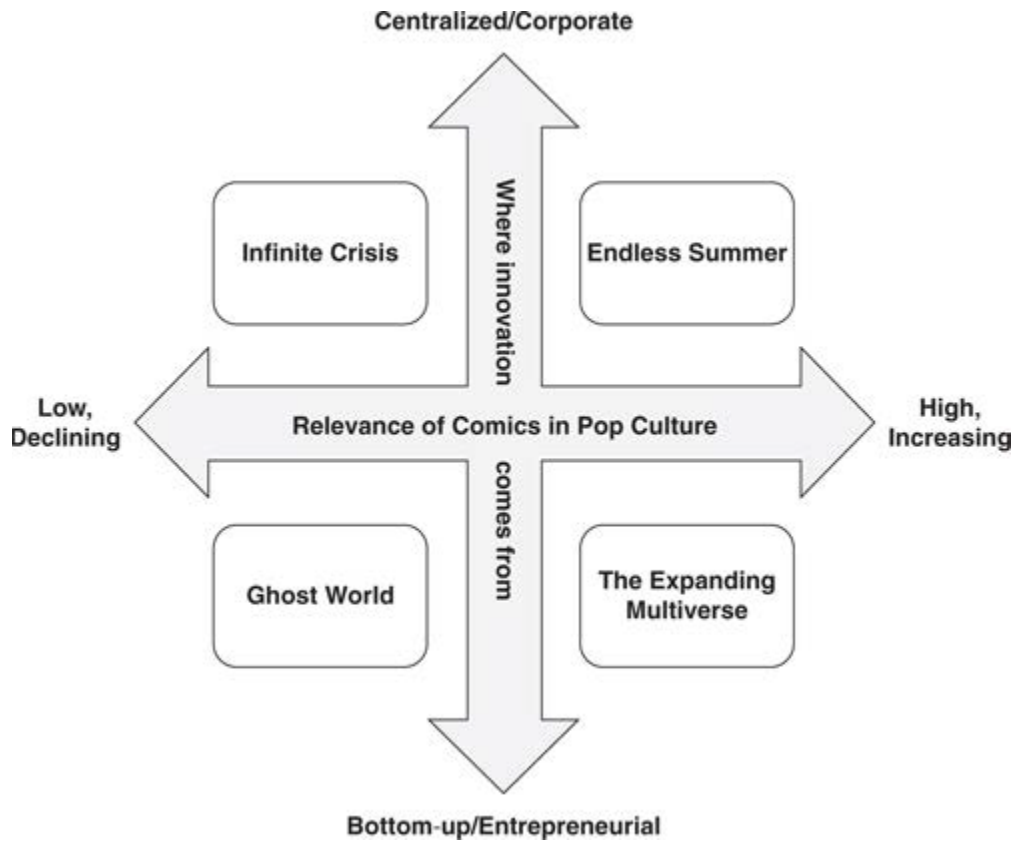


Critical uncertainties in the future of popular culture



Future of comics scenarios

	Expanding Multiverse	Endless Summer	Infinite Crisis	Ghost World
Who is the comics audience?	Smart, global cultural vanguard and curious people everywhere	Mass market consumers of popular entertainment	Aging fans	Connoisseurs
Who are the creators?	Anyone with fun, cool story ideas	Creative superstars	Fanboys turned pro	Serious artists
Who are the publishers?	Big variety, from established to newcomers, multinational, media companies, game companies, individuals	Mostly big media companies	The usual suspects	Specialty publishers, art galleries, independent creators
How are comics distributed?	Multiple digital services and pricing options, rejuvenated direct market, lots of experimentation in formats, blurred boundaries between formats and genres	One predominant digital distributor, one print distributor, online book sales, lots of tie-ins with movies, online, games, fast food, merchandise, etc.	On paper, on Wednesday, at the comic store (via print-on-demand); digital only as an add-on	Deluxe limited editions, print-on-demand; pirated scans of back issues
What's the role of digital comics and digital technology?	Digital is the default option for most readers. There are good platforms for mobile comics and lots of social channels for finding and discussing comics.	Digital comics are a keystone of the integrated media plan. They are often linked to other media (film previews, product placement, videogames, web videos, etc.)	Digital comics are promotions and samples, and for collections of back-issue story arcs. Independent creators publish online.	Creators use self-published digital comics as ways to get attention. Digital editions of new and archival material are available but not as popular as the paper copies.
What does a "comic" look like?	Combination of digital (web and app based), paper, live performance, social content	Mixed media, 3D, interactive, apps with games and stories	Print-on-demand pamphlet with regional variations, often collected in trades or digital collection of back issues	Experimental formats (<i>RAW</i>), well-designed hardcovers (<i>Cages</i> , <i>Asterios Polyp</i>) or library editions, self-published digital and web-comics.
What motivates creators?	Rewarding creative career	Money and fame	Nostalgia, sense of belonging	Artistic ambition, serious purpose
What genres are popular?	Fantasy and adventure, humor, quirky personal stories, historical drama, romance, tween-teen content	Action, superheroes, mystery, serialized drama, "reality" comics, porn	Superheroes, retro genres (hard-boiled, horror, jungle adventure, etc.)	Personal narratives, serious fiction, journalism, biography, satire, avant-garde
How are sales doing?	Great!	Great for top sellers, OK for everyone else	Bad and getting worse	Small but stable
What keeps publishers awake at night?	Competing with self-published works, global alliances, staying ahead of trends	Protecting IP, locking up talent, making the best licensing deals	Maintaining market share, paying the bills	Getting titles reviewed, reputation of brand and creators
Status of IP protection	More open climate encourages co-creation, fan fiction	All content is rights-managed and aggressively protected	Publishers constantly litigating against creators and pirates	Most IP is creator-owned
Perception of comics in the pop-culture universe	A mass medium for communication, storytelling, education	Part of the trans-media mix, source of high-value IP	Do they still make comics? Only nerds read those things!	"Graphic stories/novels" are for hipsters, academics, and intellectuals
