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Dedications:
The COMIC is dedicated to Captain George
Henderson for his help, encouragement, and
contribution to fandom.
The CRYPT is dedicated to Christopher Lee.

Editorial

Welcome to Comic and the Crypt #5. For most of you this is your first look at a zine, one you've probably never heard of before. The factor which makes us different from most other zines in fandom is our appeal to both the Comic and the Gothic fan. This issue, the only article dealing with this aspect is a nine-page study of Hammer Studios' Count Dracula, which I feel is excellent. Hopefully, next issue, a bigger portion of the zine will be geared to the horror fan.

This can only be accomplished by the enlargement of our staff, so well written indepth articles, preferably Horror and finished illus, are welcome.

Our price tag, 70¢ p.p., for 40 pages wraparound, is one of the better deals in fandom. It is due to this low price that our break even point is upwards from 300, so if you like the zine, tell your friends—we need the orders. Thanks.

We are sorry to announce the departure of Jonathan Lightman, our original layout man, due to his failure to establish priorities. His loss, however, has been our gain. Our layouts are now being handled by the very capable team of Ron Kasman and Ronn Sutton.

I hope you enjoy the zine; I'm confident the contents speak for themselves.

Mark Sigal, Publishing Editor.
OPINION

There is an extreme sparsity in variety today on the newsstands. If I think of to what I actually look forward, the list wouldn't extend very far. Neal Adams' some Jack Kirby, Al Williamson, Spiderman with six arms, any new concepts.

New concepts are important, but the ones that really strike deep are very, very few. I've digested enough Jack Kirby to throw up, and I find the most enthralling Kirby stories are the Guardian reprints. His other efforts are mired in antiquated science-fiction ideas.

After reading three Neal Adams stories, I'm bored. The Avengers is too pedantically written to merit his attention. No offense to Roy, but in contrast to the X-Men Thomas-Adams issues, the writing is now so involved in plot that the reader gets 10 Avengers at once, and so on. Adams' effort is a longer draft. Dr. Doom Adams works best on ordinary people, with the accent off costumes. Deadman was masterful, particularly the later efforts. If one leaps through any Green Lantern-Green Arrow, it is quite easy to see that colouring is almost divorced from costume shades. Yet when they are produced, they are very striking. (Page 11 of GL #79 is nothing short of masterful.) Yet, equally skillfully done are pages 8 and 9 of this same issue, as an example of my point.) Yet, too much Adams is like a steady diet of ice cream and cake. Al Williamson stories are sparse enough to keep me a steady fan. I'd hate to search through my entire collection to come up with ten issues with his artwork represented.

As a change from super-heroes, House of Secrets is a breath of fresh air, but by the end of the issue, it's boring--an equal dilemma.

All this is so much rambling; the main point is that we've been given very little new material. That done is all rehashed. Red Wolf is good, but he's nothing more. Werewolf by Night is an old idea. Kirby's New Gods, etc., are old concepts under new costumes. Of course, when you come down to it each individual story stands on its own. But please don't mistake me—I'm here talking about the magic and fascination that makes me pick up a comic book still, after through on fifteen years of doing so. And I find very little of that childish fascination that makes it all worthwhile left. Some remains in moments of reverie and nostalgia, in which case just about anything will serve, from the Justice League's "Riddle of the Robot JIN" to an old Amazing Fantasy Ditko story.

The only really intriguing concept I've found left is Spiderman's six arms. Totally enticing; the possibilities whirr in my mind. He's been reduced to his old self again though. Sad.

So, what have I done here? Only said that the entire fascination of comics has for me fled. I've shot down the art, the stories, the best combinations of the two.

My comic collection numbers over 2,000, and I haven't stopped. About ten are added each week, usually more. Why? Nostalgia is in the mind. I wouldn't need more than 100 comics to keep me brimming in nostalgia.

I find no aesthetic pleasure in owning a complete run of Green Lantern.

Perhaps it's a question of habit. Perhaps it's a private world, a clique the average man is unaware of. Perhaps I've devoted too much time to it now. I tend to disavow all of these explanations. The only real one is enjoyment. I get off on the Flash. The Hulk turns me on. War stories are intriguing, criticism is a gas.

In short, comics are fun. I still dig them. But I wish I was a kid again and was counting the days until the next Atom issue would hit the newsstands.

"There's something lost and something gained." — Joni Mitchell

We wish to thank the following for deferring copyright on photographs, illustrations, and characters:

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William Payne

by Jim Vlcko
ON A CLEAR DAY
YOU CAN SEE
THIRD AVENUE

Well, the New York Con was over and the next one wouldn't come for another year. But before packing our gear into the back of a 1967 Fury to head back to the land of the ice and snow, the "gang" decided that we should see some of the sights of the big city. The thought occurred to us that a trip to the Empire State building might be nice, but everybody goes to the Empire State building. "After all, we're not just typical tourists! We're visiting dignitaries! There is better than that for us in this city I hope." The idea of going to Central Park then came up. "Are you kidding, going to a park, here, in the states? We travelled 500 miles in that shitbox of yours to go to a park? If you want to go to a park, you can damn well go yourself." You might say they weren't too up on the idea. So after a little more discussion concerning the subject, during which time I was threatened with being used to plug up a crack in the wall of our hotel room, being the true comic book fans that we are, we decided to mosey on down to 909 Third Avenue, the offices of National Periodical Publications. Upon our arrival, we jumped into the elevator and zipped up to the twentieth floor. After stepping out and glaring at the wallpaper which consisted of giant figures of Superman and Batman (drawn by Murphy Anderson), we slyly deduced that it had to be the place. The six of us marched up to the secretary, who looked miraculously like Lois Lane, and our spokesman, Tom Robe (assistant to Captain George Henderson, on Whizzbang) casually announced that we had an appointment. The secretary said that she would get Mr. Bridwell for us. Upon hearing this, Neal Stein exclaimed in a rather surprised and loud voice—even for him, "Oh no!" He was then hit with a rolled-up newspaper and told to shut up. (Neal, it seems, went up to Mr. Bridwell at the Con, and asked him to read one of the stories that he had written. After reading it, Mr. Bridwell got up and walked away, without commenting on it at all—a very rude thing to do.)

We sat down to wait for Mr. Bridwell. While waiting, DC's distribution manager, Ed Lolacher, who is a friend of Marc Bilkrey, the sole New Yorker in our group, walked by. Marc stopped him and persuaded him to introduce us to Carmine Infantino.

A minute later, we were in Mr. Infantino's office, where we sat down and interrupted his lunch break, as we discussed the pressing issues of the day in the comic field.

It seems that DC is currently screwed up with distribution problems. Have you ever noticed how the stores will have twenty copies of Superman and only one copy of Green Lantern-Green Arrow? And the publishers wonder why some of their best books aren't selling. So as to find out just what these problems are, DC has created the Superman Survey Club, which consists of about 500 dually deputized fans, whose jobs are to go from store to store to report on circulation.

We were immediately sworn in and given little gold cards with pictures of Superman on them, which we are to use as identification. I placed it in my wallet, next to the picture of my mother.

So much for business. We talked about Kirby's new books, and readers' reaction to them. Believe it or not, Mr. Miracle is the best selling of JK's books, with Forever People and New Gods each running two points behind. It seems amazing that the books are selling so well, when you consider that Kirby only takes about five days to complete an issue (pencils and script). The first four books in
each series were even completed before he left his job at Marvel. Mr. Infantino's gloats filled the air at the thought of siring Kirby from Marvel. He said that DC and Marvel are at one another's throats. Marvel is sure that since their books are a nickel cheaper it will put National out of business, whereas National feels since their books are 16 pages longer, it will put Marvel out of business. It seems to me that Marvel has the idea: "We did it in '61, so we'll do it again today." National's philosophy is totally different. They're constantly looking for change and improvement even to the point of negotiating with Frazetta to do a cover painting on the Gothic Horror books. The chances for him doing it seem rather slim to me though. Their editorial policies are far less stringent than Marvel's. Both Kirby and Ditko were aquired from Marvel by letting them have total control over their books, editorially. Buscema was given the same offer. Both Steranko and Wrightson have promised issues of Batman in the near future. Remember what Marvel said to Wrightson when he wanted to do King Kull? Sorry, buddy Berni, but you just don't fit into the Marvel style. And with Steranko, they substituted stories in the middle of both his Captain America and Nick Fury series. Nice guys, eh? Mr. Infantino mentioned to us that Romita is an artist that he would like to get his hands on and with the way things are going between Marvel and DC, he probably will. Well, maybe it will all work out for the best and we'll get Ditko back on Spiderman.

