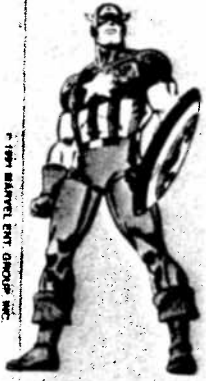


EXHIBIT 1

**MARVEL
COMICS**

Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics

MARVEL



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SPECIAL
COLLECTOR'S
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BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BY
LES DANIELS

INTRODUCTIONS BY
STILES

**700 COLOR
ILLUSTRATIONS!**
**FANTASTIC SUPER
HERO PROFILES!**
**BEHIND-THE-SCENES
ADVENTURES!**

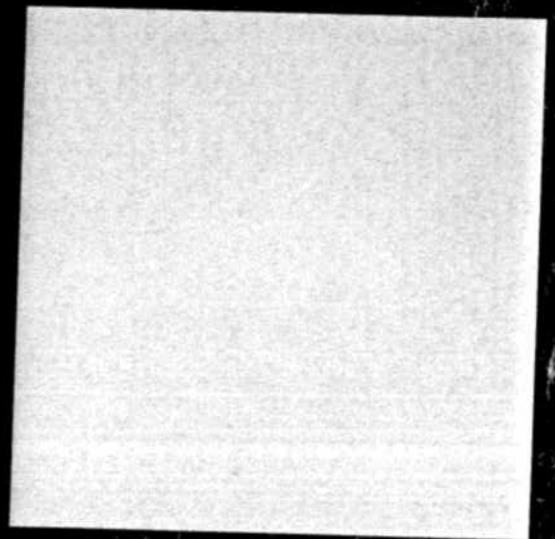


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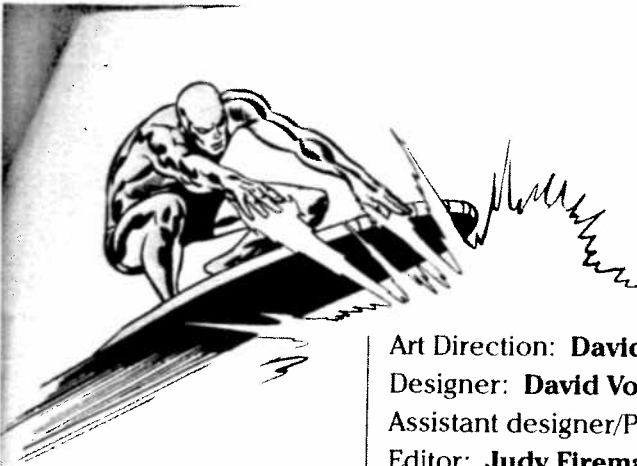
Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics

by
Les Daniels

Introduction by
Stan Lee



Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers



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and-white magazine exempt from Code censorship. Atlas hung on by a thread.

Atlas Shrugged

For a while, Atlas was able to stave off the worst effects of the general disaster. Because Goodman was his own distributor, he was independent of the nervous businessmen who kept some other comic book companies from getting their books to the newsstands. As a result, many of the industry's top talents drifted over to Atlas, but most of them didn't stay long. Declining sales meant fewer books and lower rates for free-lancers. "Every time I took another job I took another cut in pay," says

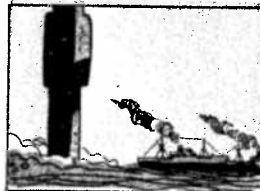
▼ Artist Don Heck's early work at Marvel included this series of well-crafted maritime adventures. From *Navy Combat* #1 (June 1955).

**ANOTHER THRILLING NAVY COMBAT ADVENTURE STARRING
"TORPEDO" TAYLOR**
"ATTACK BY SEA!"

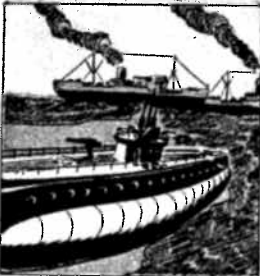


MEET "TORPEDO" TAYLOR, OF YOUR UNCLE SAM'S SUBMARINE SERVICE! IN WORLD WAR II, THE "BARRACUDA" AND ITS GALLANT CREW CHALKED UP A GREAT RECORD, AND WHEN THE SUB'S TIN FISH STRUCK HOME, YOU COULD BE SURE "TORPEDO" TAYLOR WAS ON THE JOB AT THE FIRING CONTROLS!