What's next?	Continued market expansion; hybridization of forms; potential overexposure; shakeout; crackdown	Overexposure; next new thing comes along; new generation rediscovers "classic" print and art comics	Collapse, rejuvenation, purification	Halting attempts to restart commercial industry; popular characters lapse into public domain; comics become specialty taste, like poetry

Introduction

- p. 3 hereafter “known as Comic-Con”: Note that the term “Comic-Con” (with a hyphen) is a registered trademark of the Comic-Con International: San Diego. Other shows are “comic cons” (no hyphen).
- p. 3 “contributes an estimated \$163 million to the local economy”:
<http://www.visitsandiego.com/pressroom/details.cfm/newsid/201>.
- p. 3 “upwards of 130,000 people”: Comic-Con might be one of the few events that systematically underreports its attendance. Rumor has it that the official estimate of 130,000 is for the benefit of the fire marshal, and that the real number is closer to 150,000.
- p. 3 “sells out almost instantly”: The speed with which Comic-Con sells out is now pushing up against the laws of physics. For the 2012 show, anyone interested in attending had to apply for a member number well in advance just to be given a chance to purchase an admission pass. When the passes went on sale the morning of March 3 to this select group, the online queue reached into the 10,000s in the first few seconds, and Comic-Con reported a complete sellout in less than an hour. Small follow-on lots of badges would go on sale throughout the spring and sell out in seconds.
- p. 7 “Comic-Con history book that came out in 2009”: *Comic-Con: 40 Years of Artists, Writers, Fans and Friends* (Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2009).
- p. 8 “links at his Comics Reporter site”:
http://www.comicsreporter.com/index.php/resources/out_and_about/33639/.
- p. 8 “the monograph by Douglas Wolk”: Douglas Wolk, *Comic-Con Strikes Again*,” Kindle Edition, August 2011. Douglas and I were working on our projects at

the same time – we ran into each other at the ICv2 event – and I salute his alacrity at getting his work out so quickly, in part by walking the talk when it came to digital publishing. I strongly recommend all of his writing on comics, particularly *Reading Comics: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean* (De Capo Press, 2007), to anyone interested in issues related to the aesthetics of the medium.

- p. 10 “what new problems are they encountering?”: For a more detailed discussion of the disruptive role of entrepreneurship worldwide, see R. Salkowitz, *Young World Rising: How Youth, Technology and Entrepreneurship Are Changing the World from the Bottom Up* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2010).
- p. 11 “different orientation toward digital technology”: For a detailed treatment of this subject, please see R. Salkowitz, *Generation Blend: Managing Across the Technology Age Gap* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008).

Chapter 1

- p. 16 “unique use of words and pictures to tell stories”: For an authoritative analysis of comics and sequential art as a medium, you can’t beat Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics* (New York: Harper, 1994).
- p. 21 “The most desirable tickets for the 2011 convention”:
http://www.nctimes.com/business/article_0dd24a8a-a75d-53ae-a16e-3c0c244d5e0c.html.
- p. 22 “a rising tide of hassles, costs, and inconveniences”: For those of you not lucky enough to be married to an über-organized geek goddess or god, Doug Kline’s *Unauthorized San Diego Comic-Con Survival Guide* is an essential resource to help navigate the hassles of Con attendance; <http://sdccsurvivalguide.com/>.

