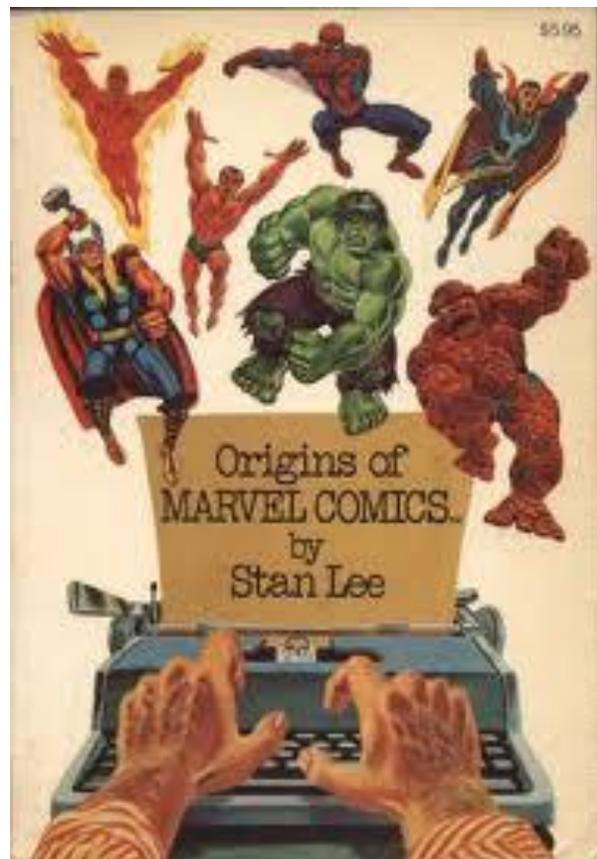
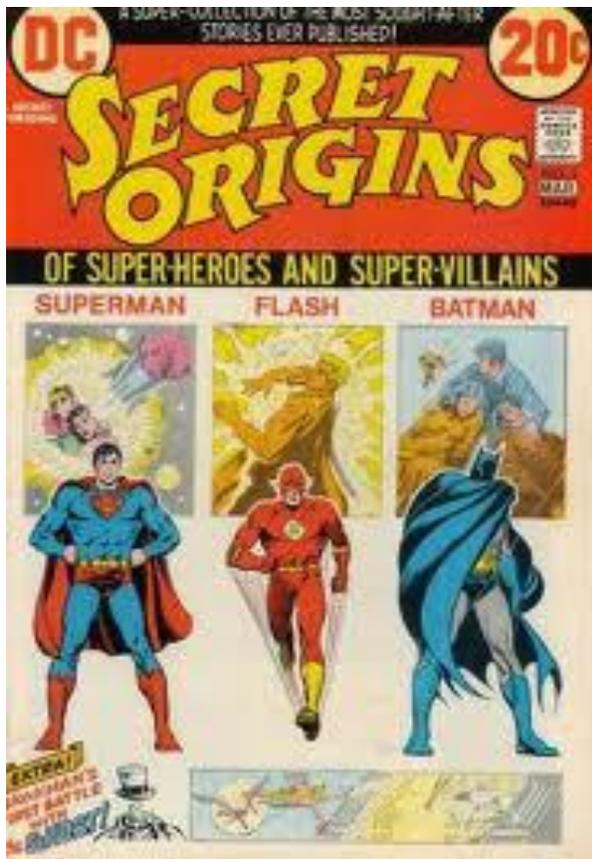




SUPERHERO ORIGINS

SPRING 2011 WILLIAMS COLLEGE TRIVIA CONTEST



Superman, Batman, Spider-Man, the Hulk ... the stories of these heroes and their comrades in leather and spandex have risen beyond their humble beginnings as cheap pulp fiction, and reached a status more akin to modern mythology. Everyone knows the stories of their origins ...

