted.” Gaines told the committee: “Dr. Wertham did not tell you what the plot of the story was. This is one of a series of stories designed to show the evils of race prejudice and mob violence, in this case against Mexican Catholics... This is one of the most brilliantly written stories that I

The WHIPPING

HE WAS A MIDDLE-AGED MAN, SLIGHTLY BALDING. HE STOOD BELOW THE GLARING STREET LAMP, NERVOUSLY SMOKING CIGARETTE. AFTER CIGARETTE. FROM TIME TO TIME HE'D PEER INTO THE DARK NIGHT, UP AND DOWN THE DESERTED STREET, AS IF HE WERE EXPECTING SOMEONE OR SOMETHING. HE'D LISTEN FOR A MOMENT, CURSE SOFTLY TO HIMSELF, SHIFT THE WHITE ROBE AND HOOD HE'D BEEN HOLDING FROM ONE ARM TO THE OTHER, AND THEN CONTINUE TO ABSENTLY ROLL AND UNROLL THE THICK LEATHER STRAP HE'D BROUGHT ALONG FOR THE WHIPPING, AND AS HE FONDLED THE STRAP, HIS MOUTH DREW INTO A TIGHT LINE, AND HIS FACE GREW GRIM, AND A LOOK OF HATE SHOWN IN HIS ANGRY, ANGRY EYES...

HE STOOD IN THE LONELY, EMPTY NIGHT, HARBORING HIS FURY AND HIS HATE, AND HE THOUGHT ABOUT HIS DAUGHTER CRYING HER EYES OUT, AND SOBBING...

BUT I LOVE HIM, DADDY! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I LOVE HIM!

LOVE HIM? WELL, FORGET ABOUT IT! NO DAUGHTER OF MINE'S GOING TO RUN AROUND WITH NO GREASY MEXICAN.

JUST YOU WAIT. WE'RE COMING! IN A LITTLE WHILE, YOU'LL GET YOURS, YOU LITTLE SPICK. I'LL TEACH YOU TO PLAY AROUND WITH MY DAUGHTER...

HE'D TRIED TO DISCOURAGE HER FROM SEEING THE BOY. HE'D EVEN THREATENED HER...

YOU GO NEAR THAT HOUSE AGAIN AND, SO HELP ME, I'LL TAN YOUR HIDE! DO YOU HEAR? PROMISE ME! PROMISE ME YOU WON'T SEE HIM AGAIN!

I... I CAN'T PROMISE YOU... SOB... I WON'T... SOB... I LOVE HIM!

THE STRAP... THE WEAPON OF HIS DELUSION... THE REVOLVER OF HIS HATE... THE PUNCTUATOR OF HIS FICTION... ROSE AND FELL... AGAIN AND AGAIN... BRINGING DOWN UPON HIS FANTASY THE REALITY OF PAIN...

DIRTY... UHH... LITTLE... UHH... SPICK...

SAVAGE, WILD, ANGRY ANGRY STROKES FELL UPON A GAGGED VICTIM... A VICTIM UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF AGAINST THAT FANTASY... UNABLE TO CRY OUT... UNABLE TO BE HEARD... A VICTIM LIKE ALL VICTIMS OF INTOLERANCE...

UHH... UHH... UHH... ALL RIGHT, ED! THAT'S ENOUGH!

THE WHIP-WIELDER SWUNG OUT, STRIKING THE OBJECTOR ACROSS HIS HOODED FACE, AND THE PAIN WAS FELT BENEATH THE COVERING...

I TOLD YOU! NO NAMES!

YOU... @#%*!#!

THE OBJECTOR MOVED OFF, WHIMPERING... STUNG BY HIS OWN WORK... SUFFERING THE PAIN OF HIS OWN MISSION. HE'D OBJECTED, YES! BUT HE'D OBJECTED TOO LATE. THE WHIP-WIELDER RETURNED TO HIS VICTIM...

UHH... UHH... UHH...

AND THE VICTIM FELL BENEATH THE ONSLAUGHT AND LAY STILL AND UNMOVING IN THE COOL GRASS...

ED! HE... HE'S DEAD!

YOU... YOU... SHUT UP! LET'S GO!

THE SCREAM CAME FROM DOWN THE BLOCK. THE FIGURE DARTED TOWARD THEM... THE FIGURE OF A BOY WITH OLIVE SKIN AND BLACK HAIR...

AMY! AMY!

LOOK!

IT'S... OH, GOD... HIM!

THE BOY KNELT BESIDE THE STILL FIGURE AND TENDERLY REMOVED THE SACK AND GAG AND KISSED THE WIDE STARING EYES AND WHITE DEAD FACE AND HE CRIED QUIETLY...

WE... WE WERE MARRIED... SECRETLY SHE WAS WAITING FOR ME... TO GET HOME... FROM WORK... SOB...

AMY! AMY! OH LORD! I'VE KILLED MY DAUGHTER!

