**ADVERTISING**

In the early 20th Century SUNDAY FUNNIES in America were a staple of newspaper publishing and by the 1930s these increasingly contained ADVERTISING strips for products such as Jell-O, Lux and Rinso. Selling ADVERTISING space for strips in the SUNDAY FUNNIES generated in the region of $1,000,000 per annum for newspapers in 1933 (The Funny Papers 1933: 98-101). ADVERTISING was also central to COMIC BOOK PUBLISHING throughout much of the 20th Century. Charles Atlas’ body-building courses were early examples of such advertisements in the form of comic strips. Advertisements for Hostess Twinkies bars (featuring SUPERHEROES from both Marvel and DC) appeared in many TITLES released by these PUBLISHERS from the 1970s. The American COMIC BOOK has its origins, at least in terms of FORMAT, in premiums, or free give away comics. In the early 1930s Harry I. Wildenberg and M. C. Gaines of the Eastern Colour Printing Company experimented with the printing process to create half-tabloid sized giveaways for customers of companies such as Canada Dry, Gulf Oil and Wheatena (Goulart 1991: 18-20). Strictly speaking these were not ADVERTISING but are best considered as promotional or public relations comics (Horton 2017) and Davidson has suggested all these types can be termed impact comics (Davidson 2005: 340-2).

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**COMEDY**

The very term COMIC implies that COMEDY is a central feature of the MEDIUM and in America in the early 20th Century the newspaper strips were known as the FUNNIES (The Funny Papers 1933). According to Sabin “The great age for comedy comics was c. 1935-65. ( ... ) selling in numbers that were never matched before or since – in other words, millions rather than thousands.” (1996: 27). Sabin goes on to suggest that this success was due to changes in the form such as, simplified artwork, removal of captions and brighter colours, that made more fluid joke telling possible (1996: 27-9). Witek also argues that there are key formal features, for example spatial simplification and the use of emenata, underpinning what he calls the cartoon mode of comics which are closely linked to anthropomorphic characters in children’s comics ( 2012: 27-30, 34-42). Yet despite thier commercial success in COMICS STUDIES “Notably less attention has been awarded to comics that are funny – whether daft, deadpan or exponents of slapstick gags.” (Mickwitz, Hague and Horton 2020: 10). This is in part because such COMICS are associated with children and as the MEDIUM (and COMICS STUDIES) sought legitimacy adult themes have been deemed more worthy of attention.

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**DESIGN**

COMICS are rarely studied as DESIGN objects or in relation to the principles and processes of graphic design and production methods of printing (exceptions include Farmer (2006); Gray (2017) Murray (2013) and Rogers (2006)). The importance of DESIGN in production before computers has been noted by Preigo: “( ... ) everything was put together as a coherent textual whole by a graphic and editorial designing team” (2014). COMICS are a sub-category of magazine PUBLISHING and many of the roles, such as the art director, are identical. At Timely Comics (later Marvel Comics), editor Stan Lee fulfilled the function of art director before Sol Brodsky joined as production manager additionally producing graphics such as the mastheads for *The Fantastic Four* and *The Avengers* (Zimmerman 1985: 15-18). Similarly, Jan Shepard and Kevin O’Neill worked as art directors on many titles for the publisher IPC including *2000 AD*, producing mastheads for stories such as Judge Dredd as well as layouts (Bishop 2007: 21-2; 40-1.). This process was revolutionised in the 1980s by the Apple Macintosh computer, with whole COMIC BOOKS such as *Shatter* (Case and Athanas: 1986) being produced using this new technology. By the end of the 1990s all DESIGN was being done digitally.

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**FANZINES**

FANZINES, or ‘zines’, are self-published magazines created by and for special interest groups. The earliest FANZINES emerged out of science fiction fandom in America in the 1930s and included both science fiction and comics as topics (Schelly 2010: 3; Sabin 1993: 63, 174-5; Triggs 2010: 17). English language FANZINES dedicated to comics first appeared in the 1950s but the 1960s and 1970s saw a boom with the launch of many titles such as *Alter Ego*, *Comic Media News*, *Comic Reader*, *Ka-Pow* and *Xero* (Goulart 1991: 313-7; Sabin 1993: 63-4, 174-5; Schelly 2010: 3-12). These contained: articles about comics, creator interviews, indices of collectible comics, as well as comic strips, illustrations and short stories by fans themselves, many of whom went on to work in the comic book profession (Sabin 1993: 63-4; Schelly 2010: 6-7). In Europe FANZINES such as *Giff Wiff* and *Phenix* in France and *¡Bang! Fanzine de los tebeos* in Spain were launched in the 1960s with the expressed aim of raising the status of comics (Grove 2013: 230-40; Valencia-García 2018: 17-8). FANZINES were the wellspring of journalism and criticism about comics with some such as *Alter Ego* and *The Comics Journal* making the transition to regular magazines in terms of production values and distribution (Sabin 1993: 85; Schelly 2010: 126-30).

