

MON. 7/27 4:00PM — G-2: UNMASKING A MARVEL OF AN IDEA IN D.C.: HOW GRAPHIC LITERATURE CAN BE SUPERTOOLS FOR LAW LIBRARIANS

2009 AALL ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

Date/Time: Mon, Jul 27 4:00pm - 5:15pm

Location/Room: WCC-Room 146 C

This program is sponsored by RIPS-SIS and the Gen X/Gen Y Caucus. It is listed here at the speakers' request for posting handouts (see below).

This program will illustrate how allusions to graphic literature, especially when directly linked with law and/or librarianship, can bridge social and generational gaps, supplement instruction (with shared experiences from the panel), promote library services, support diversity, and foster recruitment to our profession. Today's law student, young attorney, client or juror often uses pop culture references to define the world. Attention spans are short, learning styles are different, and image is—if not everything—a pretty big thing. With the growing number of successful comic/manga-based movies, television shows and merchandise, the influence that comics have on society is as great as it has ever been. Here's how law librarians can Bat-Channel the medium to their benefit.

Coordinator and Moderator:

Kerry Skinner - Arizona State University, Ross-Blakley Law Library

Speaker(s):

Arnold Blumberg - Geppi's Entertainment Museum

W. Robert Farmer - Faulkner University, Jones School of Law Library

Deborah Ginsberg - Chicago-Kent College of Law Library

Hollie White - University of North Carolina

Handouts/Resources

[Robert Farmer - Handout](#)

[Debbie Ginsberg - Comics and Diversity: a Diigo List](#)

Assorted Law-Related Comic Book Materials

Law-Related Series

Daredevil (Marvel Comics): <http://marvel.com/comics/Daredevil>: This dramatic series features an attorney in a small firm as the lead character, with prominent supporting characters also in the legal field. Courtroom and law office scenes are common, but not the focus of the series.

Sensational She-Hulk (Marvel Comics): 1989-1994, http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/Sensational_She-Hulk/Covers: This humorous series features a lead character as a prosecuting attorney. Supporting characters include her legal secretary (a former golden age hero). Courtroom and law office scenes are common, but not the focus of the series.

She-Hulk (Marvel Comics): 2004-2009, http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/Category:She-Hulk_Vol_1, http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/Category:She-Hulk_Vol_2

Often lighthearted, but more serious than their predecessor, these series find the lead character moving to a large private firm specializing in superhuman law. Rather than just serving as a background, law is often the focus of the series, and even though fictional, well written and solid. The supporting cast is largely comprised of typical firm employees, including runners, clerks, library paraprofessionals, and secretaries.

Wolff & Byrd: Supernatural Law (Exhibit A Press): <http://www.exhibitapress.com/pages/w&b.html>: This humorous series began as a comic strip that once ran in the National Law Journal. The lead characters serve as counsel for vampires, zombies, and similar non-traditional clients, with the legal drama as the primary action.

Manhunter (DC Comics): 2004-2009, <http://comicbookdb.com/character.php?ID=450>: This series features an attorney as lead character. Courtroom and law office scenes are common, with legal issues often at the forefront of the action.

Batman: Streets of Gotham: (DC Comics) 2009 - The back-up feature of this new series features the lead from *Manhunter*, <http://www.dccomics.com/dcu/comics/?cm=11871>

Notable Librarian Characters

Barbara Gordon/Batgirl/Oracle: First introduced in the Batman TV show, then later in the comics, she's (as far as I know) the first law librarian superhero. Using her library & information science degree, computer expertise, and judo training, she fought crime as Batgirl,

ran the Gotham City Public Library, and was even elected to Congress. Upon losing the use of her legs when shot in the spine by the Joker, she took on the virtual identity of Oracle, in order to continue her crusade. By gathering electronic information on criminals worldwide and financing her operations by siphoning their ill gotten gains for, she both shared intelligence with other heroes, and coordinated her own team, the Birds of Prey.

[http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Barbara_Gordon_\(New_Earth\)](http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Barbara_Gordon_(New_Earth))

Yomiko Readman/Agent Paper: Secret agent for the British Library in the Manga/Anime series Read or Die. She has the power to control paper and fashion it into weapons, shields, and methods of transportation.

