



## Comic Books: Superheroes/heroines, Domestic Scenes, and Animal Images

Curriculum Unit 80.02.03

by Patricia Flynn

The idea of developing a unit on the American Comic Book grew from the interests and suggestions of middle school students in their art classes. There is a need on the middle school level for an Art History Curriculum that will appeal to young people, and at the same time introduce them to an enduring art form. The history of the American Comic Book seems appropriately qualified to satisfy that need. Art History involves the pursuit of an understanding of man in his time through the study of visual materials. It would seem reasonable to assume that the popular comic book must contain many sources that reflect the values and concerns of the culture that has supported its development and continued growth in America since its introduction in 1934 with the publication of *Famous Funnies*, a group of reprinted newspaper comic strips.

From my informal discussions with middle school students, three distinctive styles of comic books emerged as possible themes; the superhero and the superheroine, domestic scenes, and animal images. These themes historically repeat themselves in endless variations. The superhero/heroine in the comic book can trace its ancestry back to Greek, Roman and Nordic mythology. Ancient mythologies may be considered as a way of explaining the forces of nature to man. Examples of myths may be found world-wide that describe how the universe began, how men, animals and all living things originated, along with the world's inanimate natural forces. The heroes/heroines of the Greek and Roman myths have super human qualities that can satisfy man's need for an invulnerable guardian or protector. Immortality was their assurance. Heroes/heroines of Nordic mythology are not as optimistic. They will fight evil knowing that they become even greater heroes in death. The power of good is not guaranteed to win out in Nordic mythology. Resisting evil is the primary goal. The distinction between Greek, Roman and Nordic mythology is made here, because in the discussion below of the two major superhero/heroine comic book publishers; one has characters similar in style to the Greco-Roman (D.C.), and the other publisher (Marvel) has characters representative of Nordic themes. The comic book hero/heroine is a modification of its ancient source that expresses man's need for feeling control in his life in spite of his vulnerability and mortality. So that students will have alternative choices, comic books that have domestic scenes are included. This style of comic book humorously portrays modes of family life and child rearing. In a third type of comic book, animal characters act out the human predicament of the power struggle between the small guy and the stronger antagonist.

### **Genesis of the Comic Book**

In the late nineteenth century the newspaper industry in the United States was controlled by two men who

were in constant competition for increased sales. They were Joseph Pulitzer of the *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst of the *New York Journal*. In 1894 the illustrator Richard Felton Outcault created a humorous cartoon in color for Pulitzer's *New York World* which was entitled *The Origin of a New Species*, or the *Evolution of the Crocodile Explained*. The comic strip's appearance in the newspaper had one goal profits. Outcault continued with *The Yellow Kid* in 1896. The character in this comic strip had his crude dialogue written on his yellow nightie. The term 'yellow journalism' is derived from *The Yellow Kid* comic strip since its intent was to be sensational and sell more newspapers. Hearst in competition with Pulitzer had Rudolph Dirks create *The Katzenjammer Kids* whose characters spoke a German accented American-English. During economic and political tension in America, the comic strip could divert people from their troubles. The comic strip could be made available to the masses, being published seven days a week. Many of the newspapers' comic strips of the early twentieth century contained ethnic humor or portrayed the American family as poor, but full of pride and ambition. From their inception, comics could be seen as a means of further power and profits for newspaper publishers. Distribution syndicates were formed, and by 1915 strips were made available to smaller newspapers for a fee. <sup>1</sup>

Newspaper publishers continued to develop and refine the comic strip for its adult audience during the 1920's and 1930's. The technology of the printing process improved. The Eastern Color Printing Company in New York City, which had been printing the Sunday color comic strips for newspapers, decided in 1933 to print a comic book entitled *Funnies on Parade*. A copy could be acquired by sending in coupons clipped from Proctor and Gamble soap products. The format took advantage of existent printing processes and color processes. The standard newspaper page was folded in half twice to produce sixteen comic book pages that measured approximately eight by eleven inches, slightly larger than today's comic book. The book was successful, and the following year Eastern published a sixty-four page *Famous Funnies* comic book, reprinting previously published comic strips. As unsophisticated as it seems in comparison to modern comic books, *Famous Funnies* gave its reading audience an entire story sequence rather than the daily segments found in the newspaper comic strip which could take days to complete. <sup>2</sup>