Harvey Kurtzman in Toronto

Just as this issue goes to press Harvey Kurtzman is visiting Toronto.
Harvey was invited to Toronto by Captain George Henderson, editor of Captain George's Whizzbang, and the now-defunct Captain George Presents. George has just opened a comic art gallery and Harvey Kurtzman is the first guest.

Harvey's visit to the gallery will be highlighted by his participation on a panel where he will be interviewed by Pierre Berton, one of Canada's leading television personalities, and possibly Marshal McLuhan.

Also while in Toronto, Mr. Kurtzman will be interviewed on a television show. On display at the gallery will be Little Annie Fanny originals.

If all goes well and the sixth issue of Comic and the Crypt does appear, there is a very good chance it will feature an in-depth interview with Mr. Kurtzman.
Comic & Crypt interviews

JACK KIRBY & CARMINE INFANTINO!

This interview was conducted on January 31st, 1971, in the offices of National Periodical Publications. We were fortunate in getting this interview which might never have taken place without the help of Emanuel Maris, John Skyke, and Marc Bilkrey. Thanks very much.

The interview is more a casual discussion, which is exactly what took place; just the four of us sitting in Carmine’s office talking with him and Jack Kirby.

How did you both get your start in comics?

CI: I got into comics the same way Jack did; we were kids of the depression. Now you gentlemen don’t know the depression, or what it was about. It was a period when you starved; your family starved. There wasn’t enough food to go around. This was an outlet for us, a field open to us, and like those who went into prizefighting, we went into comics.

JK: I feel the minority people had a lot of drive and went to entertainment or anywhere energy was involved.

Who did you start off with first?

CI: We both started off with Harry Chellin many years ago. He was a packager-used to package comics, and he used to cheat you like crazy. You were lucky to get paid at the end of the week. It was more fortunate then, as there was time to begin. Now you either have it or you don’t. But then there were always little outfits where you could begin, learn, and grow.

JK: Back then I worked for FAMOUS FUNNIES and I did cowboy stories for one of my earlier jobs. I also was with-

CI: Yeah! He started that way, and you got nothing for it, but you didn’t care. It was a chance to work, a chance to draw, and that’s all we cared about.

Were you in a group of independent artists who sold their stories to the publishers?

CI: No, I worked for Harry for a while; then I went to QUALITY; erasing pages and doing backgrounds. Those were the days of Lou Fine, and Reed Crandall on BLACKHAWK, and the genius, Jack Cole started on PLASTIC MAN. I used to erase pages all summer just to get a break to start, and that was the beginning.

You seem to be best known for STRANGE and the FLASH. Which did you enjoy the
most?

CI: To tell the truth, I did not like doing westerns, or, strangely enough, the FLASH. As for STRANGE, I enjoyed him at first, but I really liked the ELONGATED MAN. I'm sure this goes for you too, Jack; the ones you're best known for aren't the ones you like best.

JK: The ones I began weren't the well-known ones. I began MANHUNTER and MR. SCARLET, which just faded out. Every strip I did was a challenge, as I'm sure it was to Carmine; but I feel what Carmine is trying to say, is that he especially liked one thing but we couldn't always do that. We did what they gave us to do.

CI: I could never do a sci-fi story the way he could.

But your speed concepts and futuristic cities were amazing.

CI: Did you see the ones he did?

But you're two different types of artists. You can't--

CI: This isn't what I'm trying to say. This is not what I enjoyed the most. I enjoyed the ELONGATED MAN because of the satire in there. Well, let me say something. Back in the early day there were quite a lot wrong with my drawing and every once in a while I would go up to this fellow in the city. We'd talk and he'd help me. But the most important thing he helped me do was think, and I feel he was one of the best around. When I went up there, he used to stop his work and look at my stuff and give me suggestions. That person was Jack.

JK: Well I'm not going to take credit for that. Carmine was and is a fine artist, but back then Joe Simon and I used to have an apartment up there. All the guys got together and I think we helped each other actually. That was the main purpose back then as none of us had a school; we became each other's school. There were things that Carmine knew that I didn't. It was an exchange and that's basically how artist's learned back then. We took standards from each other.

Just what was your relationship with Joe Simon? How did it start?

JK: It started the same way all things did in the industry. Some guys gravitated to each other and Joe Simon and I met, liked each other, and decided to work together.

In a lot of your books, you started the sort of panel within a narrative. How did you get the idea for that?

CI: The reason that was done was because we wanted to get as much motion as possible going, so that when you put that little box in with the silhouette of the batter pulling his bat back; in the next panel you had the follow-through which kept the flow of motion.

But how did you get the idea? Was it a brainstorm of yours or what?

CI: Well, Julie Schwartz, the editor at the time, told me to go home and make the book look different.

Did you enjoy doing that particular series?

CI: Yes I did. Maybe it was the sports angle to it. I could design stadiums and futuristic basketball arenas, and the storyline made you think. Every book was a challenge.

JK: I think you hit on the right gimmick. I feel that sports books are the toughest books to do. To do it in the first place is a challenge. To do it effectively was an achievement of some kind. I never had the opportunity to do it but I still feel that it would be a challenge.

CI: I must have pencilled a page a day on that stuff. That's how rough it was because you had to make sure the action followed through. If you didn't, the thing didn't work. It looked terrible. The bat was back and on the next panel, the ball connected. Then the ball moved out. The thing I enjoyed most was when somebody said I want it different.

We've noticed that some comics are featuring covers by you. Do you ever feel like getting back to the drawing board?

CI: Jack, do you want to answer that for me?

JK: Well, I feel essentially Carmine will always have the urge as anyone involved in a creative activity does. I think it's a matter of circumstances and if Carmine had the opportunity and the time....

What led you into becoming Editorial Director?

CI: An accident. I was drawing here. I think I was drawing the BATMAN and DEADMAN. It was during that story that the second guy at MARVEL was slaughtering NATIONAL. I think his name was Kirby or something, and the gentleman who happened to be in charge at the time asked me if I would care to stop in
and help re-organize. We discussed it and I finally did. I thought it would be interesting.

Well you tried the new trend books. They failed but I read them all and I thought they had possibilities, especially BATLASH.

CI: In BATLASH what bothered me the most was what I wrote it. I plotted every one of them and Sergio took it from there and wrote them down. Then Benny would dialogue them later.

When a friend of mine met Mr. Weisinger, he was told by him not to go into comics; that it was a dying field. He told him rather to go into painting, and to get out of comics. (This was about five years ago—MS)

JK: You should have told him not to knock anything he hasn't tried.

Was that the type of attitude that was around then?

CI: No. I think it was a personal attitude.

Has the atmosphere changed? Are new ideas welcome?

JK: Yes. It's a different company today. If a company feels that there is an essential need somewhere they get the right executive to fill that need. In other words, to expedite that need. You use that need to revitalize the company. Comics are in a transition, as far as I see it. I think this is the most interesting time for comics.

How long have you had the idea for the NEW GODS?

JK: Well, I guess for several years it's probably been in the back of my mind, but I've never sat down and worked it out through I've always known it's been there.

Do FOREVER PEOPLE come from the same place as the NEW GODS?

JK: Yes, but they don't call the things you see the same things that I do. In other words, I would say great or swell, and you guys would say cool. It's not New Genesis to them, but Superhoom. That's how they see it. There is, though, a lot more to it than that and I think you guys are going to find it pretty interesting.

According to the sales, the superhero book is on the rocks.

JK: I pay attention to the sales occasionally only because I plot the books, and sometimes the sales are my only link with the fans. I feel that the superhero surf is going somewhere. What I'm trying to do is follow its exact trail; that's my job. I want to entertain you guys and find something new for you—if not just for you, for myself—the challenge of my job is to keep me from getting bored. I feel that if I would want to buy my own book, I have met that challenge.

