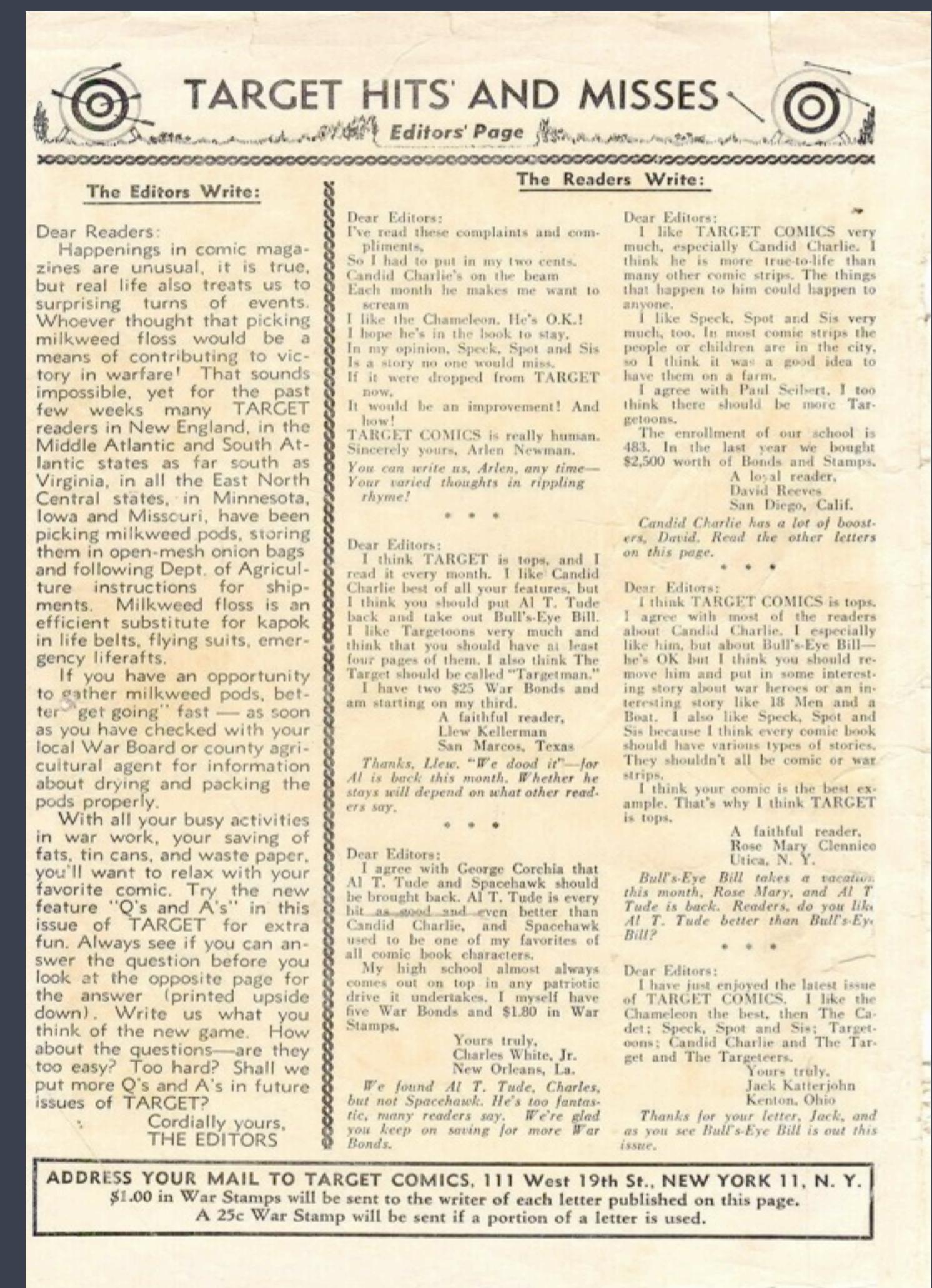
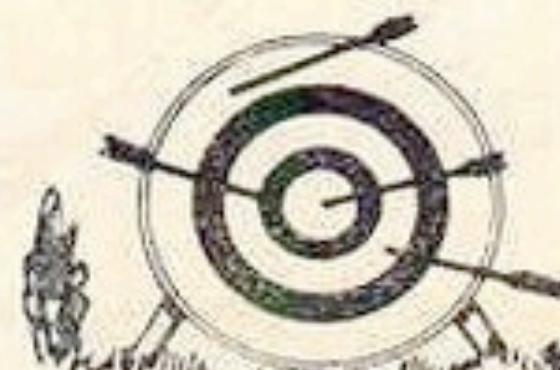




- ▶ Section of a comic book where reader letters (to the publisher or the editor) appear - letter columns, letter pages, letters to the editor, letters of comment
- ▶ *Target Comics* #6, published by Novelty Press in 1940
- ▶ The first DC comic to include a letters column was *Real Fact Comics* #3 (July 1946)
- ▶ Early letter columns tended to be fan letters from younger readers - simplistic questions (where Superman put his Clark Kent clothes when he was in costume)





