

'GOLDEN' BOYS

THE CREATORS & CREATION OF COMIC BOOKS AS WE KNOW THEM TODAY

EXPERIMENTING WITH IDEAS

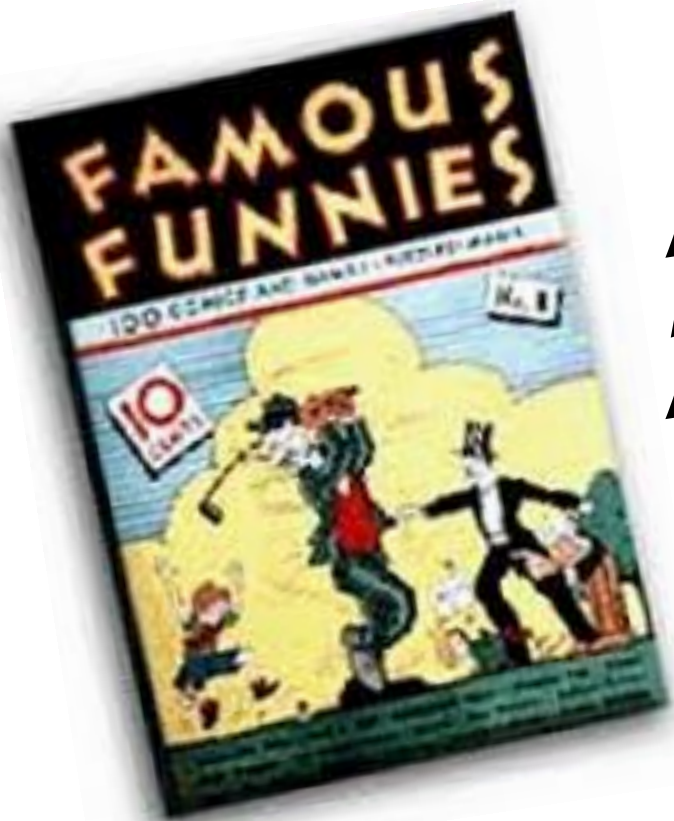
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU TOOK A NEWSPAPER COMIC STRIP AND FOLDED IT AND THEN STAPLED IT IN THE MIDDLE?

NEWSPAPER COMIC STRIPS WERE SO POPULAR IN THE 1930S THAT A MAN NAMED MC (MAX) GAINES ENDED UP ASKING THAT EXACT QUESTION.

HE TRIED IT AND CALLED IT A 'COMIC BOOK'

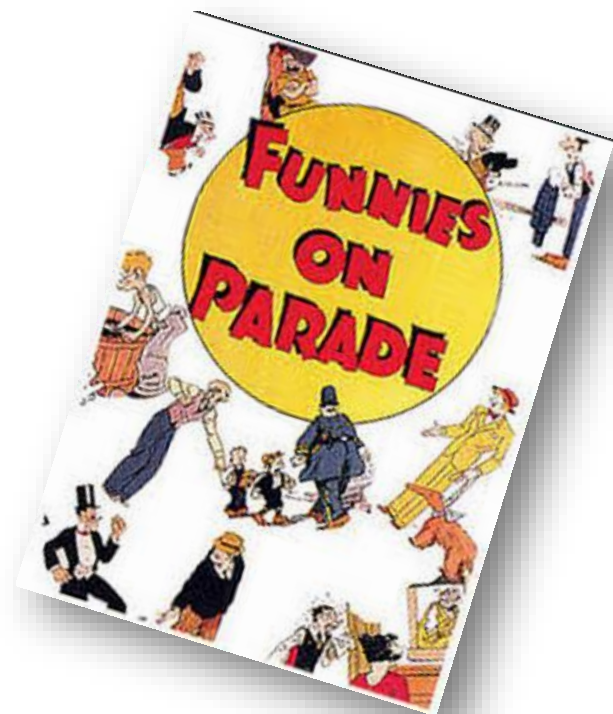
AND THEN HE WENT OUT AND EXPERIMENTED WITH IT, SOLD IT AT A COUPLE OF NEWSSTANDS IN NEW YORK CITY TO TEST THE MARKET.