The themes in NEW GODS and FOREVER PEOPLE are expansions of the old themes from MARVEL. It seems that you had more ideas, but they wouldn't let you continue with them.
to see himself as Thor and his captain as Odin. Then he sees what he's fighting for. He sees why he's in that hole, why he's in the dirt, why he's dressed in that stupid uniform. It's not only functional—it's symbolic of what he is; he comes into a whole new world and he feels pretty good about it. That's what it's all about. To make everything we see and know around and in us, and give it some meaning. And the GODS are nothing more than that. They are making us see some value in us and we have value that value. So in order to express that value, we make "new" GODS. We can't be Thor. We can't be Odin, anymore. We're not a bunch of guys running around in bear skins; we're guys that wear spacesuits and surgeon's masks. A surgeon is godlike because he handles life and death. If you want to idealize him that's the way to do it. A nuclear physicist is Metron. A mathematician is Metron. A guy who works a projection booth in a theater is Metron. He's involved in technology. We're trying to know everything and we've got the equipment to do it. That's where Metron's chair comes in. It's one of our gadgets. That damn chair can do anything!

There is so much meaning in the strip. I read it and I enjoyed it but I couldn't place all these things into it, but it's there.

JK: It's there because I'm trying to interpret us. Nothing more than that. I'm trying to interpret what we're in. What kind of times we live in. And we should have these versions. I can see this guy in a space suit. There is no reason why he shouldn't be able to go to Mars. Maybe in '75. Because we can do it. The materials are there. They'll be common. And to put it all in one word that's Metron. And New Genesis. You name it. That's New York or Chicago; just an idealized version of that. It's the city.

Did you ever mention this to MARVEL?

JK: No. I was involved in what I was doing there and I feel that this would never have fit into what they were doing.

Pictured above is Jack Kirby in the office of National's publisher, Carmine Infantino, answering one of the many questions we asked him that afternoon.

Above is Carmine Infantino, the man responsible for the obtaining of Jack Kirby's fine artistic services, and the man who put National into the position they are in today.
JK: This is a whole new interpretation and it cannot be told with shields and swords; it must be done with what we know and deal with what we worry about.

So was THOR; when it came out as a mythology in the olden times it was relevant and real to the people then, because people were using the same things: swords, shields, etc.

JK: Yes, THOR was very real to the guy in the middle ages, and not only that if you think about it, THOR was a religion as well. THOR is not a comic book story. Norse mythology was a religion, just as Greek mythology was. I was being superficial when I did THOR and if I showed it to a guy who was really involved with it he would tell me it wasn’t good enough.

Why?

JK: Suppose I was to make an interpretation of things you really believed in. It would be weak because those things are on such a grandiose scale. I can’t draw them.

Who would you classify as your favourite artist?

JK: Well, I like them all, especially if they have their own distinct style. Neal Adams is one, Steve Ditko is another.

And your favourite comic work being done now?

JK: I like anything that is trying to do something different. Anything that tries to put new life into the strip, or upgrade the medium is doing a good job.

Who thought of the Black & White books?

JK: I don’t know how these things start. They start with everybody. It might have been in your mind too!

CI: No. It was in yours. It is a completely new approach to the visual medium. It will be composed of photographs, drawings, and writing. It’s very different.

Isn’t it something like Gil Kane’s BLACK MARK book?

CI: Nothing like that at all! This will be larger-sized books with black and white material.

How big are you going on this? About 150,000?

CI: No. Much more.

That is what happened to SAVAGE TALKS. They only printed 150,000 and they were hard to get. Neal Adams told me that MARVEL dished out quite a bit of money because they were trying for a quality effect. They spent $6,000 instead of the usual $3,000. I don’t know if it’s true or not.

CI: I’m going to tell you to look at Jack’s books and make up your own mind.

With the BLACK & WHITE books, are you trying for an adult market?

JK: I am trying for a universal market. It’s going to be rational for the adults and exciting for the kids. In other words, if an adult picks it up and he analyzes it as an adult should, he might find it interesting whereas the kids will have the costumes, the action, the strange atmosphere which I think every strip needs.

Fantasy is interesting because it is a projection, an idealized version of everything we see and hear. I think that is what makes it interesting. For instance, if you see a tank I’ve drawn, or a car, it could never work, but it’s an interesting looking object. If you want to analyze my machines, they may be nothing more than a fantastic typewriter or a pencil sharpener.

CI: This is the beginning for comics. Only comics not as you know them. This is a whole new world; that’s why I’m here. That’s why Jack is here. On June 15th, the first book we were talking about comes out. July 15, the second will be coming out. We’re doing our own thing. Jack wouldn’t be here if we were doing what everyone else is doing.
Some comics, like SUPERBOY don't have the same flexibility, or even attempt it. As long as they sell.

JK: They are not made for a universal market. They are not aiming for my market.

CI: First of all, the SUPERBOY and LOIS LANE books. LOIS LANE is made for the "girl" market. SUPERBOY is the same thing. It's at another level, though. You don't mess around with a book like SUPERBOY, which is selling over 500,000. That's not saying what we will do tomorrow. I don't know. Jack will develop his own line of books. It will have Jack's stamp. We have some other stamps. You'll buy these or you won't. But to turn out one stamp in a company I can't feel it very good.

Did you like Gray Morrow on EL DIABLO?

CI: No, I did not like his artwork. I told him I didn't. That does not mean that Gray is not a talented man. I thought that Gray should be on other things that he could do well.

What did you think of his work on WITCHING HOUR?

CI: Beautiful. That's Gray's field.

Are you considering making the new books monthly?

CI: I don't know. If Jack's books turn monthly, can Jack do all of the work by himself? I'm not going to ruin him. I'm not going to spread this guy so far that it'll destroy him. And I won't let anybody else do his characters. Nobody touches his characters! He knows what he's doing with them.

JK: SILVER SURFER was taken out of my hands. I originated it because I had a reason for the SILVER SURFER. Nobody else had a reason for him; I knew the SILVER SURFER.
it. The book was slowly rising. It went real high at one point. Then it sagged off again. If this book can give us some real public relations, if it can take this business and give us the solid citizen reputation it should have not been considered junk, as it used to be. It will be worth everything we are putting into it.

Now about your latest race between Superman and the Flash. In all your comics, the final page is the one that decides whom is the fastest. Now I'm not really interested in who is faster. But why did you cop out again in the ending? I bought both issues and after reading the second book I ripped it up.

CI: Why?

Because I found Flash and Superman crawling with both their legs broken, and yet Flash crawled faster than Superman, and pulled the lever that saved the universe. Which proved that Flash can crawl faster than Superman. Why the cop out?

Well, it's getting late and we've taken up enough of your time, and besides we've run out of questions to ask you.

CI: It's been strictly our pleasure.

Thanks very much to both of you.

Due to the fact that this interview was conducted over six months ago, some of the material has become dated, but was still included because we felt that it reflected Jack Kirby's and Carmine Infantino's opinions and would prove interesting to the fans.

Dear Mark:

Big, big improvement. An excellent issue in its own right. Indeed, C & C does look like a respectable fanzine. The layout, grouping, spacing, and the details that a reader shouldn't be troubled with, but which the editor must labor with—were all there.

Adkins gave you a really neat cover. It was the best item in the book. Keep that division of the Comic and the Crypt department in your table of contents. Make it even more discernible in the zine itself. Keep the total content 60-60. You can make it seem like two fanzines in one.

1) Best Wishes...B.W. It's good to get a rundown on the guys who came up through the ranks, got in and what they are doing now. I wouldn't mind reading about some outstanding artist who would like to work for the comic industry and could use the boost of a zine.

2) No one should really expect the original in one medium to be adapted identically in another. I'm not a great COMAN fan, but I am a fan of the artists who create their own world of details and atmosphere. The most I think Roy Thomas should be guided by the novels are general storyline, characters, and a few details here and there. The artists have to get their inspiration from the overall tone of Howard's creative writing. I don't think the artist should pay any attention to detail except as directed by the writer.

J.J.A. Neat and complete. Hanley's art—WOW!

4) Demise of a Marvel Superhero. Well written and opinionated. I suppose the familiar success-repetition-stereotyping has set in at Marvel, but I don't know if this means the show is all over for Marvel. It's really a one-man operation and Stan Lee, I'm sure more than anyone, loves his Hulk, Cap America and others and will bring in new notions, new twists to perk up the characters and storyline. He'd better. It's his meat and potatoes. I hope my comments are helpful to you and your fine staff.

