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**About Our Cover:** *It was a natural choice to utilize the late great Gil Kane’s half-cover of the classic 1975 Giant-Size X-Men as this basis of this issue’s cover. Working from a copy of its oft-reprinted rough (reprinted yet again, above!), artist Mark Sparacio painted a truly stunning cover especially for Alter Ego. Talk about combining beauty and power!* [Painting ©2006 Mark Sparacio; rough ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.; X-Men TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



*Alter Ego*™ is published monthly, except Jan., April., Sept., and Nov. by TwoMorrows, 10407 Bedfordtown Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614, USA. Phone: (919) 449-0344. Roy Thomas, Editor. John Morrow, Publisher. *Alter Ego* Editorial Offices: 32 Bluebird Trail, St. Matthews, SC 29135, USA. Fax: (803) 826-6501; e-mail: roydann@tinet.com. *Send subscription funds to TwoMorrows, NOT to the editorial offices.* Single issues: \$9 (\$11.00 outside the US). Twelve-issue subscriptions: \$72 US, \$132 Canada, \$144 elsewhere. All characters are © their respective companies. All material © their creators unless otherwise noted. All editorial matter © Roy Thomas. *Alter Ego* is a TM of Roy & Dann Thomas. FCA is a TM of P.C. Hamerlinck. Printed in Canada. FIRST PRINTING.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of  
**Mort Leav & Bill Fraccio**

# An "X"-Rated Movie

**Y**ep, that's right. The *X-Men* screenplay Gerry Conway and I wrote in 1984 for what could've become a major Hollywood movie a decade and a half before the 2000 big-budget blockbuster might easily have been rated "X."

"X" for: extraordinary... exciting... exuberant... excessive... exaggerated... exasperating... exceptional... expressive... explosive...

Execrable? We hope not.

And, finally... *exterminated*.

'Cause, like the vast majority of screenplays written—even *purchased*, as this one was—by motion picture producers, it never got made.

As you'll see in the last of the three *X-Men*-related pieces in this issue, we two veteran comic book writers/editors found the experience (another "X"!) of writing that script to be all the above adjectives, at one time or another... all over a period of a few months in 1984. Still, we deemed it interesting, even amusing, to look back on it more than two decades later... and hope you enjoy our dissection of the event.

Like most things in life, our joint remembrances of writing that script often resemble nothing so much as the classic Japanese film *Rashomon*, in which several people recall the same events through different eyes, with different minds—and wind up occasionally with wildly varying conclusions.

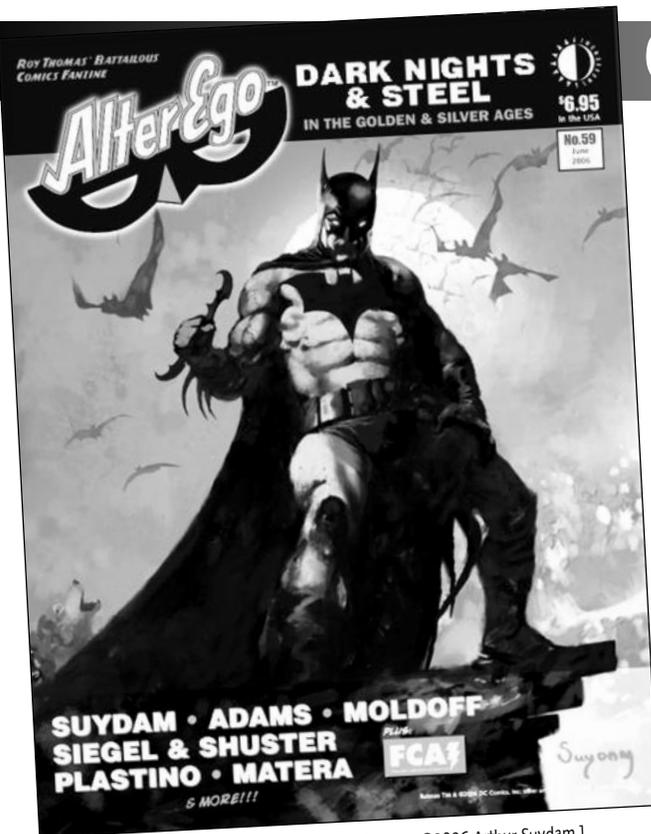
Still, as a snapshot of what it was like, in the mid-1980s, to be working on the screenplay of a potential studio movie at a time after most of the Christopher Reeve *Superman* films, but before Tim Burton took on *Batman*—and in an era when Marvel had had zero success in getting any of its properties transmuted to the big screen—we thought you might enjoy listening in on Gerry's and my recent phone conversation. And reading what Chris Irving has to say about both our *X-Men* screenplay and the comic book, by way of introduction.

Even with this issue's focus on Professor X's exceptional students, though, we still managed to squeeze in plenty of other material, much of it Marvel-related this time... plus our regular departments and another feature or two. We won't claim this issue of *A/E* contains "something for everybody"—but if you have any real interest in the history of the comics field, we kinda suspect you'll find *something* in it to your taste.

From mutants to Manning to MegaCon to *Man Comics*, and, yes, marriage—this one's got a little bit of everything.

Read two articles—maybe three—and e-mail us in the morning.

Bestest,

## COMING IN JUNE

# #59

# DARK NIGHTS & STEEL!

## Batman, Superman, & More In The Golden & Silver Ages!

- Mind-blowing new *Batman* cover painting by award-winning artist ARTHUR SUYDAM!
- *Interviews Galore!* ARTHUR SUYDAM on his early comics career—modern legend NEAL ADAMS on 1960s/70s DC—SHELLY MOLDOFF on *Batman*, *Hawkman*, & BOB KANE—major *Superman* artist AL PLASTINO—& Golden Age illustrator FRAN MATERA (*Doll Man*, *Steve Roper*, etc.) talks to JIM AMASH!
- When *Superman* co-creator JERRY SIEGEL wrote *The Spider!* (No, not *that* one—or *that* one, either!) Article by ALBERTO BECATTINI.
- "*Superman and the Third Reich!*" by DWIGHT DECKER—MURRAY BISHOFF on SIEGEL & SHUSTER!
- Plus FCA with MARC SWAYZE, JERRY ORDWAY, RUBEN PROCOPIO, *et al.*—BILL SCHELLY's 1966 Benson Con Report—MICHAEL T. GILBERT on RUSS MANNING—& MORE!!

Edited by ROY THOMAS

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# “The Kon-Tiki Statue Blowing Its Nose Was Our Favorite Scene!”

A Conversation Between GERRY CONWAY and ROY THOMAS  
About Their 1984 X-Men Screenplay For Orion Pictures

Conducted (Feb. 6, 2006) by Roy Thomas

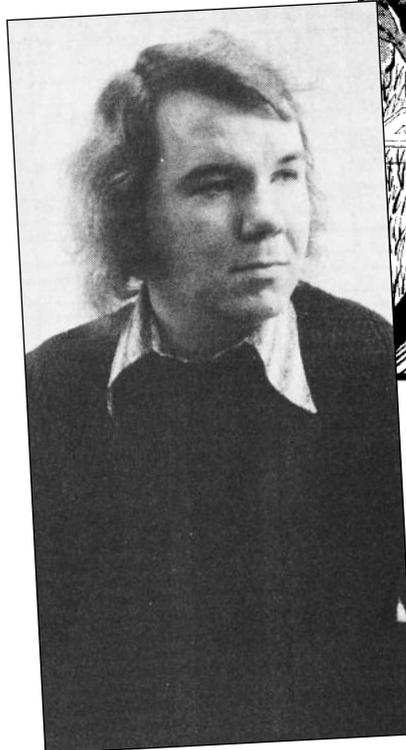
Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

**N**ow that you've read Chris Irving's overviews of both the X-Men comic book series and of Gerry Conway's and my screenplay for a proposed movie starring same, it's time Gerry and I discussed the latter just between the two of us—actually, for the first time since we scribed it, more than two decades ago. When you've finished reading this piece, you'll know about as much as my early-'80s writing partner and I do about the background of that project and script.

Between 1981 and 1985, Gerry and I co-wrote eight screenplays for a variety of production companies and studios. Only two of those were filmed in any form: the



animated *Fire and Ice* (1982), produced by Ralph Bakshi and Frank Frazetta—and Conan the Destroyer (1983), starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Grace Jones, for which we scripted the first five drafts and received “Story by” screen credit—plus royalties which still trickle in, each and every year. During this period, we also wrote six other screenplays (all live-action), for which we were paid, though they were never produced: *Snow Fury* (a horror/science-fiction film based on a 1950s novel)... Cage (also for Bakshi; a film in the “Indiana Jones” mode)... *Spy vs. Spy* (based loosely on the *Probias* feature in *Mad*)... *Doc Dynamo* (a send-up of *World*



### Our Colorful Cast of Characters

Gerry Conway (left) and Roy Thomas (right) a decade before their X-Men screenplay, in photos from 1973's *F.O.O.M. (Friends Of Ol' Marvel)* magazine #1. At that time, Roy was in the middle of his two-year run as Marvel's editor-in-chief, and 20-year-old Gerry was writing key titles like *Amazing Spider-Man*, *Thor*, *Marvel Team-Up*, and *Fantastic Four*. Seen between them is later Marvel & Image artist Jim Valentino's frontispiece for George Olshesky's 1978 *X-Men Index*. The grouping of mutants employed in the 1984 screenplay is the quintet seen at bottom, plus Cyclops and new creation Yoshi Akia, a.k.a. Circe. [Art ©2006 Jim Valentino; X-Men TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

War II movie serials; this screenplay was published in 2005 by Black Coat Press—see p. 84)... The Last Warriors (an sf adventure set in the far future)... and X-Men, based on Marvel's madcap mutants.