Notable Attorney Characters

Matthew "Hawk" Liebowicz/Two-Gun Kid: Cowboy hero in the Marvel Comics universe, who had adventures both in the old West, and in the modern era. A successful attorney in the 19th century, his prior Harvard legal education was not enough to get him admitted to the current New York bar. <http://www.marveldirectory.com/individuals/t/twogunkid.htm>

Harvey Dent/ Two-Face: Usually a villain, but sometimes a hero in the DC Comics universe, he's a former District Attorney for Gotham City, until suffering mental illness as a result of disfiguring attack by criminals unhappy with his successful prosecutions. Obsessed with duality, he often makes decisions by flipping a coin.

http://www.dccomics.com/dcu/heroes_and_villains/?hv=origin_stories/two_face&p=1

Jennifer Walters/She-Hulk: Green and super-strong like her cousin, she's also a UCLA law grad admitted to the Marvel Universe bar in both California, and New York. She has experience in prosecution, criminal defense, corporate law, and civil litigation. Her most recent law firm specialized in "superhuman law." <http://marvel.com/universe/She-Hulk>

Matt Murdock/Daredevil: Visually blind, but possessing other superhuman senses, he maintains a small private practice in the Marvel Comics universe, in addition to his crime fighting. He's a graduate of Columbia University's law school, and he provides legal representation for much of Marvel's superhero community.

http://marvel.com/universe/Daredevil_%28Matthew_Murdock%29

Kate Spencer/Manhunter: As a Los Angeles prosecutor in the DC Comics universe, she became discouraged by the release of superhuman killers to the street. She raided evidence lockers for weaponry formerly used by villains and used it to dispense vigilante justice. After a stint as a defense attorney, she recently relocated to Gotham City and serves as its current District Attorney. [http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Katherine_Spencer_\(New_Earth\)](http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Katherine_Spencer_(New_Earth))

Paul Johnstone/Shadowhawk: An attorney in the Image Comics universe, he was a prosecutor who was injected with HIV tainted blood by criminals in retaliation for his work. Using a mask and powered armor, he fought crime until eventually succumbing to the disease.

<http://www.valentinocomics.com/shadowhawk.html>

Notable Comic Characters in the US Government

Lex Luthor: President of the United States (DC Comics):

http://www.dccomics.com/dcu/heroes_and_villains/?hv=origin_stories/lex_luthor&p=1 Well known Superman villain that was elected to the presidency. His cabinet included:

Amanda Waller: Secretary of Metahuman Affairs; Long-time government employee and expert manager of superhuman covert operations.

[http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Amanda_Waller_\(New_Earth\)](http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Amanda_Waller_(New_Earth))

Frank Rock: Head of Joint Chiefs of Staff, he was a decorated WWII hero as the Sergeant in command of Easy Company. http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Sgt._Rock

Jefferson Pierce/Black Lightning: Secretary of Education, he was a former Olympic athlete, school teacher, and costumed hero

http://www.dccomics.com/dcu/heroes_and_villains/?hv=origin_stories/black_lightning&p=1

Pete Ross: President of the United States (DC Comics): Superman's best friend growing up, he married Lana Lang, was vice-president under Lex, and assumed office when Luthor was forced out. [http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Peter_Ross_\(New_Earth\)](http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Peter_Ross_(New_Earth))

Lorraine Reilly/Firehawk: United States Congresswoman (DC Comics): Superhero and colleague of Firestorm. <http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Firehawk>

Robert Kelly: United States Senator (Marvel Comics) who introduced the Mutant Registration Act, before changing his views toward anti-mutant prejudices.

http://marvel.com/universe/Kelly,_Robert

Notable Government Agencies in Comics

S.H.I.E.L.D.: International law enforcement agency in the Marvel Comics universe with strong ties to the federal government. <http://marvel.com/universe/SHIELD>

Department of Extranormal Operations (DEO): Federal agency in the DC Comics universe that monitors and investigates individuals with superhuman powers.

http://dc.wikia.com/wiki/Department_of_Extranormal_Operations

Bureau for Paranormal Research & Defense (BPRD): Federal agency in the Dark Horse Comics universe that investigates and defends against supernatural threats.