Alan Hanley

continued on page 30
The God of Technology has been overturned by the 20th century mythology of Jack Kirby. A modern saga has been created, built upon the foundations of the ultimate battle between the traditional ideals of good and evil—more specifically, between New Genesis and Apokolips, respectively. The eternal fascination with which we still view the ancient Graeco-Roman legends has been embodied in Kirby's trilogy, which appears as far-reaching and involving as Homer's Odyssey, or even Isaac Asimov's Foundation series. Of course, no one can determine whether the present moment exactly how far-reaching these "kosmic kapers" are, simply because not everything has been revealed. And so it should be, for where would we be if, under the pretense of our 20th century saga, we were to merely treat the endless chain of abbreviated episodes, each with its clearly defined beginning and end—crammed with the usual stupidities of a superhero's daily existence, including his, by now, cliched "identity crisis?" From what has been revealed, though, a great many observations and theories can be formulated.

Perhaps the most logical place to begin would be at the "Project" as it was the first of an ever-increasing number of "concepts" to be introduced. The "Project" brings to mind one of the most astounding, and yet frightening, advancements of our rapidly accelerating civilization: the duplication of life. A very fine distinction was made on the letters page of Jimmy Olsen #138, in which this editorial reply was made in answer to a reader's observation. "The 'Project' grows humans from living cells; therefore it does not create life." However, in the very same issue, Superman talks of the Genetic Code having been "broken and deciphered" and of the essence of the "Project"—"the secret of life long hidden in the DNA molecule" having been extracted and now being used for mankind's "benefit". If the "secret of life" has actually become known, then there is nothing else that one may do except to "create" life and surely not all of the artificial personnel of the "Project" were "grown" from a "cell-tissue sample" as the revised Guardian was. Even if this were feasible, from what type of human cell could such a mutation as Dubblex have evolved? Superman again talks of "the human having been subjected to a wide range of conditions", but even this explanation appears to be merely an editorial construction in order to lessen the repugnance which conceivably could arise in regards to the "morality" of this type of research. The moralistic question of Man-playing-God becomes even more puzzling as we turn to the matter of responsibility. Who is in charge of the "Project?" And much more important, who determines what is "grown" and what is not? Unfortunately, these are vital questions which for the time being must go unanswered.

The Hairies are explained as "Step-Ups" which accounts for the mechanical wonders that they have produced such as The Mountain of Judgement; they are Kirby's version of to-day's "hippies" or "freaks", if you prefer, judging from such obvious paraphernalia as their generally long-haired, bearded appearance, their communal type of living, The Tree City of Habitat, and their obnoxious "hip" language. (We are literally hit over the head with Jack's trite symbolism when he refers to them as the "Deep-out Society." ) However this combination of a freak society and of a technological brilliance suggests the makings of an alternate culture which is truly workable, possibly the end product of many of the revolutionary changes occurring today.
Besides the above weighty considerations of the creation of life and the future of society, we are left with just some clowning around. Jimmy Olsen #136 featured a giant green DNAlien, reminiscent, of course, of the Hulk and, lo and behold, after he had been defeated and covered with a coat of Liquid Nitrogen, he looked remarkably like a figure of the Silver Surfer. The Guardian (whether or not the original is irrelevant as I doubt we will be subjected to any great in-depth character study of him) and the Newsboy Legion are back to please all of the Golden Age collectors and nostalgia buffs. (As far back as the Goody and Don Rickles escapades were concerned...well, isn’t that what they used to call “camp”? Today I have another four-letter word for it which also begins with a "C"-crap.) Mr. Miracle, for all his involvement with Darkseid and his many allies, is an extension of this sort of Golden Age flavour; needless to say, it has definitely captured the kiddie market as is evidenced by the fact that it is the best-selling of the three books. In the very first issue we’re introduced to "Intergang", with its present chief, Steel Hand, and a few of his hirelings, Stuka, Herky, and Nails; not only has Kirby’s commercialized flair for choosing names, sounding as if they were rejects from the Gestapo or the Greaser days of the 1950’s, becoming readily apparent but also his caricatures of Intergang’s members, what with pin stripe suits, hats pulled down over foreheads, and cigarettes hanging out of the sides of mouths, are better suited to the 1930’s atmosphere of In the Days of the Mob, rather than to 1970.

A very disappointing part of Mr. Miracle’s act, though, is first shown at the end of that issue where he drags forth nearly every pseudo-scientific gadget possible in order to explain how he escaped from the top of the missile. This aggravating dilemma is brought into sharper focus in issue #4 where he introduces not only another new mechanical device, “the multi-cube”, but also a device which seemingly acquired new properties as each new situation arose, e.g., laser beam, steel cable, corrosion spray, and even an electro-sonic signal! Instead of allowing Mr. Miracle to be continually introducing an endless stream of mechanical wonders, it would be much more plausible and interesting to limit him to only a few standard pieces of equipment. If this were to occur, a beneficial side effect would be a heightened sense of reader involvement.

In the second issue, Granny Goodness is introduced, whose domineering-mother-relationship with her “rebellious boys” suggests a pattern of symptoms which are generally found in cases of homosexuality; her skin-tight metal-clad costume along with her sadistic attacks upon her minions to “discipline” them appears to reinforce this. Not only is she serving Darkseid’s purpose by capturing Mr. Miracle but she is also satisfying some psychosexual desire of her own when she speaks of that “horrible young Scott Free” being brought back to her for “punishment”. Most likely, Scott would have become one of Granny’s groveling boys, totally dependent upon her for comfort and security, if he had not managed to escape.

Big Barda is another interesting character in that she represents a combination of the sexual freedom preached by the Women’s Liberation groups of today and the physical prowess of an Amazon warrior. Faint suggestions of Granny Goodness appear, though, for in reply to a derogatory remark from Oberon, she says, “The little rat—he needs a disciplined tongue.” Even her costume is similar but then these resemblances are to be expected as she, herself, states that she was a pupil.
of Granny's at the same time that Scott was. Still Big Barda seems to enjoy a relationship based on warm com-
radeship with Scott, as her companion-in-peril, and her all-too-human comments on dinner at the end of the
story display a genuine sense of human compassion.

The Forever People, while being rather cliche in
their original creation and character, however, did in-
roduce quite a few of the more complicated concepts and
characters which were to dominate the conflict between
Darkseid and themselves in the issues to come. Glorious
Godfrey burst forth in the third issue as the self-pro-
claimed saviour of the masses, complete with the "right-
eous" fervour and religious razzle-dazzle that character-
izes many of the Billy Graham extravaganzas. The politics
of right-wing extremism, concerned about everyone think-
ing in the "right" way, is given force and substance by
Godfrey's formation of his agents of fascism, The Justi-
fiers. Under a pretense of "law and order", the Justifi-
ers mercilessly invaded private homes, beat their occupants
into submission, and finally herded them into vans; even
libraries were a target for these vigilante groups as
entire rooms of books were burned—a situation markedly
like the one presented in Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451.

This reign of terror and oppression appears to be based
on Hitler's inhuman persecution of the Jews just before
and during the Second World War; Hitler used them as
scapegoats upon which he directed the German people's
anger and wrath, which was a result, at that time, of
their disillusionment with their country's crumbling
economy. And what do we find one of the Justifiers paint-
ing onto a store window, halfway through the issue? A
letter "S" which Godfrey himself states is for "scape-
goat." This plus the opening quote from Adolph Hitler leaves
one with little doubt as to
where Kirby received the in-
spiration for this story.

With the capture of the
Forever People at the end of the
issue, the sadistic figure of
Desaad comes into prominence,ob-
viously patterned after the Mar-
quis de Sade, an expert on the
subject of pain as a sexual per-
version during the reign of
Louis XVI. His Camp of the
Dammed is a present day concen-
tration camp with its chief tor-
ment being a psychological one.

Cries of anguish are turned into
tones of laughter as
Happyland is introduced to us—a
playground of mayhem on the
surface, a kingdom of the damned
underneath. This situation of an
undercurrent of terror beneath a
seemingly carefree society, on
the outside, was the theory un-
derlying the creation of the
"Village" in "The Prisoner" tele-
evision series. Indeed, "torment
is computed" and "death is con-
trolled" in both of these micro-
cosms of what may happen to
man, or become if we
allow our lives to be totally
"processed" from cradle to grave
by the existing technocratic
structures. Sonny Sumo presents
a great many possibilities
too, especially now that we
know that he is the possessor
of the Anti-Life Equation; this
awesome secret imbedded within
his noble stature can only serve
to make the Forever People even
more involving.

The New Gods symbolizes
Kirby's mythology at its zenith;
here the ultimate battle will be
fought on a universal scale.