TARGET HITS' AND MISSES

Editors' Page



The Editors Write:

Dear Readers:

Happenings in comic magazines are unusual, it is true, but real life also treats us to surprising turns of events. Whoever thought that picking milkweed floss would be a means of contributing to victory in warfare! That sounds impossible, yet for the past few weeks many TARGET readers in New England, in the Middle Atlantic and South Atlantic states as far south as Virginia, in all the East North Central states, in Minnesota,

Dear Editors:

I've read these complaints and compliments,

So I had to put in my two cents. Candid Charlie's on the beam Each month he makes me want to scream

I like the Chameleon. He's O.K.! I hope he's in the book to stay. In my opinion, Speck, Spot and Sis Is a story no one would miss.

If it were dropped from TARGET now,

It would be an improvement! And how!

TARGET COMICS is really human. Sincerely yours, Arlen Newman.

*You can write us, Arlen, any time—
Your varied thoughts in rippling
rhyme!*

The Readers Write:

Dear Editors:

I like TARGET COMICS very much, especially Candid Charlie. I think he is more true-to-life than many other comic strips. The things that happen to him could happen to anyone.

I like Speck, Spot and Sis very much, too. In most comic strips the people or children are in the city, so I think it was a good idea to have them on a farm.

I agree with Paul Seibert. I too think there should be more Target-toons.

The enrollment of our school is 483. In the last year we bought \$2,500 worth of Bonds and Stamps.

A loyal reader,
David Reeves
San Diego, Calif.

WHO SPEAKS FOR THE SURFER?

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 625 MADISON AVE. N.Y., N.Y. 10022

Dear Stan and John,
SILVER SURFER #4 was another great issue. However, I felt that John's artwork slipped a little as compared to past issues. Perhaps it could have been because of the inking, which was good, though. The story, "The Good, the Bad, and the Uncanny" was excellent, but Loki was used for too much while Thor was left out to a large degree. The Silver Surfer in Asgard was astounding! John illustrated the scenes beautifully, and he drew all the characters with authority. I hope that the Surfer will confront Galactus again soon. If and when they do meet, have the Surfer get his freedom to roam the galaxies once more. This would give you a vast new field for some stories with a different turn of events. Only the Silver Surfer has the power and excitement — and already you have taken this important asset away from him. I hope you will change this soon, because the Surfer without being able to roam the endless spaceways is like Spider-Man without his spider-powers. Well, I hope you get the message. Also, Howard Purcell has brought new heights of glory to the "Tales of the Watcher" series, and the Watcher stories are always interesting with their strange and surprising endings. I hope you will continue to turn out such fine literary and artistic achievements that are hailed so highly by all Marvelites. Bill Labrie, Box 246 Athabasca, Alberta, Canada

So do we, Bill, so do we. We think you're in a minority in your opinion about the inking of Surfy's sagas, though — 'cause personally, we feel that Big John's little sibling is the most! What says Marveldom Assembled?

Dear Stan and Jack,
One thing really bugs me about the Watcher. You portray him as a noble entity, yet twice has he broken his eternal promise (#48 through #50, and #72). So, like a true Marvelite, I have come forth to salvage, not slaughter, you. Who is to say whether a bit of "interference" can be termed as interference or much needed guidance? Admittedly, l'homme doesn't look like much right now, but with the Watcher's subtle guidance, who can say that man won't illuminate the universe with greatness instead of mushroom clouds? It's a little improbable right now, but it is possible and that's what makes it interesting. Touche'

Todd Buchts, 113 Hiawatha Trail
Liverpool, N.Y. 13088

Merci, Monsieur Buchts . . . or, since you claim we've turned the wondrous Watcher into an Indian giver of promises, perhaps we should say "Mercy!"

KNOW YE THESE, THE HALLOWED RANKS OF MARVELDOM:

R.F.O. (REAL FRANTIC ONE)—A BUYER OF AT LEAST 3 MARVEL MAGS A MONTH.

T.T.B. (TITANIC TRUE BELIEVER)—A DIVINELY-INSPIRED 'NO-PRIZE' WINNER.

Q.N.S. (QUITE 'NUFF SAYER)—A FORTUNATE FRANTIC ONE WHO'S HAD A LETTER PRINTED.

K.O.F. (KEEPER OF THE FLAME)—ONE WHO RECRUITS A NEWCOMER TO MARVEL'S ROLLICKIN' RANKS.

P.M.M. (PERMANENT MARVELITE MAXIMUS)—ANYONE POSSESSING ALL FOUR OF THE OTHER TITLES.