<http://www.darkhorse.com/Search/B.P.R.D./>

Notable Heads of State in Comics

Arthur Orrin Curry/Aquaman: Leader of Atlantis (DC Comics)

<http://www.dcuguide.com/who.php?name=aquaman>

Black Adam: Leader of Kahndaq a fictional middle-eastern country in the DC Comics universe.

http://www.dccomics.com/dcu/heroes_and_villains/?hv=origin_stories/black_adam&p=1

Prince Brion Markov/Geo-force: Leader of Markovia, a fictional European country in the DC Comics universe <http://www.dcuguide.com/who.php?name=GEOFORCE>

Prince Namor the Sub-Mariner: Leader of Atlantis (Marvel Comics).

<http://marvel.com/universe/Namor>

Prince T'Challa, the Black Panther: Leader of Wakanda, a fictional African nation in the Marvel Universe http://marvel.com/universe/Black_Panther_%28T%27Challa%29

Dr. Victor von Doom: Leader of Latveria, a fictional European country in the Marvel Universe

http://marvel.com/universe/Doctor_Doom_%28Victor_von_Doom%29

Notable Legislation in Comics

Superhuman Registration Act: Following a deadly public incident, this US federal legislation was passed in the Marvel Comics universe. It required all persons or non-human legal entities with powers to register with the government, sparking a "Civil War" in the superhuman community, with heroes like Captain America opposing registration and facing off politically and violently with pro-registration heroes like Iron Man. <http://www.comicvine.com/super-human-registration-act/12-40639/>

50 State Initiative: Arising out of the SHRA in the Marvel Comics universe, this program seeks to place a government sanctioned super-team in every state (previously, most heroes operated out of the New York City area). Inexperienced superhumans must go through "boot camp" training at Camp Hammond, a training facility named for one of the first Marvel heroes, the golden-age Human Torch To date, 25 states have been assigned teams.

[http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/50-State_Initiative_\(Earth-616\)](http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/50-State_Initiative_(Earth-616))

Mutant Registration Act: A pre-cursor to the SHRA in the Marvel universe, this legislation was intended to force mutants (an evolutionary offshoot of humanity born with superhuman powers) to register. Peaceful opposition to the Act was offered by the X-Men, a team of mutant heroes, while the measures were more violently opposed by Magneto and other mutant extremists. http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/Superhuman_Registration_Act

Assorted Comics Related Legal Materials

Case Law

Winter v. DC Comics, 69 P.3d 473 (Cal. 2003): Melanin deprived rock stars from the Seventies allege defamation and illegal use of their likenesses in a cowboy horror comic.

Gaiman v. McFarlane, 360 F.3d 644 (7th Cir. 2004): Copyright courtroom battle between two famous comic creators, in which Judge Posner not only defines comic books judicially, but also gives a lengthy and accurate history of the character Spawn

National Comics Publications v. Fawcett Publications, 191 F.2d 594, 90 U.S.P.Q. 274 (2nd Cir. 1952) Long before they would do so in the comics, Superman and Captain Marvel throw down in court. Will it be UP UP & AWAY or SHAZAM?

Buckler v. Marvel Entertainment, 1992 WL 210101, 1992 US Dist Lexis 12298 (S.D. N.Y.) You may not know about the Marvel Comics cyborg Deathlok, but if you've seen the movie *Robocop*, Mr. Buckler would argue you'd just seen his character.

Charles Atlas, Ltd. V. D.C. Comics, Inc., 112 F.Supp.2d 330 (S.D. N.Y. 2000): After a long time partnership where Atlas ads appeared on the backs of comics, a bitter split in the courts with the exercise company alleging intellectual property infringement.

Siegel & Shuster v. National Periodical Publications, 508 F.2d 909 (2nd Cir. 1974): Superman fights a never ending battle for truth, justice, and the American way. His creators, their heirs, his publishers, and their parent companies just fight never ending court battles over the rights to the character. This round dealt with copyright renewals.

Siegel v. Time Warner, 496 F.Supp.2d 1111 (C.D. Cal. 2007): This round dealt with the rights to the character, Superboy.

Siegel v. Warner Brothers Entertainment, 542 F. Supp. 2d 1098, (C.D. Cal. 2008): This one dealt with the rights of the heirs to the estate

Siegel v. Warner Brothers Entertainment, 2009 WL 2014164 (C.D. Cal. 2009): This one from last week dealt with the movie rights and the monetary value of the character. Looks like there's going to be a Superman movie coming really soon.