THE END 7

EC Takes A "Whipping"

Racial prejudice and lynch-mob "justice" were the focus of the EC story "The Whipping" in *Shock SuspensStories* #14, (April-May 1954). Art by Wally Wood; writer uncertain—either Al Feldstein (from a plot by Gaines) or Jack Oleck. Thanks to Steven Willis. [© William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc.]

have ever had the pleasure to publish. I was very proud of it, and to find it being used in such a nefarious way made me quite angry" (Hearings 99).

Wertham clearly did misrepresent the story in his testimony. One tactic used effectively by many critics was to take panels and dialogue from comic book stories out of context in order to illustrate a point. But Wertham's misreading of the story may not have been deliberate, because there are actually two stories being told in "The Whipping," one through the images and the dialogue in the word balloons, and another in the captions that accompany the story. The social message about the evils of racism is conveyed by the omniscient narrator through the use of captions. But if Wertham's reader skips the captions and skims the dialogue, a much different story is told, where the racism seemingly is justified by the attempted rape of Amy; the fact that it is a trumped-up charge is explained only in the caption. The ending, then, rather than being read as a punishment for racist thinking, simply becomes an ironic twist of fate—a father has been tricked into killing the very daughter he has sworn to protect.

But no one reading the entire story would construe it as one preaching racial hatred. The surprise ending, common in the E.C. stories, was intended to shock the reader with the consequences of racism. The text makes clear the wrongness of intolerance based on different colored skin, facial features, accents, and unfamiliar religions. The whipping also becomes a metaphor for all victims of intolerance. Amy's bound and gagged body is meant to symbolize

victims' helplessness, a symbolism made explicit in the caption: "a victim unable to defend himself against that fantasy... unable to cry out... unable to be heard... a victim like all victims of intolerance."

While Wertham emphasized the beating in his summary, there is actually very little violence depicted in the seven-page story. In one panel, Ed strikes his daughter after she tells him she will continue to see Louis. On the final page, we see one of the hooded figures who objected to the continued beating struck across the face with a belt by Ed. In the last panel, Louis cradles the body of his dead wife, Amy. The blows struck by Ed are suggested, rather than shown. Instead, the violence in this story is found, not in the images, but in the words that accompany the drawings. The beating, which takes place across four panels, is described this way: "The strap... rose and fell... again and again... Savage, wild, angry angry strokes fell upon a gagged victim... and the victim fell beneath the onslaught and lay still and unmoving in the cool grass." The conventions of graphic storytelling invite the reader to fill in the action between the panels, as the words work with the images to create a sense of brutal violence that neither words nor pictures alone could invoke.

If this story indeed had a social message against racism, with little graphic violence, why was it singled out as an example of a "bad" comic? Much of the protest had to do with the way the moral of the story was delivered. Rather than depicting "good" behavior being rewarded, "The Whipping" and other stories like it



HELLO, READERS! MR. MONSTER HERE WITH PART TWO OF THE CRYPT'S COMPLETE PRINTING OF MICHAEL T.'S LOST COMIC SERIES FROM 1975! HE CALLED IT . . .

INKSPOT! INKSPOTS! INKSPOTS!

A CRUEL PRACTICAL JOKE IS VISITED UPON MR. PEEPERS.



Inkspots! (Part 2)

by Michael T. Gilbert

Stick around long enough and everything becomes history. Take my *Inkspots!* strip, for instance. Here's part two of that bit of history, continued from last issue.

As previously discussed, after graduating college in '73, I scored my first art job at Vizmo studios in New York City's Rockefeller Plaza, drawing graphics for NBC News, located right across the street from the NBC studios. It was great while it lasted, but a few months later NBC started its own in-house graphics department and I was out of a job.

I scored another one designing advertising gee-gaws (key chains with company logos, letter openers, and such) for HIT Sales and made friends with the other artists. One of them, Edgar Bacellis, eventually quit HIT Sales to find fame and fortune in California.

This was in late '74. By then, I'd already published two issues of my underground, *New Paltz Comix*, and the thought of exploring the Bay Area comix scene intrigued me. If Edgar could make the move, why not me? I'd lived in New York all my life, but I was 23, single, and ready to try something slightly crazy.

So I said goodbye to friends and family, stored my comics with some pals, and began a trip to California on a hippie-style "Grey

Rabbit" bus—complete with working woodstove. A week later, I arrived in San Francisco with \$200 and four duffle bags stuffed with clothes and comics. I called Edgar when I arrived, and he invited me to crash at his cousin's house in Santa Rosa, about an hour away from San Francisco. From there I hitched to the city every day searching for a cheap room to rent.

Flower Child!

I was still looking when Edgar and I decided to check out Berkeley, counterculture capital of the universe. Stepping off the BART train, we were greeted by a young hippie chick straight from central casting. After introducing herself as "Evie Eden," she gave us each a small flower. Then she invited us to a free meal that night in a large commune house a few blocks away, courtesy of something called the "Ideal City Project." Hey, never let it be said that Michael T. Gilbert turned down a free meal!