Orienting itself toward "younger" readers of all ages, the comic book from its inception has featured drawings in black and white or color, with or without dialogue, in rectangular or square frames that connect to each other in continuous sequences and episodes. Rather than remaining horizontal like comic strips, the comic book combines the horizontal and vertical on a whole page. Comic books can complete a story, but can also continue the motivation for further sales by providing sequels. The comic book has evolved over the past four decades as a source of reading material that combines visual image and the written word. Humor, adventure, mystery, fantasy, violence, sex, romance and satire are some of the themes to be found in the comic book.

### ***Superheroes/heroines***

For purposes of organization and presentation of this material to middle school students, the two major superhero/heroine comic book publishers are discussed separately, even though they developed their style and characters during the same time period.

In the search for original material for the comic book, *Detective Comics*, which later became National Publications carrying the logo *D.C.*, introduced the character of *Superman* to the public in 1938. Created by writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Schuster a few years earlier, it had been pushed aside for fear that the idea of a superhero would be rejected. *Superman* and the profusion of superhuman characters to follow were not entirely innovative, since they bear a likeness to the heroes of ancient myths. As observed above, *D.C.* comic book heroes/heroines possess some qualities that are similar to the heroes/heroines of Greek and Roman

myths. Many of the superheroes/heroines have a double identity. The heroic side of his/ her personality can accomplish superhuman feats without constraint, while the everyday human side of his personality with its vulnerability made the character easy for the reader to identify with. Superheroes/ heroines give the impression of immortality. They cannot die, but they can have some vulnerability in relation to an object or an energy source. Always fighting the battle of good versus evil, the superhero/heroine combats all forms of enemies from natural catastrophes to man-made injustices, including war. As an example of the above qualities, *Superman* has as his alter ego Clark Kent, a newspaper reporter. (Since 1970, Clark Kent has become a T.V. reporter.) His secret hiding place is known as the fortress of solitude. *Superman's* weakness is kryptonite of various colors. He is superstrong, has X-ray vision and is so fast that he can travel through time. During the Second World War *Superman* was extremely popular with American soldiers. He was a symbol of courage and hope against the real enemies of a real war. <sup>3</sup>

D.C. comics introduced Bob Kane's *Batman* in 1939. *Batman* was not a superhero as *Superman* was, but rather a human with a dual personality. Comic book heroes had to dress dramatically for their roles. *Batman* wore a mask and cape. Skin tight suits in bold color became the norm. D.C. comics continued with *Flash*, *Hawkman*, and *Green Lantern* under the title of *All-Star Comics* in 1940. *Wonder Woman* appeared in her own comic book in 1942 for D.C. comics. She was written by William Moulton Marston to appeal to female readers. As a woman superheroine *Wonder Woman* is an Amazon living on a secret island dominated by women. She conquers her enemies through justice rather than violence. <sup>4</sup>

Following the success of D.C. comic books with their superheroes/heroines, other companies saw the potential for financial rewards. *Captain Marvel* appeared in 1940 in Whiz Comics, a Fawcett Publication. With a dual personality, *Captain Marvel* transformed himself from Billy Batson by saying the name of the wizard "Shazam!" Each letter of "Shazam!" represents an ancient hero: S, for the wisdom of Solomon; H, for the strength of Hercules; A, for the stamina of Atlas; Z, for the power of Zeus; A, for the courage of Achilles; and M, for the speed of Mercury. <sup>5</sup>

Publication of *Captain Marvel* was stopped in 1953 as the result of a lawsuit by D.C. comics contesting that he resembled *Superman* too closely. Quality Comics introduced, in 1941, *Blackhawk*, an ace pilot who was to fight off the German Nazis throughout World War II. The heroes of the comic books were in full gear during the war years. They sold war bonds, and encouraged Americans to salvage scrap paper, wire and rubber. <sup>6</sup> Quality Comics also produced the *Spirit* and *Plastic Man* in 1944. *Plastic Man* was able to stretch and distort his body in fighting crime.