"When the Old Gods Died" is a
line which has been interpreted
in general by fandom as sym-
bolizing the coming of Ragnar-
ak and, consequently, the de-
struction of Thordon and the gods of
Asgard. This could very well be
true and, if carried further, it
may even symbolize Kirby's break
with Marvel in order to work at
National; however, if inter-
prediction on a religious or cosmic
level, it appears that Kirby
has destroyed the gods of our
Twentieth century, in particular,
the God of Technology. We have
raised technology to the myth-
ical status of a god, and ex-
pected him to save us from the
impending ecological/nuclear hol-
ocaust. All that is required for
a god to exist is belief. Kirby
has reduced this allegory to
the purely physical terms of Orion
battling the hordes of Darkseid
in order to save the Earth from a
bizarre variety of menaces, one of which, interestingly enough, is the basic emotion of fear.

Fear can reduce man to a cowering animal and rob him of all of his reason; it is also a force which causes friends to build walls around themselves and causes total strangers to view each other with poisonous suspicion. We live in a society governed by a fear of ourselves and of others. In regards to Kirby's books, fear can cause man to turn against those who would protect him, e.g. Orion and the "Dreaded Fear Machine" or even cling to the repressive ideals of those who would impose their will upon society, e.g. Glorious Godfrey. The commonplace occupants of an apartment building were turned into a raging mob by Dr. Bedlam in Mr. Miracle #3 all on account of this solitary emotion, too.

New Genesis and Apokolips are the two diverse poles of existence available to man at the present time. New Genesis is a masterly combination of superior technology, designed to ease and benefit the state of man, and of the intellectual wisdom of ages past, where the young are revered and respected, and tomorrow's hope for an even better world. Apokolips is an ugly and scarred reflection of the effects of massive industrialization carried to its limit and beyond. Good and evil have been personified into two entire worlds which are bound together by a single force: Death. And death is the Black Racer.

Combining the messenger role of the Silver Surfer, and the death-wielding properties of his master, Galactus, the Black Racer speeds from the Source to Sergeant Willie Walker, decreed by destiny, to assume the awesome power of silencing life. The Black Racer is one of the more unique concepts presented thus far, because he seems to be, not only an individual fulfilling a sacred mission,

but also a separate entity unto himself. Has the original Black Racer relinquished his dreaded powers to Willie Walker for all time? What type of link has been established between the Source and Willie; so that by the end of the third issue, his eyes wide in apparent knowledge of his next intended victim? With the issues to come, the Black Racer could very well challenge the omnipotent status of either High Father or Darkseid while not totally committing himself to either side.

The most complex and paradoxical of Kirby's characters to date is Orion. With his point of origin cloaked in mystery, he is summoned back to New Genesis, after an unspecified length of time, in order to wage war against Darkseid; however, Orion's mind continues to be troubled by ominous thoughts. In the third issue, he forces Mother Box to reshift his atoms and stands revealed for what he is—a puzzle—a man of gentle New Genesis yet also one whose life is dedicated to the sound of battle. This dedication reaches almost a fanatical hate in the fifth issue as he wields the destructive astro-force with a bloody vengeance in order to utterly demolish Slik of the Deep Six. His fit of insane laughter after wrecking Slik's counterpart Mother Box again causes his animalistic features to show and again he must depend wholly on Mother Box, so that he may become "part" of New Genesis. Is this one born of New Genesis? In Kirby's scripts and dialogue border on sensationalism a great many times, especially the numerous inane burbles which clutter up the covers every issue, but a certain degree of this type of writing is to be expected because of the appeal which it holds for the predominantly juvenile audience which supports the comic book industry. Another powerful aid, this time visual instead of literal, which I'm sure fans of all ages can enjoy and appreciate, is his use of rich imagery which is extremely effective in bringing out the "fantastic" element, present in many of his plots. His photographic collage helps too. Even though his artwork is crude in terms of basic human anatomy, his full-page and double-page spreads are usually unequalled in their representation of such different topics as the cataclysmic destruction of an entire segment of the galaxy or the predecessors of man battling ferocious creatures in a prehistoric world. Certain characters are being developed, each mouthing their own particular philosophical bits and pieces, and, more importantly, an overall storyline has been established along the lines of the classic sagas mentioned earlier. Individual battles are lost and won but the war still rages.

A great many questions have arisen within the letters column of the various mags and also within the confines of this article in relation to individual aspects of the series which have not been fully explained or explored; in fact this has been used as a criticism at times against the books. However, I feel that this is the very quality which has insured these "kosmic kapers" of Kirby's to be a success. By not fully elaborating on every conceivable situation, you have been literally forced to get involved and to think. The measure of any creative effort's success depends on its ability to stimulate you in either some emotional or intellectual sense, and it is this that we have Jack Kirby to thank for.
Reflections Four

You want to buy an imported zine?
There’s nothing quite like it in the States. Reflections represents inspired work by Gerard Gaery (the transcript of his New York convention speech on horror comics), a full page inside front cover by Neal Adams, photo-fiction by Neal Stein whose work is soon to be featured in Vince Marchesano’s Spectrum publications (profusely illustrated by Paul Truster), illustrations by Romm Sutton, and pro Sai Amendola. Also contained in this issue is a five-page humour-horror strip by Neal Stein (illustrated by Fandom’s own, Ron Kasman), and sword and sorcery engravings by the nineteenth century artist A.V.S. Anthony. These illustrations, consisting of six full pages, are ungodly rare, found in an old expensive Longfellow.

All this and more for only 35¢ including a 10¢ surcharge.
The Last Forty Years of Gothic Film History have been characterized by Universal's ever-recurring re-creations of Dracula. While the effect of the last film had been somewhat similar to the previous ones, it was not quite as convincing or as memorable. The main problem was the artificiality of the vampire film, the source of its inferiority.

The recent Hammer Films production of 'The Vampire Lovers', however, is a different matter. This film, though perhaps somewhat mild in its portrayal of the vampire, has achieved a new level of achievement in its presentation of the Gothic genre. The special effects and technical work were exceptional, and the acting was uniformly good. The film is a credit to Hammer Films and should be seen by all who are interested in the Gothic genre.
THE

LEGEND

CONTEST

The Hammer Dracula series has always been concerned with the struggle between good and evil. These two poles always show themselves in the form of a noble force, such as a priest, in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave, or a doctor, in Horror of Dracula and Brides of Dracula, and of course the vampire, respectively. Yet people scoff at the films because of the way Hammer specifically Jimmy Sangster and Anthony Hinds, write the legend into the screenplay. The reason for this is because so many people have seen Universal's Dracula; they are the ones who claim the pictures are wrong, or that someone has made a mistake. Everything concerning legend in the films is intended.

The most notable difference between the vampire of Dracula(1931) and Dracula(1958) is the powers that the vampire possesses. According to Bram Stoker in his 1897 novel:

"Count Dracula, from sunset to sunrise has the strength of twenty men...To hide himself, he can command fog, storm, and thunder...He throws no shadow and shows no mirror image...He can change into a wolf, bat, owl, even a moth! Thousands of vicious rats answer his silent summons...He can vanish entirely, grow huge or very tiny...He can, if you're poetically minded, transform himself into dust motes and ride a moonbeam. Of course he sees in the dark...If he feasts in quantity of human blood, he grows younger!"

For obvious reasons, Jimmy Sangster disregarded much of this useless formula, and developed something much more unique and effective, in the right hands. Horror of Dracula, the first of Hammer's excellent series revealed very little of what Sangster had been planning for sometime previous. Basically, Dracula was a simple vampire, when he was seen at all on the screen. The thing which struck me at first was the relief which I felt when the usual transformation into a bat did not occur. Sangster, rightly so, decided that if he employed the bat as a means of escape once, it would limit the number of situations that the vampire could be involved; this way it would also allow Lee, for whom this and Curse of Frankenstein were vehicles, to have a larger and more exciting part in the film. Also, the people of 1958 had had enough of incredulity with the abhorring number of science-fiction films which had been made during that decade, and were no longer interested in escapism, but in action.