Chapter 2

- p. 27 “ ‘bestsellers’ in a given month rarely broke 75,000”: DC’s “New 52” launch in September helped lift sales into the 170,000–200,000 level for many titles (and over 360,000, and possibly considerably more in later printings, for the bestselling *Justice League #1*), according to industry data, but that burst of activity was still several months in the future at the time of Comic-Con 2011, and the overall trend remains ominous;
<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/heat-vision/dc-comics-marvel-sales-figures-277720>.
- p. 27 “the top-selling Batman title that month”:
<http://www.comichron.com/monthlycomicssales/2011/2011-07.html>.
- p. 28 “a future... that does not include comic books: “Is the Comic Book Doomed?” was the subject of a panel during the 2011 Con, which I did not attend.
Summary here:
<http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&cid=33573>.
- p. 31 “the industry group ICv2”: The group’s name stands for “Internal Correspondence,” the name of the association’s original printed newsletter.
“v2” (version 2) indicates we are now in the digital era.
- p. 33 “graphic novels were down more than 5 percent in 2010”: Sales would continue their plunge, down another 11.6 percent for 2011;
<http://www.newsarama.com/comics/december-2011-comic-book-sales-charts-120106.html>.
- p. 34 “leaving the manga business and restructuring”:
http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/feature/bandai_downsizing_ken_iyadomi_interview.
- p. 34 “most manga sales come through bookstores”:
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/08/19/with-borders-gone-manga>.

- p. 37 “comics may be the “killer app”: Amazon seems to think so. Comics, graphic novels, and the ComiXology app featured prominently in the marketing of the Kindle Fire during its launch in the fall of 2011.
- p. 38 “taking the entire direct market down with them”: Some retailers and analysts dispute this point; <http://www.newsarama.com/comics/digital-and-future-of-comic-book-shops-110810.html>.
- p. 38 “can’t take more than a few steps without setting it on fire”: For a good example of the retailer’s view on the move to digital, see <http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&id=34091>.
- p. 39 “consumers who expect digital comics to be free”: I wrote about this problem back in 2006; <http://www.worldfamouscomics.com/tony/back20060808.shtml>.
- p. 39 “about 1 to 3 percent”: <http://www.icv2.com/articles/news/20448.html>. By 2012, digital sales were running 10 to 15 percent of print and higher on some titles.
- p. 39 “ComiXology, had made a series of announcements”:
<http://www.newsarama.com/comics/ComiXology>.
- p. 40 “a few smaller publishers were experimenting with day-and-date”: BOOM! Studios was the first publisher to market with day-and-date digital. Though the results were encouraging, digital sales remained a tiny percentage of revenues generated by print products.
- p. 40 “its entire line will be available same-day digital by April 2012”: At the SxSW Conference in March 2012, Marvel moved the digital conversation forward with an ambitious strategy involving augmented reality and new storytelling modes. <http://www.fastcompany.com/1824133/marvel-announces-big-new-digital-comics-push-but-will-it-fly>.
- p. 40 “too high a barrier for a lot of readers”: One informed industry source claims the opposite is true: digital sales did not take off until the undiscounted price

for a download rose to \$1.99, giving publishers room to create gradations of pricing to influence value perception.

- p. 41 “retailers will retaliate by canceling orders”: This fear is well founded. When publisher Dark Horse Comics intimated that it was reducing day-and-date digital pricing to \$1.99 (compared to \$2.99 for print) in December 2011, retailer backlash was so forceful that the company was forced to “clarify” its position, saying that the \$1.99 pricing applied only after the title had been in-market for a few weeks.
- p. 42 “one of the most perceptive observers of the comics industry”: See www.comicsbeat.com for one of the web’s best daily discussions of issues affecting every aspect of the art, business, and hobby of comics.
- p. 49 “*Supernatural Law* moved online”: It can be found at www.supernaturallaw.com.
- p. 52 “retailers grew skittish”: Exhibit A found a creative solution to the self-publishing dilemma, mounting a successful campaign on the crowdsourced creative financing site Kickstarter to fund its new trade edition in 2012.
- p. 56 “Lucasfilm showed up with a slideshow”: There are great pictures of that historical moment at EW.com:
http://www.ew.com/ew/gallery/0,,20399642_20511617_20990681,00.html#20990681.

Chapter 3

- p. 62 “posted on the Comic-Con website”: <http://www.comic-con.org>.
- p. 68 “He expounded on these ideas”: Grant Morrison, *Supergods: What Masked Vigilantes, Miraculous Mutants and a Sun God from Smallville Can Teach Us About Being Human* (New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2011).