Gerry, of course, was a writer (and sometimes an editor) in the comics field from the late 1960s through the 1980s, and co-created The Punisher, Steel the Indestructible Man, Power Girl, and Firestorm, among others. As a teenager he authored the sf novels Midnight Dancers and Mindship. He has been a consulting producer on TV's Hercules and is currently co-executive producer of the series Law & Order: Criminal Intent. He has been nominated for several Emmys and an Edgar Award. —Roy.

**ROY THOMAS:** Do you know how we first got in touch with the people for whom we did the film? Was it [our agent] Dan Ostroff who would've lined it up for us?

**GERRY CONWAY:** Yeah, it was Dan. As I recall, it was right after our Conan script went into production. And he got the call, or he was negotiating with or talking to people at Orion, and our names came up. Unfortunately, they didn't want to pay our rates, so we made a sweetheart deal with them that turned out not to be as much of a sweetheart deal as we'd hoped. [mutual laughter]

**THOMAS:** So even though we were actually working for these two independent producers, you think Dan negotiated with Orion, rather than with them?

**CONWAY:** Yeah. I'm not sure, but I think Orion actually paid the fee. Of course, no one wants to pay any money out of their own pockets. [laughs] So the reason we got less than our usual rate may have been because the [independent] producers were, in fact, paying it out of their own pockets.

**THOMAS:** But at least we got paid... something. [mutual laughter] Do you recall if Michael Hirsh's company was already called Nelvana by that time?

**CONWAY:** Yeah, I'm pretty sure it was. He had that animation company up in Canada.

**THOMAS:** I had heard of him because he'd co-written a book about Canadian comics, and Nelvana was a Canadian comic book character as well as an authentic folk legend. I only recently remembered the name of the other person involved in our plotting. Or, more accurately, I accidentally ran across the name on the back

of another card in my Rolodex file: Jane Kagen. So was it at her house that we had the meetings?

**CONWAY:** No, I think it was the partner's house—the attorney. Remember there were three of them? He had a house in Santa Monica where we met, and I guess she was in Malibu.

**THOMAS:** No, I didn't recall that. I'd forgotten any third person entirely. [NOTE: Judging by a name on a contract-related deal memo I ran across recently, the attorney's name was Bob Kaplan. Both he and Jane Kagen—I think—represented a company called Film Development Fund. —Roy.]

**CONWAY:** I remember the attorney had apparently read Syd Fields' book on screenwriting—and he kept asking us things like, "Where's your plot point A?" And we're like, "What?" [mutual laughter]

**THOMAS:** Had we read Fields' book by this point, do you know?

**CONWAY:** I think we read it after that—because this guy kept talking about it. But we looked back at our scripts and it turns out we actually had been doing it.

**THOMAS:** Yeah, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing for these guys. [laughs] Maybe for us, too.

**CONWAY:** I do recall that Jane was apparently from a wealthy, well-connected L.A. family, and that her father had bought a lot of property up in Palmdale for development. This was, I think, right during the middle of one of the depressions in the housing market. So she was making bitter comments about how Palmdale was her inheritance. [laughs]

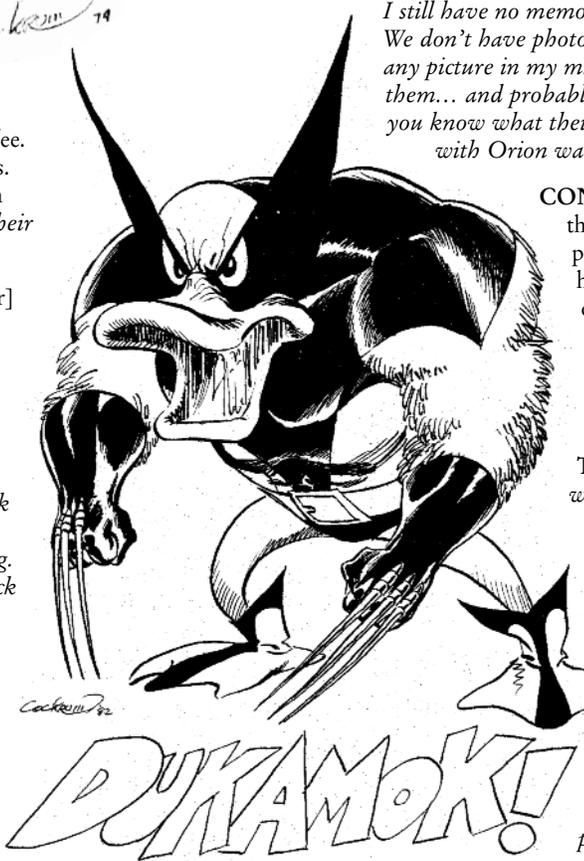
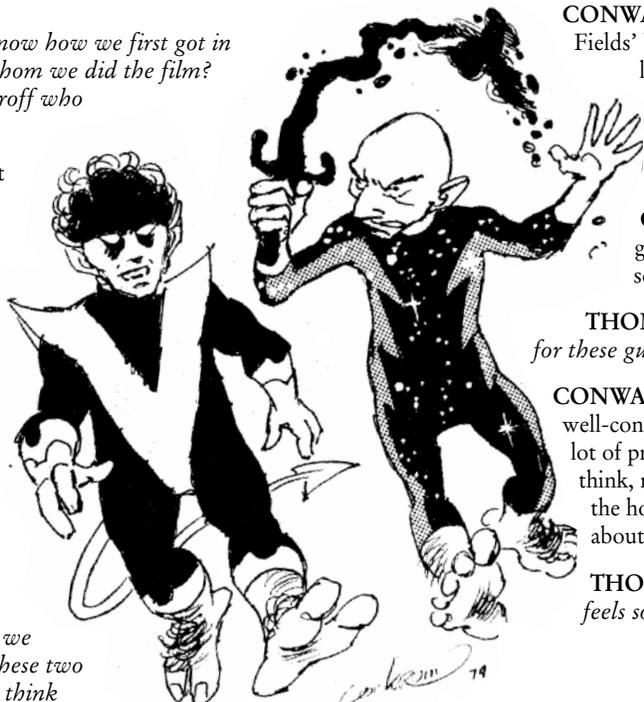
**THOMAS:** You know what Hemingway said: "Nobody feels sorry for a girl crying on a yacht." [mutual laughter] They seemed all right, though, basically. I still have no memory of the attorney. We don't have photos, so I don't have any picture in my mind of any of them... and probably vice versa. Do you know what their arrangement with Orion was?

**CONWAY:** I think they'd sold the project to Orion, or had some kind of an option on it. And we were their last chance to get it off the ground, as I recall.

**THOMAS:** Why were we their last chance?

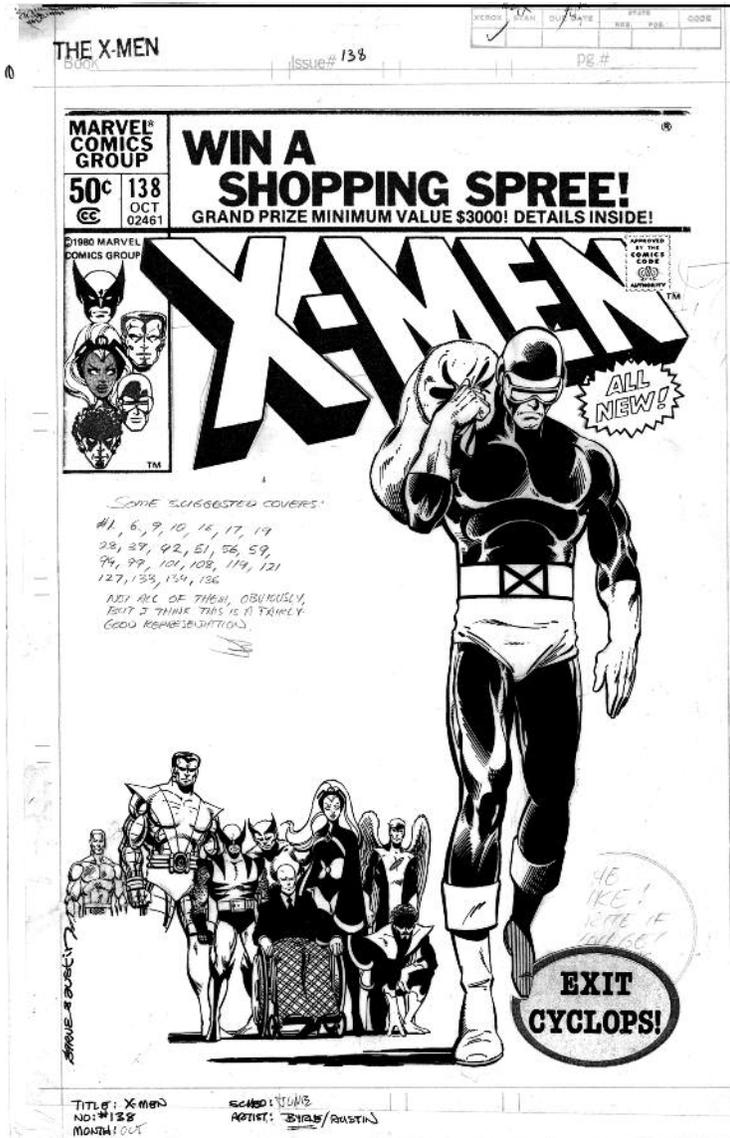
**CONWAY:** Because they had run through all their development money.