The main change to the vampire himself, was the creation of a 'human vampire', with emotions, rather than the lumbering gait and seemingly zombie-like expression of Lugosi's 27 years earlier. It must be remembered that I'm am speaking throughout this article of the Dracula legend, which differs greatly from the straight Vampire one. Stoker claims to have researched his novel in the Balkans although legend may change from village to village. I have many times wondered why Hammer used the original Dracula at all. Why not change the names of characters, and take away the cape. Most likely the reason that Sangster left certain elements of the original picture in was that the film was intended as a remake, and that the public would be familiar with the name used in ten other pix.
I am still puzzled at Horror of Dracula, though. In the film, Peter Cushing has made a phonograph recording listing powers, weaknesses, and assorted information about the vampire. One of the points is that vampires are 'allergic to sunlight'. This doctrine resulted in the destruction of Dracula at the end of the film when he was exposed to the sunlight by Cushing. This method would have been fine, except in the direct sequel, Dracula - Prince of Darkness, Dracula was exposed to sunlight twice, and lived through both!

Dracula cannot die. This must be accepted before you see any of Hammer's films. If not, you will only reject them because they constantly revive Dracula in some, I must admit, pretty strange circumstances. Blood, except once, and then it was involved to some extent, was the implement used to revive Dracula. In Prince, it is a human servant to Dracula that revives him, by using the blood of an Englishman, whom he has just killed. Again, in Risen, he is reawakened from his imprisonment by blood. An alcoholic priest stumbles and hits his head at the bottom of the cliff, which is the foundation of Castle Dracula. The blood from his cut drips onto ice he has cracked during his fall. Inside the ice lies Dracula, who immediately awakes at the first taste of the victim's blood. The only unexplained, and as far as I'm concerned, unsatisfactory, revival in Taste the Blood of Dracula was TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA. One of Dracula's disciples (played excellently by Ralph Bates) has drunk a goblet of Dracula's blood, when he suddenly falls and rolls in agony. The three men that are with him at the time kick at him, until he is dead. After they have left, a dust covers the corpse, and then the shell cracks, with Dracula replacing the disciple.

That is one criticism I have of the film. Yet even it is negated by the excellent ending, which leaves nothing to be desired.

Dracula has been hiding in a church. This does not contradict the Hammer legend. The disciple has performed a Black Mass in the church. Not that he has vanquished God, but that God has left in utter disgust. The 'heroine' of the picture, played by Linda Hayden, has also become a servant of Dracula, although she has not been bitten. Her saviour, remarkably well-played by Anthony Corland, has discovered her is with Dracula in the church, and he sets out armed with weapons to repel the vampire, as described by his father (Peter Sallis).

On entering the church, Corland sets about his task of purifying it once more. Wisely, he first places a large cross on the door, in anticipation of Dracula's escape. He goes to the table that had been used for the Black Mass. After removing the implements of the Black Mass: black curtains, candles, and tablecloth, he replaces them with white ones, obviously signifying good. He then does something that I must compliment Tony Hinds for; and that is Corland's reading of Latin prayer. Prayer was first introduced into the legend in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave. In that film, Dracula has just been stabbed with an otherwise-fatal stake. However, Hinds again comes through with the condition that someone must pray or the vampire will not die.

On Dracula's appearance, Corland pulls out another cross and holds it up to Lee. Effective work by Brian Johncock had the crucifix light up and glow gold. Feeling absolute contempt for Corland, Dracula retreats to the top ledges of the till now abandoned church. But just as he is about to throw down a large piece of wood, he begins to stagger; as he moves away from the window, a cross, on the stained-glass lit up, undoubtedly symbolizing God's return to the church. At once, Dracula feels the omnipotence of the Master even he must obey.

As he peers around the seemingly deserted church, he sees before him an array of lighted candles, priests, and choirs chanting ancient prayer. All around him good is forcing itself on him and helpless, he falls lifeless to the table be-
I see them use a holy article in order to escape some predicament.

The method in which the vampire expires in this film also helps to substantiate the Sangster legend. The Baron Meinster has run out into the night for his fire, inside the windmill which he had just powered. The windmill has caught on fire when the brazier was knocked over. Cushing attempts to escape by leaving through the loft at the top of the mill. Below him he sees the Baron, and with a terribly accurate leap, he grabs hold of the blade and pulls it down, until it forms the shadow of the cross under the moonlight. The Baron suddenly stops as he is caught in the shadow, and collapses as the overpowering force of good permeates completely his unspeakable presence.

According to the "Balkan" legend, the vampire cannot cross moving water. This would be a plausible explanation if not for Universal's Dracula in which he comes across the channel in the Dameter, to England. Hammer restored this vital part of the legend in Dracula-Prince of Darkness where Dracula was killed by the power of moving water. Some purists argue that he wasn't killed, merely frozen. As I mentioned previously, Dracula can never die. The only reason I use that word is for lack of any other. It seems to me that only people who saw Hammer uses that as an excuse to continue making sequel after sequel know very little about horror films, and therefore cannot appreciate just what Hammer is doing for them.

Something that struck me as peculiar in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave, was the fact that he killed someone who was already a vampire. This also denotes humanism in the form of boredom, disgust and perhaps even jealousy. Mexican vampire film doesn't state that when its vampires drain blood from a human, they replace it with something of the like of a fluid. Perhaps it is this fluid that gives the vampire his amazing healing powers. What is so strange about a vampire having the power to heal? If he can live eternally, change into a bat, and speak fluent Hungarian, why not give him healing abilities?

It is very hard to describe just what Dracula is and for what reason does he exist. At first, in the foundation Horror of Dracula, he was what we expected him to be: a blood-sucker; totally evil, and totally repulsive. The only purpose he had at all was to kill and to drink blood of humans involved in the story. With the coming, seven years later, of Dracula-Prince of Darkness, Lee came on as a type of spirit, who actually had nothing to say. In Dracula Has Risen From the Grave, a 1968 Hammer production, he again had his few lines, delivered most dramatically at the priest who aided him to remove the huge cross the Archbishop (Rupert Davies) had placed there. For those of you who were fortunate enough to see Taste the Blood of Dracula, it is clear that Dracula operated entirely out of revenge for the murder of his disciple. It is rare that Dracula kills for necessity, as is told by Stoker in his book, but merely out of almost mischief. Such was the case in another of Hinds' screenplays, Kiss of the Vampires. While really a quite poor film, it has been acclaimed by the many critics opposed to Taste the Blood of Dracula. Clifford Evans plays the head of a clique of vampires who took vampirism and transformed it into a virtual game. Actually the film was a farce.

The next time you see any of the Lee-Dracula pictures playing, I would strongly recommend that you attend, for Jimmy Sangster and Anthony Hinds have created a legend that makes the other obsolete.

Stills in this article are from the private collection of Jonathan Lightman.
THE HORROR OF DRACULA

Too often, the people who really make a film go unnoticed. This is especially true at Hammer. Besides having their names at the end of the picture, the people behind the scenes never really get their fair share of publicity.

The most obvious of these is the writer, the person who actually creates things for the actors to say. The best of Hammer’s stock of writers, is Jimmy Sangster, who, as I mentioned briefly earlier, wrote the screenplays for the first of Hammer’s horror pictures, including Horror of Dracula and Curse of Frankenstein, and another vampire film which is terribly underrated, Brides of Dracula. While Sangster’s list rambles on and on, another writer is quickly making a name for himself, producer Anthony Hinds, better known to many movie-goers as “John Elder.” It was Hinds, who surprised me by having his name credited as the writer of both Dracula Has Risen from the Grave and Taste the Blood of Dracula. These films excelled themselves in their scripts, despite the criticalism of their similarities. The plotting of the films, as well as the many twists, eventually resulted in the brilliant conclusion described earlier.

Without a doubt, the greatest asset (or liability) a film can have is its director. Terence Fisher took from Hammer the otherwise unworkable scripts by Sangster and others only to turn them into veritable classics. Fisher has an uncanny sense of pacing a picture. Horror films are unlike other movies in that suspense can only be limited to a short time, so as not to turn fear into boredom. Neither can the film be too long, or have too much exposition of the vampire or whatever is the film’s feature. Quick-moving and effective shadows and beautiful face shots are virtually Fisher’s trademark. Whenever Terence Fisher is billed as the director of a film, it goes without saying that the film will be of the finest Hammer quality. Fisher has been one of the deciding factors, if not the greatest factor, which put Hammer where it is today. Even the lowliest of Hammer’s products such as Noon Zero Two, Creatures the World Forgot could at least be brought up to the level of AIP with the artful touch of Terence Fisher.

The major criticism people, who many times know little about either horror or film-making, have of Hammer vampire films is the excessive use of blood. Their usage of it has been described as a filler to the story, as poor taste, as a mistake altogether; even as a welcome addition.