- p. 72 “to changes in solar activity in 11-year cycles”: Ibid., pp. 301–302.
- p. 72 “first put forward this idea in their 1991 book”: William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America’s Future 1584–2069* (New York: Perennial, 1991).
- p. 73 “restore a clichéd trope to mass-cultural relevance”: One retailer described the effect of early sales as “DC’s stimulus package” to the direct market:
<http://flyingcolorcomics.com/> via
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/09/23/new-52-stimulus-flowing-freely-into-comics-shops>.
- p. 74 “behind the convention center”: There’s a nice recap here:
<http://popwatch.ew.com/2011/07/20/twilight-comic-con-fans-breaking-dawn/>.
- p. 76 “high numbers of females of any age”: That’s not to say that women were entirely absent. The “matriarchs” of comics fandom include people like Maggie Thompson and Pat Lupoff, who were present from the earliest days, and our friend Jackie Estrada, who was at the first San Diego Con in 1970 and every one since.
- p. 77 “the hardest-core male superhero reader”: And please, *please* note for the record that I am not suggesting that all female comics fans are into *Twilight*. Many hard-core girl geeks have just as big a problem with the soft-edged premise as guys do.
- p. 77 “young adult fiction”: I am apparently too old and too male to have noticed the obvious recent addition to this list, *The Hunger Games*, until it was nearly too late to mention it in the text!
- p. 79 “gratuitously offensive characterizations of women in their books”: A disturbing trend in the depiction of women as crime victims in certain superhero comic books is known in fandom as the “women in refrigerators syndrome.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_Refrigerators#Women_in_Refrigerators_Syndrome.

- p. 79 “employing more female creators”: Questions about the poor representation of female creators in DC’s New 52 launch dogged DC President Dan DiDio throughout the 2011 Comic-Con—only the most recent example of an oft-expressed concern.
- p. 80 “created by comic industry veterans”: Specifically, Joe Casey, Steven T. Seagle, Duncan Rouleau, and Joe Kelly of Man of Action Studios.
www.manofaction.tv.
- p. 82 “The room frequently shook with laughter”: For the moderator’s perspective, see <http://www.hitfix.com/blogs/whats-alan-watching/posts/comic-con-2011-fxs-wilfred-charms-horrifies-and-amuses>.
- p. 85 “properties like *Breaking Bad*”: <http://www.amctv.com/shows/breaking-bad/the-interrogation>.
- p. 89 “*the* coolest place in the comics universe at that particular moment”: Chip is now performing that function for ComiXology, the digital comics distributor, as vice president of marketing, public relations, and business development.
- p. 91 “a host of smaller publishers track in the single digits”: Current market data is tracked by ICv2 and can be found at sites like Newsarama and The Beat, which also provide analysis.
- p. 93 “DC provided evidence”: See <http://dcu.blog.dccomics.com/2012/02/01/dc-entertainment-officially-announces-%E2%80%9Cbefore-watchmen%E2%80%9D/> for the announcement, <http://www.fastcompany.com/1813669/whos-watching-the-watchmen-even-prestigious-comics-are-just-grist-for-the-entertainment-mill> for my discussion of it, and <http://www.fastcocomplete.com/1679856/alan->

for Moore's

take on the proceedings.

- p. 93 "Marvel successfully sued": ComicBook Resources was just one of many sites that discussed the details of this complex situation in which writer Gary Friedrich sued Marvel over the Ghost Rider character, lost, and was ordered to pay \$17,000 in damages for money he made selling prints and other merchandise at trade shows. Many were concerned the case would cast a pall over the ability of artists to sell drawings of corporate-owned characters to fans at conventions or through the Internet, a significant source of income for some creators in the industry.

<http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&id=36893>.

- p. 94 "reportedly in development at Showtime": According to this March 2011 report from the insider blog *Deadline Hollywood*:

<http://www.deadline.com/2011/03/showtime-developing-comedy-series-adaptation-of-comic-chew/>.

Chapter 4

- p. 107 "this offbeat, genre-crossing movie": Fortunately, it appears destined to have a long afterlife in video as a cult classic.
- p. 110 "the vibe just isn't right": Note that animation often solves this problem effectively. Some of the best-loved and most successful adaptations of superhero comics in recent years have been cartoon series (*Batman: The Animated Series*, various incarnations of *X-Men*, and so on), but these seem to reach their maximum audience via TV or direct-to-video features, and rarely, if ever, get theatrical release. One notable exception is the animated 2004 film *The Incredibles* (Disney/Pixar), which is considered by many to be the best superhero movie not based on a pre-existing property.