We had a few hours before our feast, so we walked a few blocks to the office of the notorious underground paper, *The Berkeley Barb*. The *Barb* had been publishing underground cartoonists, and I thought I'd stop by and see if I could get my foot in the door. Some layout guy working there told me about the *Barb's* loosey-goosey approach to submissions. Cartoonist Larry Rippee, who worked for them beginning in 1974, recently described it:

"I file my working with the *Barb* as one of my better cartooning



STEVE PERRIN – Part 3

A Potpourri Of His 1960s Writings—including His Profile of SF/Comics Writer EDMOND HAMILTON

For the last two issues, we've run my interview with Steve Perrin, along with images to illustrate the points being discussed: his introduction to fandom, meeting the Golden Gate foursome, collaborating with Ronn Foss to create "The Black Phantom," and quite a bit more. Unfortunately, a sidebar and samples from other pieces got squeezed out—until we decided to spend one more issue with Steve.

We couldn't pass up the opportunity to present his profile of science-fiction and comics writer Edmond Hamilton, which was conducted at the 1964 World Science Fiction Convention in the San Francisco area. It appeared under the heading "Meet the Pro" in *Voice of Comicdom* #3 (Jan. 1965), the same issue that featured a brief "Meet the Fan" profile of Steve himself. In addition, we thought at least a page of Steve's article on *Fighting American* from Harvey's *Silver Age* reprint *Fighting American* #1 (1966) ought to be shown, though we decided not to reprint it all, rife as it is with typing errors committed by someone on Harvey's editorial staff. (It originally appeared in Mike Tuohey's fanzine *Super-Hero* #2 (1962).

In addition: several years ago, Bill Spicer sent along Steve's unused script for a second "Black Phantom" strip, titled "Death Trap in Harlem." Unfortunately, it wasn't adapted by Ronn Foss or any other artist at the time. However, we thought this would be a great opportunity to reproduce a page of the script, just for fun, featuring as it did an African-American super-hero some time before Marvel's *Black Panther*, let alone *Luke Cage*. Enjoy! —Bill Schelly.

Meet The Pro – EDMOND HAMILTON

by Steve Perrin

(From *Voice of Comicdom* #3 [Jan. 1965])

On the second day of the World Science Fiction Convention in Oakland, I caught Edmond Hamilton for a moment, and after discussing his past and present science fiction work for a few brief moments, I asked for an interview later in the day, a request he affably granted. "Later" turned out to be within the next couple of hours, as I spied my co-editor of *Mask and Cape*, Margaret Gemignani, talking with Mr. Hamilton, and I speedily joined them. Mr. Hamilton, a very pleasant gentleman, seemed happy to talk about his work with the Superman family of magazines, perhaps as a relief from the "straight" science fiction he had been discussing the whole day.

Through Mr. Hamilton we got an

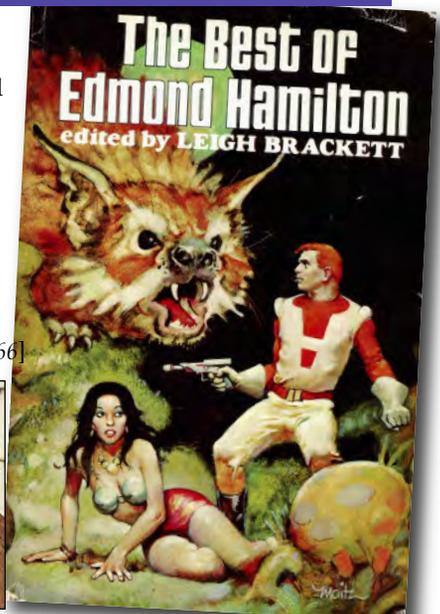


We'll Always Have Perrin

(Left to right:) Fans Steve Perrin, Bill DuBay, and Johnny Chambers in a photo printed (very small!) in *Voice of Comicdom* #2 in September 1964. Bill, an artist, would go on to edit the James Warren magazines for some years, while cartoonist Johnny Chambers was later published in the *Comics Buyer's Guide* and elsewhere.

interesting portrait of Superman editor Mort Weisinger, an old time friend of Hamilton's who, in fact, helped to bring Hamilton and his wife, Leigh Brackett, together. Mr. Weisinger is very conscientious about the continuity in the Superman stories and is constantly working at

[Continued on p. 66]



Science Says You're Right If You Believe That...

(Left:) Edmond Hamilton (1904-1977, in a photo from *Voice of Comicdom* #3) began writing magazine science-fiction in 1926, and eventually became a prolific writer of what could be called interstellar space opera—but good interstellar space opera. He also contributed to *Weird Tales* in its heyday.

(Above center:) His wife Leigh Brackett, seen with him here, in addition to writing lyrical science-fiction prose herself, was a credited screenwriter on such major films as *The Big Sleep*, *Rio Bravo*, and *The Empire Strikes Back*. Thanks to Bill Schelly for both scans.