Probably the most flamboyant comic book superheroes/heroines to be found are those published by the Marvel Comics Group. Beginning in 1939 as Timely Publications, with the *Human Torch* and *Sub-Mariner*, Marvel has produced a multitude of superheroes/heroines who derive their super powers from a freak accident or were created by a mad scientist. American science had advanced to the point where the plausibility of such characters could be accepted. Atomic energy was a reality for Americans during World War II, especially in its destructive use on Hiroshima in 1945. *Captain America*, whose power derived from a serum, became a symbol of patriotism during this time. Two major differences can be noted between D.C. and Marvel superheroes/heroines. D.C. heroes appear to have almost omnipotent powers that assure their success in fighting injustices and crime, while the Marvel heroes are superhuman characters that have to go through more complicated trials to set up the situation in which they can win. As for the art work, D.C. comics contained simple, flat drawings and use of color, while in contrast Marvel comics were drawn with exciting color and dramatic action. Marvel comics are known for their drawing techniques that make a spectacular use of the moving form in space giving the illusion of depth. One of Marvel's early artists to use this technique was

Jack Kirby, who had a background in film. <sup>7</sup>

Following World War II, the comic book industry that produced the superheroes/heroines slowed down. The 1950's saw changes that affected the growth of the comic book. Controversy was rampant through the investigations of Senator Joseph McCarthy. Comic books were attacked in Frederic Wertham's *Seduction of the Innocent*, published in 1954. Dr. Wertham, a psychiatrist in New York, sensationally suggested that the comic book was a major cause for delinquency in youth. The comic book industry reacted with the *Comics Code Authority*. When a comic book passed the restrictions listed in the Code, it displayed a seal of approval on its cover. Over the years the restrictions have been altered, but the Comics Code seal can be found at present on comic book covers. <sup>8</sup>

In the early 1960's Marvel Comics launched some new heroes/ heroines with dramatic success that has continued to the present. With the Comics Code affecting their development by requiring that good win out over evil, the characters of Marvel occasionally switch roles. The same character can be a protagonist in one issue and antagonist in another. The first of the new superheroes are the *Fantastic Four*: *Mr. Fantastic*, *The Thing*, *Invisible Girl* and *The Human Torch*, with Dr. Doom being their main adversary. The *Fantastic Four* acquired their characteristics as the result of cosmic radiation. Scientist Reed Richards became the rubber-like *Mr. Fantastic*. Benjamin Grimm is transformed into the orange colossus known as *The Thing*. Brother and sister, Sue and Johnny Storm become *Invisible Girl* and *The Human Torch*. The *Amazing Spider Man* was first published in 1963. He is the dual personality of Peter Parker who earns his living photographing himself in battle as *Spider Man*. *Spider Man* is considered to be one of the most human of superheroes for he never seems to have enough money, has self-doubts concerning his worth, and worries about his Aunt May. Being a superhero is not always easy. The *Incredible Hulk* is a tragic character who was introduced following *Spider Man* and persists today with his own television show. In the pages of the *Fantastic Four* emerged the *Silver Surfer*. *Silver Surfer* is a messenger of the mighty Galactus who feeds on the energy of whole worlds. He refuses to obey Galactus and is banished to earth. *Silver Surfer* is puzzled that humans are the only creatures who kill in the name of justice. New heroes continued to appear such as *Iron Man*, *The Avengers* and *The X-Men*, a group of mutants. Female heroines did present themselves such as *Medusa* with magic red hair, and the *Black Widow*, a counterpart to *Spider Man*. Two Black superheroes are introduced. *Black Panther* is seen in 1966 in *Fantastic Four* for a short time. *The Falcon* arrives in 1969 in the pages of *Captain America*. *The Falcon* originates in Harlem. He travels to an island with his trained falcon to assist people in their fight against the evil *Exiles*. The early 1970's saw the introduction of *Savage Tales* featuring *Conan*, the *Barbarian* aimed at a "more adult" audience. More recently Marvel has introduced: *She-Hulk*; *Rom, the Spaceknight*; and *Star Lord*. Contemporary comic book heroes/heroines involve themselves in present day social problems: drugs, energy, political conflicts between nations, health and space technology. <sup>9</sup>

### **Domestic Scenes**

The portrayal of the American family in comic books is discussed briefly here in order that students can have an alternative style to become involved with. Even though some family style cartoons originate with the comic strip or in the animated cartoon series for television, they are also published in the comic book form.