- p. 110 “a masterpiece of graphic storytelling”: Including *Time* magazine, which put *Watchmen* on the list of the 100 most important novels of the twentieth century.
- p. 111 “a movie that pleased no one”: That is, it dramatically underperformed commercial and critical expectations. It was not a flop—according to the industry site Box Office Mojo, it (barely) made back its \$150 million production cost with domestic and foreign box office, and it scored a 65 percent on the film critic aggregator Rotten Tomatoes. Many comic films have done worse, but few have had higher hopes for massive success.
- p. 111 “ill served in film adaptations over the years”: His other credits include *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, *V for Vendetta*, and *From Hell*, all of which are considered classics in the comics medium; in addition, he created the character John Constantine, a complex and cynical British supernaturalist, portrayed by Keanu Reeves in the 2005 film *Constantine*.
- p. 120 “the medium of comics and its history”: At his highly entertaining blog, “The Fate of the Artist”: <http://eddiecampbell.blogspot.com/>.
- p. 121 “did not believe his current work benefited”: Eddie’s position on this was not as definitive as I represented it in the text. He decided to attend the 2012 Con and I was never happier to be wrong: His presence adds much to the proceedings.
- p. 123 “others are likely to follow suit”: The acclaimed graphic novelist Chris Ware took a big step down this path in September 2011, announcing the release of his latest work, “Touch Sensitive,” as an iPad digital exclusive through his publisher, McSweeney’s: <http://www.tuaw.com/2011/09/20/chris-ware-releases-ipad-only-comic-via-mcsweeneys-app/>.
- p. 129 “had him killed in an explosion”: Naturally, no one stays dead permanently in comics. DC revived the character later, and he now headlines his own book, *Red Hood and the Outsiders*.

p. 135 “properties that have no relevance to the current day”: Or ignore better-known simplified versions of their characters that may have appeared in other media in favor of versions that “respect” every obscure continuity point that longtime fans might seize on.

p. 140 “hilarious innuendo capped with a full-on kiss on the lips”: See for yourself at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8NxWnMhlso> or search for “Jonathan Ross Snogs Neil Gaiman.”

Chapter 5

p. 146 “my local comics store, The Comics Dungeon”: Located in Seattle’s Wallingford neighborhood, owned by G. Scott Tomlin, and managed by mighty Chris Casos.

p. 146 “Diamond has the market to itself”: Diamond’s domination of comics distribution was solidified even further by the October 2011 closure of Haven, one of the last remaining independent distributors, and the announcement in early 2012 that Bud Plant, one of the pioneers in the distribution of graphic novels and comic-related art books, was calling it a day.

p. 147 “girl-geek and singles-night events”: Comic-themed gatherings are underrated venues for meeting new partners. See this interesting report on the erotic undercurrents at the 2011 New York Comic-Con:
http://www.slate.com/articles/double_x/doublex/2011/11/speed_dating_at_comic_con_why_it_s_great_for_women.html.

p. 147 “boys’ club atmosphere”: Some retailers apparently didn’t get the memo. *Comic-Book Men*, a reality show that debuted in 2012 on AMC, produced by nerdlebrity filmmaker Kevin Smith and featuring his comic book store in New Jersey, perpetuates some of the most dire stereotypes of the business side of the hobby.

- p. 147 “a new location called Little Island Comics”:
<http://www.littleislandcomics.com/>.
- p. 147 “the rest of the community”:
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/09/05/littleisland-comics-north-americas-first-kid-focused-comics-shop-opens-tomorrow/>.
- p. 148 “shortly after the 2011 Comic-Con ended”:
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/08/21/breaking-atomic-comics-chain-closes/>.
- p. 152 “Mark Hamill”: Yes, *that* Mark Hamill, best known as Luke Skywalker in the original *Star Wars* trilogy.
- p. 152 “gamers who may or may not have any use for comics or animation”: According to the Comic Book Resources website, *Batman: Arkham Asylum* was given a Guinness world record as the most critically acclaimed superhero game ever.
- p. 155 “the current vogue for geek chic”: The advertising world has taken note: a New York-based agency, the Bonfire Group, opened in early 2011 specifically to promote geek culture and branding.
- p. 160 “the Ponzi scheme that is today’s collectibles market”: This story was reported and extensively documented by Daniel Best in his blog “20th Century Danny Boy,” <http://ohdannyboy.blogspot.com/2011/08/original-art-stories-steve-geppis.html>.
- p. 161 “literally wrote the book”: Jerry Weist, *The Comic Art Price Guide* (second edition). Iona, WI: Krauss Publications, 2000.
- p. 162 “most of the commerce takes place online and through back channels”: The online forum the Collectors Society is one spot to observe the behind-the-scenes conversations among this community: <http://comics.www.collectors-society.com/default.aspx>.

p. 165 “crammed into their snug townhome”: They would probably like me to note that they’ve since moved to more spacious digs.

