Raw, ribald, rebellious, the underground comics rose and fell with the counter-culture of the 1960s. But their legacy of unfettered self-expression and artistic freedom continues to influence comics to this day.

Some of the artists called them “comix” to distinguish their work from mainstream funnybooks like Little Lotta and Batman. They really didn’t need that—the work itself was so mad, bad and dangerous to read, there was never any risk of customers confusing the likes of Skull, Young Lust and Dope’n’ Dan with the offerings at the drugstore spinner rack. 'Lust'ers confusing the likes of Little Lotta and Batman, there was never any risk of customers confusing the likes of Skull, Young Lust and Dope’n’ Dan with the offerings at the drugstore spinner rack.

Underground comics got their name due to being published outside the established distribution network for comic books and magazines. They were cheaply made, often on presses run by the creators themselves because “straight” printers balked at the subject matter. They were sold at the drugstore spinner rack, where the even more racy Underground Comix was available at the drugstore spinner rack. Underground comics got their name due to being published outside the established distribution network for comic books and magazines. They were cheaply made, often on presses run by the creators themselves because “straight” printers balked at the subject matter. They were sold at the drugstore spinner rack, where the even more racy Underground Comix was available at the drugstore spinner rack.

Though the 1960s counter-culture went quiescent in the Seventies, a new generation of rebels came of age during the 1980s. Spawned in the punk and queer communities opposed to the social and political conservatism of the Reagan era, many of the most artistic agitators found a home in alternative comic anthologies such as WW3 and World War 3. From the pages of WW3 comes Now Is the Time of Monsters, a dark, furious visual jeremiad against that absurd capitalism of our age. WW3 and the RAW vet ZinCo’s solo work Zoocide is a visual jeremiad against that absurd capitalism of our age.

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Marijuana was the daily sacrament of the counter-culture of the 1960s. It played a central part in underground comics, whose characters were either users or dealers. The other side of the story, sordid sagas of the “assassin of youth,” had been told years before in the pages of pre-Code crime and romance comics. Bug-eyed reefer addicts and good middle class girls led astray by jazz and “pod” fell afoul of the law and paid the price for trifling with “the weed with roots in hell.” Now those archivists of the obscure at lexpublib.org have compiled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Books have assembled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Now those archivists of the obscure at lexpublib.org have compiled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Books have assembled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Now those archivists of the obscure at lexpublib.org have compiled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Books have assembled another Best of the Worst in Yoe! Now those archivists of the obscure at lexpublib.org have compiled another Best of the Worst in Yoe!

### Meanwhile

Kids away from dope. Judging from the comics made by the kids who grew up reading these anti-drug strips, I’d say they didn’t work. But lovers of the campy and creepy should give Reefer Madness a read. Meanwhile, madness of a different sort claims the painter called “the last of the Greats, the first Modernist”. Spanish artist Francisco Goya (1746-1828) plied his painterly trade like most of his peers, garnering the favor of the rich and powerful. But he had a secret life, pursuing his obsession with the weird and occult. In the graphic biography Goya: The Terrible Sublime (Pegasus), writer El Torres and artist Fran Galan recast the artist’s struggle with his demons as a literal battle with unearthly forces. His only true ally is the Duchess of Alba. Despite her high-born station, she is haunted by the same mob of brujas as Goya. As deafness and disease ravage him, Goya follows his muse to the bitter end, where he discovers the true leader of the witches. Available at all locations, The Terrible Sublime will thrill fans of both historicals and horror. Speaking of which,

### Sagas of the Sea, Ships, Pirates and... Piracy

Doctor of Horror is the third and last of Fanta-graphic’s EC Artists Series dedicated to “Ghostly” Graham Ingels. Available at Beaumont, Central and Tates Creek, this collection includes not only the grisly horror tales that gave Ingels his well-deserved nickname but some of his pre-Trend love and cowboy comics. Stablemate Jack Kamen returns to Eastside shelves with The Martian Monster, another collection of his work from Weird Science and Weird Fantasy. An entertaining hybrid of sci-fi, soap opera and murder mystery, these snap-ending short stories were often centered around a love triangle featuring one of his trademarks “Kamen Kuties”. Too bad the man couldn’t draw a decent robot to save his life! Though one of EC’s most prolific artists, Kamen didn’t contribute to all the line’s legendary titles. He never drew for the war comics nor their replacements such as Piracy. But other EC mainstays did, such as Jack Davis, Al Williamson and Wallace Wood. Each brought their specific styles to these swashbuckling tales of adventure and avarice. The real stand-outs, however, are Reed Crandall and Bernard Krigstein (see 741.5 no. 16). The former followed in the sea-swayed steps of his influences such as Howard Pyle and N.C. Wyeth; the latter brought a sharp, savage edge evoking both Hogarth, William and Burne. A big, beautiful book in full color, Piracy is available at Beaumont, Central and Eastside. Thievery is but one of the multitude of crimes perpetrated by the nihil-ist namesake of The Wrath of Fantomas (Titan). A French sensation in the early 20th Century, “the Lord of Evil” set the standard for super-villains (and more than a few heroes) to come. Olivier Bouquet’s script is as wickedly inventive as the original novels; the blood-smeared art of Julie Rocheleau is a mad mix of mood and mayhem. The figure of hooded menace influenced not just literature, but sport. Specifically, the King of Sports, professional wrestling! Masked men such as El Santo, Dr. X and the Super Destroyer played both the face (hero) and the heel (villain) in the squared circle. The complicated history of this perennially popular and controversial art form is detailed in The Comic Book Story of Professional Wrestling (Ten Speed Press). It’s a well-drawn, well-written, well-researched book that exposes not just wrestling’s past, but its future in indie, transnational and women’s wrestling. “Fallen Angel” Christopher Daniels digs it. So go to lexpublib.org to reserve it today!

Back issues of 741.5 are available at lexpublib.org under the COLLECTIONS tab!