(Above right:) The cover of the 1977 collection *The Best of Edmond Hamilton*—edited by Leigh Brackett. Painting by Don Maitz. Thanks to Bill Bailey.

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P.C. HAMERLINCK'S

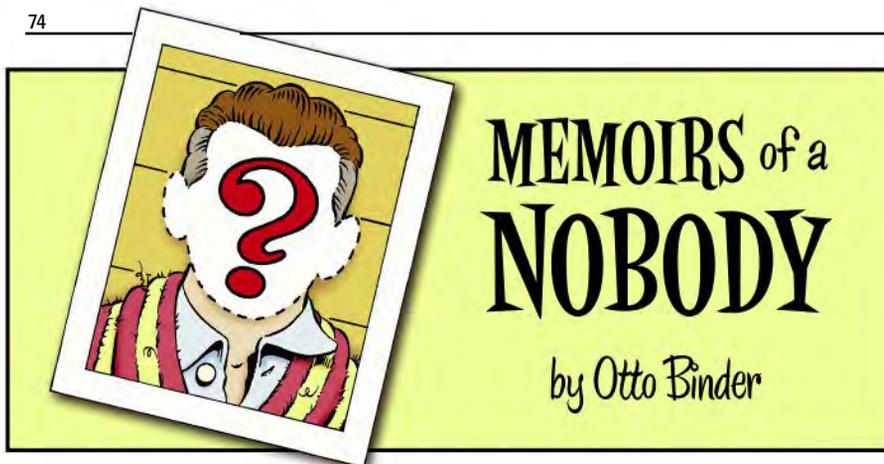
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Fawcett Collectors of America

#186
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[Ibis the Invincible & Tala TM & © DC Comics; other art © 2014 Jay Pisco.]



Part VII

Abridged & Edited by P.C. Hamerlinck

Otto Oscar Binder (1911-1974), the prolific science fiction and comic book writer renowned for authoring over half of the *Marvel Family* saga for Fawcett Publications, wrote *Memoirs of a Nobody* in 1948 at the age of 37 during what was arguably the most imaginative period within the repertoire of *Captain Marvel* stories.

Aside from intermittent details about himself, Binder's capricious chronicle resembles very little in the way of anything that is indeed autobiographical. Unearthed several years ago from Binder's file materials at Texas A&M University, *Memoirs* is self-described by its author as "ramblings through the untracked wilderness of my mind." Binder's potpourri of stray philosophical beliefs, pet peeves, theories, and anecdotes were written in freewheeling fashion and devoid of any charted course — other than allowing his mind to flow with no restricting parameters. The abridged and edited manuscript — serialized here within the pages of *FCA* — will nonetheless provide glimpses into the idiosyncratic and fanciful mind of Otto O. Binder.

In this seventh excerpt, Otto executes some self-examination in a chapter he titled "Confessions of a Neurotic." —P.C. Hamerlinck.

Are all writers neurotic?

It would seem that most word-flingers are not "normal" or "average." And that would include artists, too. And let's toss in musicians just for good measure. Putting it on a broader basis, are all creative people somewhat on the neurotic side?

Well, I can't answer that question. I'm only God when creating stories. But in the process of some years of soul-searching and self-analysis, I can surmise that *I* am a neurotic.

What is a neurotic? As I gather, it's a person who lives in a dream-world, or at least applies too much imagination to real life. The normal person, I suppose, takes life exactly as it comes, with quiet joy and strength, and is not to be deceived into using either rose-colored glasses or black paint ... [with] a knack of looking at every-

thing objectively, I guess.

I can't do that, all the time. I find myself getting too enthused over something, and then comes the dawn and the brown taste of disillusionment. Or conversely, some little problem faces me, and right away the end of the world is coming, and my nerves do the Jitterbug.

One of the toughest things for me is making a decision, even a little one. I know it's neurotic. The normal person would firmly make up his mind one way or another and then carry out his decision with single-tracked enjoyment. Period. Not me. I always have two desires and confictions. I know, I'm a dual personality. There are two of me, and each hates what the other one likes and they're always quarreling.

It occurs to me that everyone is neurotic, one way or another. Don't we all have our little foibles and mental twists? I'm glad I'm not normal. I'd stick out like a sore thumb.