WHAT HAPPENED?

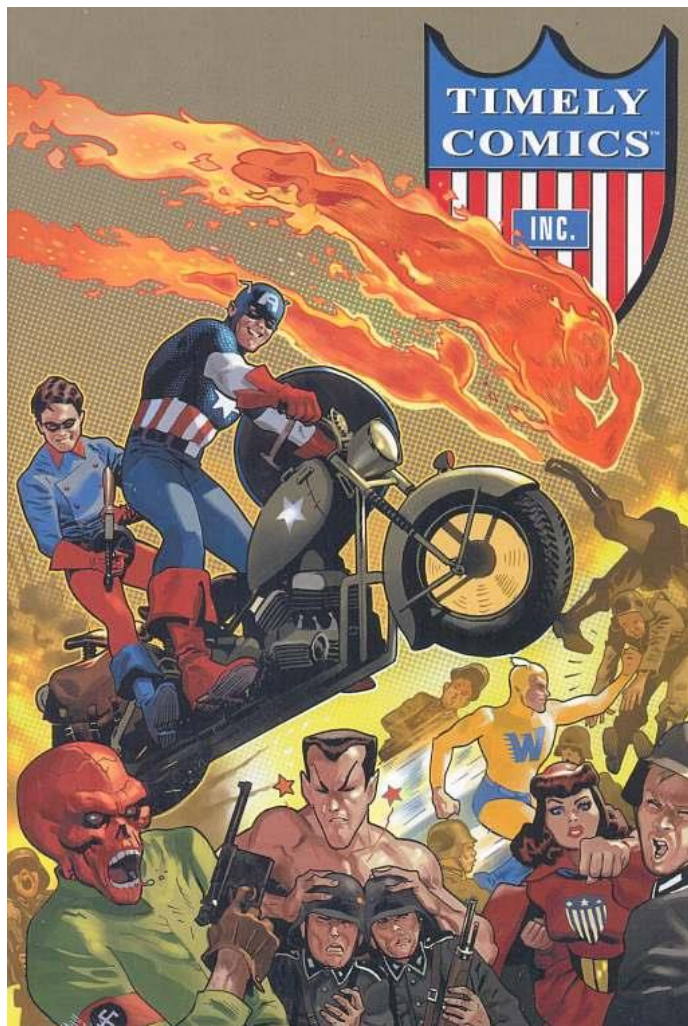


THEY SOLD. THEY SOLD WELL.

AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, SUCH COMIC BOOK TITLES AS FUNNIES ON PARADE AND FAMOUS FUNNIES STARTED TO TAKE ROOT IN AMERICA, AND THE COMIC BOOK INDUSTRY WAS BORN.



ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN...



OVER ON THE OTHER PART OF TOWN, THERE WAS MARTIN GOODMAN, ANOTHER JEWISH PUBLISHER WHO HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN PULPS WHO GOT INTO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS IN LATE 1939, CALLING HIS COMIC BOOK LINE TIMELY COMICS.