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**HUMOUR**

HUMOUR in comics takes many different forms from the slapstick gags of children’s comics to the PARODY and SATIRE in UNDERGROUND COMIX and the darker themes explored in AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL GRAPHIC NOVELS. The fact that “( ... ) humour is a crucial element in caricature and satire alike has been recognised in some important work on comics histories.” (Mickwitz, Hague and Horton 2020: 10) and scholars such as Berger (1970), Cole (2020), Kunzle (1983) and Sabin (2014) have considered how HUMOUR operates in COMICS by looking at their origins in CARICATURE and CARTOONING. Other aspects of HUMOUR have received less attention but recent scholarship has started to address this issue. Streeten (2020) has examined HUMOUR in British FEMINIST cartoons, comics and graphic novels from the 1960s to the present-day while Thompson (2020) has explored this issue in British children’s comics. Gordon (2016) and Valente (2016) have also looked at HUMOUR in children’s comics but address the issue of translation across different languages and cultures and what this might mean for the ways in which it operates by examining American, Australian, British and Italian comics.

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**INKER**

This role is associated with industrialised American comic book production methods initiated in the 1930s where the PENCILLER creates page layouts and the main compositional features within panels which are then finished in detail by the INKER (Ray Murray 2013: 339-40; Rogers 2006: 509-11). The PENCILLER is usually credited as the main artistic force but when discussing Jack Kirby’s work Hatfield notes the INKER has a significant impact with Joe Sinnott and Mike Royer seen as exemplary in realising Kirby’s vision (2012: 182-3). Occasionally artists in Europe also inked each other’s work often due to the pressure of deadlines. In Britain during the 1970s and 1980s Brett Ewins and the McCarthy brothers worked collaboratively on a number of strips for *2000 AD* and Paul Neary was INKER on Alan Davies’ work for Marvel UK (Klaehn 2014: 10-14; Molcher 2015: 12-18). European artists such as Herge employed a studio engaged in a range of tasks from tracing original drawings to inking and colouring final pages (Taylor 2010: 200-1). Similarly in Japan many Manga artists, such as Masashi Kishimoto, Takao Saito and Osamu Tezuka, were “(... ) supported by a veritable army of artistic assistants who work shoulder-to-shoulder with him, contributing to every imaginable creative task short of adding their own names to the title page” (Brienza 2010: 111).

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**MAIL ORDER**

Selling back issues of Golden Age comic books through MAIL ORDER started in the 1950s and 1960s in America with dealers and store owners, such as Claude Held, Bud Plant and Howard Rogofsky (Schelly 2010: 40-53). In addition to creating their own catalogues, dealers placed ADVERTISMENTS in FANZINES which had from the outset included lists of comics for sale by MAIL ORDER, usually from the creator’s own collections. The most significant of these ‘adzines’ was the *Rocket’s Blast-Comicollector* which was, as the title suggests, a merger of two existing FANZINES (Schelly 2010: 68-71). Another significant publication for MAIL ORDER, for both dealers and fans, was the *Comic Buyer’s Guide* (formerly *The Buyer’s Guide*) founded in 1971 (Goulart 1991: 316-7). In Britain the MAIL ORDER business in dealing comics started through the classified advertising magazine *Exchange and Mart* before the emergence of FANZINES such as the *Fantasy Advertiser* (Sabin 1993: 63-4). MAIL ORDER was also important for the creators of Small Press comics (sometimes call Newave or Mini Comix) who would sell copies of their own work by post. Some Small Press creators would also rely on the services of ‘distributors’ such as Paul Gravett’s Fast Fiction in Britain or Michael Dower’s Starhead Comix in America to sell their work by MAIL ORDER (Dower 2010; Sabin 1993: 82-3, 176, 282).

