

VOL. 1 NO. 7
OCTOBER 1975Comic Book Club of Ithaca
1701 N. Cayuga St. Ithaca, N.Y.
1st & 3rd Tues. of each month

Editorial Dept.-The first editorial is by our former president Aaron Pichel and on the next few pages is an interesting piece of information by Bill Turner. We hope you like them: The new DC magazine "Hercules Unbound" is not bad. The book is written by Gerry Conway and the art is done by J.L. Garcia and Wally Wood. The art sort of looks like Steve Ditko in a funny sort of way but since his name is not in the credits I assume he had nothing to do with it.

You might wonder why both DC and Marvel are putting out a book with the same character in it and both books come out within one month. Well it's done like this: the copywriters figure that a legend or a god cannot be copywritten. That means that we might be seeing a DC Thor.

I personally think that the DC Hercules is better than the Marvel one. It could be that I don't really like the artists that are doing the Marvel one, or it could be that I just think that DC is better. Well it's more to the tune of: I don't like those Marvel artists.

DC's tale takes place in about 1000 years in the future. Ares god of war had chained Hercules to a rock and left him there for a couple hundred years until a blind kid passes by and Herc breaks the chains that hold him. The blind kid and Hercules then go looking for the blind kid's father and ends up killing the poor guy whom Ares had changed into a Smasher (the guy looked an awful lot like the Hulk, is it a coincidence?)

All in all the book was very nice. It was good to see Wally Wood come out of his inking hole and finally do some pencils for a book. Now if only DC would give more credits like: Inker, Editor, Colorist, Proofreader, cover artist, and the guy who empties the wastepaper baskets (we all know that honest Irving Forbush empties them at Marvel).

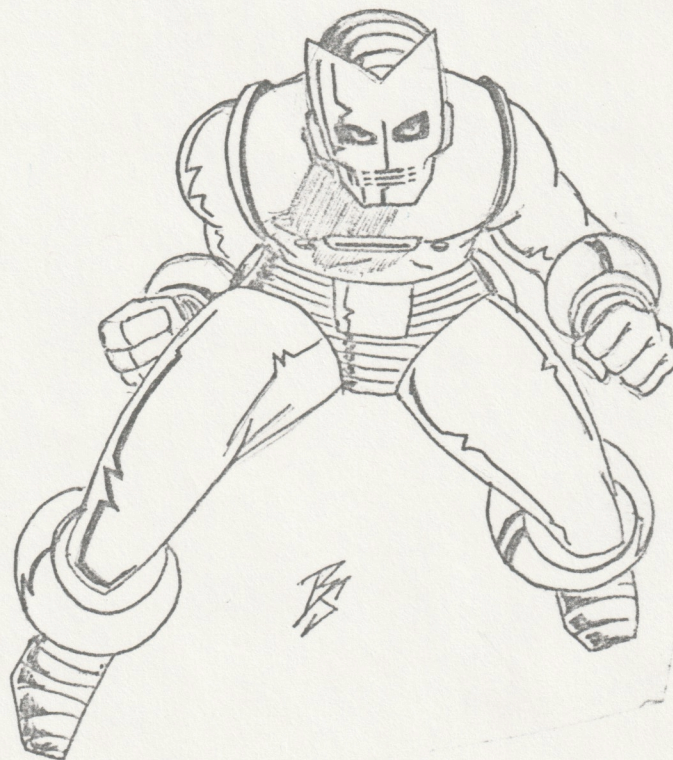
News Dept.-Son of Origins of Marvel Comics by Stan Lee is now on sale. It features the origins of the Silver Surfer, the Avengers the X-Men, Daredevil, Iron Man, S.H.I.E.L.D., and the Watcher. . . Also on sale is the 1976 Marvel Calendar. . . More Kirby covers include: Iron Man 81, Invaders 4, more should be showing up soon. . . Jim Starlin's birthday is October 19th and Glynis Wiens is the 26th send them a card guys. . . There may be a Hulk movie in 76. . . That's it this time folks.

New Issues Dept.-Son of Satan #1, Giant-Size Captain Marvel, Giant-Size Captain America, Marvel Special Collectors Edition, Marvel Adventure, Manbat,

Biographies Dept.-Here now for your entertainment is our 2nd big bio so you may better know your fellow members. This month is a Gray month, Tim Gray month to be exact.