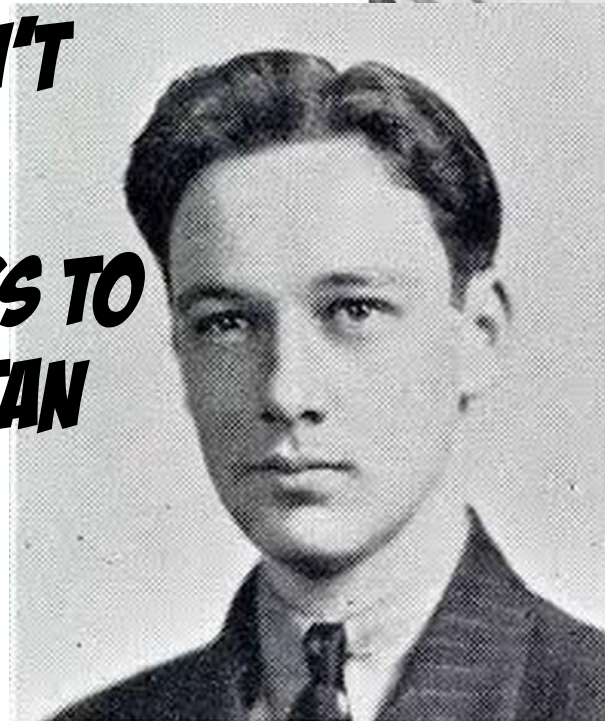
NOT TOO MANY YEARS LATER, THEY WOULD BECOME KNOWN MORE BY THE NAME OF THE FIRST COMIC BOOK HE PUBLISHED, A LITTLE DITTY CALLED MARVEL COMICS.

LETTING IT RUN ITSELF?

- **MARTIN GOODMAN WAS A BUSINESSMAN AND HE WAS VERY HAPPY TO BE PUBLISHING COMICS, AND THE MONEY THEY BROUGHT IN, BUT COMICS DIDN'T INTEREST HIM THAT MUCH.**
- **SO HE PRETTY MUCH LEFT THE COMICS TO AN 'ANNOYING TEENAGER' NAMED STAN LEE ALL THE TIME.**



Martin Goodman



Stan Lee, Sr. Year of H.S.

BIG IDEAS & BIGGER HEROES



WHICH WAS A MARVELOUS THING FOR COMIC BOOKS, AS STAN LEE WENT ON TO BECOME THE COMIC-BOOK CREATOR WHO, WORKING WITH THE INVALUABLE HELP OF OTHER INCREDIBLY TALENTED ARTISTS & WRITERS, LIKE JACK KIRBY, CAME UP WITH THE LIKES OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, THE X-MEN, IRON MAN, & OTHER AVENGERS CHARACTERS.

TWO MINDS ARE BETTER THAN ONE



OFFICIALLY, LEE WROTE THE STORY AND KIRBY DREW THE STORY, NOT ALWAYS IN THAT ORDER.

DIFFERENT STORIES CAME TOGETHER DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT ESSENTIALLY THEY WERE CO-STORYTELLERS.

AND THE WORK THEY DID TOGETHER DURING THOSE FIRST FEW YEARS TRANSFORMED THE AMERICAN COMIC-BOOK INDUSTRY AND LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE BILLION-DOLLAR TRADEMARK EMPIRE MARVEL WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME.

CONTROVERSY?!

THE EARLY FANTASTIC FOUR SAID "WRITTEN BY STAN LEE, DRAWN BY JACK KIRBY." NICE AND SIMPLE, RIGHT?

IN "ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS" AND OTHER INTERVIEWS, STAN LEE INDICATES THAT HE CAME UP WITH THE IDEAS AND JACK KIRBY DREW THEM. BUT ACCORDING TO SOME COMIC BOOK HISTORIANS THERE ARE SEVERAL BIG PROBLEMS WITH THAT.

WHOSE BIG IDEA?

- ACCORDING TO HISTORIANS STAN LEE WAS NOT KNOWN FOR PRODUCING GREAT NEW IDEAS. JACK KIRBY, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS KNOWN FOR ALWAYS PRODUCING BIG IDEAS, SUCH AS CAPTAIN AMERICA (CO-CREATED WITH JOE SIMON.)***