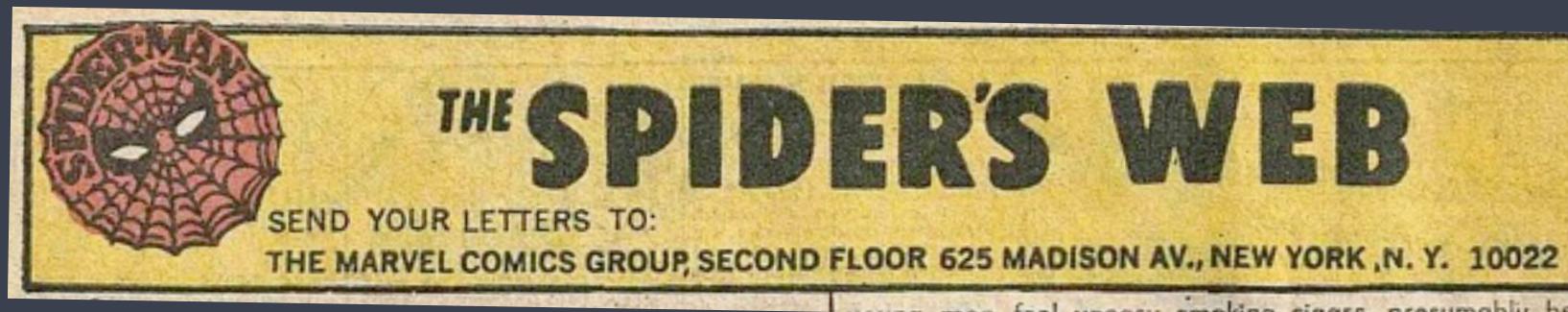
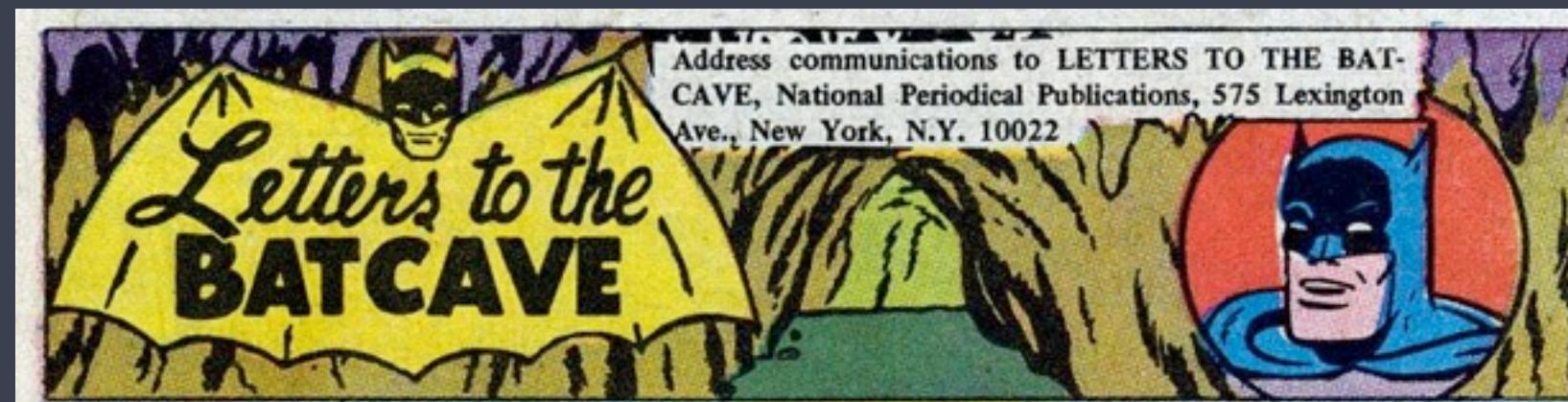
F.F.F. (FEARLESS FRONT FACER)—AN HONORARY TITLE BESTOWED FOR DEVOTION TO MARVEL ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY.

► Letter columns came into their prime in the 1960s, when readers' letters became longer and the discussions more sophisticated

► Important differences between DC & Marvel letter columns:

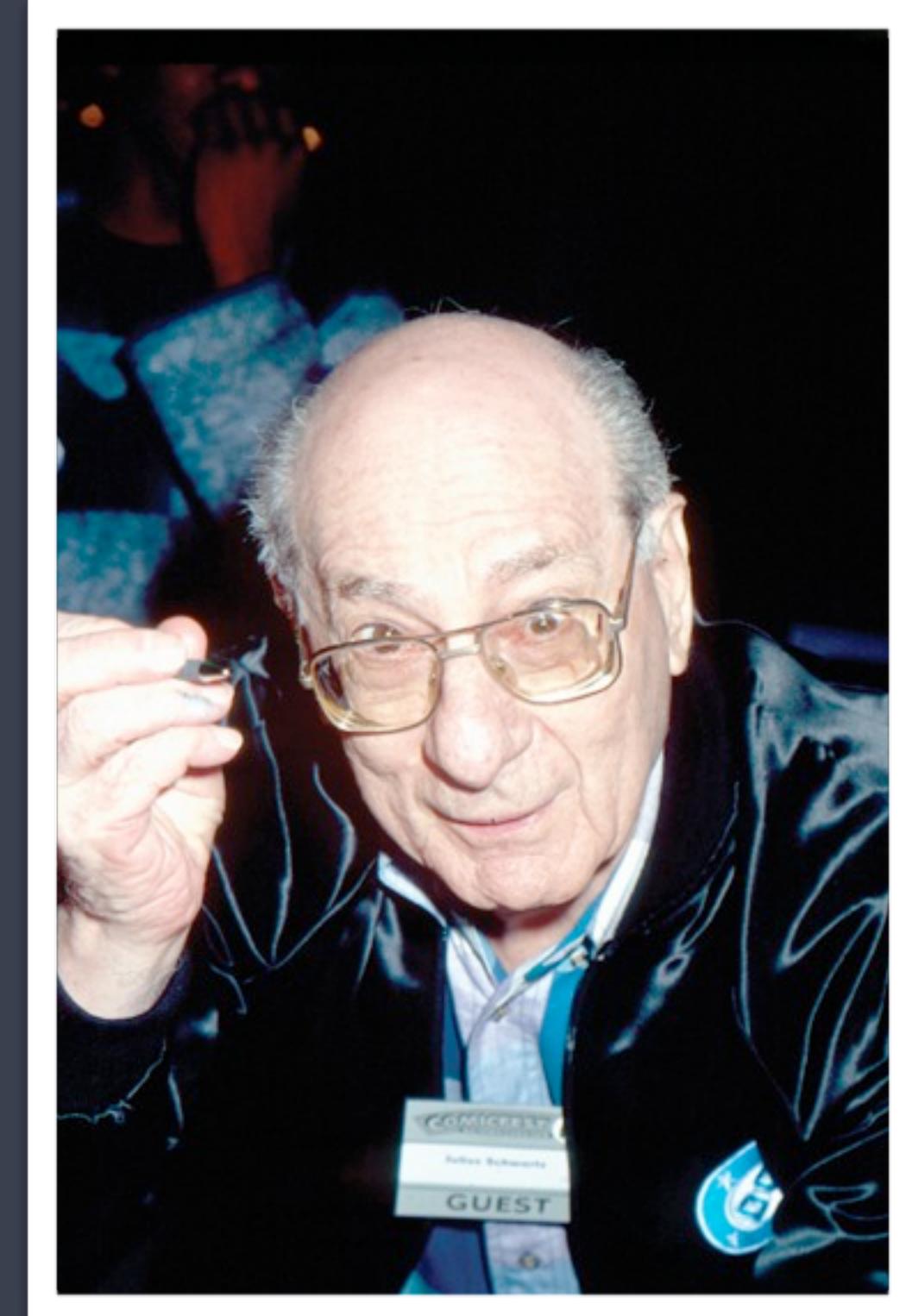
► **DC** rarely printed the entire letter (much more selective in what they published) - editors referred to readers as "them"

► **Marvel** published letters in their entirety - letters were often critical or offered detailed suggestions - editors were inclusive, referring to readers as "us" or "we"



BUILDING FAN COMMUNITY

- ▶ *The Brave and the Bold* #35 (1961)
- ▶ DC Editor Julius Schwartz decided to publish the full name and address of letter writers
- ▶ Created a sense of community among readers - many became pen pals or organized meet ups
- ▶ Precursor to the comic fan community website



READER PARTICIPATION

- ▶ Publishers took advantage of the letter columns to solicit feedback & suggestions from readers
- ▶ Fans were asked to weigh in on a character's uniform changes or submit their own uniform designs - the winning entry actually becoming the character's new costume
- ▶ For team books like *The Avengers* or *Justice League*, fans were asked which characters should become permanent members, team leaders, or kicked off the team

“We don't score hits with every issue. Sometimes a story has flaws or just doesn't come up to snuff. Which is why your letters are so valuable to us in producing these comments. . . . So don't let anybody tell you your letters aren't important, people. They are vital to these magazines.”

Len Wein (*Powerman* #24, April 1975)

LETTERHACKS

- ▶ For many fans, having a letter printed was a badge of honor — especially if it was in one of the more high-profile letters pages
- ▶ Fans whose letters were published regularly became well-known throughout the industry by virtue of their letters - became mini celebrities in their own right
- ▶ A small number of these **Letterhacks** actually parlayed their letter writing success into a career in the industry (Kurt Busiek, Ralph Macchio)

History Bookmarks Tools Window iFanboy - Comic Books Discussion

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iFanboy

What's Your Game?