**THOMAS:** [laughs] So maybe we weren't the first people to try



**Laugh And The World Laughs At You**

As seen in X-Men features in Alter Ego #24, E #25, Dave Cockrum, original artist of the revived "New X-Men" in 1975, often amused himself by doing humorous mutant-related drawings. Here are two of them—including one of Nightcrawler, a character Dave created. As this interview moves along, you'll see why Gerry and Roy feel they could've used a good laugh while writing their X-Men screenplay. [Art ©2006 Dave Cockrum; Nightcrawler & Wolverine TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



### Cyclops Sees Double

(Left:) The classic *X-Men* #138 cover by John Byrne & Terry Austin featured Cyclops—marred by that humongous “Shopping Spree” blurb. (Talk about the tail wagging the dog!) (Right:) This image from a John Byrne/George Pérez *X-Men Portfolio* featured both the mutants and Byrne’s own Canadian creation, Alpha Flight. [Both original-art images ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.; with thanks to Dominic Bongo & Heritage Comics.]

writing that X-Men movie for them? Well, if not the first choice—the last choice, anyway. This was while our first draft of the second Conan movie was still floating around Hollywood, and producers were seeing that script and asking us why Dino [DeLaurentiis] didn’t make the movie based on our script instead of the 18th draft written by Stanley Mann—and we couldn’t answer them, because we very much agreed with them.

CONWAY: Even Arnold [Schwarzenegger] asked us that.

THOMAS: Right. I remember him saying, “I liked your script da best!” at the party at Dino’s gourmet fast-food restaurant in Beverly Hills. Well, Arnold was a politician, even then. [laughs]

CONWAY: He was that.

THOMAS: [laughs] I know we finished the X-Men script around the time Orion started having its real financial problems, with which I’m not too familiar. And Orion sank—maybe not without a trace, but it sank soon thereafter. Was that given as the problem, or was it just they didn’t like our script or the approach or something? Do you recall?

CONWAY: I think Orion just sort-of faded out. I think they had other things on their mind, and they knew [by that time] they couldn’t finance

a film as expensive as this one would have been.

THOMAS: This wasn’t a Woody Allen film like the ones they’d been doing.

CONWAY: Yeah, Orion was doing much smaller-budget films. They’d been a big player for a few years, but they were beginning to fade out, and I don’t think they were around much longer. Once again, like with our *Adam Link* deal with United Artists, it was just bad timing on our part. [NOTE: Remind us to tell you some other time about how we almost wrote a movie about Otto Binder’s robot hero. —Roy.]

THOMAS: I hadn’t re-read the full X-Men screenplay in years. For some reason, though, I recall how my Pontiac Firebird broke down once between San Pedro and a meeting up in Santa Monica, so I rented a Cavalier and drove the rest of the way. It was a fairly zippy little car, and I got a speeding ticket on the way home because I didn’t realize I was 15 miles over the speed limit. Dann and I wound up buying a Cavalier as our next car. Funny that I can remember that better than I can recall many aspects of the screenplay itself!

For instance, I keep wondering whether Michael and Jane—and now you’ve added the attorney—had some idea already in mind for

Timely/Atlas/Marvel Biography Series #1

# Bob Brant And The Trouble-Shooters —Plus Lance Brant

by Thomas C. Lammers

**W**ith this issue, Tom Lammers and Alter Ego launch a new and occasional series of Timely/Atlas/Marvel “biographies” of short-lived features from the 1950s.

It seemed appropriate to begin with the above-named series from 1953, which is not only about a bunch of teenagers only slightly younger (at most) than *The X-Men*—but which even has a “mutant connection.” We’ll let Tom take over from this point, starting with his list of the stories covered in two related series, starting with the coded Timely “job-numbers” listed on their splash panels (as explained by Tom back in issue #49, in his in-depth article on the Timely/Atlas “Implosion” of 1957):

## Appearances:

- C-293 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: “Behind the False Face!” (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #26 (May 1953)
- C-378 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: [“The Dead Ringer!”] (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #26 (May 1953)
- C-379 Lance Brant: “The Tarantula’s Web” (5 pp.) *Man Comics* #26 (May 1953)
- C-511 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: [“Rocket to the Moon!”] (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #27 (Jun 1953)
- C-560 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: [“The Faceless Man!”] (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #27 (Jun 1953)
- C-621 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: “The Crawling Things!” (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #28 (Sep 1953)
- C-622 Lance Brant: “Death Is a Spy’s Reward” (5 pp.) *Man Comics* #27 (Jun 1953)
- C-796 Bob Brant and The Trouble-Shooters: “Where Mummies Prowl!” (9 pp.) *Man Comics* #28 (Sep 1953)
- C-824 Lance Brant: “Toying with Death” (5 pp.) *Man Comics* #28 (Sep 1953)



## Man and Boy

This dramatic cover for issue #26 introduced the “Bob Brant” series. He, his buddies, and his family took over the mag for its final three issues. There’s something a bit odd about a comic called *Man Comics* that stars mainly young boys—but hey, they couldn’t exactly change the name to *Boy Comics*, could they? Lev Gleason and Charles Biro already had that title all sewed up! All art for this article supplied by Thomas C. Lammers. [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

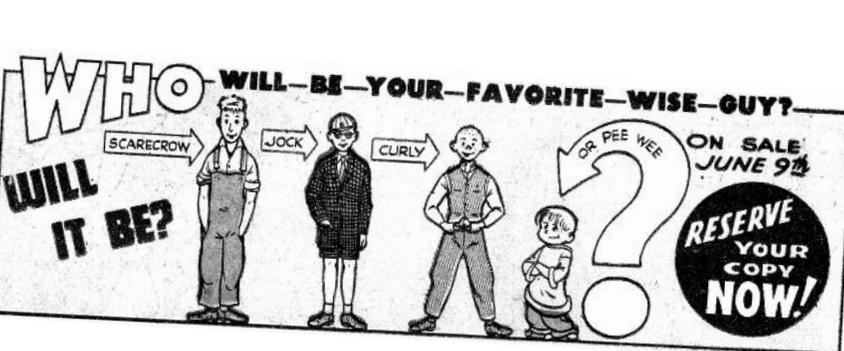
## Biographical Notes:

[from Story # C-293 except where otherwise noted]

**Bob Brant** is a high school student and “a typical American boy” who lives in New York City [C-560]. He is athletic, handsome, and blond, and is characteristically dressed in a red letter-sweater with a large “B” on the front. He drives a green 1920s-vintage touring car of uncertain reliability, and is a licensed pilot [C-378]. His pet is a semi-anthropomorphic raccoon named **Reuben**.

**Bob’s father** is head of the United Nations Security Police. His **mother** was formerly “**The Great Cecile**,” a trapeze artist with Jingling Brothers Circus; she had her son on a trapeze before he could walk, and by his teen years he is a skilled aerialist. His mother was killed in a performance accident when Bob was six years old.

Bob’s older brother **Lance Brant** is a troubleshooter for the UN, working for the UN Security Police [C-379], though his father does not seem to be his boss. Instead, he has received orders directly from the U.N. [Security?] Council [C-511]. Later, he receives orders from the Intelligence Department [C-621] and is described as a government agent [C-824] and a special investigator [C-824]. Perhaps this indicates that he left the employ of the United Nations and went to work for some agency of the American government.



**Don't Be A Wise Guy—Or Maybe You Should!**

See? Reading horror comics didn't hurt kids, like Doc Wertham claimed! In the two panels at left from the lead story in *Man* #27, The Trouble-Shooters read Timely's horror mags—though *Menace* and *Strange Tales* didn't usually feature stories about a rocket to the moon.