As a family style cartoon, *Blondie* began as a comic strip in 1930 drawn by Chic Young. Before her marriage to *Dagwood*, *Blondie* was the stereotyped empty-head blonde. With her marriage, *Blondie* becomes the boss and *Dagwood* is subservient to her. *Dagwood* is a combination of the fall guy and the hen-pecked husband. *Blondie* later became a comic book in which the American male was represented as a helpless clown even though he was the economic strength of the family. <sup>10</sup> William Hanna and Joseph Barbera, designers of animated

cartoons, created the stone-age family known as *The Flintstones*.

*Archie Comics* originally was created by Bob Montana for MLJ Comics in 1943. *Archie* represents the so-called “typical” American teenager whose activities revolve around dating, eating and school. *Archie* and his friends reflect the commercialism found in teenage fads and fashions. Among the related *Archie Comics* of a similar style are: *Archie’s Jokes* , *Archie and His Friends* , *Betty and Veronica* , *Reggie* , and *Jughead* .

### **Animal Images**

Another alternative style of comic book that students expressed an interest in are those that present animal images that possess human characteristics. Many of the anthropomorphic animals in comic books originated in the movies with the animated film. The major theme repeated endlessly is that of the clever little animal winning out over his antagonist. Walt Disney came to be known as the biggest name in animated cartoon film since 1920. In 1928, *Mickey Mouse* appeared for the first time in an animated film with a sound track. *Mickey Mouse* was an instant success, with his own magazine in 1935, which later became Dell’s *Walt Disney’s Comics and Stories* in 1940. The early *Mickey Mouse* with red shorts and big yellow shoes worked as a detective until he became the symbol for Disney Enterprises, always preaching a moral. *Donald Duck* appeared in 1936. Drawn by Carl Barks, *Donald Duck* may be considered even more successful in comic books than *Mickey Mouse* . *Donald Duck* , his nephews Huey, Dewey, Louie, and Uncle Scrooge travel all over the world searching for treasure. *Donald* is the fall guy, while Uncle Scrooge is totally absorbed in accumulating piles of money. Capitalism is the theme here. Warner Brothers came out with *Porky Pig* and the popular *Bugs Bunny* in the 1940’s. *Bugs Bunny* , full of wise cracks and confidence, teamed up with *Daffy Duck* against the egotistical *Elmer Fudd* . The appeal of these human-like animals relates to the fact that in the 1940’s American society had lived through a Depression, and the America of small towns was changing. The creators of these comics were people who had lived through the Depression resulting in a preoccupation with money and how to accumulate it. Many of the artists, including Walt Disney and Carl Barks, had grown up in a rural environment. <sup>11</sup>

### **Comic Book Techniques**

Comics are a popular art, part of a mass culture, transmitting the values of the culture as interpreted by the authors. Combining visual image and written dialogue is a process involving the skills and cooperation of many individuals. There are many varying techniques and procedures that occur in the publishing of a comic book. The following is a generalized discussion of procedures that adult commercial comic book publishers use. These procedures can be adapted for use by middle school students in creating their own comic book.

The editors generate an idea which may come from readers’ suggestions; Marvel and D.C. Comics have a page in each issue for readers’ reaction. An author writes the story and a graphic artist designs the drawings. One individual may create both the story and the illustrations. Following this a pencil sketch is made of each picture by a penciler. Drawing ink lines are made to frame each picture. A letterer puts in the text. Then an artist inks in the drawings. After all the pencil lines are removed, each page is sent to the Comic’s Code Authority in New York. After approval is secured, each page is returned for color to be added and photocopying for production. Comic book dialogue has consistent rules to follow. The narrative description of the story is written in short sentences within squares framed by black lines. Conversation is written in balloons with tails pointing toward the speaking character. A balloon drawn with a broken line shows whispering. A pointed line indicates a cry. When a zig-zag shaped balloon is used with a zig-zag line drawn to a telephone, you know that a voice is speaking through the phone. To show a character’s thoughts the balloon is connected to the thinker with small circles. Sounds are expressed through the use of onomatopoeia: ‘ZZZ’ stands for



snoring, and curses are expressed by stars, exclamation marks or other signs. Movement is shown through speed lines. <sup>12</sup>

Whether one values the comic book or not as an art form and reading material, its popularity has endured in America. Beyond the great financial profits for its creators, the comic book has provided its audience with a form of fantasy and escape from the stresses of reality.