ELEVEN MILLION PEOPLE

FREE TRIAL

WORLD OF WARCRAFT

ABOUT US PODCASTS COMICS STORE FORUM SEARCH

PICK OF THE WEEK

03.25.2009 - The Umbrella Academy: Dallas #5

Time Travel, JFK Assassination, Monkeys, and Vampires. Not a Bad Mix.

Continue Reading ▶

Superman Vol.

BOOK OF THE MONTH

the fan community

Continue Reading ▶

ARTICLES

iFanboy Events: Geoff Johns and Emerald City

ComiCon

Posted by [Josh Flanagan](#) on Mar 25, 2009 in [articles](#)

If you like iFanboy, and you're in New York City on April 1, or Seattle on April 4-5, we've got good news.

Continue Reading & Comment ▶

27

Members Giveaway - Mike Allred Original Art

Posted by [Ron Richards](#) on Mar 22, 2009 in [articles](#)

It pays to be an iFanboy member, and this month we're giving away a page of original art from Mike Allred! Click through for all the details!

Continue Reading & Comment ▶

9

Dollhouse - S01E07 - Echoes

Posted by [Johnnomy](#) on Mar 27, 2009 in [articles](#)

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100

PODCASTS

iFanboy's got podcasts to delight and tantalize the senses!

PICK OF THE WEEK PODCAST

03.22.2009 - Episode #176 - G.I. Joe: Cobra #1

Show Notes & Comments ▶

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iFanboy VIDEO PODCAST

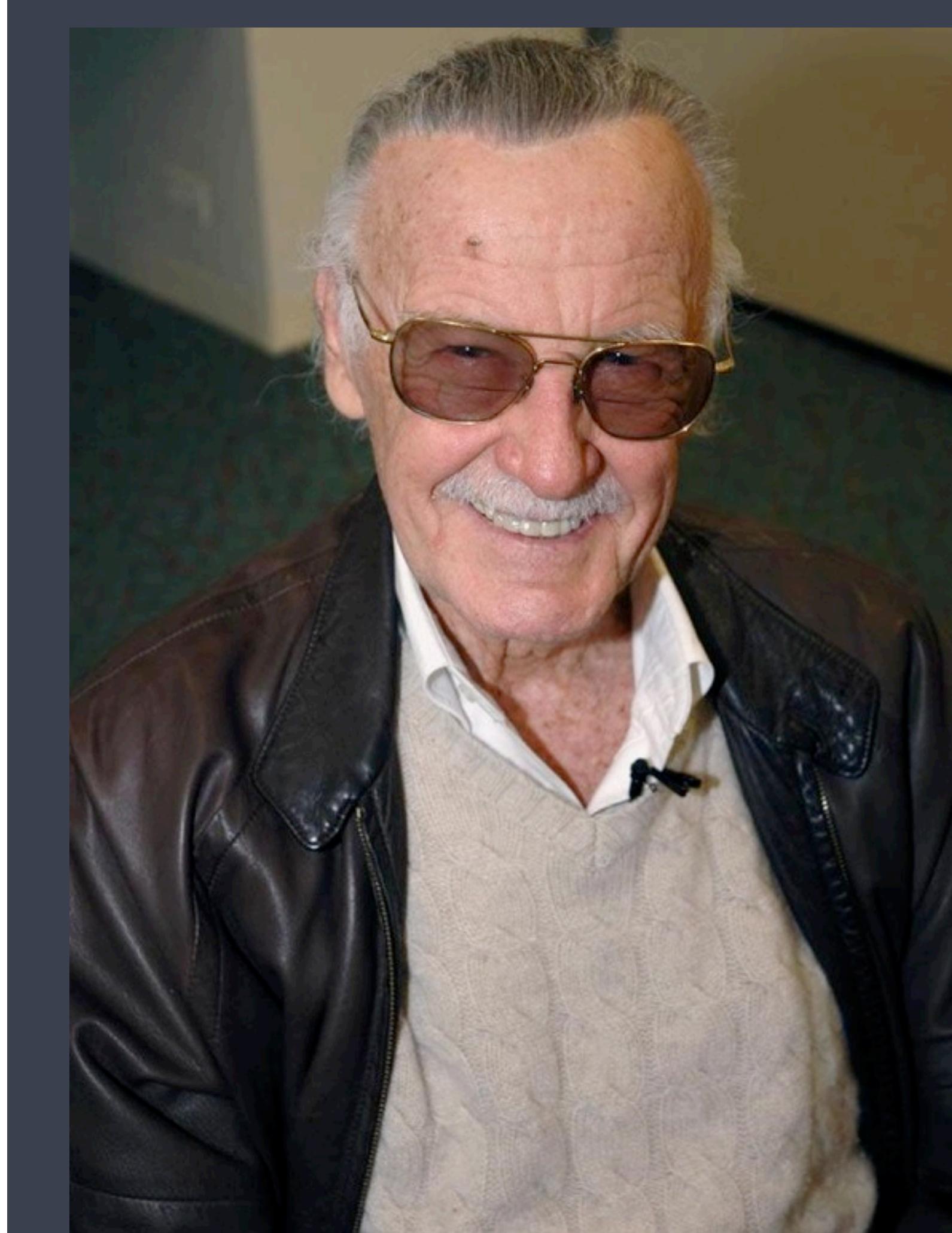
iFanboy - Episode #114 - The New Top Cow

Show Notes & Comments ▶

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BULLPEN BULLETIN

marvel speaks to fans



MARVEL BULLPEN BULLETINS • MARVEL BULLPEN BULLETINS • MARVEL BULLPEN BULLETINS WHO SAYS THIS ISN'T THE MARVEL AGE OF BATTY BULLETINS?