The Trouble-Shooters seem at least partly inspired, both in stories and visuals, by the success of "The Little Wise Guys" in Gleason/Biro's *Daredevil* comic. The latter are depicted at right, in art from an ad for a "Wise Guy Contest" featured in *Daredevil* #64, (July 1950). Daffy resembles Scarecrow, and Bomber is the size of Pee Wee. Which is even less surprising when you realize that the artist of all the "Bob Brant" stories was Carl Hubbell, who often drew for Gleason's comics. [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

Bob's teenage friends are known as **The Trouble-Shooters** [C-378]; their hangout is a large building labeled "Hanger Thirteen." **Daffy** is a slim dark-haired boy who favors sweater vests and is not noted for his wit or intellect. **Feathers** is an intellectual Native American with a large vocabulary, who wears a headband with a single feather. **Bomber** is a red-haired boy, clearly younger and in a lower grade at school [C-796]. Two female classmates are often around, too, although they are not considered members of The Trouble-Shooters. Bob likes pretty redhead **Carol Carter**, but she won't give him the time of day. She thinks he's "spineless" and a "sissy" [C-560], and criticizes him for not being dashing or adventurous [C-378] like his older brother, on whom she has a crush. **Bess** is her slim brunette friend, who wears eyeglasses. She likes Bob but realizes he's out of her league, so is content to pursue Daffy, who doesn't appreciate the attention.

Because of their careers, Lance and Mr. Brant are often involved in counter-espionage and crimefighting. Bob and The Trouble-Shooters typically become involved as well, though this fact almost always is not recognized by Bob's brother or father, by the authorities, or by Carol and Bess.

**Adventures:**

In "Behind the False Face!" [C-293], Carol's father **John Carter** is asked to serve as a proxy for the minister from Norovia for an important vote at the United Nations. If Norovia sides with the western democracies in this vote, it will swing things against the Communist bloc. To prevent that from happening, the Reds dispatch a vicious spy known as **False Face**, "the super crook with a million ugly faces" [C-621].

Coincidentally, Bob is selected by a city committee to serve as this year's "mayor for the day"; the reins of the city are placed completely in his hands. Knowing this, False Face and his gang invade the mayor's office and force Bob to send the police on a wild goose chase. They then abduct John Carter, as well as Carol and Bess, holding them captive in an old Tong mansion in Chinatown. Bob and The Trouble-Shooters track them there and fight with them until the police

arrive. Carter and the girls are rescued and most of the spy gang is captured, although False Face escapes. Bob and his pals slip out unnoticed, so that their role is unknown to authorities or the girls.

In "The Dead Ringer!" [C-378], Mr. Brant is on a mission for the UN to Idnshar, a small kingdom in the North African or Arabian desert. When the old king died, his teenage son ascended the throne as **King Ibn-Taub**. However, the boy's mother (who died in childbirth) was an Englishwoman, and the young king "looks like an English boy." For this reason, his uncle **Col. Faroun** wants to dethrone him and rule in his stead. Once he is on the throne, Faroun plans to become partners of the Soviets and to aid them in conquering the world.

**BOB BRANT AND THE TROUBLE-SHOOTERS!**



**Enter False Face**

Hubbell's splash for the first "Trouble-Shooters" story, introducing the villainous False Face. [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

Because it is a school vacation and the government aircraft is large, Mr. Brant invites Bob, The Trouble-Shooters, and the girls along on the junket. Touring the local bazaar, the teenagers encounter American **Willy Wonder**, a salesman for Wonder Tractors, who was stranded in Idnshar when his company went out of business; he is trying to sell a tractor to get money for his fare home. The only person interested in the tractor is young King Iba-Taub, who incredibly turns out to be Bob's exact double! No sooner has the king placed his *burnous* on Bob's head, to show how much they resemble one another, than Col. Faroun's men arrive. Mistaking Bob for the king, they abduct him and lock him in "the dungeon that shrinks," a cell where the ceiling and floor move inexorably together. Fortunately, The Trouble-Shooters arrive in the nick of time, using Willy's tractor to free Bob. After Faroun's attack on the palace is repelled, thanks in part to the Trouble-Shooters and Willy's tractor, Faroun flees to a private airstrip near the Dervish Oasis. Bob and the Trouble-Shooters manage to get there first,

# Riddle Of The Rabble Rouser

Or, A Hate-Monger By Any Other Name...

by Will Murray

**F**or almost 40 years, I've been bothered by the "Human Torch" story that ran in *Strange Tales* #119 (April 1964), "The Torch Goes Wild!" More specifically, by the bizarre villain Johnny Storm fought in that issue. I refer to the cretin who called himself The Rabble Rouser.

A self-styled "undercover Red agent" operating as a Manhattan soapbox agitator, he had an awful lot in common with The Hate-Monger, whom the Fantastic Four had vanquished just four months before in their own title ("The Hate-Monger!" *Fantastic Four* #21, Dec.



## Two Of A Kind

What is the relationship—if any—between The Hate-Monger and The Rabble Rouser? Between the Hate Ray and the Mesmerizer Wand? Read on and see what Will Murray has to say about it! The covers of both *FF* #21 and *Strange Tales* #119 are by Jack Kirby & George Roussos ("George Bell"); thanks to Nick Caputo and Steve Whitaker for the *ST* credits confirmation. Art accompanying this article is repro'd from *The Essential Fantastic Four*, Vol. 2 and *Essential Human Torch*, Vol. 1 (and only, since it printed the entire Silver Age "Torch" canon). [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

1963). To begin with, both men specialized in inciting street-corner passions and violence.

Now, it was not unusual for Stan Lee to recycle villains. Henry Pym was kidnapped into another dimension as Ant-Man in *Tales to Astonish* #41... and the same thing happened the minute he became Giant-Man. Tyrannus was just a handsome version of The Mole Man... The Titanium Man, a green Crimson Dynamo. Mr. Doll was The Puppet Master in a voodoo rig. And what was Kang the Conqueror but a futuristic Dr. Doom? Literally. Lee was not above recycling names, either. Bad Dr. Strange, meet Good Dr. Strange.

But the correspondences between The Hate-Monger and The Rabble Rouser are a little *too* close for coincidence.

Consider: both packed a mind-control weapon that brought out the worst in people. Nothing new there. The Fantastic Four were subjected to a similar emotion-intensifying ray at the hands of Kurrro, Master of Planet X, back in *FF* #8. The Hate-Monger used his pistol-like Hate



Then there is the rough look of The Rabble Rouser. Although he describes himself as a Red agent, he's dressed like an Andean peasant. There are passing references to his wanting to be the next Castro and rule some puppet country, but otherwise no explanation for his odd garb is given. For that matter, The Rabble Rouser isn't even given the obligatory origin! Unlike The Hate-Monger, he doesn't have an army of thugs, but operates alone. And where does he get the money for his subterranean vehicle? Come to think of it, where do you *buy* something like that?

Note that The Hate-Monger operated out of the South American republic of San Gusto. The Rabble Rouser seems to hail from Greenwich Village. At any rate, that's where he has his low-rent lab.

But it's The Rabble Rouser's strange hairy features that bother me

the most. He sports a bushy "uni-brow" and Fu Manchuish mustache that seems unusually wild. Further, it changes from panel to panel. Now, Dick Ayers inking himself is virtually guaranteed to produce a uniform, consistent look, even in those busy days when he was inking up at storm for Stan Lee. Ayers was a seasoned professional. A rush job wouldn't cause him to produce facial hair so far off the mark as to look amateurish.

**Heil Hair!**

On the final page of *FF* #21, as seen above, The Hate-Monger turned out to be either a 70-plus-year-old surviving Adolf Hitler—or one of his "many doubles." Will Murray believes some of the facial hair on The Rabble Rouser (right) may have been hastily added by someone other than artist Dick Ayers—perhaps even Stan Lee himself—because Dick had originally penciled and inked Rab, as per instructions, as a dead ringer for *Der Führer*.  
[©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



Ray, The Rabble Rouser employed his Mesmerizer Wand. Different toy, same result.

Most striking is the underground tunneler that both men just happened to control. In *FF* #21, it was described as a Russian rocket engine modified for subterranean travel. In *Strange Tales* #119, Lee called it "a modified version of a Red prototype sub-surface vehicle built to operate in New York's vast subway system."

I have a theory about the Rabble Rouser, and it's this:

He was really The Hate-Monger come back from the dead.

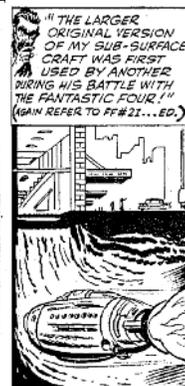
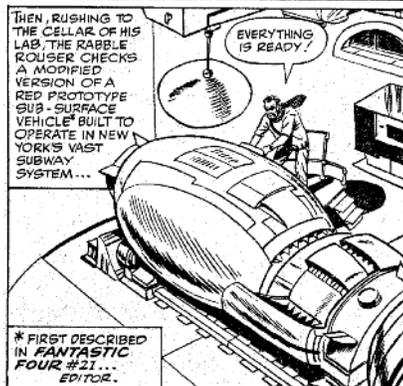
In what appears to be a clearcut flashback sequence, Ayers virtually swipes the Kirby panels from *FF* #21 showing how it operates. Lee even footnotes the reference twice in two panels, going so far as to have The Rabble Rouser refer to it this way: "The larger original version of my sub-surface craft was first used by another during his battle with The Fantastic Four."