### **Comic Book Activities**

Included with this unit is a slide collection containing examples of comic book superheroes/heroines, domestic scenes, and animal images. These examples correspond to many of the comic book characters discussed above. A student workbook is incorporated that demonstrates some of the procedures necessary in the formation of a comic book.

Since the making of a comic book involves the cooperative efforts of many people, it is very suitable for a class activity. The comic book slide presentation is intended not only to demonstrate the historical development of the comic book, but to portray the 'personalities' of the characters, their appearance and the visual techniques used in designing them. From discussion students will individually decide which type of comic book they are interested in working on. Small groups can be formed with students of similar interests. With group cooperation being one of the goals, it is important to encourage mutual respect for each other's abilities and efforts. Among students there will be those who feel more confident in drawing, while others will find their strengths in writing or lettering, etc. Changes are to be expected in the working process. Some preliminary visual processes are planned to encourage originality of ideas along with increasing confidence in designing a character and drawing it in a comic book story.

I. *Construct a three dimensional comic book character* : a superhero, a superheroine, a villain, a family type person or an animal with human characteristics. The three dimensional process can be accomplished utilizing materials such as paper, papier mache, paint, fabric and other 'found' materials. The main objective is to build a unique character that does not imitate an already existing comic book character.

II. *Drawing Activities of the Human Figure* are planned to increase ability and confidence in drawing the human body. At the middle school level students are very aware of their ability or inability to draw the human figure. All efforts are acceptable, since drawing concepts of the human body are very dependent upon the student's developmental level, his or her previous experiences in drawing, and his or her emotional stability. Practice in drawing each other will include *gesture* and *contour* drawing utilizing available drawing materials such as crayon or charcoal. *Gesture* drawing emphasizes a potential for motion and internal feeling. The gesture drawing is accomplished through scribble type lines attempting to capture the whole figure in a very limited time. A count of twenty is sufficient for each pose. There is no attempt at detail and no time allowed for erasure of so-called errors in drawing. *Contour* drawing is intended to gain practice in outlining the entire form of the body without looking at the paper. This is accomplished by coordinating the eyes with the drawing hand, as if one is feeling his or her way around the model with eyes and hand working together. One is not to erase or change the line(s). It is suggested that the model pose with his or her body extended. Avoid difficult compressed poses that demand advanced drawing skills such as foreshortening.

III. *Drawing of Faces* is a very natural mode of expression for the student. Here he/she can have a

multitude of expressions to portray. The face reflects feelings directly and clearly. Circles and ovals form faces with varying lines expressing many moods through the addition of eyes, nose, mouth, ears and hair. In application to the comic book the face can be distorted, features exaggerated and transformed easily into an animal character if desired.

### **Comic Book Activity**

With the previous activities accomplished, the group process of drawing and writing a comic book proceeds. Each group brings together its three-dimensionally constructed comic book characters. The characters are utilized as motivation to create a story. Possible questions that will assist in development of the story are.:

1. My superhero/heroine is going to battle against *who* ? (*villain* ), because the ( *villain* ) has done *what* ? (an injustice, created a threat to society, or plans to harm or destroy *what* ?).
2. My 'family' character has a problem. It is *what* ? My character will solve the problem by *doing what* ?
3. My animal character wants to go on an adventure. He/she/ it wants to go *where* ? in order to do *what* ? or find *what* ? *Who*? or *What* ? tries to interfere with my character's success? How does my character succeed?

Once the story is clarified the actual drawing of the comic book can proceed within the group.

Below is a listing of procedures that the group can use in drawing and writing its comic book.