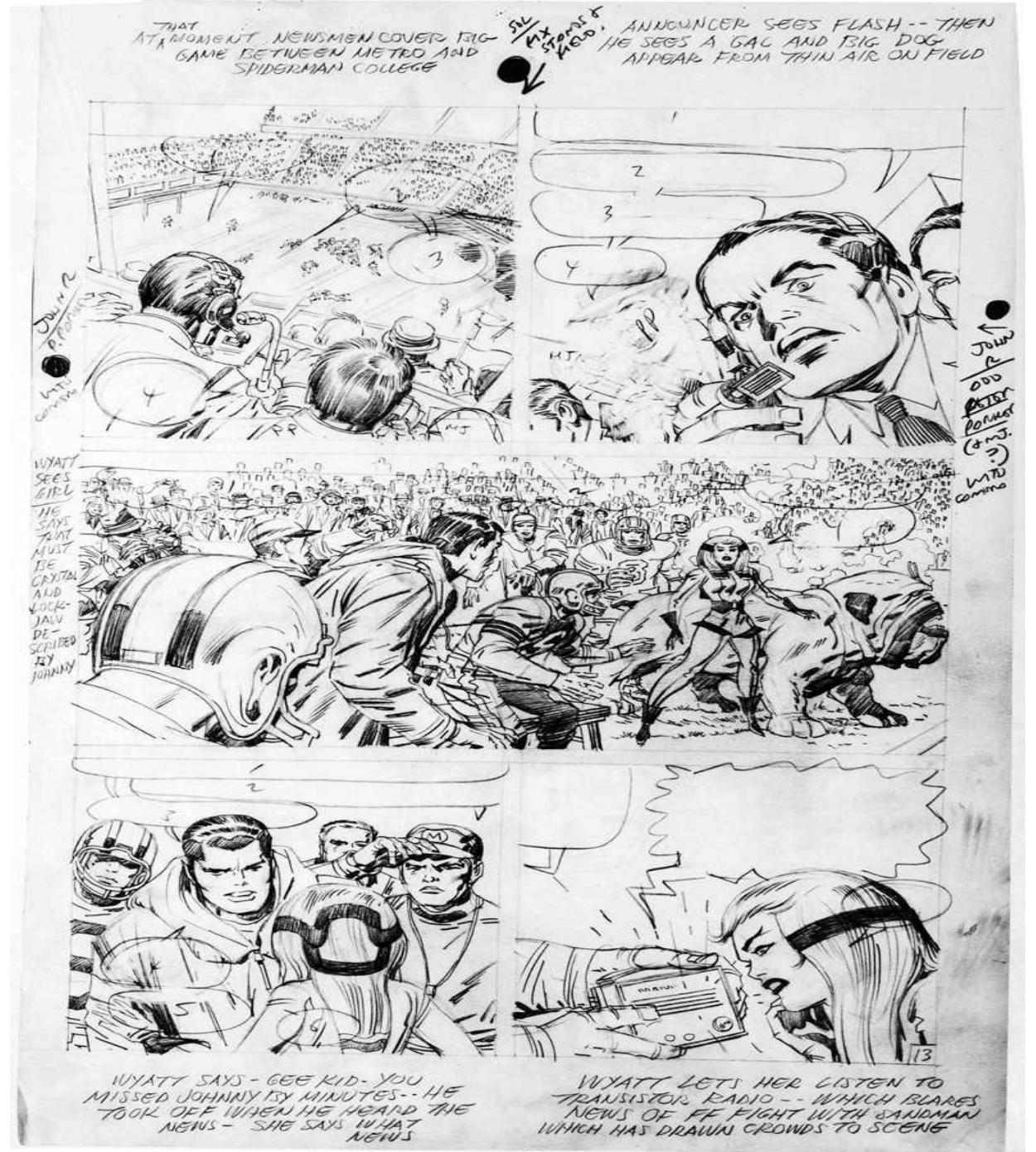


DELIVERY!

STAN WOULD OFTEN WOULD JUST GIVE A GENERAL SUGGESTION AND JACK (OR ANOTHER ARTIST) WOULD DO THE REST, DELIVERING THE PAGES FOR DIALOG TO BE ADDED,

SOMETIMES WITH NOTES ON WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE PICTURES & WHAT THE ARTIST THOUGHT THE DIALOG SHOULD BE...