Why not just mention The Hate-Monger by name? Maybe because it would've called attention to the eerie parallels between the two villains.



**Hey, Hatey—Mind If I Borrow The Car?**

Perhaps the strongest element of Will's argument is the fact that both The Hate-Monger and The Rabble Rouser use the same "modified version of a Red prototype sub-surface vehicle"—which the first of Stan Lee's two footnotes about it in the later "Torch" story actually says was "First described in *Fantastic Four* #21"! *FF* #21 interior art by Kirby & Roussos; *ST* #119 interior art by Dick Ayers. [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



How can that be when The Hate-Monger, after being gunned down by his Hate-Ray-maddened semi-stormtroopers, was unmasked as Adolf Hitler—or at the very least a lookalike double—at the climax of his first encounter with the Fab Four?

Well, Lee and Kirby were not above resurrecting old villains without a good explanation. The Radioactive Man is shown literally going nuclear at the end of his first

# “Jack [Kirby] Says You’re A Good Artist”

VIC CARRABOTTA Talks About Drawing For Timely/Atlas, Biro, Et Al.

Interview Conducted by Jim Amash      Transcribed by Teresa R. Davidson

**I** don't know whether it was Vic Carrabotta's unusual name or his drawing style that first attracted my attention when I was a kid. It doesn't matter, because I liked his crime and horror work for Timely, some of which Marvel reprinted in the early to mid-1970s. I always wondered about Vic, partly because he wasn't drawing comics when I came of reading age. So when Roy Thomas discovered that Vic now lives in Columbia, South Carolina, within an hour's drive from him, he passed the contact info along to me. Now, finally, I got to learn about Vic, and so will you. And if this interview isn't enough, check out Vic's website at [www.quickvics.com](http://www.quickvics.com). —Jim.

## “They Used To Call Me ‘Carburetor’”

**JA:** When and where were you born?

**CARRABOTTA:** I was born in Eastchester, New York, in 1929. June 24.

**JA:** I'm curious about your last name.

**CARRABOTTA:** It's Italian. Carrabotta. They used to call me “Carburetor” in the Marine Corps. [mutual laughter]

**JA:** What got you interested in drawing?

**CARRABOTTA:** There's quite a lot of art in my family. When I went to Catholic School, I was only 5 or 6 years old and I was the only Italian kid in the school. The sisters always sat me in the back of the class. When I was in the 2nd grade, the sisters called my parents and said that there must be something wrong with me because I wasn't learning anything. It turned out that I couldn't see the board because I needed glasses. While the other kids were learning, I was sitting there with my head a few inches over my desk, drawing. That's when I learned to draw. I actually drew very well; I had my own technique. I was in my own little world. I used to listen to radio shows like *Little Orphan Annie*. Drawing was my life.

At the age of about 15 or 16, I heard there was a kid around the block, who was a little older than me, who worked for National (DC) Comics. His name was Jerry Grandenetti. I picked up with Jerry and he was very nice. He said, “I'm working with Will Eisner, but when I come home, meet me by the subway and I'll teach you how to ink.” He was nice enough to teach me how to ink. I could always draw, I always had the ability, but Jerry taught me the technique of comics.



### “V” Is For Vic

Vic Carrabotta in a recent photo—and one of his recent illos. The latter illustrates his point, made in this interview, that he wishes he'd had a chance to draw super-heroes during his 1950s stint at Timely. Photo & art courtesy of the artist. [Art ©2006 Vic Carrabotta.]

From there, I didn't take the art seriously because I had other things on my mind. I was also a musician, a guitarist. I ended up in the Marine Corps Dance Band.

**JA:** When were you in the service?

**CARRABOTTA:** 1948–1951. I was supposed to go out of Camp LeJune, but my wife Connie was pregnant at the time. There was no one at home to take care of her, so I applied for a discharge. They said they could keep me here if I wanted and they had wanted to put me on *Leatherneck Magazine*. I decided to go. So I missed a good opportunity there. I would've been stationed in Washington, DC. After the Marine Corps, I didn't do too much drawing except going to the library and drawing horses, that kind of thing.

I went to Music & Art High School and did a lot of drawing there. Joe Kubert went there. I went into construction doing bricklaying with my cousins, a typical Italian thing. I was also going to Cartoonists' & Illustrators' School (later renamed the School of Visual Arts), and Jerry Robinson was one of my teachers. I was laid off in the winter months, and my wife at the time suggested I get into the publishing field. She was instrumental in getting me into comics. I never thought I could do comics, even though Jerry Grandenetti had taught me and I had the



**Portrait Of The Artist As A Young Bullpenner**

Vic in 1952, while working for Stan Lee at Timely Comics—and the splash from the very first story he did for Timely: "The House on the Hill" (not quite "The House on the Haunted Hill," as he remembered—he probably had it confused with the movie!). The story appeared in *Astonishing* #13 (May 1952). Thanks to Chris Brown for the scan. Photo courtesy of the artist. [Art ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



JA: He didn't criticize you?

CARRABOTTA: No, not at all. We worked very large in those days. Most people used a #3 brush; I used a #2 brush. To my eye, it looked fine, but when it's reduced, you lose the image. Today, I don't use a brush. When I do storyboards I use Pentels, which I use as a brush. Anyway, Stan kept giving me more work. That's when I met John Romita.

**"You Know, You Sketch Pretty Good..."**

JA: Let's go back before your days at Timely. What do you remember about Jerry Robinson as your teacher?

CARRABOTTA: I had him for 2 or 3 classes. He was quiet, a very nice guy. He basically taught us to draw from the mind. I've been doing that ever since I was a kid. I can copy, but just to draw. People don't do that today. It's a dead thing. Jerry is a very good illustrator, a great cartoonist. I remember what he looked like, the glasses and so forth. He was a very good teacher. [NOTE: For an extended interview with Jerry Robinson, see Alter Ego #39. —Jim]

JA: Did you take any classes from Burne Hogarth?

CARRABOTTA: I took a couple, like Dynamic Anatomy or whatever the heck it was. He bawled me

ability. I got myself a little homemade desk and did a couple of samples. Connie and I would go from the Bronx to Manhattan with 20¢ in our pockets—she was pregnant—and we would go to publishing houses. We went to Magazine Management, where Stan Lee was. Nothing happened there. We went all over.

We always went together. It was the winter and she was about 7 or 8 months pregnant. We went up to see Jack Kirby. Connie sat down in the lobby and I went to Jack's cubicle in the back. Jack didn't see her. Jack looked at my samples and didn't seem that enthusiastic, because my stuff wasn't that great in those days. He said, "Don't call me, I'll call you." Jack was very nice. I was just a kid back then, only 21. As he walked me out, I said, "By the way, this is my wife, Connie." Connie stands up and Jack does a double-take up and down because she's pregnant. He says, "Oh... how are you, Connie?" Jack said to me, "Have you seen Stan Lee?" I told him I tried, but I couldn't get in because he didn't know who in the hell I was. He said, "Sit here a minute, I need to go back to my office." He writes a note and seals it, and tells me to go back to Stan with the note. I went back to Magazine Management with my wife on the elevator. Kirk Douglas was also on the elevator. I guess he was filming *Detective Story* at the time. [mutual laughter]

Once in the Timely offices, the secretary addresses me to Stan and here I am meeting Stan for the first time. There's Stan, casual as all, feet up on the desk, reading this note from Jack. Stan said, "Jack says you're a good artist." I said, "Oh, I don't know. Would you like to see my samples?" He says, "No, that's OK. Jack says you're a good artist. I tell you what," and he throws this script across the desk. He says, "I want this back in a week." It was "The House on the Haunted Hill." God knows where it was published! I used my cousin as a model. I don't even want to look at it, it was so bad. I didn't know how thick the line needed to be for reproduction. It was so thin you couldn't even see it. I was surprised Stan accepted it.

**Hellbound For Spellbound**  
A moody Carrabotta splash page from *Spellbound* #21 (April 1954). Thank to Dr. Michael J. Vassallo for the art scan. [©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]



# When Is An “Unknown” Not Unknown?

A Look At The Life And Career Of Artist RAY WILLNER  
Part IV in Our Series “THE GREAT UNKNOWNNS”

by Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr., and Hames Ware



## Two Willner Wonderworks

The cover of *Smilin' Ed's Buster Brown Comics* #17 (no date) and the splash of his super-hero tale in *Cat-Man* #32 (Aug. 1946), that Holyoke title's final issue. Ye Editor was struck by how much, in various panels of his personal copy of *BB* #17, Willner's art resembled that of two Filipino ace artists of later years, Alfredo Alcalá and (especially) Nestor Redondo. All art accompanying this article was provided by Jim Vadeboncoeur, Jr. [©2006 the respective copyright holders.]

**W**hen is an “unknown” *not* unknown?

What if he had a career that was only *partially* documented? To find an artist with such an alter ego, we need look no further than the work of one of the finest artists ever to draw for comic books, and yet one whose name is almost as little known as Orestes Calpini's: Ray Willner.