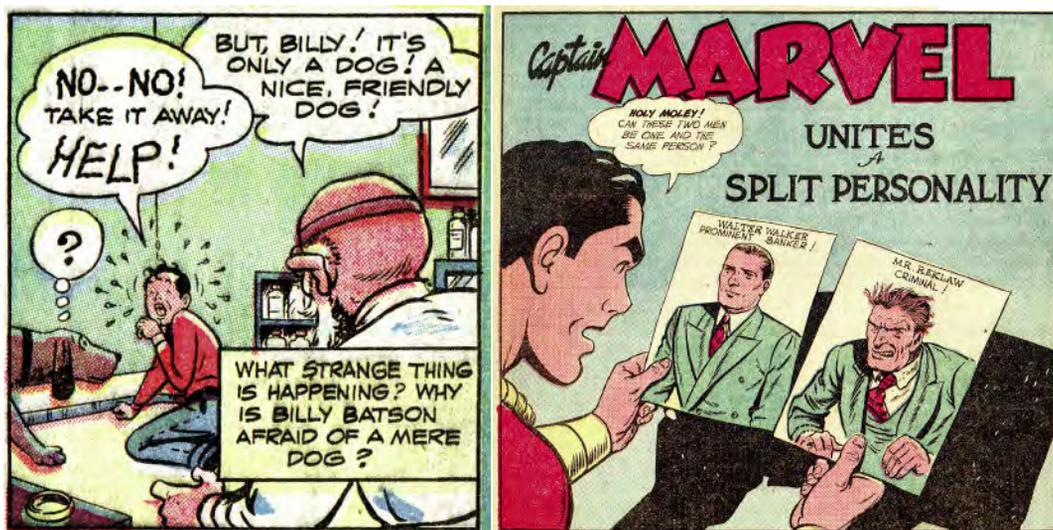
Am I a neurotic? Are you a neurotic? Is that good? Is that bad? Don't expect help from me. That's your problem.

There is one thing in the world that is absolutely sure and positively certain. I can give you this soul-saving touchstone in one word. The only sure and safe and certain and eternal thing in the universe is ... *change!*

Yes, change. "And this too shall pass away." You can bet your bottom dollar that the one thing you can rely on never to change is that all things will change. The sins of one generation are the virtues of the next. The ideals of one age are the stupidities of the next.

But what's that got to do with neuroticism? Oh well, how do you expect a silly neurotic like me to stick to the subject anyway?

Next: *THE EGO AND I*



A Fear Of Phobias

(Left:) Self-confessed neurotic Otto Binder had Captain Marvel's alter ego display some neurotic behavior in "Billy Batson's Phobias" in *Captain Marvel Adventures* #84 (May 1948). In this story in which Captain Marvel appeared in just four panels, Billy's unusual conduct was actually the result of Dr. Sivana's Phobia Ray Projector—what else?! Art by C.C. Beck.

(Right:) Did writer Binder's dual persona emerge when he wrote "Captain Marvel Unites a Split Personality" for *CMA* #86 (July 1948)? Art by C.C. Beck and Pete Costanza. [Billy Batson, Dr. Sivana, & Shazam hero TM & © DC Comics.]

Three For Pete's Sake

A Triple Spotlight On Golden Age Fawcett Artist PETE COSTANZA

I. A Brief Biography of Pete Costanza

by P.C. Hamerlinck

Peter Anthony Costanza was one of the main artists at Fawcett Publications during the Golden Age of Comics. Born May 19, 1913, in Manhattan to Benedict and Elvira Costanza, Pete was the only son and oldest of four children. His father worked in New York City as a tailor and the family resided in Bayonne, New Jersey.

After graduating high school in 1931, Costanza attended the Art Students League at the Grand Central Art School in NYC and studied with illustrator Harvey Dunn. Three years later he was creating interior illustrations for numerous pulp magazines, including *Thrilling Adventures*, *Western*, *Action Stories*, *Super Sports*, *The Lone Ranger*, *Popular Detective*, *Dime Western*, *Sports Winners*, *Ace-High*, *Texas Rangers*, *Complete Northwest*, and *Famous Western*.

In the autumn of 1939, Fawcett Publications' art director Al Allard hired Costanza to assist with the drawing for their new comic book line launched with *Whiz Comics*. With his experience illustrating Western stories, Costanza was the first artist assigned to "Golden Arrow"; he later took over drawing another *Whiz* feature, "Ibis the Invincible," and also drew the "Jungle Twins" strip in *Nickel Comics*.

1940 continued to be a busy year for Costanza as he began to assist Captain Marvel's chief artist and co-creator, C.C. Beck, with inking and drawing backgrounds on "Captain Marvel" stories. The collaboration would endure for many years, eventually evolving into a full-on business partnership.

In 1941 Costanza married Yolanda Scarinci. That same year, upon Al Allard's suggestion, Beck opened up his own studio to produce all of the "Captain Marvel" artwork for Fawcett. With the rising amount of "CM" story art needed by the publisher, Beck brought a few of the artists with him, including Costanza, to a small office space he rented on Broadway and 40th in NYC.

As World War II intensified, Costanza entered the U.S. Army in June of 1942. He produced various military posters and publica-

tions while stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. Having served in the armed forces for less than a year, he was honorably discharged in May, 1943.

Returning to civilian life, Costanza went back to work at Beck's studio, which had expanded with more artists working there. Besides churning out "Captain Marvel" art each month, the team landed other accounts, including the creation of the "Captain Tootsie" comic strip advertisements for Tootsie Roll, "Mini-Gym" ads for eminent weightlifter/stuntman Joey Bonomo, program booklets for famed stage magician/illusionist Harry Blackstone, and packaging *Vic Verity Magazine* and *Don Fortune Magazine*. (We'll have more on these B-C side ventures in future issues of FCA.) Beck and Costanza also took on training a group of Canadian artists to draw Fawcett comics characters for Toronto publisher Anglo-American.