ITEM! By the time you read these imperishable words, our two Saturday morning full-color half-hour cartoon spectacles, **FANTASTIC FOUR** and **SPIDER-MAN**, should be knockin' 'em dead from border-to-border and coast-to-coast on the far-flung ABC television network! And by the way, even if you don't live in the continental United States, write to your local TV station anyway, asking when Spidey and the FF will be seen in your area. (If you live in Red China, think how that'll shake 'em up!) When the voice of Marveldom Assembled speaks, even the airwaves must quiver in awe! —

ITEM! Speaking of the airwaves, for those of you in the N.Y.-New Jersey listening area, who might have missed our leader's radio interview with Joel Scott over F.M. station WFMU (91.1 megacycles), it was such a smash that it'll be rebroadcast at 9:00 PM, Oct. 16th. So if you get a chance, give a listen, huh? Smiley will be talking about our favorite subject — Marvel mags!

ITEM! We received a letter recently that all you face-fronters will get a kick out of. Without any further ado, here 'tis —

Dear Stan,

Remember the controversy when you introduced that pinnacle of imperfection, Irving Forbush? Everyone asked "Who is he?" Now I (with the help of my complete collection of your Marvel masterpieces) have solved the mystery! He's a character who's appeared, in various guises, in many of your earlier mags! For example, he was the owner of the clothing store which was wrecked by the Thing, when Irv told him he had no clothes to fit him. (If you've forgotten, see FF #1). To continue, Forbush was the wrestler that Peter Parker first tried his spider powers on. (Take a squint at **AMAZING FANTASY**, #15). He was also the guy who neglected to push the "hold" button when scientist Bruce Banner spotted a young man on the field, in danger of being exposed to gamma-rays. (**HULK** #1, natch). He was the private who got a soggy blanket tossed at his face when he tried to inform an irate Sgt. Fury that "Happy Sam" Sawyer wanted to see him. (A bit of nostalgia from SGT.

others? It's called **AMERICA'S BEST TV COMICS**, on sale at all newsstands, or send 25¢ to ABC, Box 20, Detroit, Mich. (—End of commercial!)

ITEM! We just remembered! It's time to announce the second rank of Marveldom. Last iss we gave you the first rank, the title R.F.O. (Real Frantic One), to which any Believer is entitled, provided he or she (or it) buys a minimum of 3 Marvel mags each month. And now (Ta ta ta taaa, ta ta!) rank #2: Q.N.S. (Quite 'Nuff Sayer), to be used with pride by any heroic one who has had at least one letter published in a Marvel mag. Stay tuned for our next iss when we'll fill you in' on the title T.T.B.I It's a doozy!

ITEM: And now, before we get to our Soapbox section, just another reminder to the more playful pussycats among you that there's a whole kaboodle of Marvel toys, games, and novelties on sale at a store near you right now. (Unless you're rowing a kayak across the Pacific — in which case, wait'll next month). We're not trying to leave you penniless, but we get so many indignant letters from frenzied ones who berate us for not mentioning various items that are on sale, that we thought we'd wrap the whole thing up in a ball and let you have it all at once, like now! Excelsior!

STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Every so often we like to toss a completely unexpected, bombshell surprise at you. Well, we've got one for you now! We decided to mention it in this space, which is the most widely-read paragraph in all of comicdom, so that none of you will miss it. Just for kicks, yours truly and Genial Gene Colan have created a brand new superhero who we think is destined to become an overnight sensation. His name — **CAPTAIN MARVEL**!! We don't wanna say any more about him now, except to tell you that he's starring in **MARVEL SUPER-HEROES**. It's on sale right now! It's dramatic! It's daring! And it's different! Read it — then drop us a line telling how it grabs you. We're waiting on pins and needles for your reaction. And now till we meet again, be good.

FANTASTIC FOUR #70: Will the fightin'-mad Thing finally do what no combination of super-villains have ever been able to do — destroy the FF? It's an action-lovers' special—as only Stan and Jack can dish it out! **SPIDER-MAN**, #56: If Spidey was hated and feared by the public before, what'll happen now — now, when he's actually fighting on the side of a more-deadly-than-ever Doc Ock? Even WE can't be sure Spidey will ever get out of this one!