Ray Willner may not be as “unknown” as some who have appeared in this column. After all, he signed work in the early Golden Age—such as “Bill Handy” in Worth's *Champion Comics* #5 from March 1940 (which later became Harvey's *Champ Comics*), and many of you are probably familiar with his work in 1952-1956 in comic books that weren't even sold! Namely, he drew several features in *Buster Brown*

*Comics*, which were given free to every kid who bought a pair of Buster Brown shoes.

It was there, alongside and oftentimes collaborating with comic book giant Reed Crandall, that Ray Willner not only held his own, but was often given the plum assignments and lead features, including “Gunga the Jungle Boy,” “Little Fox of the Dakota Sioux,” and the fabulous but unnamed science-fiction strip featuring the Interplanetary Police. He often did two of these strips in a quarterly issue. A look through his wonderful work in these little-known comics makes it easy to see why Willner deserved and received lead artist status. He even signed a few of the later stories—so you see why we can't claim that he's totally unknown. (Willner, again with

Crandall, also crafted stories for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* comics given away with the Brown Company's other line, Robin Hood Shoes.)

So, we can establish the bookends of his career, but it takes a real art detective to figure just where he was appearing during the in-between period. His other known early credits are mainly for the lowly Holyoke line of comics. These include “Captain Aero” in *Captain Aero Comics* in the early '40s, several strips in *Blue Beetle Comics* in the mid-1940s—most in conjunction with fellow artist Allen Ulmer—and one installment of “Catman” in a 1946 issue of *Catman Comics*. He's even listed in the ownership statement as the editor of that title! After that he seems to disappear.

The superb animated artist Orestes Calpini (covered in *A/E* #47) was



# A Silver Anniversary For a Silver-Ager & Spouse

ROY & DANN THOMAS Celebrate Their 25th—With A Look Back At Some Friends' Well-Wishing

by Ye *Alter Ego* Editor

Most Photos by Alan Waite

**W**ith a little bit of bloomin' luck, this piece will be as much a surprise to my lovely wife Dann as it is to this issue's other readers. To that end, I shamelessly sneaked a handful of photos out of the wedding album she'd so painstakingly assembled, made photocopies of a few pieces of relevant artwork, and kept everything under wraps as much as possible while prepping this issue.

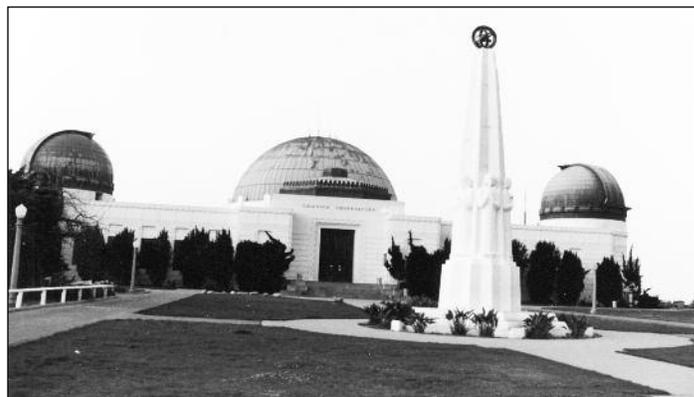
For, May 3 of this year marks the 25th anniversary of the day in 1981 when Danette (Peck) Couto and I took the proverbial plunge into matrimony. (She didn't make her first-name change legal till a year or so later, but I'll still mostly refer to her as Dann herein. Force of habit.)

But—did I say “*day*”? Actually, we were wed at the stroke of sunrise, on a hillside abutting Griffith Observatory, and overlooking Hollywood. Dann had chosen the place, for aesthetic reasons—and I'd concurred, partly because it had been the scene of the famous knife fight between Jamie Stark and Buzz Gunderson in the 1955 James Dean/Nicholas Ray movie *Rebel without a Cause*, which I've seen maybe two dozen times. I acquiesced in her desire to have the nuptials at sun-up, mostly 'cause I figured, hey, at least I'd never have to be up at that ungodly hour again. Little did I know!



Dann and Roy exchanged vows, rings, et al., before the right reverend Jennie-Lynn Falk, minister of the Church of the Divine Light, who'd gotten herself ordained specially for the occasion. In another life, she was Dann's UCLA roommate. Seen 'twixt her and the hapless (*er*, happy) couple is matron of honor Carla Conway (holding daughter Cara, Roy & Dann's godchild); at right is best man Gerry Conway. Somewhere nearby, Christy Marx (soon writer/creator of *Sisterhood of Steel*) was playing the harp... and quite beautifully, too.

Two invitees who couldn't quite make it to the wedding because they lived on the East Coast sent much-appreciated greetings. (Center:) A few words from Harvey Kurtzman—and if you have to ask who *he* is, you're not really a comics fan so what're you doing reading this mag, anyway? (Far right:) Though he somehow neglected to sign it, *Red Sonja* artist Frank Thorne sent slightly more words with his drawing. As to who “Rascal and Sam” are—read on. [Art ©2006 Adele Kurtzman & Frank Thorne, respectively.]



Griffith Observatory. Roy kept expecting the cops to screech up and gun down Sal Mineo! Actually, a Park guard *did* show, to ask if they had a *permit* to perform a wedding there. They didn't, but their friend and photographer Alan Waite convinced them they did—then told them to hurry up the ceremony before he came back! As producer of countless TV commercials, Alan knew how to keep things rolling along.





**FANTASY ADVERTISER**  
 VOL 2    10¢    NO 4  
 November    1947



*GREETINGS, FELLOW PANELOGISTS!  
 MR. MONSTER HERE, WITH A FEW FRIENDS  
 FROM THE LOCAL COMIC BOOK CLUB!  
 GRUESOME, AIN'T THEY?*

TODAY WE'RE STUDYING THE EARLY  
 WORK OF CARTOON LEGEND *RUSS  
 MANNING*. PERHAPS YOU'RE FAMILIAR  
 WITH MANNING'S IMPRESSIVE WORK ON  
*TARZAN, STAR WARS, AND MAGNUS,  
 ROBOT FIGHTER*. BUT FEW ARE AWARE  
 OF ANOTHER EQUALLY IMPRESSIVE  
 ASPECT OF RUSS MANNING'S  
 CAREER: HIS *FAN ART!*

HOWEVER, THANKS TO THE DILIGENT  
 EFFORTS OF COMIC BOOK SLEUTH  
*RAY CUTHBERT*, WE'RE ABLE TO SHED  
 A LITTLE LIGHT ON THE VERY EARLIEST  
 PUBLISHED WORK BY ONE OF  
 COMICS' GREATEST CRAFTSMAN --

***RUSS MANNING!***

LEFT: RUSS  
 MANNING'S  
 FIRST  
 PUBLISHED  
 ART!



RIGHT:  
 MANNING BY  
 MANNING!

# The Forgotten '50s: Will Comics Ever Again Be As Exciting As EC?

## A 1966 Panel With Ted White, Bhub Stewart, & Archie Goodwin

Part V of "1966: The Year Of (Nearly) THREE New York Comicons!"

by Bill Schelly

Panel Transcribed by Brian K. Morris

### Introduction

In Alter Ego #53 we initiated a series related to an approximately half-year period between mid-1966 and early 1967 which saw the new phenomenon of no less than three comics convention being held in Manhattan. The first of these, as per features in A/E #53-56, was hosted by John Benson on July 23-24, 1966. Just three weeks later, Dave Kaler would put on a sequel to his own "Academy Con" of 1965—and, in very early 1967, a "mini-con" would be sponsored by Calvin Beck's magazine Castle of Frankenstein. We here continue the extended coverage of the "Benson Con," utilizing audio tapes John was able to supply us. Transcriptions of these historic panels are worth printing both for their own sake, because of the people involved—and as a snapshot of "the way it was" almost exactly four decades ago. This time, it's a three-man symposium on comic books of the 1950s, particularly those of EC (Entertaining Comics), moderated by Ted White and also featuring Bhub Stewart and (then) Creepy & Eerie editor Archie Goodwin. The latter, of course, would later write and edit, alternately for Marvel and DC, until his untimely death in 1998.