1. Write a complete story for your characters. A possible technique utilizes the above suggested questions. One student in the group starts the story on paper and then passes the paper on to the next student in the group. The next student adds a sentence that connects to the initial sentence. This procedure continues until the story is complete. All members of the group participate.
2. Draw a four to six page comic book with a cover that visually describes the above story. Include a cover that contains a title and a drawing that invites one to read your comic book. Each page in your comic book can have three to four frames that describe the action of the story. Materials that can be used are pencil, crayon, ink, and colored markers. In drawing the character, especially if it is a superhero or heroine; it can be helpful to draw the character on sturdy paper or cardboard that can be cut out and used as a model for its appearance in each frame. This can alleviate the possible frustration of having to draw the same figure repeatedly. Dialogue and narration can be inserted when needed.

Refer to the above section that describes the rules of presenting comic book dialogue, such as types of balloons, etc.

When the comic book is refined and completed, time can be allotted for each group to share it with the entire class.

## Notes

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1. Wolfgang Fuchs and Reinhold Reitberger, *Comics: Anatomy of a Mass Medium* (Boston, 1971), pp. 11-17.
2. Les Daniels, *Comix : A History of Comic Books in America* (New York, 1971), pp. 10-11.
3. Fuchs and Reitberger, p. 100.
4. Michael Fleisher, *The Encyclopedia of Comic Book Heroes Vol. 2* (New York, 1976), An introduction by Gloria Steinem.
5. Isaac Asimov, *Super Heroes Poster Book* (New York, 1978), p. 4.
6. Michael Uslan, *America At War* (New York, 1979), p. 6.
7. Daniels, p. 137.
8. *Ibid*, pp. 83-90.
9. *Ibid.* , pp. 137-144.
10. Fuchs and Reitberger, pp. 39-41.
11. Daniels, pp. 51-55.
12. Fuchs and Reitberger, pp. 22-26.



## Bibliography for Teachers

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Berger, Arthur Asa. *The Comic Stripped American* . New York: Walker and Company, 1974.

This book discusses the historical growth of the comic strip as a reflection of American culture.

Colum, Padraic. *Myths of the World* . New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1930.

This book discusses Greco-Roman and Nordic myths that provide a historical connection to comic book superheroes/ heroines.

Daniels, Les. *Comix: A History of Comic Books in America* . New York: Outerbridge and Dienstfrey, 1971.

This book is a thorough source on the growth of the comic book, especially the chapters dealing with animal and superhero/heroine characters.

Dorfman, Ariel and Armand Mattellant. *How to Read Donald Duck : Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* . New York:. International General, 1975.

This book discusses how Disney comic books are used to portray propaganda in Central and South American countries.

Feiffer, Jules. *The Great Comic Book Heroes* . New York: Dial Press, 1965.

The heroes of comic books are discussed with wit and understanding of the human need for fantasy.

Feild, Robert D. *The Art of Walt Disney* . New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942.

This book devotes itself to Walt Disney; his personality and his successful rise in comic art. It includes detailed and technical sections on the procedures he developed in animated film.

Fuchs, Wolfgang and Reinhold Reitberger. *Comics: Anatomy of a Mass Medium* . Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971.

This book is a rich and valuable source that discusses the historical development of the American comic book. Also included are sections on European comics and the so-called "adult comics".

Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology* . New York: New American Library, Inc., 1940.

This book discusses Greco-Roman and Nordic mythology.

Horn Maurice. *75 Years of the Comics* . Boston: Boston Book and Art, 1971.

This book places major emphasis on the comic strip in America as a form of communication and art.

Lerner, Max. *America As A Civilization* . Vol. 2. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

This book contains a series of essays that discuss forms of communication in America. An essay on the comic book is included.

Morrisroe, Patricia, "Comic Book Heroes Invade the Movies," *Parade* , May 18, 1980.

This article contains a contemporary look at comic book heroes as they are portrayed in movies.

Norman, Dorothy. *The Hero: Myth/Image/Symbol* . Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1969.

This book organizes the visual images found in the art of many cultures that derive from myths.

Patai, Raphael. *Myth and Modern Man* . Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.

This book presents a psychological approach to comics with discussions of the hero, Mickey Mouse and space travel.

Stephenson, Ralph. *The Animated Film* , New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1973.