AVENGERS #47: What's this? Captain America quits the Avengers? Hercules finds an awesome mystery upon fabled Olympus? Quicksilver and the Scarlet Witch are captured after a desperate battle? And we're only charging 12¢? CHEEE!

X-MEN #39: With the fate of the entire world hanging in the balance, Marvel's mightiest mutants face a final showdown with Factor Three! Plus, the never-before-told "Origin of Cyclops!" This is X-citement unlimited!

DAREDEVIL #35: Even the fabulous FF have never been able to defeat him for good — and now, the Man Without Fear must battle the Trapster alone! But, how do you fight someone when he's already beaten you? It's a shocker!

THOR #147: Now, with the Thunder God's power at its lowest ebb — with his own father turned against him — with the police themselves unable to help — now — NOW — the mighty Thor must face the deadliest threat of all — Loki!!

SUSPENSE #97: Whiplash! His very name sends shivers down your spine! You'll meet him for the first time in this sensational Iron Man thriller! As for Captain America, he's got a real surprise for you — and for himself as well! All we have to do is mention three words — the Black Panther!

STRANGE TALES #164: You'll gasp in amazement when Doc Strange ventures into a world of nightmares to rescue the beauteous Victoria Bentley! And, as if that isn't enough, Nick Fury finds himself trapped in the lair of the Yellow Claw! This one's gotta shatter your senses!

SGT. FURY #49: The Howlers start the Allies on the long road to victory in the Pacific — as they fight their way across the blood-stained sands of Tarawa! Hoo boy — this is really the big one!

MARVEL BULLPEN BULLETINS!

FACE FRONT! Here's a whole kaboodle of news and gossip straight from your bullpen to you!

BIG NEWS! An old favorite of yours, Jolly JOE SINNOTT has rejoined our mighty Marvel team! He'll be inking the F.F. regularly, working on "Agent of Shield," and doing as many other features as we can straddle him with! (Remember his great inking job on F.F. #5? Dyed-in-the-wool Marvelites are still drooling over it!)

Everybody's favorite guessing game these days is trying to figure out the real identity of the "Sub-Mariner's" powerful penciller, ADAM AUSTIN! As most of you have guessed, Adam Austin is only a nom de plume, and one of these days we'll reveal his real name to you—if we don't forget it before then!

Did you know that our bullpen ramrod, Smilin' STAN LEE, also authors **MONSTERS UNLIMITED** as well as **YOU DON'T SAY!** Both are slick paper photo-gag magazines, and Stan the Man seems to have the magic touch—both of those humor sensations seem to sell out as fast as our own Marvel masterpieces—and that's savin' something!

CAN YOU GUESS
WHAT'S IN THIS
MYSTERIOUS
MAILING TUBE?



It's our next Marvel mail order bombshell! You've been demandin' it for months—so

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST
A Line-Up Of Some Of The Marvel-ous Mags
On Sale Right Now!

FANTASTIC FOUR #45: At last! The secret of Medusa's mysterious lost race! More about the grotesque Gorgon! And wait'll you see who the Torch meets!

AVENGERS #22: What happens to a world-famous fighting team after they've suffered their first major defeat? This one is a real shocker!

X-MEN #14: See the human race up in arms against the X-Men, as the supernatural "Sentinels" make their first fantastic appearance!

DAREDEVIL #10: A real collector's item! On a dare, Stan let Wally Wood write this one, and it's the most off-beat mystery in years! Wait'll you see the far-out supervillains and the panicky plot twists! Sure to be talked-about everywhere!

THOR #122: Having battled Thor to a standstill, the Absorbing Man now dares to attack Odin himself! Also, learn the secret of the hooded mystery man!

STRANGE #139: Fury a prisoner of Hydral Earth menaced by a betatron bomb! And then—a girl steps in! Plus: Dr. Strange's startling battle with Baron Mordol

SUSPENSE #72: The most unexpected vil-

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SPIDER-MAN - FALLEN HERO

BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS

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Manhunter, Sam & Twitch &
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ALEX MALEEV
The extraordinary Artist and
painter for New Avengers,
Daredevil & More!



ADI GRANOV
Artist & Iron Man's chief
conceptual designer.



STEVE McNIVEN
The ultimate penciller for Civil
War, Spiderman & the Fantastic
Four!



JIM McCANN
Jim @ Marvel gives you all
the Inside Info on all things
Marvel.



DAVID MACK
Creator of Kabuki. Artist of
Daredevil, Wolverine & White
Tiger!



DAVID FINCH
Artist extraordinaire - New
Avengers, Moon Knight & More!



GABRIELE DELL'OTTO
Artist/Painter - Annihilation,
Secret Wars & More!



MICHAEL LARK
Artist extraordinaire for
Daredevil, Batman, etc.