Tim bought his first comics when he was about 12 years old but stopped when the price increased from 12¢ to 15¢ but (there are a lot of them) bought some Silver Surfers. In 1971 Tim was influenced by Paul Hildrith and his collection and started collecting again. His first comics were Amazing Adventures #9 and Fantastic Four #124. Since then he has increased his collection to over 3500 comics. Among these are his oldest comic a 1939 Flash Gordon Big Little Book, and his most valuable comic Amazing Fantasy #15. Tim's favorite artists are Kirby, Smith, Starlin Coburn, and Wrightson. His favorite story is Manthing #5 & 6. His favorite comic is Famous Funnies 214 featuring Buck Rogers. His favorite continuing feature is Spider-Man. Tim became interested in starting a club after he met Aaron Pichel. Aaron started a club in his school and thought it would be nice to have one outside school and since he belonged to other clubs he had the know how and so presto the C.B.C.I. was born.

We now extend a formal invitation to C.B.C.I. members and their ~~family~~ family to the First Annual C.B.C.I. costume Party. The party will be held in the Old Mill at Upper Enfield Park. Come as your favorite character. Drinks will be provided and it is requested that you bring goodies such as food. Prizes will be given away for best costume, most original costume, best villain most humorous, and a real no prize. If you can't find your way we can give you directions. Don't forget! The party starts at 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.. The mill is 3 miles out on 327 off RT. 13. There will be special surprises so don't you miss out. Oh yes, the party is on October 28, Tuesday.



As everybody must know by now, comics in general are undergoing a wholesale retrenchment. The number of titles is being cut back sharply, especially where the larger-size magazines are concerned. The Marvel 50¢ line has been turned into the equivalent of the old 25¢ Annuals; the black-and-whites are reduced in number, and are the worst buy in comic history in terms of pages per dollar. Atlas comics have disappeared entirely. Charleton has cut its superhero comics. Only DC seems relatively unaffected, partly because they never went through the rapid expansion of the past couple of years, partly because they have been cutting titles regularly anyway (the Shadow, etc.) Fear has just been cut at Marvel, and more of the second-string characters are sure to follow Morbius into oblivion.

Of course, there are some bright spots. Warlock is back in his own comic, Steve Ditko is doing several comics (probably all short-run series) for DC, and both companies seem to be seriously be looking for new characters that can draw a good readership. But why is there so much trouble with it all?

In the first place, there is a limited market for comics. The market is limited not only in dollar terms, as Marvel found out with its more expensive lines, but in the actual number of comics that will be sold per month. Compared to the number of comics that are sold every month, there are very few real collectors; the majority of sales are to casual readers who buy only a few comics every month, and are not faithful to a particular title or character. As a company rapidly expands its line, it rapidly reaches the point where its titles are competing with each other.

The more critical point is that distributors and dealers are simply not interested in carrying too many different titles. The average dealer (newsstand, drugstore, etc.) has only one or two racks for comics. After these are filled, more titles simply do not get put out; there is no point in it. Thus, Atlas simply never got its comics distributed widely enough

to make it. They did, however, hurt Marvel enough so that some of its titles had to be cancelled, by squeezing them out of some space on the racks, mostly on the East Coast. Time and again, this overexpansion followed by sudden collapse has struck the comic industry. Ever since the ANC (American News Company) was taken over in a stock raid and liquidated, distribution has been shakey at best, not to mention expensive. Comics are cheap, and thus a low-profit item for the independent distributors to carry. The black-and-whites are an attempt to remedy this, by charging more for the same story, but this has proven unacceptable to the readers.

It is not clear what is going to happen to the industry. My guess is that things will stabilize for a while at their present levels, with more emphasis on the special projects coming out in unusual sizes. An example of this is the Treasury-size giant comics. The Kirby Silver Surfer will come out in this size. Probably there will be a lot more of similar projects that are oriented towards fans, with high prices, small press runs, and much merchandising done at conventions and by mail. This is a ready market; in past years, fans have been getting increasingly organised, to the point where there are sizeable mailing lists available. Charleton is attempting to make a go of its professional fanzine by using old superhero stories in it; if this is successful, their lead will surely be followed by Marvel.

It is good for us all that the companies are realizing that they can't sell their stuff at too high prices. A healthy attitude towards the market will mean healthier companies. A leaner line will mean better comics, as some of the more amateurish artists and writers are weeded out. All in all, what is necessary is a realistic attitude on the part of the the companies who produce comics. Only that way will another low point such as was reached in the late 50's be avoided.