Legislation

Laws of New York 1955, Chapter 836: Comic Books - Regulations

New York's scary answer to the Seduction of the Innocent phase of comics in the 1950s

American Law Reports

Kletter Fern L. *First Amendment Protection Afforded to Comic Books, Comic Strips, and Cartoons*, 118 ALR5th 213

Articles

Hillyerd, William A., *Hi Superman, I'm a Lawyer: A Guide to Attorneys (& Other Legal Professionals) Portrayed in American Comic Books: 1910-2007*, *Widener Law Review*, (forthcoming) http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1000287

Providing details we'd never have enough time for in one presentation, this article by a fellow law librarian presents a thorough examination of the subject.

Kohler, David, *At the Intersection of Comic Books & Third World Working Conditions*, 28 *Hastings Communications & Entertainment Law Journal* 145 (2005-2006): A look at the consistency of first amendment protections after the holding in *Winter v. DC Comics*.

Payne, Britton, *Super-Grokster: Super-Grokster: Untangling Secondary Liability, Comic Book Heroes and the DMCA, and a Filtering Solution for Infringing Digital Creations*, 16 *Fordham Intellectual Property, Media, and Entertainment Law Journal* 939 (2005-2006): An examination of comic book intellectual property issues in the electronic age, with a fantastic appendix (starting on page 1017) detailing how to properly cite comic books in legal publications.

Mehra, Salil, *Copyright and Comics in Japan: Does Law Explain Why All the Cartoons my Kid Watches are Japanese Imports?*, 55 *Rutgers Law Review* 155 (2002-2003): A comparison of intellectual property rights in the US and Japan, focusing on anime and manga.

Vashko, Robert E., *Exploitation of the Superhero*, 3 *Loyola Intellectual Property and High Technology Law Quarterly* 37 (1998) An examination of copyright protection, in regard to superheroes, their creators, and their publishers.

Chun, Alex, *Comic Book Original Pages: Are they Literature or a Commodity?*, 14 *Loyola Los Angeles Entertainment Law Journal* 487 (1993-1994): An examination of intellectual property rights, regulation, and taxation of these highly sought after works.

<http://collectibles.shop.ebay.com/items/Original-Comic-Art?catref=1&fln=1&sacat=3984&trksid=p3286.c0.m282>

Duesenberg, Richard W., *Crime Comic Books: Government Control and their Impact on Juvenile Conduct*, 7 Mercer Law Review 331 (1955 -1956): A look at the effects of the censorship/comic code era on the youth of America.

Collins, John J., *LEGISLATION: New York-Laws of the 178th Session-Publication and Distribution of Comic Books-Sales to Minors*, 1 Villanova Law Review 323 (1955): A thorough overview of New York's legislative attempt to prevent the corrupting of young minds through comic books.

Reeves, Reginald R., *Superman v. Captain Marvel, or Loss of Literary Property in Comic Strips*, 5 Copyright Law Symposium 3 (1954): Winner of the 1952 National Essay Award, this essay discusses intellectual property issues in light of the holding in *National Comics Publications v. Fawcett Publications*.

Note. Regulation of Comic Books, 68 Harvard Law Review 489: An extensive discussion of the comic censorship movement by a masked Crimson law student.

Legal Information in Comic/Graphic Novel Form

Keith Aoki, Jennifer Jenkins, and James Boyle, *Bound By Law: Tales from the Public Domain*, (Center for the Study of the Public Domain: 2006).

<http://www.law.duke.edu/cspd/comics/>

A funny and informative comic book, that discusses copyright law basics in plain language. Digital copies are free, and print copies are really cheap.

National Center for State Courts, Justice Case Files (Lane Morgan Media: 2008)

Justice Case File 1: The Case of Internet Piracy

Justice Case File 2: The Case of Stolen Identity

http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Comm/OrderGrphNovel.asp

Developed as an introduction to the court system for the lay person and as a teaching tool, these graphic novels illustrate basic aspects of the litigation process. Digital previews are available, and multiple copies can be ordered to share with classes and the general public. Sample lesson plans are also available, to accompany the comics for classroom use.