



Supervillains!



THE DC 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.



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- *Sputnik*
- World's 1st artificial satellite
- launched by the Soviet Union
- October 4, 1957

- *Superman: Red Son*
- historical allusions
 - Cold War competition
 - “...Russia winning the Space Race”
 - Eisenhower announcement of Soviet possession 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?