In early 1944, with the augmented workload, Beck opened a second shop, The Beck-Costanza Studio, in Englewood, New Jersey. Costanza supervised the Englewood shop, reporting in to Beck, who continued running operations at the NYC studio. (The Beck-Costanza studio's artists over the years included Ken Bald, Dave Berg, Jack Bowler, Victor Dowd, Ray Harford, Ed Robbins, Kurt Schaffenberger, Irv Steinberg, Charlie Tomsey, Ernie Townsend, and several others. Even Jack Binder spent a couple of post-war years at Beck-Costanza as a sales manager after his own shop disbanded, as did near-future "Captain Marvel" editor Wendell Crowley.)

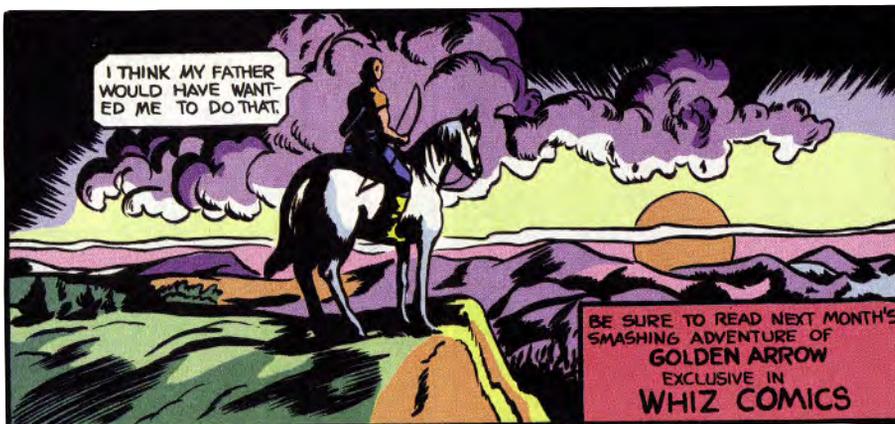
During this time, Pete and Yolanda relocated to Hasbrouk Heights, New Jersey, where the Costanzas raised two sons, Edward and Peter.

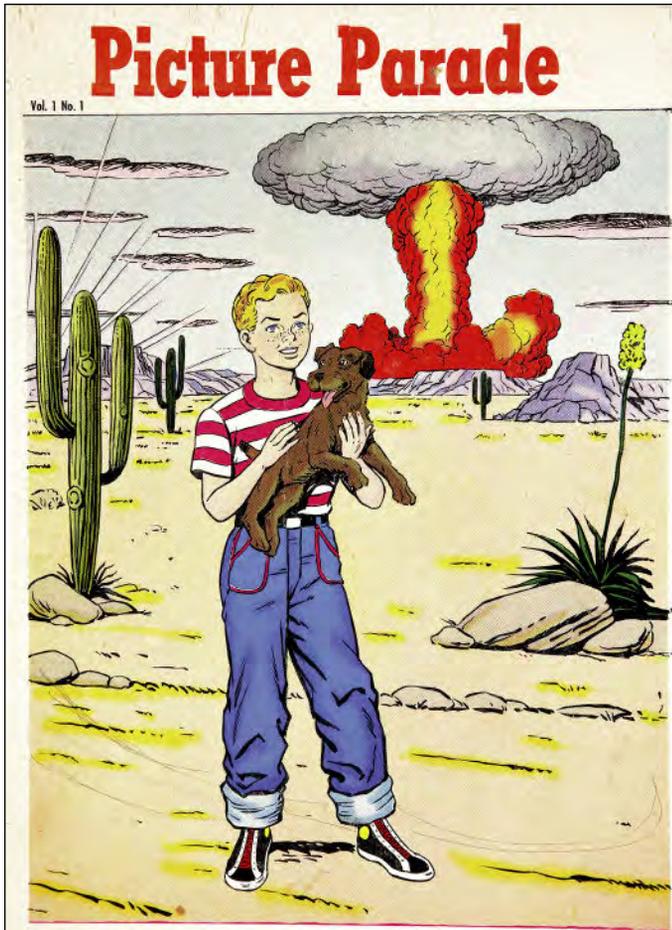


Pete's Panoramic Views

(Above:) 27-year-old Artist Pete Costanza, seen here in 1940, made the jump from pulps to comic books when he joined Fawcett Publications in the fall of '39... a career in comics which lasted over 30 years.

(Below left:) Costanza's first assignment at Fawcett was drawing "Golden Arrow," as witness his crude but dramatic last panel to the Western hero's origin tale from the first issue of *Whiz Comics* (numbered #2, Feb. 1940). Script by Bill Parker. [Art © the respective copyright holder.]





See Spot Run... From The A-Bomb!