Chapter 6

- p. 180 “handbook developed by Cruz and Hill in 2004”: Which can, in theory, be found here, although the site hasn’t been updated in a while:
<http://www.night-flight.com/secretorigin/>.
- p. 181 “under contract with the U.S. Army in the 1950s”: Collected in a fine edition in 2011: Eddie Campbell, ed., *PS: The Best of Preventative Maintenance Monthly* (Abrams Books, 2011).
- p. 181 “*The Adventures of Johnny Bunko: The Last Career Guide You’ll Ever Need*”: Daniel Pink, illustrated by Rob Ten Pas, *The Adventures of Johnny Bunko: The Last Career Guide You’ll Ever Need* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2008).
- p. 181 “adapting business classics as graphic novels”:
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2011/03/10/now-you-can-read-business-books-as-comics/>.
- p. 182 “shelved at the Library of Congress”: Comics are gaining acceptance at the top of the library food chain: the Library of Congress;
<http://www.tcj.com/introducing-the-small-press-expo-collection/>.
- p. 182 “merchandise, news, and book reviews in comics format”: See www.unshelved.com.
- p. 183 “1996’s *Palestine* by Joe Sacco”: Joe Sacco, *Palestine* (Seattle: Fantagraphics Books, 1996). This book received an American Book Award.
- p. 183 “matter-of-fact true crime series, *A Treasury of Victorian Murder*”: Collected in various formats by NBM Publishing.
- p. 183 “the writers of the 1950s Beat Generation”: Paul Buhle et al., *The Beats: A Graphic History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2010).

- p. 184 “the needs of their communities or institutions”: One excellent resource is Stephen Weiner, *Faster than a Speeding Bullet: The Rise of the Graphic Novel* (New York: NBM, 2003).
- p. 184 “affection of many of today’s leading literary lights for comic book culture”: For an interesting take on this from the *Atlantic Monthly*, see http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2011/10/how-zombies-and-superheroes-conquered-highbrow-fiction/246847/?single_page=true.
- p. 189 “curated museum shows like the groundbreaking Masters of American Comics”: http://hammer.ucla.edu/exhibitions/detail/exhibition_id/103.
- p. 189 “R. C. Harvey”: Some of his best aesthetic observations of the comics medium can be found in Robert C. Harvey, *The Art of the Comic Book* (Oxford: University of Mississippi Press, 1996).
- p. 189 “Scott McCloud”: Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994).
- p. 189 “Eisner himself”: Eisner’s treatises on comic aesthetics, *Comics and Sequential Art*, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative*, and *Expressive Anatomy* (with Peter Poplaski), are all worthy contributions to criticism from one of the medium’s most accomplished practitioners.
- p. 191 “Maurice Horn’s monumental 800-page *World Encyclopedia of Comics*”: Maurice Horn, *The World Encyclopedia of Comics* (New York: Chelsea House, 1976).
- p. 195 “a first for such a high-profile title”: As reported by ICv2: <http://www.icv2.com/articles/news/21456.html>.
- p. 196 “competition with video games and movies for young mindshare and dollars”: “Changing Habits Illustrate Decline of Indian Comics,” *BBC News*, November 28, 11; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-15658311>.

- p. 196 “bring its superhero lineup to the subcontinent, with mixed results”: A good rundown from local sources can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/gothamcomicsindia/blogs/marvelagainfailedinindia>.
- p. 197 “creating localization costs and complexity”: Some question the value of localization with English literacy on the rise among youth; <http://www.medianama.com/2009/03/223-marvel-comics-to-focus-on-india-need-for-localization/>.
- p. 197 “betting heavily on this scenario is Liquid Comics”: www.liquidcomics.com.
- p. 197 “vast potential of India’s high-tech, pop-crazy young readership”: http://www.liquidcomics.com/press_release/Dec_05_2011.html.
- p. 197 “create a new Indian superhero, Chakra—the Invincible”: <http://sciencefiction.com/2011/12/21/stan-lee-creates-indian-comic-book-hero-chakra-the-invincible/>.
- p. 198 “Archie Comics has already employed in Latin America”: <http://www.icv2.com/articles/news/20843.html>.
- p. 198 “the practical skills they need to create sustainable livelihoods”: See www.plainink.org for more information.
- p. 200 “selling out in advance and hosting huge crowds”: A firsthand account can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/gothamcomicsindia/comiccon-awalkthrough>.
- p. 200 “guests representing Europe and North America”: <http://www.bdalger.net/>.
- p. 200 “ambassadors of comics culture in all its forms”: In a related development on the domestic front, the Girl Geek Con, an unapologetically female-centered fan event, sold out its two-day debut in Seattle in 2011, signaling yet another advance in the development of the comics audience. A great firsthand account