THEY CALLED THE SUB FLEET "THE SILENT SERVICE" THEY WERE THE UNDERSEA KILLERS WHO HUNTED IN THE SILENT DEPTHS OF THE PACIFIC! THEY STRUCK AND VANISHED! THIS IS THE STORY OF AN INCIDENT IN WHICH THE "BARRACUDA" WAS HUNTING JAP PREY IN THE CORAL SEA!



THE DISTANCE CLOSED! LIKE A GRAY GHOST, THE SLEEK BODY OF THE SUB LURKED BENEATH THE WAVES!



INSIDE THE STEEL HULL, POWERFUL ENGINES HUMMED AND THE SKIPPER APPRAISED HIS PREY CAREFULLY...



▲ Science fiction and fantasy art by Jack Kirby (above) and Steve Ditko (below) were Marvel mainstays during the late 1950s.

THE VILLAIN TO BEAT: THE YELLOW CLAW

To capitalize on the specter of a Communist conspiracy haunting American minds during the 1950s, Stan Lee decided to go all the way and create a comic book named after a Commie: *The Yellow Claw*. "We fashioned him after Fu Manchu," admits Stan Lee, referring to the famous villain created in 1913 by British author Sax Rohmer. (In fact, Rohmer also wrote a novel called *Yellow Claw*, but Fu Manchu wasn't in it.) Like his literary predecessor, the comic book Yellow Claw was a brilliant scientist; he also dabbled in the occult and had created an elixir that extended his life abnormally.

After the Korean war, the Red Chinese were disliked perhaps even more than the Russians, but *The Yellow Claw* avoided blatant racism by making its hero Chinese too. This evenhandedness may have been one reason why the comic book lasted only four issues, but then again, very few bad guys ever got their own comic books in the first place.

Revived in the 1960s, the Claw abandoned Marxism and set out to rule the world himself. If he hasn't succeeded yet, credit must go to Marvel heroes like Nick Fury, Captain America and Iron Man, who in recent years have struggled to thwart his nefarious schemes.



Top two covers by John Severin;
bottom cover by Bill Everett.
Clutching Claw by Joe Maneely.

John Romita.

Many artists were forced out of the field by economic pressures. Bill Everett took a job with a greeting card company. John Buscema, and then Gene Colan, drifted into advertising. "It was a very bad time," says Colan. "I had the full catastrophe. I had a house and a family and I just had to do whatever else I could." Romita held on as long as possible and then moved over to DC, where long-standing conservative fiscal and artistic policies had kept the company in comparatively good shape. He stayed at DC "doing really dreadful, mindless romance comics for about eight years." By 1955 it looked like Atlas might be nearing the end of the line.

Oddly enough, it was a group of recent arrivals at Atlas who eventually turned things around. Artist Don Heck had arrived in 1954 and was soon enhancing the war books with his vigorous work on characters like "Torpedo" Taylor. In 1956, artist Steve Ditko brought his unusual drawing style to the toned-down horror books and turned out a series of atmospheric fantasies. Most important of all, in 1956 Jack Kirby came back.

Recently separated from his longtime partner Joe Simon, Kirby was one of the most creative forces in the business and he needed the outlet that Atlas could provide. "When I got back they were practically taking the furniture out of the place," he says, "and I had to stop them. I had to have a place to work."

But before things got better, they got worse. Atlas, Goodman's distribution arm, was gradually becoming a liability. By 1957, because there weren't many comics to distribute and expenses were high, Goodman closed down Atlas and arranged for a deal with the American News Company, one of the country's largest magazine distributors. To Goodman it seemed like a good idea at the time. He didn't realize how far Dr. Wertham's poison had spread, and he never suspected that American News was itself on the verge of collapse until suddenly it fell. Catastrophe turned to cataclysm, and suddenly there seemed to be no way at all for Goodman to get the comic books to the customers.

Stan Lee was left alone in a small office with a backlog of finished art. There was no work for anyone, not even on a free-lance basis. "It was very tough," says Lee. "These were all people that I'd worked with. I knew their families. And I was asked to let everybody go. I don't know why Goodman kept me on. I guess he just felt that if there was any chance at all he wouldn't give up the comics completely."

The Thing that Lived

Somehow the company survived, even though it was now nameless since the Atlas trademark was gone for good. Ingeniously, Goodman made a deal with rival publisher DC to get his few remaining