As Fawcett was about to close the doors of its comics department, Costanza was already seeking work elsewhere. His first stop was at Gilberton, where he did several *Classics Illustrated* adaptations as well as a few educational comics, including *Picture Parade* #1 from 1953, in which a young dog owner received lessons on atomic energy and radioactivity. [© Fawley Corporation and its exclusive licensee, First Classics, Inc.]

By late 1947, the Beck-Costanza Studios had downsized considerably. Costanza continued to collaborate with Beck for several more years on "Captain Marvel" before he began to freelance solo on Fawcett war titles (*Battle Stories*, *Soldier Comics*), an adaptation of the 1952 Jimmy Stewart film *Carbine Williams* (*Fawcett Movie Comic*), and some romance stories, until Fawcett ceased publishing their entire comic book line in early 1954. Having started off as Golden Arrow's first artist, it was fitting that some of Costanza's final work for Fawcett was on *Bob Steele Western*.

Fawcett artist Marc Swayze (in his column from FCA #58, 1997) remembered that Costanza was "fun to have around... [a]ffable, talkative, humorous, completely unaffected," as well as his "positive effect of his presence on the morale of the group." Marc Swayze also made note of the vast amount of work Costanza was able to produce: "I'd have to go along with the opinions of the Binders, Otto and Jack... Pete could have been better. He could have, but he was satisfied, apparently. He was very fast and thus capable of a tremendous output, but the layouts, rough penciling, and inking he did as Beck's assistant suggested he may have been *too* fast."

After Fawcett, Costanza briefly drew "White Indian" for Magazine Enterprises and did several adaptations for Gilberton's *Classics Illustrated* (*Captains Courageous*, *The Golden Fleece*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Mutineers*). He was kept busy during the '50s with commercial art as well as providing spot illustrations for such magazines as *Double Action Western*, *Famous Western*, and *Future Fiction*.

For the next twelve years or so, he worked for Richard E. Hughes' American Comics Group (ACG), where he helped co-create supernatural super-heroes Magicman and Nemesis and drew numerous mystery-suspense tales in *Forbidden Worlds*, *Unknown Worlds*, *Adventures into the Unknown*, and *Midnight Mystery*.

In the mid-'60s (on Otto Binder's recommendation to Mort Weisinger), Costanza began working for DC Comics, mainly on *Superman's Pal, Jimmy Olsen*, as well as on "Legion of Super-Heroes" and other features, until a stroke he suffered in 1971 put an end to his career in comics. With the stroke paralyzing the use of his drawing hand, Costanza taught himself to oil paint left-handed. In his closing years, he produced hundreds of paintings and taught oil painting to those with disabilities.

Pete Costanza passed away on June 28, 1984, in Hackensack, NJ, at the age of 71. C.C. Beck remembered his old friend and business partner as a "fine artist" ... that their work "complemented each other nicely" ... and that Pete "never gave up."

II. "Never Read Them, Only Worked On Them"

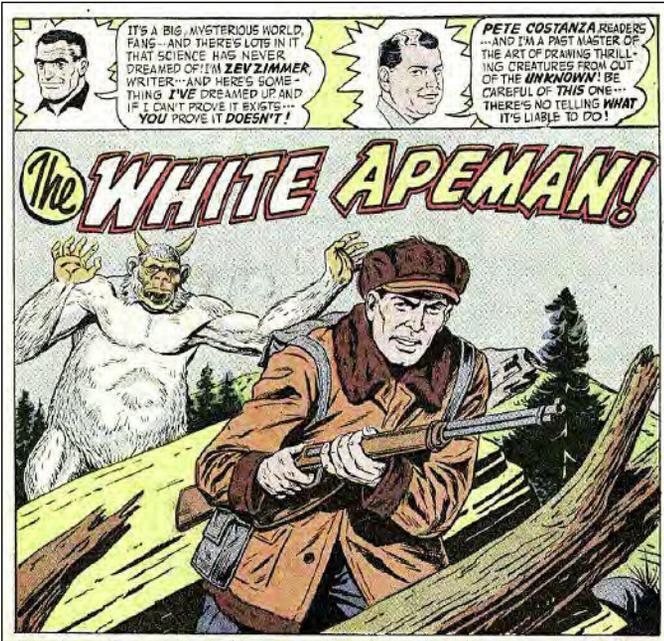
Pete Costanza Interviewed by John G. Pierce, 1977

[FCA EDITOR'S NOTE: In 1977, interviewer John G. Pierce had the privilege of conducting a by-mail interview with Pete Costanza. At that point, the artist had been robbed of the use of his right hand due to the misfortune of a stroke six years earlier, so his answers were transcribed by his wife, Yolanda. A significantly-edited version of the interview originally appeared in FCA/SOB #2 (FCA #13), June 1980 (C.C. Beck's second issue as FCA editor). The following is the first time the interview has been published in its original, fully-intact form. —PCH.]