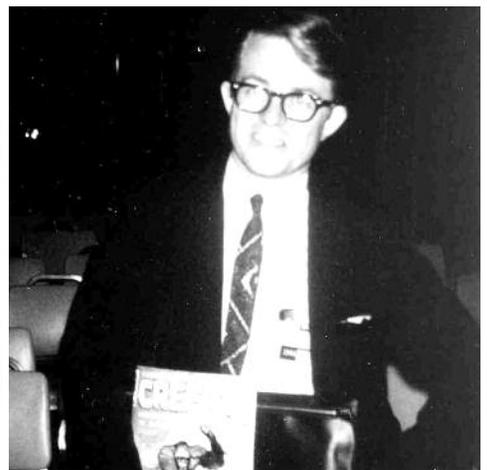
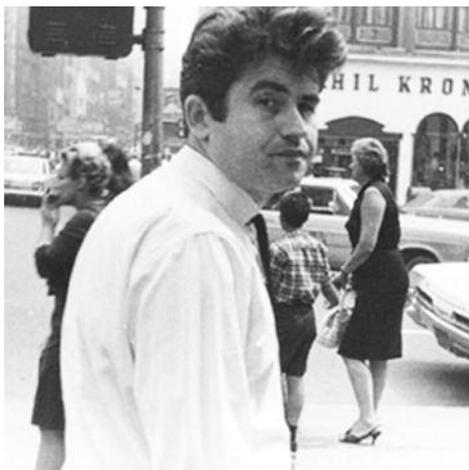
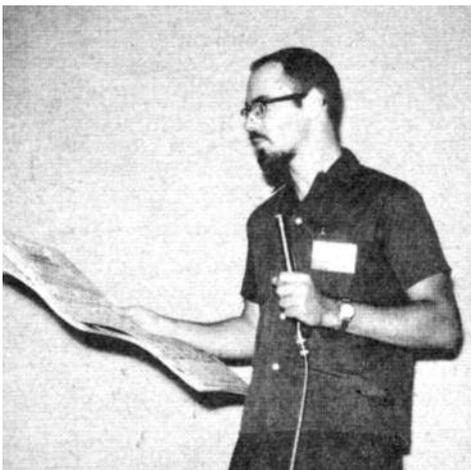
In one of those puzzling conundrums, comics of the 1950s seemed

farther away to younger comics fans of the early 1960s than they do to collectors of today. In a time before comic book history was written or valuable collections were issued, the only way to find out about earlier times was via the oral recollections of Fans Who Were There.

On this panel, three Fans Who Were There gathered to convey their knowledge to the mostly-younger set. They were unified by their mutual regard for EC, and their involvement in the fan activity that had sprung up around its publications—and around the work that EC artists did for other comics and magazines of the era. Panels like this (and articles on EC in the new fanzines) helped make EC's horror and science-fiction output second only to super-heroes in popularity among those who formed the rank-and-file of 1960s comic fandom. The transcript has been slightly edited for repetition and length, but is essentially as it was seen and heard on July 23, 1966. The panel was introduced by convention organizer John Benson:

**JOHN BENSON:** This panel is called "The Forgotten '50s," and consists of three people who are in the professional fields today and who were all very active in fandom during the '50s.

Ted White is a science-fiction novelist, and has just received a



### Three To Get Ready...

Unfortunately, no known photo exists of the "Forgotten '50s" panel from the 1966 Benson Con, so we'll have to make do with this trio of pics from that period. (Left to right):

Ted White, moderator, shown here acting as auctioneer, probably at that same comicon. The photo appeared in Larry Ivie's magazine *Monsters and Heroes*. Bhub Stewart in New York City, circa 1965. Photo by Martin Jukovsky.

Archie Goodwin at the Benson Con, posing for photographer Jack C. Harris, who would later become (like Archie himself) an editor at DC Comics.

[Photos ©2006 the respective photographers.]

contract to write a *Captain America* novel for Bantam Books [*The Great American Gold Steal*]. Ted is also the assistant editor for *Fantasy and Science Fiction*.

Archie Goodwin is the editor and chief writer for James Warren's comics *Creepy* and *Eerie*.

Bhub Stewart is the editor of *Castle of Frankenstein* magazine and also does most of the editorial material in the magazine. He's also the movie editor in *TV Guide*, and writes the little squibs about the late-night movies that appear all over the country.

**TED WHITE:** Thank you, John. This panel is based on the '50s—let's say, generally, 1950 to 1960, in the comics field. This is a period during which I think the comics showed more upheaval than at any time since the advent of the super-characters in the late '30s, early '40s. It was a very turbulent time. It was a time of some of the comic field's best moments and certainly some of its worst moments, both before and after the Comics Code, which of course was another aspect of the '50s. To start the panel off, Bhub Stewart has a prepared statement.

**BHUB STEWART:** I'm going to read this because I do not trust my ability to speak spontaneously and there's something very important that I would like to say.

A decade has passed since the death of EC—only a decade—and that's why I'd put it into a little niche in the overall levels of the graphic story form. There's an important reason why this should be done. Consider this fact: isn't it just possible that the comic book is mankind's greatest art form? Now, if someone made that statement to me, my first immediate reaction would be "no," or "It could be done with film." Anything that can be done in any other art can also be done in film, including comics.

But maybe it's the other way around: "movies on paper, the final dream." That's the way Jules Feiffer saw comics when he was younger. The last chapter of his book [*The Great Comic Book Heroes*—the grown-up chapter—is frightening, is disappointing, is disillusioning, and is sad, because he's right. Comics are junk: "It has no one's respect to lose, no image to endanger, its values are the least middle-class of all the mass media, and that's why it's needed so. Comic books were our booze." Now, if you'll multiply it, your booze is the same kind of booze that I had during World War II.

When I was eight years old, I knew my father was fighting Hitler. I knew because *I* was fighting Hitler every day myself, with Spy Smasher and Green Lama and Boy Commandos, right? Today I walk by a newsstand and I see Captain America is still fighting that same war. Did anyone tell Captain America about D-Day?

Then one day, Captain Marvel said, "Shazam!" and nothing happened. And pretty soon, I stopped reading all comics but one: *Little Lulu*. [audience laughs] After all, I was growing up, and *Little Lulu* was the most adult comic that I could find in 1946.

I reached puberty, and I had my first love affair. Her name was EC. We went together for four years and then we broke up. She and I do not speak to each other very much any more. EC came out of Bradbury who came out of Lovecraft and Thomas Wolfe and Eisner. EC came out of Eisner, who came out of Fritz Lang and [Orson] Welles. And I thought [he pounds his fist on the table with each word], "Hey, maybe it's not junk!" And I read a few of them next month and I thought, [pounds fist on the table] "Hey, maybe I'll write in and join this. Maybe they don't think it's junk." And I was right, they didn't. Not only did they see it wasn't junk, they tried to show it to me. Al Feldstein, in one monstrous breath, summed up the entire 30-year history of pulp science-fiction. Harvey Kurtzman pushed the Eisner tradition all the way over to the horizon line.



"Gimme a copy of *Little Lulu*."

#### "Little Lulu, I Love You-Lu Just The Same"

Bhub Stewart mentions reading only *Little Lulu* at one point in 1946. By coincidence, in 1964, Roy Thomas had drawn the above cartoon for a spread in *Alter Ego* (Vol. 1) #7 which was influenced by the *Playboy* work of Shel Silverstein, which Bill Schelly finds equally appropriate in referring to a time two decades earlier. The newsstand dealer was drawn as one of Silverstein's self-caricatures. [©2006 Roy Thomas.]

And one man, one artist, came along who saw comics the same way Marshall McLuhan does, simply as a medium, a medium with a troubled and artistically unexploited potentiality, a boundless medium. Not junk! A boundless medium, as exotic as an 8th-century illumination—and his name was Bernard Krigstein. He's since proved his worth as both a fine artist and a classically influenced illustrator. While he was at EC, he functioned not as most writers, he functioned as an artist. Dig it! Every story was a different challenge, required a different kind of style. It prompted a completely new kind of story breakdown. He said, "I think I was striving to control these effects; that is, building up to dramatic climaxes and then realizing, as far as it was in my power to do so, all the emotional force of the climax. And I think I succeeded pretty well, because in working for something, I really feel as if I'd stumbled upon an important way to tell stories, to break down stories. As things worked out, I was unable to continue it."

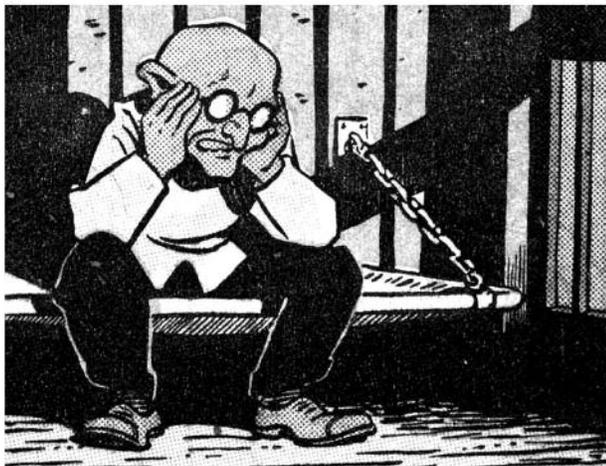
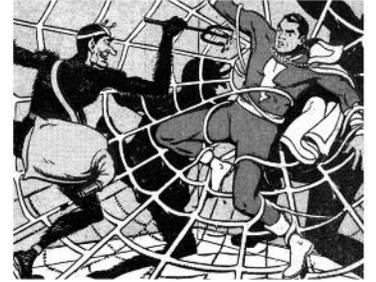
And his point: Bernard Krigstein saw how much could be done with a graphic story. Imagery flowing across the page: "Something grabbed her eye and ripped it from the socket!" Some of these stories can be read dozens of times and still offer something new, some minute, fantastic detail that he consciously inserted. Yet for the most part, it was not illustration. One time, it was a picture. Another time it was a slap in the face. And more, you got a jigsaw page mosaic, shimmering, pulsating on the pages, and soon you're engulfed and there's a snap like a reel change in the projection booth. Krigstein showed that comics can be an

P.C. HAMERLINCK'S

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# B.C.C. F.C.A. B.C.C.