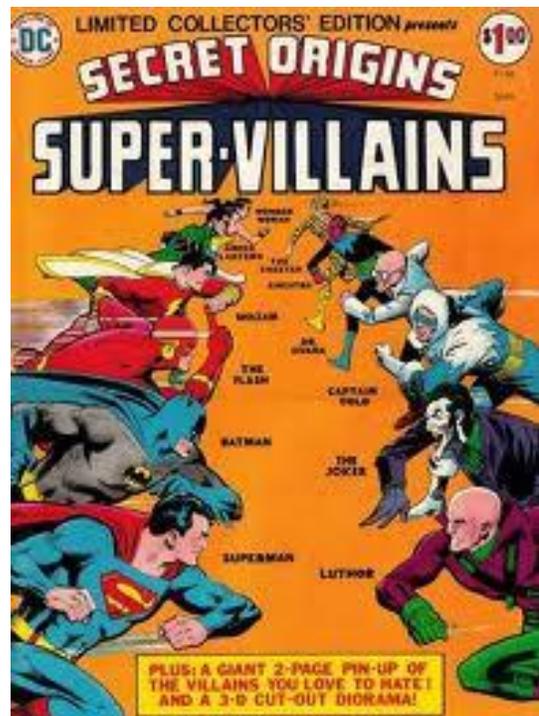
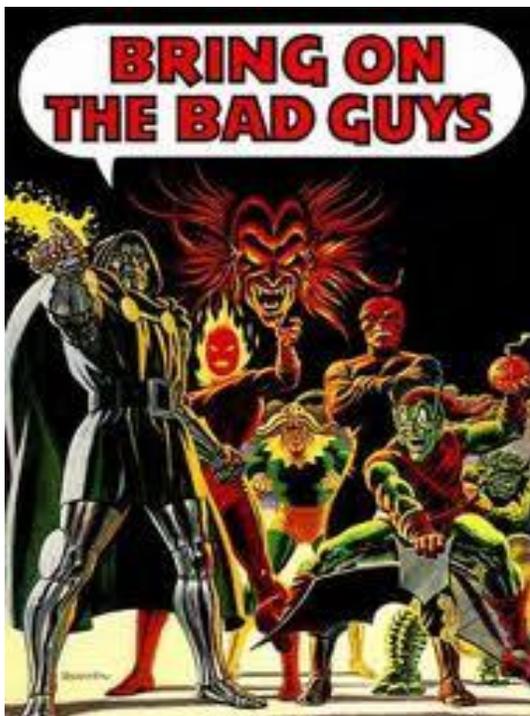
... which is why we're not going to ask about them (nope, none of those four are in the quiz). Instead, we will ask about the lesser lights of the pantheon. The fame of these characters is not so widespread, their exploits are not so celebrated, their comics are not the basis of the next multi-billion dollar blockbuster movie. This is not to say that these heroes and heroines are not important in their own right ... many of them have appeared in hundreds of comics and belonged to the most prestigious of super teams. Some have even appeared on screen. Of course, some of them are not so prominent. Your job is to identify which of these characters we are talking about. In superhero comics, almost everyone has a secret identity and some even have multiple heroic identities. Give us either the character's real name or most common superhero name ... as long as we can tell who you're talking about, you're golden. Good luck!

- 1) Employed as a museum guard in the 25th century, this hero stole some of the technology on display and traveled back to the 20th century, seeking fame and fortune as a glory-hungry crime fighter.
- 2) Although possessing no superhuman powers, this hero became deranged after reading 5000 comics in succession on a bet, and decided to combat evil as a costumed vigilante.
- 3) This hero was a gifted surgeon, until a car accident deprived him of the steady hands needed to perform operations. Seeking a cure, he traveled to Tibet and met an ancient hermit who showed him his true calling.
- 4) This hero wanted to become a contortionist, and discovered that other contortionists drank a soda called "Gingold" to make them more flexible. Using his knowledge of chemistry, he created a more concentrated form of the active ingredient, which came from the gingo plant, found only in the jungles of Mexico. After drinking this concentrate, he received his powers.
- 5) This hero was the son of a prostitute and an unknown john. Due to his mother's neglect and lifestyle, he grew up with a warped view of the world. After reading about a murder in which there were many witnesses who refused to help because they "did not want to get involved", he decided to become a vigilante, dispensing violent justice on all criminals.
- 6) This hero ruled a small kingdom that appeared primitive to the outside world, but was secretly an advanced scientific utopia. His powers derived from a heart-shaped herb, which was deadly poison to anyone not of his royal bloodline.
- 7) This hero was the son of a superhuman mutant and the clone of his former lover, also a superpowered hero. As a child, he was sent into the future by his step-sister to safeguard him from his father's enemies. As an adult, he returned to his original time and joined with his father and other mutants to prevent some other mutants (including his arch enemy, who is also a clone of himself) from taking over the world. Lots of other confusing stuff happened too ... (for example, he was infected with a "techno-virus"; don't ask) ... who was this abomination of byzantine storytelling?