Blood in a horror picture is not only 'a welcome addition', but a dire necessity. Can it possibly be that someone can die, regardless of method, without some blood? I can already hear some of you saying: 'Somewhat.' I have never seen a Hammer film where blood was not only appropriate, and in some, I despised the absence of it.

The men responsible for the usage and application of blood are the special effects crew. Among the elite in this field are Brian Johncock, Gary Fletcher, and Frank George. Besides the blood, these men, along with excellent camera work by Arthur and Monay Grant, also bring about the famous disintegration scenes, some ideally enhancing Dracula-Prince of Darkness, Taste the Blood of Dracula, Horror of Dracula, and along with Freddie Francis controlled company of artists, which he directed many films outside of Hammer) did an excellent job of reducing Dracula to nothing in Dracula Has Risen From the Grave.

Besides Mr. Lee's fine characterization of Dracula, credit must be given to the fantastic character and supporting actors in Hammer’s employ. Most obvious of these are the ‘healthier’ vampires, probably ideally pictured as Veronica Carlson, who has such films as Frankenstein Must be Destroyed, and Dracula Has Risen From the Grave to her credit. Mention must also be given of Barry Andrews, Rupert Davies, and Hazel Court, who unconditionally aid the films immensely. I cannot also neglect to mention the superb acting of Ewan Hooper in Risen, not of Ralph Bates and Tony Corlinda Taste. I have no fear of Hammer not using these actors and actresses to their utmost, and would be most disappointed if they weren’t.

Undoubtedly, I have left off many names here worth mentioning. Apologies to Jack Asher and Aida Young, who have also been fabulous at camera directing and producing, respectively. These are the unsung heroes that make Hammer.
"I decided that Count Dracula must be represented as essentially a human being. Monster of ferocity though he is, tigerish in his desires, he is still very real. He is a nobleman, a leader, a presence of impenetrable dignity and stillness, except when exploding into ravening action. It is this essential reality which must always be maintained. It is vital that the audience should believe that everything that they are seeing could very well happen at the time. Also, one should not forget that Dracula was a person of immense physical appeal, as witness the undoubted effect he had upon the desires of women.

"I have always tried to include in my performances what I term, 'the loneliness of evil.' Despite his actions, there is to me a sadness about Dracula, a brooding, withdrawn unhappiness. He is a demon, but he is above all a man."

-Christopher Lee

Christopher Lee is Count Dracula. Alongside of Lee, no actor is capable at all of playing him. While Lee considers himself honoured to be numbered among those who have played Dracula, it is rather they who should be honoured to have Lee numbered among them.

Forty years ago, an actor was given the role of Dracula to play. His name was Lon Chaney. It was the idea of Universal Studios to do a series of horror films utilizing the newly-adopted sound system. Chaney had been featured in many films of the silent era, and now Carl Laemmle felt that Lon was the one actor who could usher in a new type of Horror picture.

Chaney died four months later of cancer of the throat. But because of Universal's strict no-quit policy, the film would have to be made. Several people were considered for the part, including John Carradine, who was to receive the part some years later, anyway. It eventually came down to Lugosi, who had played Dracula on the stage many times before, across the country.

Lugosi was born in Hungary, supposedly mere miles from the actual location of Castle Dracula, and his menacing Svengali-like look made him a natural for the part. He had a very singular voice which soon made him the target for many impressionists and satirists, yet his voice did not aid him in his role. If it had, perhaps the film would not be as bad as it is. Why it was named a classic, I'll never know. After telling people what I think of the Lugosi version, I am always hit with remarks like: 'Think about when it was made. I have thought about it, and I'm still convinced that it was no more than a waste of Tod Browning's time. He is a good director normally; I wonder what happened with that film? It's my guess that Lugosi was not as cooperative as he should of been. From what I have read of him he was a very temperamental actor who didn't appreciate discipline. The film probably would have been released months later if people like Lugosi hadn't shown up on time and followed instructions. His interpretation of Dracula was obviously stale, no doubt because of the number of times he played it on the stage. But Lugosi's other performances convince me that Dracula would have been a lot better than it was if Lugosi had really put his all into doing it.

Lon Chaney was not the person to give the part which rightfully belonged to his father. Personally, I feel that Chaney is only in the movies because of his name. Don't mistake me! Lon Chaney is a good actor, but not in horror pictures. His performance as Lenny, in Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men, clearly illustrates that Chaney is suited perfectly to play a half-wit.

Son of Dracula was not a bad film... if you consider some of the other trash circulating at the time. The title, for some reason, does not fit, as Chaney plays Dracula himself, and not his son. The only reason I can think for having that title is to honour Chaney's being the son of the original Dracula. The film put Dracula in a new setting: the deep south of America. The reason for this needed change was that Dracula's home, Transylvania was becoming depopulated, quickly,
and in order to prevent his suicide, he had to find a fertile region, namely the States. Chaney's performance was not bad. It lacked the suspense at times that is vital to such a film. It also lacked Lugosi, which is probably the best asset of the entire film.

_Horror of Dracula_ brought on a new heir to the title: Christopher Lee. Having just completed the very successful _Curse of Frankenstein_, James Carreras, founder of Hammer Film Productions 12 years earlier, chose Lee mainly because of his physical stature. Lee stands 6' 4" in his stocking feet, and proved a very menacing figure in costume.

Lee put into that film, the greatest performance by anyone as a vampire, yet that was poor for Lee. He hardly appeared on the screen at all, and when he did appear, he was usually leaving or being covered by his own cape. The reason for this is that Terence Fisher, excellent director that he is, was somewhat inexperienced at making vampire films, as this was his first attempt. Instead, the film was virtually turned over to Peter Cushing, and admirable actor in the same leagues as Lee, who played Dr. van Helsing, noted anthropologist, the same role played out poorly by Edward van Sloan, in 1931.

Cushing was, of course, excellent in the film. Together, Lee and Cushing make a remarkable pair, who seem to work very well off one another.

In 1965, Hammer hit home with another excellent vampire film, _Diallo: Prince of Darkness_. While some people feel that the film was somewhat contrived, with a poor cast, I must differ. Lee's part was strictly no-talking, the biggest mistake of the whole film as Lee has since proved that he can speak his lines quite formidably in both _Dracula Has Risen From the Grave_ and _Taste the Blood of Dracula_.

Lee, who is a handsome person anyway, employed the use of hypnotism of his victims. I say employed because the choice was left up to him by Jimmy Sangster, in 1958, and remained a part of Lee's character throughout.

The custom at Hammer has been to combine the actual story with a lot of sex and blood. Many movie fans take offense at this and claim that the only reason that it's there is to help sell the picture. The is only true up to a point. Lee's character is not all that much older than his victims, and the hinting of sex does not seem that far fetched between vivacious women like Veronica Carlson and handsome men like Chris Lee.

Blood is present because the very nature of the film is the idea of blood, and its theft.

As I have mentioned a number of times before, _Taste the Blood of Dracula_ is my favourite horror film, mainly because of Lee's acting. His resounding voice calling off the numbers of his victims made me wonder why Dracula always has so little to say. No writer yet has been able to handle the vampire in terms of lines and a decent part, although Anthony Hinds is coming very close.

After walking away from the film, I realized that the feeling I had for Lee was one of contempt; he was the monster and he belonged dead. However, after reconsidering, I found myself feeling pity for Lee's character, and discovered the beauty of what the last twenty minutes of the film contained. Rather than the idea of good-over-evil, I felt that perhaps Dracula did not belong dead, but was content to know that he would no doubt be revived again.

As Lee dies in both _Risen_ and _Taste_, his eyes become filled with red. Some claim that this is the stolen blood exiting his body, others say it is simply for effect. I think that the red is really Chris Lee's way of having Dracula show emotion, crying out of the 'loneliness of evil'.

![Image of Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing in _Horror of Dracula_](image-url)
Dear Mark:

Issue #4 was such an incredible improvement over #3 that I feel now that you are ready for some constructive criticism, from the 'professional' point of view, so to speak.