This book discusses the historical development of the animated film. It includes both American and European examples that expand the use of film animation beyond the cartoon.

Wertham, Frederic. *Seduction of the Innocent* . New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1954.

This book has as its theme that comic books are a cause for juvenile delinquency. It discusses the 'horror' comic book extensively. As a result of its impact the Comic Book Code Authority was formed that set up the standards in comic book publication.

White, David Manning and Robert H. Abel. *The Funnies: An American Idiom* . New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963.

This book discusses the comic strip, and includes studies made as to who reads the comic strip and why they read it.

## **Bibliography for Students**

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Asimov, Isaac. *Super Heroes Poster Book* . New York: Harmony Books' 1978.

This book is a visual collection of D.C. comic book characters.

Bridwell, E. Nelson. *Batman From the 30's to the 70's* . New York: Bonanza Books, 1971.

This book contains a visual and historical survey of the D.C. comic book character, *Batman*.

Fleisher, Michael. *The Encyclopedia of Comic Book Heroes* . Vol. 2. New York: Macmillan, 1975. (8 volumes)

This book is one of a series of eight volumes that is devoted to the historical development of individual comic book heroes. (Vol. 2: Wonder Woman)

Lee, Stan. *The Fantastic Four* . New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. This book presents in comic book format the birth of Marvel comic book's characters: *The Fantastic Four* .

Lee, Stan. *Son of Origins of Marvel Comics* . New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975.

This book is the second volume in a series of two that discusses the creation of Marvel comic book characters during the 1960's.

Marston, William Moulton. *Wonder Woman* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972.

This book discusses the development of the D.C. comic book heroine, *Wonder Woman* .

McKay, Winsor. *Little Nemo 1905-1906* . New York: Nostalgia Press, Inc., 1976.

This book contains reprints of the comic strip, *Little Nemo* recognized for drawings of fantasy in three-dimensional space.

Robinson, Jerry. *The Comics: An Illustrated History of Comic Strip Art*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974.

This book contains the history of the comic strip through reprints of actual comic strips.

Uslan, Michael. *America At War: The Best of D.C. War Comics* . New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979.

This book contains reprints of D.C. comics that have war as its theme.

## Materials for Classroom Use

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1. *Comic Books*

2. *Set of Slides* : Contains annotated examples of comic book superheroes/heroines, animal images and domestic scenes.

3. *Student Workbook* : Contains simplified instructions and samples that will assist students in making a comic book.

4. *Art Materials*

*Papier Mache* : newspaper, paper toweling, plastic bottles, cardboard, found objects, wallpaper paste, fabric, yarn, paint, glue, and water.

*Drawing and Painting* : crayon, pencil, charcoal, colored markers, drawing paper, black ink, colored inks, and watercolor paints.

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Superhero comics are one of the most common genres of American comic books. The genre rose to prominence in the 1930s and became extremely popular in the 1940s and has remained the dominant form of comic book in North America since the 1960s. Superhero comics feature stories about superheroes and the universes these characters inhabit. Beginning with the introduction of Superman in 1938 in Action Comics #1 — an anthology of adventure features — comic books devoted to superheroes (heroic people with Even comic book superheroes have trouble sticking around for that long - the idea of a female-led humor series selling for 28 years was simply unheard of. Not only that, but the core Millie the Model series eventually split into a number of spin-offs throughout the years. As for the comic itself, Millie the Model tackled a number of different stories and genres over its near-30-year run. Many consider Wonder Woman to be the first true heroine of comic books - but, in reality, Diana Prince wasn't the first super-powered female hero on newsstands. Phantom Lady, published by Quality Comics all the way back in August of 1941, is largely credited with being the first successful superheroine in comics. See more ideas about comic character, comic books art, comic heroes. Guardian of the temple / 3D illustration of science fiction scene showing evil skull faced astronaut space soldier with laser pulse rifle surrounded by alien machinery. Captain Britain. Kallark (Earth-616)/Gallery. Super Hero RPGs - Wayne's Books RPG Reference. A list of products, cover scans, and sources for purchase of these out-of-print books for Super Hero RPGs. Justice League: Cry for Justice #5. Justice League: Cry for Justice #5 real cover by Mauro Cascioli..