C.B. CEBULSKI
Marvel Editor and writer of Loners,
Spiderman, etc.



the creator site

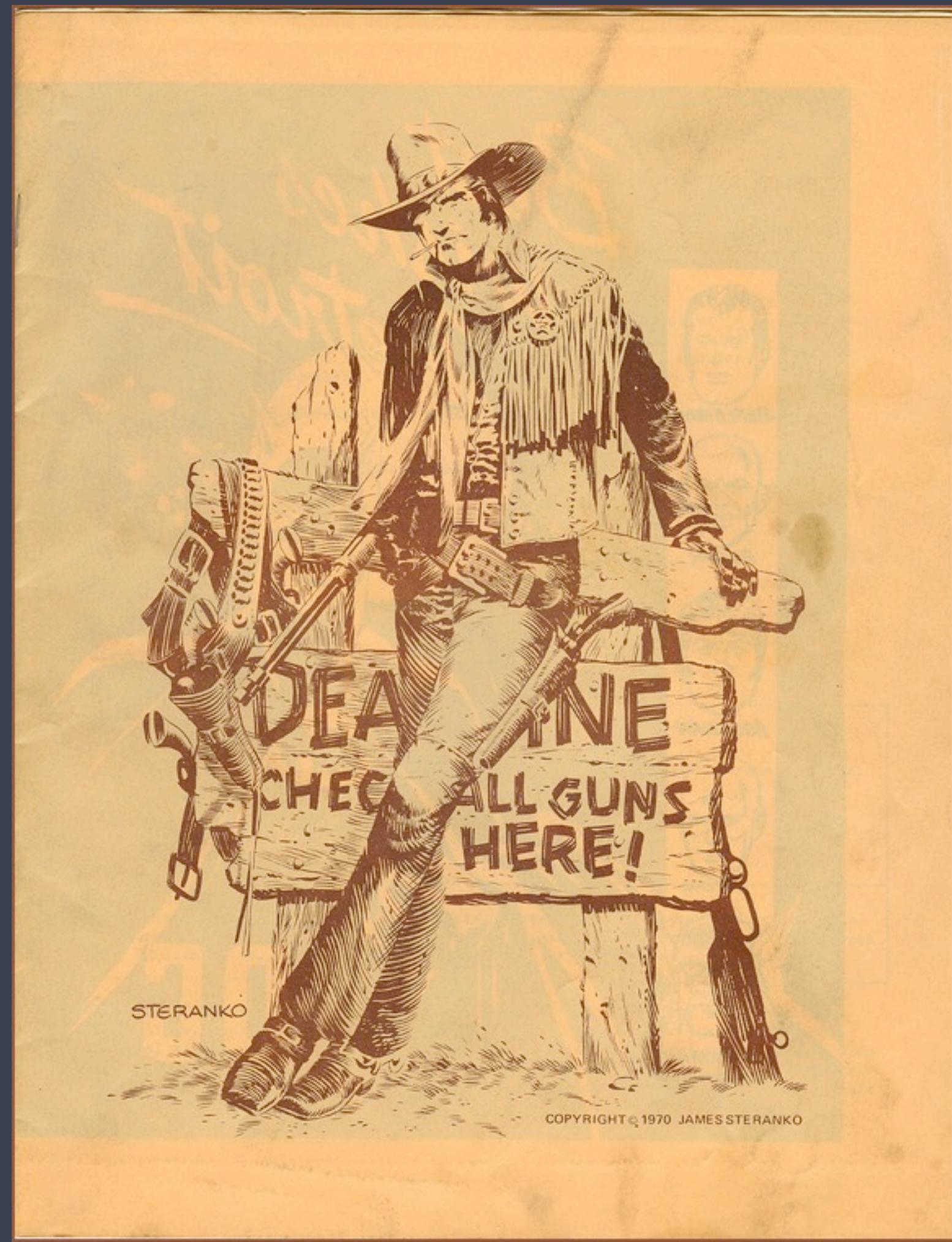
POWERS DAY

MARVEL

BENDIS TAPES

THE CONVENTION

- ▶ Fan conventions (“cons”) date back to the mid/late 1930s - First World Science Fiction Convention in 1939
- ▶ Informal (non-commercial) comic fan “meet-ups” - often facilitated by letters columns
- ▶ **Detroit Triple-Fan Fair** - first commercial comic book convention (organized by Shelton Dorf in the mid 1960s)
- ▶ Golden State Comic Book Convention - August 1st, 1970 (also organized by Shelton Dorf)
- ▶ Basement of the U.S. Grant Hotel in San Diego - attracted a modest 300 attendees





San Diego Comic-Con

WHY ARE CONVENTIONS IMPORTANT?

(for the development of fandom)

A photograph of a man with a shaved head and a dark green sweater, sitting at a table and signing books. He is looking down at the books. In the background, another man in a white shirt and cap is standing. The image is framed by a white border.

Fan - Creator Interaction

Panels, the New Letters Page





THE LCS

building comic culture, locally

