

POINT COUNTER-POINT

Clash of the comic book titans: Marvel vs. DC

I'm a Marvel... and I'm a DC

NEIL JAMES
opinion editor

Art and entertainment is subjective. The same goes in the world of comic books. The main camps that comic geeks reside in are between the "big two," Marvel and DC.

However, animosity and competition always rages between the two factions. Fans of each side are always trying to persuade the other. In my experienced opinion, Marvel Comics is the better universe.

Here's why:
1. **The Media:** In the past few years, Marvel produced the majority of the comic book films that have been saturating the market, while DC has only produced two major films.

Though the *Dark Knight* and *Watchmen* contained boundless quantities of awesome, Marvel Comics has cranked out 17 films since 2000 (*Iron Man*, *Spider-Man*, *X-Men*) and nine more in production (*Iron Man 2*, *Captain America*, *Thor*, *The Avengers*, *Thor: The God of Thunder*, *Iron Man 3*, *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Avengers: Infinity War*, and *Avengers: Endgame*).

Yes, some of the movies have flopped, but others were phenomenal. The *Spider-Man* franchise broke the box office record with each successive film. DC is starting to get the ball rolling with their films, but they will hardly be able to keep up.

With the creation of Marvel Studios and the nearly limitless pockets of Disney, Marvel's movies will only get better with time.

2. **The Powers:** When it comes to the comparison between the universes' power sets, it's virtually a unanimous decision that DC's characters are grotesquely overpowered.

Look at Superman. The only way to kill him is with Kryptonite (which is as rare as a fe-

male in a 4th year engineering class at Behrend) and magic. What's the appeal in reading about a hero that is practically invulnerable and is basically a god?

The only struggle or compulsion to keep reading. At Marvel, a character's powers are not too strong. Hell, Captain America was shot in the chest and killed. Spider-Man has to live with his sores and he was beat to death in a later issue. **God worry. He got beat by some crazy comic book character.**

This is not to say that DC is not to be feared. It's just that there is a sense of humanity in that DC heroes seem to be on the two sides of the same coin. They are only too human.

3. **The Characters:** When it comes to character depth, Marvel still can't be beat. Though they may be overpowered, they are human side that makes them much more interesting. Compare Batman to Spider-Man. Bruce Wayne is a millionaire playboy who has his own secret headquarters, nearly infinite resources and a

harem of women at his every beck and call.

Yes, he might not have superpowers, but he has something just as good: an ungodly amount of cash!

Now compare him to Spidey. Yes, Spider-Man might have super powers, but his life has been ruined because of them. Bruce Wayne's parents might have been killed in front of him, but Peter was indirectly responsible for his Uncle's death.

It's this humbling fact that makes Spidey push himself so hard. He sacrificed his education to save lives and everything he has to do to atone for his sins.

Batman is a hoity-toity mansion, comes with a butler, fighter jet, a boat, and rocket-powered cape. Spidey has a dingy apartment and a discount chemist. Who can a person relate with more: the rich playboy who is drowning in sex, or the average-Joe who has all the same problems you do?

DC has also been criticized for having heroes who are too "pretty." Look no further than Superman. He's muscular with zero body fat, has the chiseled features of Adonis and is adored by 99.999999% of the global population.

Now look at the Fantastic Four's Ben Grimm, better known as The Thing. Since the day he got his powers, he's been considered a freak. He can never be truly loved by another, is constantly battling clinical depression, and he's attempted suicide multiple times.

Call me crazy, but I feel a much stronger connection to Ben than Superman.

Marvel's characters have a humanity and depth that can't be trumped by DC's army of perfect pretty boys.

BRENDEEN MULTON
contributing writer

DC Comics started in 1934 as Detective Comics. It is known for a wide range of superheroes. Their "big three" are Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman.

DC Comics also publishes stories with numerous other heroes such as the Flash, Green Lantern, and the superhero organizations, the Justice League and the Teen Titans.

DC Comics' biggest competitor is Marvel Comics, and there are several reasons why DC fans believe their superheroes are superior.

