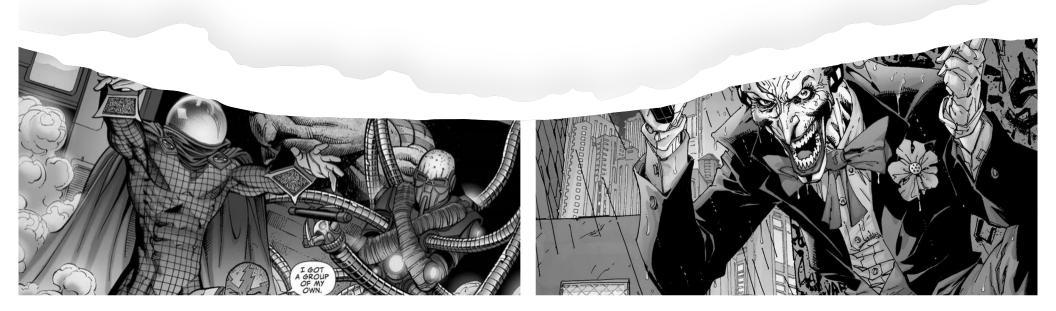


### Supervillains!



# SUPER-VILLAINS

- Original Batman villains • The Joker
- The Riddler
- Cat Woman
- The Penguin
- Poison Ivy

Two-Face

#### **Original Superman Villains**

- Lex Luthor
- Brainiac
- General Zod
- Bizarro
- Mr. Mxyzptlk

### THE DAUGHTER OF LUTHOR! THE TERROR OF TOYMAN! AND MORE!

- Pizarro and Baumeister: "Superhero Comics as Moral Pornography"
  - "Stories about good and evil are among the oldest stories told"
    - Read Intro (pp. 18-19)
  - List of some principal villains (p. 21)
  - Main question: Why are supervillains so popular/attractive?
    - "The Power of Bad"
    - superheroes are always successful = in pornography the conquest is always made
      - p. 23
    - issues of gender
    - why do people enjoy hating super villains?
      - suggests morality is 'hardwired'
      - also to evaluate others in moral terms
        - "moral shadowboxing" (p. 24)
        - very important to conducting regular day-to-day activities

# Superman: Red Son



- Superman: Red Son
- DC Comics, 2003
- Writer: Mark Millar (1969-)
- premise: what if Kal-El had landed in the Soviet Union during the Cold War instead of the U.S.



- Sputnik
- World's 1<sup>st</sup> artificial satellite
- launched by the Soviet Union
- October 4, 1957



- Superman: Red Son
- historical allusions
  - Cold War competition
    - "...Russia winning the Space Race"
    - <u>Eisenhower announcement of Soviet possession</u> of Superman
    - "...the Cold War just evolved into a whole new animal..."
  - Stalin
    - Iosif ("Joseph") Vissarionovich Stalin (1878-1953)
    - ruled over Soviet Union from c. 1928 to 1953
    - stal = steel
  - N.K.V.D. = People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs
    - Soviet secret police in the 1930s
    - presided over the Great Terror in 1936-38
    - headed by Nikolai Yezhov (1895-1940)









- Lavrenty Beria (1899-1953)
- probably the model for "Pyotr Roslov"

- Characters
  - Real world but in alternate reality
    - President Eisenhower
    - Stalin
    - mentions Nixon, Kennedy, Norma Jeane,
  - Fictional
    - Superman
    - Lex Luthor (S.T.A.R. Labs, LuthorCorps)
    - Lois Lane/Luthor
    - Agent James Olsen
    - Daily Planet people (Perry White, etc.)
    - Wonder Woman/Diana
    - Hippolyta
    - Brainiac
    - Superman 2
    - Batman
    - The Green Lantern Corps
    - Captain Pyotr Roslov
    - Lana Lazarenko
  - Plot?



- Analytical themes
  - political systems
    - Socialism
    - Would a god-like superhero like Superman naturally gravitate to an authoritarian system?
      - socialism vs. "superman"
      - Pyotr says: "You're the opposite of Marxist Doctrine, Superman. Living proof that all men aren't created equal."
    - freedom vs. economic security
      - does Superman impose total control? Like Stalin?
    - chaos vs. order
      - USA vs. Soviet Union in later years
        - Luthor as President vs. Superman as Premiere
        - demagogue vs. demagogue
        - Superman: "I offered them utopia, but they fought for the right to live in hell"
      - what is the role of Batman?