STAN WOULD THEN ADD THE ACTUAL DIALOG (WHICH OFTEN CONTRADICTED WHAT THE ARTIST HAD WANTED, BUT THEY SELDOM HAD TIME TO READ THE FINISHED COMIC.)



THE 'MARVEL METHOD'

- **IT WAS SAID, STAN LEE WAS JUST TOO BUSY TO WRITE EVERYTHING, AND WOULD OFTEN JUST DELIVER THE FAINTEST OUTLINE FOR A SCRIPT.**
- **IN THIS LETTER FROM 1965 (PRINTED IN THE BOOK "THE STAN LEE UNIVERSE") HE OUTLINES WHAT BECAME KNOWN AS "THE MARVEL METHOD:**

FF is easily our favorite book here at the Marvel bullpen. It's my baby and I love it. People have asked for original scripts- actually, we don't even HAVE any. I write the story plot- go over it with Jack- he draws it up based on our hasty conferences- then, with his drawings in front of me, I write the captions and dialogue, usually right on the original art work! It seems to work out well,

THE PROCESS

THE PROCESS: JACK (OR WHOEVER) HAD THE IDEAS, STAN WOULD APPROVE OR CHANGE THEM AND ADD HIS OWN IDEAS, AND KIRBY (OR ANOTHER ARTIST) DID THE REST. BUT STAN WAS IN OVERALL CONTROL AND STAN WOULD WRITE THE FINISHED DIALOG IN HIS EASY TO READ STYLE, AND THAT IS WHY HE CALLED HIMSELF THE WRITER.



WHY FIGHT?

- ***JACK KIRBY WAS ONLY PAID AS AN ARTIST, BUT HE FELT HE SHOULD BE PAID MORE BECAUSE HE ALSO CONTRIBUTED STORY IDEAS.***
- ***HE BELIEVED HE HAD BEEN PROMISED PAYMENT AND IT NEVER CAME, SO HE FINALLY LEFT MARVEL. YEARS LATER, IN THE 1980S, JACK WAS FIGHTING TO GET HIS ORIGINAL ART BACK FROM MARVEL, AND THE TWO SIDES BECAME POLARIZED.***

ONE MORE THING...

IT HAS BEEN SAID STAN HAS A POWERFUL MOTIVE FOR CLAIMING CREDIT: COPYRIGHT LAW MEANS THAT IF KIRBY TRULY CREATED IT THEN HE (OR HIS ESTATE) WOULD NOW BE DUE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN ROYALTIES. BUT, ACCORDING TO SOME, STAN IS 'ALWAYS THE CONSUMMATE COMPANY MAN,' SO AS LONG AS HE CLAIMS CREDIT (AND TAKES HIS MILLION DOLLAR A YEAR SALARY) MARVEL IS LEGALLY SAFE.



HE SAYS, HE SAYS . . .