Bill Turner

INACTIVE MEMBERS

Effective immediately, attendance will be taken very strictly at each and every regular Club meeting. If anyone misses four consecutive meetings (two months), he will be placed on the list of INACTIVE members. Inactive members will NOT lose any of their membership priveleges, but will not be counted as Absent if a quorum call is made. What this does is allows us to vote on new officers and on amendments to the Bylaws even if less than half of the total membership is present, as long as two-thirds of the Active members are present. To get from the Inactive list back to Active membership, all you have to do is come to a meeting.

Being present at a meeting will mean staying through the business meeting, not just being there for the trading before the business meeting.

This policy is necessary because of the large portion of our membership that does not attend meetings regularly. This policy, as well as others, will be considered in December and January when a committee will be formed to review the Bylaws and probably rewrite them. As time has passed, we have had to make several amendments and policy decisions that should be incorporated into a revised version of the Bylaws. This will be presented to the general membership in February.

We have not yet made any decision about what do do when a member is far behind in his dues, in addition to being inactive. So far, we have been very lenient about this, perhaps too lenient since it costs the rest of the members money to continue sending newsletters to those who have not paid dues. Because of this, this will be the last newsletter for some of you unless you COME TO A MEETING AND PAY DUES!!!

Anybody who has anything to say about any of these policies, or who wants to be involved with the revision of the Bylaws, should get in touch with Bill Turner or Tim Gray.

THE COMIC BOOK CLUB OF ITHACA

LIBRARY

BOOKS:

<u>All In Color For A Dime</u>	Lupoff & Thompson
<u>The Comic Book Price Guide (1975)</u>	Overstreet (softcover)
<u>Comix</u>	Daniels
<u>Origins of Marvel Comics</u>	Lee (softcover, autographed)
<u>Penquin Book of Comics</u>	Perry & Aldridge (softcover)

MAGAZINES:

Charleton Bullseye	#1 (#3 on order)
The Comic Reader	subscription on order
FOOM Magazine	#4, #6
Inside Comics	#1
Marvel Times	#2
Nova	(one-shot)
The Rocket's Blast Comicollector	#112-date

MISCELLANEOUS:

Article by Mike Costello on Marvel Comics
Letter from Stan Lee thanking Mike for a copy of his article
Dyna-Pubs catalog, featuring their Flashback series of reprints
Cassette recording of Stan Lee at Ithaca College 3/26/75
Cassette recording of Gene Roddenberry at Ithaca College 4/14/75
and usually, the current issue of The Buyer's Guide

Anyone who would be interested in contributing material to the Library, reviewing anything we already have, or ESPECIALLY in making a transcript of our recordings is encouraged to do so.

QUESTIONNAIRE

In an attempt to find out what everybody likes, we are presenting this list of questions. Please fill out the form and either mail it to Bill Turner, 20 N. Triphammer Rd. Apt. 3D, Ithaca, or bring it to the next meeting of the Club. If we don't know what you like, we can't give it to you.

1. Name(optional) _____
2. Age _____
3. Major collecting interests _____
4. Favorite titles/characters _____
5. Are you happy with the Club? _____ Do you have any specific complaints? _____

6. 0=Terrible 1=Poor 2=Fair 3=OK 4=Very Good 5=Excellent

Please rate the following Club activities according to the scale above:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Art displays _____ | e) Newsletter _____ |
| b) Auctions _____ | f) Raffles _____ |
| c) Films _____ | g) Sale of bags _____ |
| d) Lectures _____ | h) _____ |

7. Would you like to be a member of the Executive Board? _____

If so, which one(s)? _____

8. Do you like the idea of a Halloween party? _____

Should it be a costume party? _____ If it is a costume party, will you come in costume? _____

9. As you probably know, we are considering having a Miniconvention in the spring, probably on May 15 (Saturday). This would have most of the activities of a regular convention, with films, a dealers' room, an art display, hopefully guest artists and writers, etc.

Do you think a Minicon would be a good idea? _____

Would you be willing to work on things before the Minicon to get it together? _____

Would you be willing to work during the Minicon to put on program events? (act as guard at art show, run film projector, etc.) _____

10. Do you think the current amount of dues is fair (\$5.00/yr.) _____

Would you be interested in paying higher dues to get things like professionally-printed membership cards, membership pins, etc.? _____

11. What do you think you should be getting out of the Club that you are not getting now? _____

COMIC BOOK CLUB OF ITHACA MEMBERS

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