1. **The Media.** Possibly the biggest advantage that DC has over Marvel is the amount of recent media exposure that DC has had. The Justice League television show ran on Cartoon Network from 2001 to 2004. Its cast included Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman, Martian Manhunter, Green Lantern and Hawkgirl.

This was the premier for some of the characters to the animation world. Furthermore, IGN.com named the Justice League as the 20th best animated television series of all time, five years after its run.

Other noteworthy animated series include *Batman: The Animated Series*, and *Justice League Unlimited*, which was a follow up to the Justice League series.

The movies *Batman Begins* and *The Dark Knight* have catapulted DC heroes into the spotlight.

The four Superman movies starring Christopher Reeves as well as *Superman Returns* are also name pushers for DC Comics.

2. **The Powers:** A second

point for DC Comics is the heroes' levels of power. Several of DC's successful heroes do not even have superpowers. The first one that springs to mind is Batman. **Granted, Batman, or Bruce Wayne, is a millionaire and can afford all sorts of cool gadgets.**

However, it is inspiring to see Batman because what he does is realistic.

The murder of his parents drives Bruce Wayne to become a master of martial arts and always be in peak physical condition so that he can fight crime. It is reasonable to think that any person with the right motivation could turn themselves into a "Batman."

Batman is not the only DC hero without any superpowers. The *Green Arrow* is also in his company. **The Question, also known as Vic Sage, is a reporter who was tired of seeing the rampant crime and political corruption in his home town, Hub City. He donned a trench coat, fedora and mask made to bond to his face and gave him the appearance of being faceless to fight crime.**

The *Green Arrow* is Oliver Queen, who was once also a millionaire playboy, like Bruce Wayne, aka Batman, although the *Green Arrow* eventually lost his wealth. He patrols the streets of Seattle. His costume makes him look like Robin Hood and he uses a bow with a variety of trick arrows to fight crime.

When it comes to power levels, DC Comics has created a character that blatantly mocks Marvel heroes, who are often criticized for being too powerful.

The DC antihero Lobo is an amalgam of the Marvel heroes Wolverine, Punisher, and Deadpool.

Lobo is an alien mercenary and bounty hunter who is crazy and can regenerate his entire body from a single drop of blood, which effectively makes him unkillable. Lobo's entire comic line is ridiculous and over-the-top, and it frequently makes fun of superhero stereotypes.

3. **The Characters:** DC Comics frequently explore the personality of the man or woman behind the mask. Many of the Superman comics deal with Superman's humanity.

In fact, Superman's biggest enemy, Lex Luthor, despises Superman because he believes Superman is holding back the human race from reaching its potential by solving many of their problems.

An example of Superman's humanity being the central plot for his stories is from the Superman/Batman team-up line of comics.

During this story, an alien force is approaching Earth, and it tricks Superman into believing that he looked very frightening when he was found in a cornfield in Kansas, and changed his appearance to fit in with the humans.

By preying on Superman's doubts of his own humanity, the aliens were able to get Superman to turn his back on the Earth until he realized that he almost killed Batman, with whom he has a very strong friendship.

When faced with these reasons it is hard to see why someone would prefer another group of superheroes.

MY VOICE

A student's thoughts on economics

DANIEL MUCCI
contributing writer

Subsidies for higher education are burdens for taxpayers, and they won't be helping out students much either.

College tuition presents a tough challenge for students to afford. President Barack Obama has ideas to make college more affordable.

In his State of the Union address, he mentioned giving families a \$10,000 tax credit for four years of college, and an increase in Pell Grants.

The president also proposed that after graduation, students would only be required to pay 10 percent of their income on student loans, their debt would be forgiven after 20 years and only 10 years if they have a career in public service.

These subsidies will fall short of helping out the middle class and students.

College costs will become even more expensive under such policies presented by the president. Also, as a result, the value of a college degree could dwindle.

More students are trying to get into college, so basic supply and demand theory would suggest that colleges would then charge higher prices with the

increased demand. If President Obama gets his way and these subsidies are passed in Congress, the big winners would be these college institutions.

With more students entering college and the subsidies allowing them to pay more, institutions will succumb to the temptation of milking them for the maximum amount they can.

Hence, wealth very well could be leaving the hands of taxpayers in paying for these policies, going to students, and then to these college institutions.