- 8) Believe it or not, it gets worse ... there was ANOTHER hero, who was the son of the same superhuman mutant, this time with the original woman as his mother, and not the clone. However, this guy was from an alternate timeline instead of the future like the first hero. And, since he was not infected with the techno-virus, he was additionally nearly omnipotent. Anyway, who's this guy?
- 9) Enough of that nonsense ... back to more sensible origins. For instance, this hero, despite being an overweight child (called a "fat little nothing" by his father), had nearly limitless powers whose origins were never fully explained, although some of his powers came from magical lollipops. His superhero costume consisted of red longjohns and a toilet plunger for a helmet.
- 10) This heroine was the daughter of magical parents, members of the species *Homo Magi*. She usually focused her magical powers via magic spells that featured saying the incantations in reverse.
- 11) This hero was a homeless street urchin until he was led into a secret subway tunnel by a mysterious stranger. There, he encountered an ancient wizard who gave him the powers of six mighty mythological figures.
- 12) This hero was an artificial life form, constructed by another artificial life form to be used in a vengeance scheme against his creator's arch-enemies. His body was created from the shell of yet another artificial life form who had been deactivated, and his mind was programmed with the brain patterns of yet another hero, thought to be dead. However, he turned against his creator and joined forces with the heroes he was sent to destroy.
- 13) This hero gained his powers of superhuman strength and steel-hard skin when he underwent an experimental procedure in exchange for parole from prison. After returning to the streets, he became a hero for hire.
- 14) This hero was selected at random to receive his powers, by a dying member of an intergalactic peacekeeping force, in hopes the new hero could stop the space pirate that destroyed the dying alien's planet.
- 15) This hero was selected, basically at random due to being in the right place at the right time, by the last leader of an intergalactic peacekeeping force to receive his powers, after a rogue member of the force had killed all the other leaders and fellow members of that peacekeeping force, as well as totally destroying an Earth city.
- 16) This hero was the seventh son of a seventh son, born at 7 a.m. on Saturday, July 7th the seventh day of the week, the seventh day of the seventh month. This causes him to be kidnapped and sold to a group of men from the fictional country of Badhnesia who had been looking for someone born at this time on this day. On his seventh birthday, he was given possession of a genie-like creature in a scheme which would allow Badhnesia to conquer a neighboring country. The scheme was thwarted, and the hero returned to America. Later, he accidentally discovered a method to summon the magical creature, and became a crime fighting adventurer.
- 17) This hero shared many aspects of Batman's origin: he was originally a billionaire playboy, he had various gadgets and vehicles named after himself, had a teenaged sidekick, and even had his headquarters in a cave. Later, the character moved in a completely different direction, losing his fortune and becoming a champion of the working class and underprivileged.
- 18) This heroine was originally a member of a group of super-villains (which also included her brother), who were led by her father (although she did not know at the time that he was her father). She later left the villain group and went straight, becoming a member of the most respected super hero team on the planet.