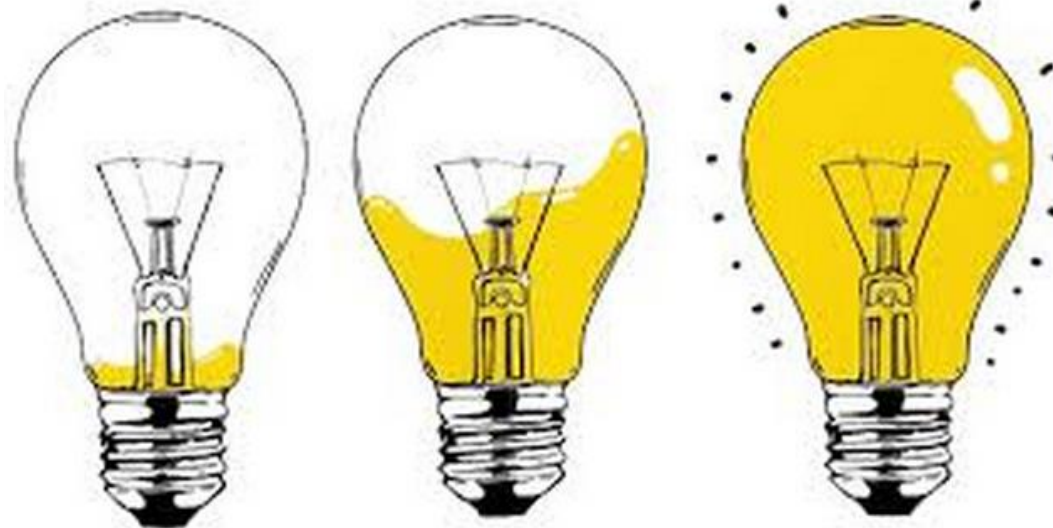
- ***SOME SAY JACK KIRBY CREATED MARVEL "COMICS" (SMALL "C", THE PICTURES AND STORIES) BUT STAN LEE CREATED MARVEL "COMICS". LEE CREATED THE CONNECTED UNIVERSE AND GLOBAL EMPIRE AND WITHOUT HIM, WE WOULDN'T KNOW JACK KIRBY'S STORIES.***
- ***SOME FANS FELT THAT CLEARLY STAN DID EVERYTHING. OTHERS FELT THAT HE HAD TAKEN CREDIT FOR KIRBY'S WORK. STILL OTHERS FELT THAT THEIR CONTRIBUTION WAS EQUAL, AS ONE HISTORIAN SAYS, "STAN LEE PROVIDED THE ROADS, THE LAND, THE BUYERS AND THE PAINT, BUT JACK KIRBY BUILT THE HOUSE." PERHAPS NEITHER COULD SUCCEED WITHOUT THE OTHER.***
- ***THE BATTLE RAGES TO THIS DAY.***

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

- ***WHO IS RIGHT?***
- ***WHO DESERVES THE MOST CREDIT?***
- ***IS A COMIC BOOK A STORY WITHOUT THE WORDS? CAN A COMIC BOOK TELL A STORY WITHOUT THE PICTURES?***
- ***DO THEY BOTH DESERVE THE SAME AMOUNT?***
- ***HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU WERE JACK KIRBY?***
- ***HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU WERE STAN LEE?***

FINDING *INSPIRATION*

ARTISTS AND WRITERS FIND INSPIRATION FOR THEIR CREATIONS IN A VARIETY OF THINGS AROUND THEM, FROM ANY EVERYDAY ITEM TO THE EXCEPTIONAL. PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS, EVEN OTHER WORKS OF ART HAVE INSPIRED SOME OF THE GREATEST ARTISTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY TO CREATE SOME VERY MEMORABLE PIECES – COMIC BOOK ARTISTS AND WRITERS ARE NO EXCEPTION.



THAT REMINDS ME!

- ***HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT INSPIRED COMIC BOOK ARTISTS TO CREATE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE SUPERHEROES AND VILLAINS?***
- ***WHILE SOME OF THEM CAME DIRECTLY FROM THE MINDS OF THE CREATORS (SUCH AS THE BLOB AND APOCALYPSE) OR FROM THE GREEK AND NORSE MYTHOLOGY (SUCH AS HERCULES AND THOR) THERE ARE STILL A FEW OF THEM THAT AREN'T SO OBVIOUS TO FIGURE OUT.***

ART INSPIRED BY LIFE

MOST OF THE GREATEST COMIC BOOK SUPERHEROES AND VILLAINS HAVE BEEN INSPIRED BY LIVING, BREATHING PEOPLE. HERE ARE SOME OF THE REAL LIFE INSPIRATIONS BEHIND COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS.