Getting In Deep

Though C.C. Beck co-created (with writer Bill Parker) and drew the early "Ibis the Invincible" stories in *Whiz Comics*, Costanza soon took over art chores on the feature. This captivating Costanza scene is from *Whiz* #13 (Feb. 1941); script by Bill Woolfolk. This early panoramic panel exemplifies the artist's capabilities... and that there was more to his talents than that of a mere supporter. [Golden Arrow and Ibis the Invincible TM & © DC Comics.]



American's Greatest Comics

Before finishing his comics career with DC Comics, Pete Costanza spent more than a dozen years working on American Comics Group (ACG) mystery and suspense titles, as well as co-creating their two supernatural super-heroes, Nemesis and Magicman, with ACG publisher Richard Hughes. Above left, Costanza and Hughes (the latter under the pseudonym Zev Zimmer) personally introduce their tale in *Midnight Mystery* #6 (Sept. '61).

Beside it is the cover of *Forbidden Worlds* #134 (March-April '66), signed by Costanza—but actually drawn by another former Fawcett artist, Kurt Schaffenberger, who bylined it that way to keep DC editor Mort Weisinger off his back (since KS was also drawing for DC at the time). Kilkenny, the character Magicman is about to rescue, was a recurring character in the stories drawn by Costanza ... and was the splitting image of Pete himself. [© the respective copyright holders.]

JOHN G. PIERCE: Tell us how your art career began.

PETE COSTANZA: I became interested in art at about 11 years old. When I was 15 years old, I studied under Bridgeman, the anatomist, for three years. At 18, I worked on pulp illustrations for a number of years. Then I was fortunate enough to study under Harvey Dunn as a straight illustrator for more than three years.

JP: What were your major artistic influences?

PC: Harvey Dunn and his students Dean Cornwell and Harold Von Smith, Mark Clark and Benton Clarke. I was always interested in straight illustration.

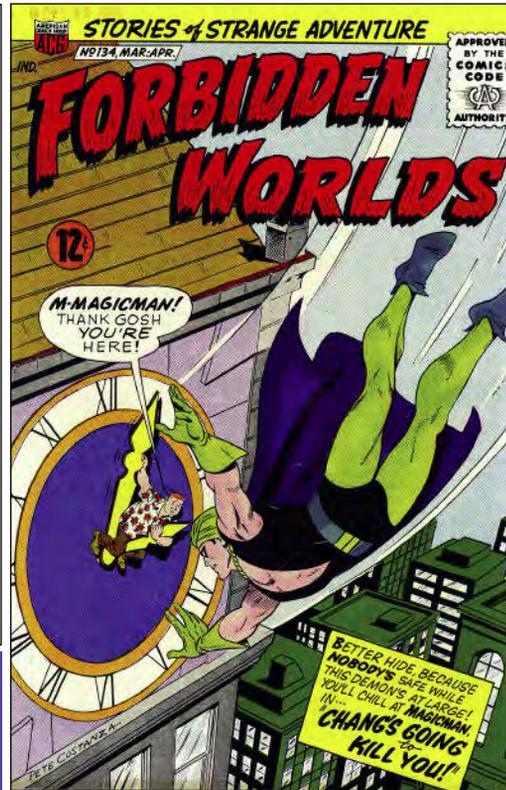
JP: Do you recall your first meeting with C. C. Beck?

PC: I began working at Fawcett in 1939 [and] Beck and I struck it off. He was doing cartoons for Fawcett. I was an illustrator. In 1940 Al Allard told Beck and [me] that Fawcett was going to expand and wanted us to draw "Captain Marvel," which was at the time called "Captain Thunder."

JP: You were the one who came up with the new name, weren't you?

PC: Before the first issue of "Captain Marvel" [i.e., *Whiz Comics* #2] was published, the name had to be changed, and all the writers and artists were asked to submit a new name. I was the one that came up with the name Marvelous. Since there were too many letters in it, it was reduced to Marvel.

JP: Was your first work with Beck on "Captain Marvel" or on a non-CM



feature?

PC: Beck was a cartoonist, while I was a straight illustrator. I started illustrating "Golden Arrow" and later "Ibis." At that time there was too much to do at Fawcett, so [art director] Al Allard told Beck to collaborate with me to do it on our own.

JP: That led to the formation of the Beck-Costanza Studio at that point?

PC: We opened our own studio with a staff of 15 artists. We did *Captain Marvel*

Adventures, *Whiz Comics*, *The Marvel Family*, and other magazines. A paper shortage stopped the big production, [but] Beck and I had enough to do that we worked out of our homes, as lived near each other. We also did "Captain Tootsie" [advertisements].

JP: Who originated "Captain Tootsie"?

PC: It started at the McCann/Erickson Advertising Agency. Beck and I took it over and had a lot of fun doing it.

JP: You were in the Army, correct?

PC: In 1942, I entered the Army, and after 10 months I was discharged because of high blood pressure.

JP: Did Beck transition gradually into straight illustration or were you "indistinguishable"?

PC: Beck and I

JP: Was Beck the

PC: Both Beck

JP: Do you recall

PC: I don't rem

JP: What did you

PC: "Captain M

JP: You made a

PC: I think I di

JP: When drawin

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