- 19) This hero was summoned to Earth as a child by Nazi occultists at the end of World War II. Rescued by Allied forces, he was raised to adulthood by a special branch of the US military trained in dealing with occult threats. Although this hero appeared similar to the conventional image of the Devil (including red skin, a tail and horns, which he filed down to appear more human), thanks to his upbringing, he became a force for good.
- 20) In order to save his planet from destruction, this hero agreed to become the servant of an unbelievably powerful cosmic being. This being granted him incredible powers, but he later betrayed his master when the being threatened to destroy the Earth.
- 21) This heroine gained her powers when she was badly injured by thugs seeking revenge on her father. An emergency blood transfusion received from her super-powered cousin led to her developing similar powers of her own.
- 22) This hero discovered a “miraculous vitamin” he termed Miraclo. After taking Miraclo, he developed enhanced strength, speed and durability. However, the dose wore off after a short time, and he had to take the drug again each time he wanted to use his powers.
- 23) This hero was a scientist working on a top secret project. One day, he accidentally left his watch in the experimental chamber. Returning to the chamber to retrieve it, he was caught in an energy discharge and seemingly vaporized. However, over the course of a few weeks, he reconstituted himself, and displayed nearly limitless powers of time and energy manipulation.
- 24) The origins of this hero’s powers (super strength, “nigh-invulnerability” and the ability to increase his powers in dramatic situations) remain a mystery, but he became the guardian of his home city after escaping from a lunatic asylum.
- 25) This heroine was a wealthy socialite whose father was murdered by a monster from another dimension. In order to battle the monster, she was given powers by a sympathetic scientist. Together, they battled the monster and returned it to its original dimension. Later, they became a romantic couple and eventually married (and later divorced).

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!!!



- 26) This villain was created when an evil scientist used a "duplicating ray" on a prominent hero. However, instead of duplicating him exactly, the copy came out as a warped copy with little intelligence and a strange appearance.
- 27) This villain was born on the moon Titan, the son of the leader of a powerful group of immortal beings. Due to a genetic mutation, while he possessed all the powers of his race, he also had a freakish appearance, which caused him to withdraw from society. He developed a nihilistic worldview, and eventually became the lover and servant of the personification of Death. In order to please her, his ultimate goal was the destruction of all life in the universe.
- 28) This villain was actually a clone of Adolph Hitler, with Hitler's mind transferred into the clone's body before his death. Using a ray gun that caused anyone affected to hate all others uncontrollably, he wreaked havoc before being defeated and killed.
- 29) This villain led a large criminal syndicate, despite the fact that he had a freakish appearance, including an everyday household object in place of his head. In his most grandiose scheme, he planned to write his name on the moon with a huge laser.
- 30) This villain was a gifted physicist specializing in radioactivity. He developed an apparatus that allowed him to process radioactive substances at a distance with mechanical precision, as well as granting him great strength. During an accident, the apparatus was fused to his body, and he gained the ability to control it using only the power of his mind. The accident also damaged his brain, and he turned to a life of crime.
- 31) This villain was the ruler of an extra-dimensional planet filled with powerful demon-like creatures. His ultimate goal was to eliminate free will throughout the universe, and to that end, he sought a secret known as the Anti-Life Equation, which he believed was contained in fragments possessed collectively in the minds of the people of Earth.
- 32) This villain was originally a scientist who theorized that the Earth was hollow. Exploring deep caves, he did indeed discover a subterranean world populated by small yellow humanoids. Enslaving these humanoids, he led them back to the surface in an all-out attack.
- 33) This villain was a wealthy Washington socialite with an undiagnosed split personality disorder and inferiority complex. When she was upstaged at a social event by the heroine who would become her arch-enemy, she retreated to her room in tears. Looking in the mirror, she saw her reflection commanding her to fashion a costume and, "*when I command you, you shall go forth dressed like your TRUE self and do as I command you...*"
- 34) This villain was a technician for a scientific criminal organization. He was exposed to mutagenic chemicals in an effort to turn him into a massively intelligent computing machine. The chemicals worked, and he mutated into a grotesque semi-human floating head. Once in this form, he used his newfound powers to take control of the organization.
- 35) This villain grew up as a homely and obese child who suffered at the hands of bullies. He decided to join a gang, but was laughed out of the gang's hideout due to his ridiculous appearance. After that humiliation, he created a weapon in the form of an everyday household object, which would become his trademark. He returned to the criminal hideout and murdered those who laughed at him and took control of the gang, eventually ruling a large criminal empire.