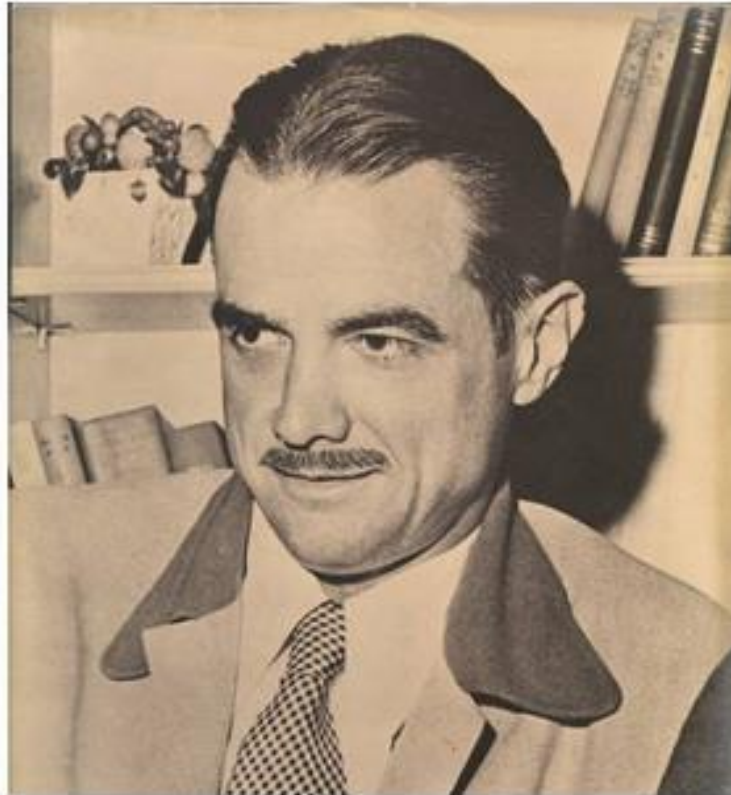
THE JOKER



THE JOKER WAS INSPIRED BY A PLAYING CARD AND A SILENT MOVIE STAR (CONRAD VEIDT IN THE MAN WHO LAUGHS.)



IRON MAN



IRON MAN IS BASICALLY HOWARD HUGHES. IF CROTCHETY HERMIT BILLIONAIRES HAD TRADING CARDS, HOWARD HUGHES WOULD BE THE BABE RUTH.

THOUGH HANDSOME, RICH AND BONA-FIDE BRILLIANT, HUGHES STRUGGLED IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE. SINCE THAT KIND OF FLAWED HERO FIGURE IS REALLY MARVEL'S BAG, HUGHES WAS A NATURAL FIT WHEN COMING UP WITH THE PERSONALITY FOR PLAYBOY WHIZ TONY STARK.

BOTH INHERITED THEIR FORTUNE FROM THEIR FATHERS, BOTH WERE INVENTORS AND PLAYBOYS. THEY EVEN NAMED TONY'S FATHER HOWARD.

SUPER MAN!



- ***SUPERMAN WAS INSPIRED BY A WHOLE COMBINATION OF THINGS!***
- ***USING BIBLICAL FIGURES SUCH AS MOSES AND SAMSON AND FICTIONAL HEROES SUCH AS HERCULES, DOC SAVAGE, AND BUCK ROGERS, HIS CREATORS TWEAKED THEIR CREATION INTO ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC CHARACTERS EVER.***

SUPER MEN = SUPER MAN!



AS AVID MOVIE BUFFS, SIEGEL AND SHUSTER MADE SUPERMAN LOOK LIKE FAMOUS MOVIE STAR DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS (MINUS THE PENCIL-THIN MUSTACHE). HIS ALTER EGO, CLARK KENT (USING THE FIRST NAMES OF ACTORS CLARK GABLE AND KENT TAYLOR) WAS MODELED AFTER ANOTHER ACTOR, HAROLD LLOYD.



***IF YOU WERE GOING TO CREATE A
SUPERHERO OR SUPER VILLAIN
WHAT OR WHO WOULD YOU USE AS
INSPIRATION?***