# Setting The Record Straight

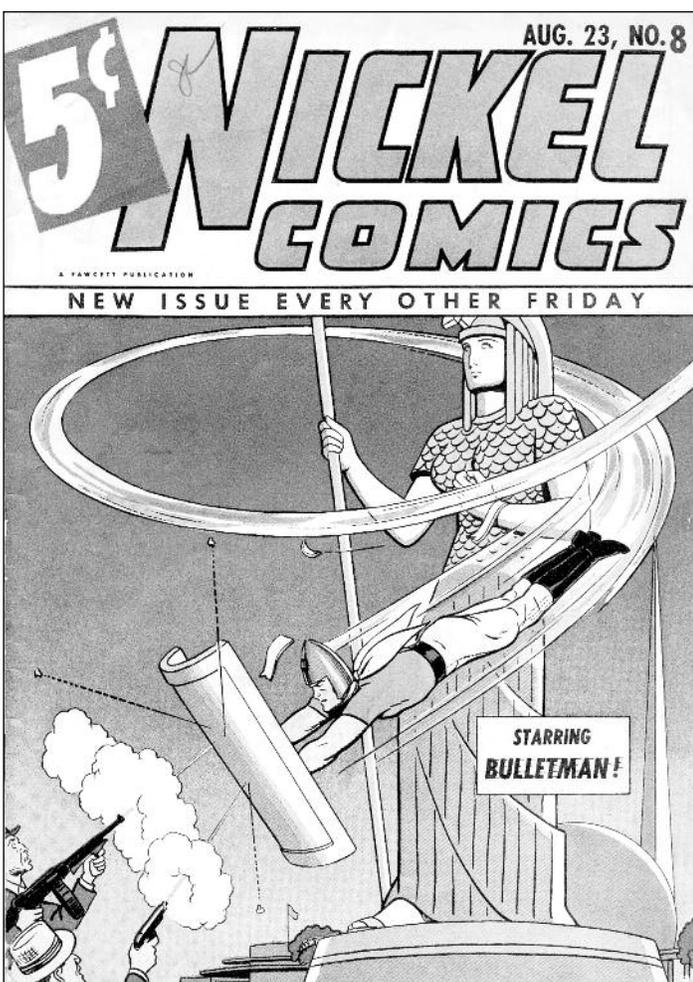
## Historical Inaccuracies Pointed Out By Captain Marvel's Chief Artist

A Previously Unpublished Essay From The Early 1980s By C.C. Beck

Edited by P.C. Hamerlinck

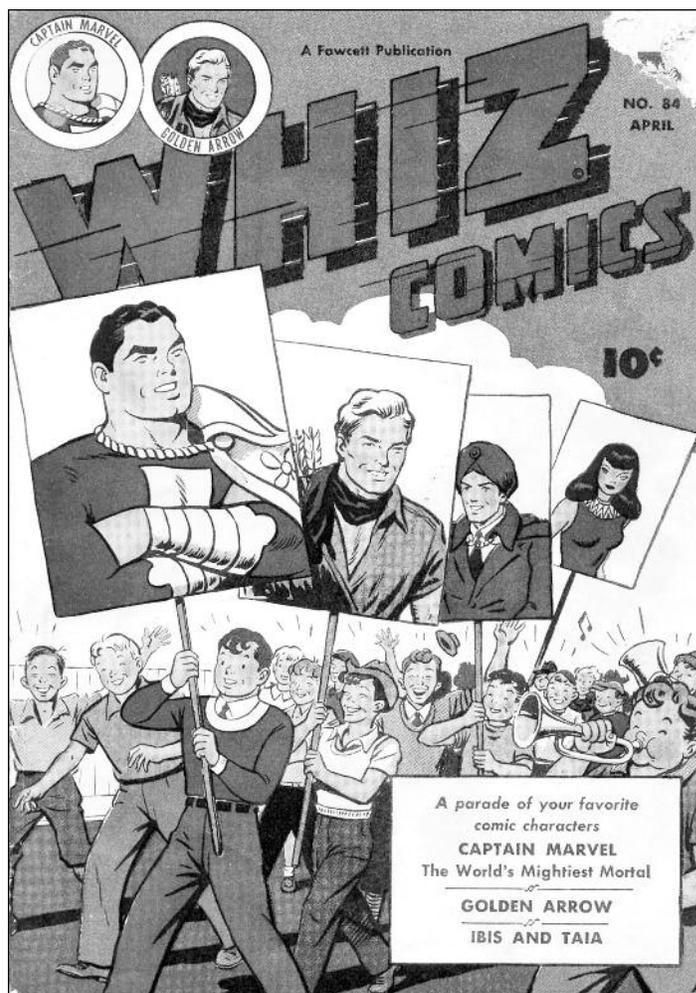
In the half-century since the dawn of the Golden Age of Comic Books, many errors have crept into its history. The most serious error regarding Fawcett Publications' Captain Marvel is calling him a "super-hero," which he never was. In fact, Captain Marvel was not even the hero of the stories he appeared in; Billy Batson was. Billy was the one who got into trouble in the stories; Captain Marvel was the *deus ex machina* or supernatural character called in to rescue the hero and put things right.

Super-heroes had superhuman powers such as X-ray vision, the ability to stretch their bodies into weird shapes, to set themselves on fire, to breathe underwater, and so on. Captain Marvel had no such powers; he was simply a large, powerful man and was billed as "The World's



### Faster Than a Speeding Bullet, Man

Unlike Captain Marvel, Bulletman flew from the very beginning, "thanks to his miraculous bullet-shaped helmet." Beck's cover for *Nickel Comics* #8 (Aug. 1940), the final issue before the Flying Detective moved over to *Master Comics*. [©2006 DC Comics.]



### Hero Sandwich

"Captain Marvel was not even the hero of the stories he appeared in; Billy Batson was." C.C. Beck's cover for *Whiz Comics* #84 (April 1947), repro'd from what P.C. calls his "rat-chewed copy." [©2006 DC Comics.]

Mightiest Mortal." In the beginning he could not fly (neither could Superman) and had no reason to. Later, at the publisher's insistence, he and all his family were forced to appear in sequences showing them flying through the air like so many bullets ... which may have come about because another of Fawcett's characters, Bulletman, did fly, thanks to his miraculous bullet-shaped helmet. In time, almost all comic characters of the Golden Age flew, bounced bullets off their chests, tore down mountains, destroyed whole armies single-handed, and did other ridiculously impossible superhuman feats of strength. Captain Marvel was forced to follow suit, and it was his undoing. When the rage for super-heroes died away in the '50s, Captain Marvel died, too. If he had not been forced to join the mob of super-hero characters put out by other publishers, Fawcett's Captain Marvel might not have been caught in the Ragnarok of the early '50s.

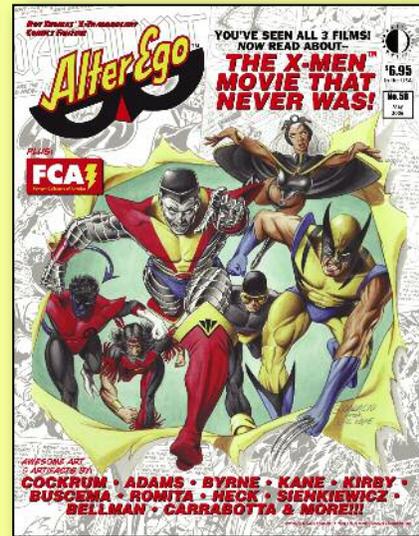
# “Captain Marvel Meets The Human Torch” (Continued)

OUR SPECIAL BRAZILIAN BONUS! Two additional pages from the 1964 *Almanaque do O Globo Juvenil*, in which the comics of Brazil printed new stories of The Marvel Family for years after Fawcett had cancelled all their titles in 1953. In this unique tale, Cap met Timely/Marvel's original Human Torch—since he and Cap had been published by the same South American company. This symbolic splash gives a foretaste of what's to come, and The Cobra unveils his plan. [Captain Marvel TM & ©2006 DC Comics; Human Torch TM & ©2006 Marvel Characters, Inc.]

## Captain MARVEL



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### ALTER EGO #58

GERRY CONWAY and ROY THOMAS on their '80s screenplay for "The X-Men Movie That Never Was!" with art by COCKRUM, ADAMS, BUSCEMA, BYRNE, GIL KANE, KIRBY, HECK, and LIEBER, Atlas artist VIC CARRABOTTA interview, ALLEN BELLMAN on 1940s Timely bullpen, FCA, 1966 panel on 1950s EC Comics, and MR. MONSTER! MARK SPARACIO/GIL KANE cover!

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