First of all the artwork:
1) Front Cover—breathtaking, just breathtaking.
2) Back Cover—the layout STUNK; it was disjointed and had 3 (count them) centres of focus.
3) Ronn Sutton—very good, as usual. [Many thanks for the great inks, Ronn]
4) Al Hanley—a pleasant surprise; better than expected on that particular subject matter.
5) Ron Kaman—he’s gotta go.
6) Jill Taylor—I dunno. She’s so indistinct I can’t tell, pro or con.
7) Mike Heltz-Give it time, give it time. Meanwhile, have him ink someone else; he’ll learn a lot.
8) Dave Russell—who is this lad?!?! FANTASTIC STUFF!!!
9) Vince Marchesano—looking forward to seeing him in print. Anatomy needs work, but inks are highly accomplished.

Now you’re gonna catch it: the articles!
1) Best Wishes, Benni Wrightson—very interesting and informative once I waded thru the unstructured syntax.
2) The Demise of the Marvel Super Hero—the illos should have been any of: the X-men, Capt. Marvel, Silver, Dr. Strange, Nick Fury (Sgt. OR S.H.I.E.L.D.), Capt. Savage, or Forbush Man [Ha!]. Maybe the article had a point to make, but all I got out of it was that Paul Hock has a hate-on where Stan Lee is concerned.
3) H.P. Lovecraft: etc.—Ballantine books has issued an entire series of H.P. short stories in paperback form, annotated by LIN CARTER. Available at the BOOK CELLAR.
4) The Hunchbacks—note to John Lightman: read more movie reviews.
5) SF story—to Benni Lightman: suggest you make a career of reading FEDERICK Pohl.
6) Larry Ivie interview—Close your quotation marks, dammit! I had a helluva time figuring out where the interview ended and you began. Also, I’m not very interested in your personal opinions on the subject matter.
7) Conan—tell me: does Bruce Kalmin like the Thomas-Smith Conan or not?

Page 8 was a hack job of layout; it was murder to read. I still haven’t figured out what the notations on the end of the article were all about. The research showed? Keep trying; you’ll succeed in the near future.

   a) Dynamo’s big appeal was the fact that he was a ‘big, blue bumpkin.’ Suggest you ask some commercial girls if they’d go for the handsome one in the office.
   b) I thought Noman had the most realistic character of all of them. Man, he was really pissed off at the whole situation near the end of the run.
   d) Hell, I thought those Weed stories were kinda cute.
   e) Riddle: Who pencilled "The Priceless Counterfeit" in Dynamo #2? Atkins inked it.
   f) What Wood signs, Wood has pencilled and inked. You’re probably confused 'cause DA was NW’s student. Good article. One more thing—who did those Raven vs. Mayven stories; they were SHIT! [by the way I hope you never took THUNDER seriously; I didn’t]

‘Nuff said!

Ron Jamieson
Dear Mark:

Enclosed is the cover you asked for. Do me a favour, print it on white just as it is. Don’t print it on coloured paper, okay?

Eerie #1 wasn’t distributed at all. It wasn’t meant to be distributed. It was only a small (about 4" x 5") black and white book, no coloured cover, and only a couple hundred copies were printed. All the stories that appeared in #1 were later printed in Creepy or Eerie, so the readers didn’t miss anything.

The downhill came for Warren when he lost money on Blazing Combat and some other interests outside of magazine publishing. He stopped paying artists. It took me 2½ years to collect for my painting on Eerie #12. Archie Goodwin quit because his artists were complaining about not getting paid. He could hardly keep asking them to work for nothing. So, the whole thing was due to money.

Now Warren is paying again, but not the same rates as before, but lower rates.

Best,
Dan Adkins

(Thanks for your covers for this issue and last. All reaction has been more than favourable. Hope you like this issue.
Mark)

Dear Mark:

A friend of ours turned over the latest copy of COMIC and the CRYPTO. You really have an interesting and good fammag there. I found of particular interest Larry Ives’s revelations anent Jim Warren especially intriguing. As a good friend of mine, I know that Larry is much too kind to "tell all" or at least ventures too gently into understatement. Some day the "whole" story, whenever it’ll appear, will make peoples’ hair stand on end, such as Warren’s fantasatical hatred against all "competition", and the mania he has in thinking he invented the horror comics and "nostalgia" business.

While I’m at it, please send me a copy of your current issue, and put Cop-down for all future review copies (the copy I now hold is being borrowed).

With best wishes,
Calvin T. Beck

(We appreciate your comments on our issue. Ironically enough we were scheduled to have an interview with Mr. Warren this issue. It was arranged by my friends, Marc Bilgrey and Manny Maris, who also arranged the Kirby-Infantino interview. While they were at Mr. Warren's office, they went up to Billy Graham's blase's and said, "What are you doing here?" The secretary overheard, mentioned it to Mr. Warren and he took it as a racial slur. When I did come down to New York and went for my appointment with him, he told me to leave the premises due to the incident that happened with Maris and Graham. -Mark)

Dear Mark:

Yes... I enjoyed #3 and #4... of course #4 was better and a little bigger. Your zine is everything a zine should be. You like it... your readers like it!!! Every issue will get better and better. At this point it’s everything it should be. I know, when I see an ad for #6... with the Kirby article... I’ll sure order a copy!!! I don’t order in advance as sometimes they aren’t published... it happens.

True... I don’t take assignments. When I can the time and inspiration... I do items and send them to zines I’ve seen and like... I like your zine!!! But I won’t make a promise I might not be able to keep. I didn’t fill in the form as I feel I like the material about the things... characters... comics, etc. My favourite cover was Adkins’ Dynamo on #4... but the original art is something else!! Example: my favourite of both issues (3&4) was the THUNDER AGENTS article... but then I’ve collected (T.A., Dynamo, and Roman) all of the TOWER books.

If Kirby gets a great inker, his stuff at National will be as good or better than those wonderfull Marvel days.

Best,
Jim Jones
COMIC AND THE CRYPT

IN CONCLUSION:

Now that you have completed the issue, it's time for plugs and thank yous, where they are due.

BILLY NELSON, whose fine linework has been featured in Photon, Cinefantastique, and many other zines, now graces our inside back cover, with his marvelous rendering of Rondo Hatton. A portfolio of his drawings is available from him, at the address which appears on this page. Although high-priced, it is well worthwhile.

ALAN HANLEY, a mainstay in fandom for many years, and a contributor to Comic and the Crypt since our second issue, has copies of his own fanzine, The Comic Book, which can be obtained from him for $1.00, by ordering from 1440 West Wilson Ave., Chicago Ill. 60640. The current issue, No. 5, is fantastically funny, and well worth the price.

DAN ADKINS, one of the most well-known artists around, is among the few artists in comics who answers fan letters, as well as sells his services for very reasonable prices. He did us our cover for last issue, as well as the back cover for this one. Thanks again, Dan.

VINCE MARCHESANO, is a very busy man; as you read this issue, Vince will have already been married. His own zine, Spectrum, has been an instant hit with fandom, and even between his marriage and preparing his own zine, he found the time to do our centreflap. Vince's zine is available from him for 50¢ per copy. The first two issues are now in print. His address is 279 Mohawk Rd., West, Hamilton 41, Ontario Canada.

POLICY at Comic and the Crypt has changed this issue. In the past, it has been the custom to send all art and articles to myself. However, this issue we are altering that custom so that any art or articles related to the Crypt should be sent to the executive editor, at 6 Dinan St., Toronto 12, Ontario, Canada. Art and articles for the Comic should be submitted to me, at the address listed on the inside front cover.

DEALERS' ORDERS are welcome. You are considered a dealer if your order is for ten copies or more. A special 25% discount is available for such orders.

ELSEWHERE in the zine you will notice a full-page ad for a new publication, Fandom's Fanzine. I am involved in this venture, along with another fellow, Manny Maris, in New York. This type of "newspaper zine" has been tried in R.B.C.C., with little success. We are hoping to improve on their idea, with a low-priced, on schedule zine. The zine needs support, and contributions as well. $1.00 for four issues is really not much of a gamble and I'm hoping you will see the merit and possibilities in it—and give it a try.

ADS are accepted at $6.00 per half-page, and $10.00 per whole page. Please submit on either 8½ x 11 or 11 x 14½ size paper. We reserve the right to alter or reject any poorly done ads.

WELL that's it for this issue. If all goes well, and this issue reaches the break even point, Comic and the Crypt #8 will be appearing in about six months.

As you might have already noticed this issue is thirty-six pages long instead of the advertised forty. This is due to a misunderstanding with our printer. Luckily, we only had to drop one planned feature, Confessions of a DC Survey Man, and even managed to spare you two ads. This error will certainly never occur again.

Mark Sigan

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