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**PUBLISHING**

Originally, comics were directly linked to newspaper and magazine PUBLISHING. From the 1890s, American SUNDAY FUNNIES were published as newspaper inserts and in the UK the foremost publisher of COMIC BOOKS, Amalgamated Press (later Fleetway Publications then International Publishing Corporation), mainly produced newspapers and magazines (Sabin 1996: 18-19, 27-33). In the 1930s, companies like Detective Comics (later DC Comics) were founded to publish only COMIC BOOKS but others, such as Timely Comics (later Marvel Comics), continued to publish pulp fiction and magazines. Such publishers were responsible for creation, printing and packaging but generally not distribution (Lee 2002: 22-32, 98-110; Simon 2011: 90-8). The UNDERGROUND COMIX of the 1960s saw a shift towards self-publishing which continued with the emergence of ALTERNATIVE COMICS in the late 1970s, though in both cases new PUBLISHING firms such as Last Gasp and Fantagraphics emerged to take advantage of these new markets (Sabin 1996: 107, 178). The most vocal advocate for self-publishing in this period was Dave Sim, the creator of *Cerebus*, who also led key debates about creators rights (Beaty and Woo 2016: 121-31). With the emergence of the GRAPHIC NOVEL new players entered the field in the form of books publishers and most recently WEBCOMICS have created new PUBLISHING models.

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**SYNDICATES**

SYNDICATES are organisations that sell, and usually own, comic strips which are sold for publication in newspapers and magazines. Historically SYNDICATES consist of two main types, the dominant form linked to newspaper empires and the independents with no affiliation within the publishing industry (The Funny Papers 1933: 45-6). Many SYNDICATES, such as newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst’s King Features Syndicate, were founded in America in the first decades of the twentieth century before going on to syndicate comic strips such as *Krazy Kat* and *The Katzenjammer Kids* internationally (Gravett 2013: 13). This international reach was further developed by the emergence of local agents for American SYNDICATES such as the Yaffa Syndicate in Australia and Bulls Press serving the Nordic region (Patrick 2017: 62-4; Scholz 2020: 82, 90). Until the mid-1930s SYNDICATES were content to sell publication rights of their newspaper strips to entrepreneurial publishers for repackaging in comic book form. As the comic books boomed SYNDICATES went into the business themselves, one of the first was United Features Syndicate who produced *Tip Top Comics* in 1936 featuring characters such as Tarzan and Li’l Abner (Goulart 1991: 7-37). The 1960s saw SYNDICATES merge and absorbed by media conglomerates, a process that has accelerated in subsequent years resulting an industry now consisting of a few powerful players.

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**TYPOGRAPHY**

The text in most COMIC BOOKS was hand-drawn by the LETTERER or artist and TYPOGRAPHY was rarely used for CAPTIONS or BALLOONS. Although not strictly TYPOGRAPHY, the Leroy template system, designed for lettering architectural and engineering drawings, was used on EC COMICS such as *Tales from the Crypt* in the 1950s (Kannenberg 2001: 183; Brownstien 2010: 91). In 1950, the *Eagle* employed the typographer Ruari McLean to DESIGN the layout of the first issue and TYPOGRAPHY was used for CAPTIONS. Berthold Wolpe created the *Eagle* MASTHEAD based on his Tempest typeface which demonstrates the close links between TYPOGRAPHY and lettering (Morris 1977: 8; Morris and Hallwood 1998: 128). The British newspaper and magazine publisher DC Thomson used TYPOGRAPHY for all text in their COMIC BOOKS, initially hot-metal typesetting before switching to the IBM ‘Golfball’ electronic typewriter and a wide range of phototypesetting systems in the 1960s (Laird 2020). Gil Kane employed TYPOGRAPHY to mixed critical reactions in his PROTO-GRAPHIC NOVELS *My Name is … Savage* (1968) and *Blackmark* (1971), but these did foreshadow the GRAPHIC NOVEL boom and an increased use of TYPOGRAPHY (Brownstein 2010: 91; Thomas 2017: 6-7). By the mid-1990s, award-winning letterers such as Todd Klein were using digital TYPOGRAPHY for most of their work, often creating fonts based on their own lettering. The 1990s saw the formation of digital foundries like Comicraft with the result that the majority of lettering in COMIC BOOKS is now technically TYPOGRAPHY (Kannenberg 2001: 183-90; Klein 2020).

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