- comes from professional comics writer and guest of honor Gail Simone:
<http://gailsimone.tumblr.com/post/11272833640/some-personal-highlights-from-geek-girl-con>.
- p. 205 “the FAQ on the strip’s website”: <http://axecop.com/index.php/achome/story/>.
- p. 205 “a project called Trip City”: <http://welcometotrip.com/>, announced at the Beat: <http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/10/31/introducing-trip-city/>.
- p. 206 “his 2000 manifesto *Reinventing Comics*”: Scott McCloud, *Reinventing Comics: How Imagination and Technology Are Revolutionizing an Art Form* (New York: William Morrow, 2000).
- p. 206 “Jerry Holkins and Mike Krauhlik’s *Penny Arcade*”: <http://www.penny-arcade.com/>.
- p. 206 “Pete Abrams’s *Sluggy Freelance*”: <http://www.sluggy.com/>.
- p. 206 “Scott Kurtz’s *PvP*”: <http://www.pvponline/>.
- p. 206 “a more-or-less webcomic on Jeff Kinney’s ‘Funbrain’ site”:
<http://www.funbrain.com/journal/Journal.html?ThisJournalDay=1&ThisPage=2>.
- p. 206 “a world populated by glorified stick figures”:
<http://www.deadline.com/2011/12/comedy-central-announces-2011-12-development-slate/#more-202206>.
- p. 208 “Lieber joined the discussion thread”:
http://undergroundthecomix.com/4chan_thread_20614483.html.
- p. 208 “artists who are trying to distinguish themselves in a crowded and competitive field”: Lieber blogged extensively about the experience and gave interviews to industry sites like Comic Book Resources:
<http://www.comicbookresources.com/?page=article&id=29083>.

- p. 208 “what to do when that happens”: This account is adapted from an article I wrote in March 2011 at the site Internet Evolution:
http://www.internetevolution.com/author.asp?section_id=697&doc_id=20486
3.
- p. 208 “a deluxe edition from IDW”:
<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/renaedeliz/womanthology-massive-all-female-comic-anthology?ref=card>.
- p. 208 “making the project commercially viable for the publisher”: Kickstarter has also proved problematic for certain kinds of projects, especially collaborations. A creator dispute threw a previously heralded Kickstarter project called *Ashes* into peril, raising troubling fundamental questions about the whole model.
<http://forbiddenplanet.co.uk/blog/2012/an-ashes-update-jimmy-broxtons-off-the-book/>.
- p. 212 “by 2015, total tablet usage will top 82.1 million U.S. adults”:
http://blogs.forrester.com/sarah_rotman_epps/11-01-04-us-tablet-sales-will-more-than-double-this-year.
- p. 212 “more than 294 million units sold worldwide”:
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/04/19/us-tablets-research-idUSTRE73I16K20110419>.
- p. 212 “the Kindle Fire tablet in 2011”: While tablets are still a bit pricey in the early 2010s, they are so effective as vehicles for the delivery of high-margin paid content that it is easy to see a day when providers or networks will give them away (or sell them for a nominal fee) as a means of locking in customers.
- p. 212 “more than \$2.8 billion by 2015, according to Forrester”:
http://www.forrester.com/rb/Research/ebook_buying_is_about_to_spiral_upward/q/id/57664/t/2.

- p. 213 “files that ran only in their own application environments”: The security isn’t foolproof, as some digital content is often “liberated” on sharing and torrent sites, but it represents a barrier to ordinary users.
- p. 213 “restrictive terms of use governing digital comics”: See <http://www.comixology.com/terms> for an example. Note that the terms license only the right to view the content, not the content itself. “Digital Content is licensed, not sold, to you by ComiXology. ComiXology reserves the right to revoke your license to Digital Content at any time for any reason.”
- p. 214 “service provider vanishes in the mist”: The market got its first real taste of this problem in April 2012, when Graphicly announced it was closing its digital storefront and mothballing its reading application for Android and iOS devices to become a distribution service provider for the broader market for graphic e-books. See <http://www.fastcocreate.com/1680464/behind-a-pivot-graphicly-closes-marketplace-refocuses-business>.
- p. 216 “create critical mass around its platform”: Smaller players like Panelfly, Wowio, and Longbox Digital are also fighting for share in a crowded market.
- p. 216 “infusion of capital from private equity in November 2011”:
<http://comicspl.us/iverse-media-announces-4-million-private-equity-funding-commitment/>.
- p. 216 “its potential for widespread industry adoption remain unclear”: The rather complex iVerse/Diamond announcement from February 2012 was the subject of considerable discussion among industry observers. For example, see this clarifying report from Beat reporter Todd Allen:
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2012/02/17/diamonds-digital-distribution-program-the-actual-details/>.
- p. 219 “view them on the ComiXology app”: For Steinberger’s perspective on this, see <http://www.suntimes.com/technology/ihnatko/8689560-452/talking-the-amazon-fire-with-ComiXology>.

- p. 219 “ComiXology announced”: “ComiXology Tops 50 Million Downloads.” Press release issued by ComiXology, March 6, 2012. ComiXology updated its number to 60 million in April 2012.
- p. 220 “a more-than-credible competitor overnight”: Apple took a step in that direction in late February 2012, establishing a separate section of its iBookstore for comics and graphic novels, with a heavy emphasis on top-sellers from Marvel and Image. <http://itunes.apple.com/us/genre/books-comics-graphic-novels/id9026?mt=11>, as reported in <http://www.comicsbeat.com/2012/02/28/itunes-launches-standalone-comics-section-of-ibookstore/>.
- p. 222 “titles that might not have enough viability in the direct market”: DC announced its first “digital first” title, *Batman Beyond Unlimited* (a tie-in to the early 2000 animated series), in November 2011. It shipped in January 2012 for 99 cents as a digital edition only, and became available in print for \$3.99 in February 2012, according to ICv2: <http://www.icv2.com/articles/news/21518.html>.
- p. 222 “discounted pricing for complete story arcs”: Marvel announced complete digital bundles (story arcs) from ComiXology in September 2011: <http://robot6.comic/bookresources.com/2011/09/marvel-offers-digital-bundles/>.
- p. 222 “monthly subscription model through the iVerse service”:
<http://www.comicsbeat.com/2011/12/27/sales-charts-unboxing-day-2011-and-a-surprising-discovery/>.
- p. 223 “sold more than 500,000 copies in print”:
<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/heat-vision/dc-comics-marvel-sales-figures-277720>.

- p. 225 “interact with the creators and one another”:
<http://stumptowntradereview.com/2011/10/this-is-how-digital-comics-should-work/>.
- p. 225 “a DVD that comes with the physical book”: Art Spiegelman, *MetaMaus: A Look Inside a Modern Classic* (New York: Pantheon, 2011).
- p. 225 “keeping it at an affordable price”: <http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/digital/content-and-e-books/article/49045-shanower--s-age-of-bronze-seen-app-goes-live-for-new-york-comic-con.html>.
- p. 226 “These do-it-yourself offerings outsold”:
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/10/business/media/for-archie-comics-a-return-to-superheroes.html?_r=1.
- p. 226 “money comes through the tip jar, not the toll booth”: Perhaps this is why DC and Marvel Entertainment are high-profile supporters of various legislative efforts to restrict content usage on the Internet.
- p. 229 “polarized reactions”: More so in the wake of his highly publicized November 2011 invective-tinged rant against the Occupy Wall Street movement that he posted on his blog, www.frankmillerink.com (the post was titled “Anarchy”)—but that was still four months in the future when he appeared at the Dead Dog Party.

Chapter 7

- p. 236 “known as scenario planning”: Scenario planning was initially developed in the 1980s by a team of strategists working for Shell Oil who needed better risk models for determining future energy market conditions. Members of the team, including Peter Schwartz and Lawrence Wilkinson, later founded the consultancy Global Business Network and popularized scenario planning through books, workshops, and engagements. Large corporations, industry

groups, and governments, including Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Merck, and the nation of Singapore, use scenario planning to drive market, product, and competitive strategy.

- p. 237 “a Marvel title called *What If?*”: Most of these were written by Roy Thomas, the most continuity-oriented of his generation of writers, and many of the *What If* scenarios later ended up happening “for real” in the Marvel universe.
- p. 247 “connected by networks and mobile devices”: For a richer picture of this world, see my 2010 book, *Young World Rising*.
- p. 252 “threatening to enemies of modernity and artistic experimentation”: I address many of the problems of this scenario in an essay called “Entrepreneurship and Its Enemies,” available in my 2011 e-book release, *Young World Shining*.
- p. 257 “one of the great *X-Men* stories of the early 1980s”: “Days of Future Past,” by Chris Claremont and John Byrne, *Uncanny X-Men*, 141–142, Marvel Comics Group, January–February 1980.