This would make the taxpayers the big losers.

Furthermore, many taxpayers are not college graduates themselves.

Thus, many taxpayers will be funding subsidies for students who figure to be soon generating a greater income than them.

This would appear to raise the issue of fairness in the redistribution of wealth.

The Cato Institution, in a 2009 article, presents figures that show the average real cost (in terms of 2006 dollars) per student in a four-year private college increased by 68 percent from 1986 to 2006.

However, once you take out grants, loans, and tax benefits

the cost shows only a 28 percent increase.

The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education found that the price of college increased 439 percent from 1982, representing a growth four times the growth of inflation.

In addition, research done by the College Board found that the total federal student aid in the 2008-2009 year was about \$117 billion, a 99 percent increase over the last 10 years.

President Obama supports more subsidies, while the statistics and economic intuition indicate that these subsidies are helping increase the cost of college.

Supporters of higher education subsidies may not realize that by giving out more subsidies, college tuition will rise.

Or perhaps these politicians want to ignore this and present ideas that on the surface appeal to the middle class and those that need aid so they can be re-elected.

Supporters may also point out that having more students in college is going to make this country better. However, there are problems with that way of thinking.

First of all, colleges will have to spend more to accommodate

the additional students. More students mean colleges will need more residence rooms, more food, more parking spaces and perhaps even more professors. Economic intuition would tell you that this too can lead to higher tuition and college costs for the students.

Secondly, allowing more students into college will lower the value and standards of a college degree.

China is a perfect example of this situation. Michael Wines of the New York Times in a November 2009 article described how China has spent billions of dollars on higher education, has tripled enrollment since 2000, has more individuals with college degrees than the U.S. and India combined, yet fired their minister of education amongst criticism of their quality of schools and jobless graduates.

I strongly believe that the United States should be concentrating on the quality of college graduates, not the quantity of college graduates.

President Obama wants to appeal to the middle class and those that need financial assistance, but higher education subsidies will only accomplish more wasteful spending of taxpayer money.

Have Your Say:

What are your thoughts on the Race Machine?



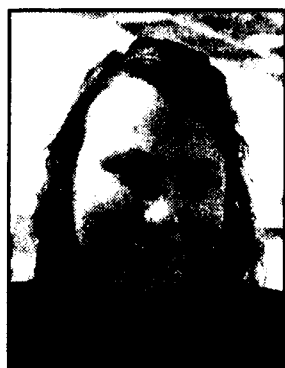
Kristi Gdanetz
sophomore
biology

"I think it's funny that you can know what your children will look like."



Dave Marogi
sophomore
mechanical engineering

"I thought it was cool, but I also thought it was kind of random. I thought it was very stereotypical."



Lauren Liedbzinski
freshman
business economics

"People are always wondering what they are going to look like later. It's interesting to see something able to do that."



Ray Wolkan
sophomore
psychology

"I thought it was okay, but I was kind of disappointed with the aging thing."

THE EDITOR'S BLURB

Why Edward Cullen will kill us all

NEIL JAMES
opinion editor

Since 2005, Edward Cullen has penetrated the dreams of women across the country.

However, this is actually the worst thing that ever happened to the psyche of the teenage American girl.

Why? Because it takes the idea of a knight-in-shining-armor (skin in this case) and takes it to the extreme.

It's natural for people to believe in a "white knight." Man or woman, everyone wants to think that someone will come into their lives and make them happy.

The catch is that no person can do that. The only person who can make you happy is YOU.

But now, thanks to *Twilight*, a whole generation of girls are being conditioned to believe that Prince Charming actually exists.

Now the astute reader may think, "But people are smart. Any person of normal mental health is able to differentiate between reality and fantasy."

I completely agree. Readers know very well that vampires don't exist. However, it's very easy to believe that a man as perfect as Edward Cullen does. This is a completely unrealistic expectation to place on men. No one is going to ride up to you on a white steed and save you from your problems. It is up to you to find the power within your own heart and make yourself happy.

Another problem that *Twilight* creates is that its protagonist, Bella Swan, is a terrible role model for impressionable teen girls.

Bella professes her undying love for him after seeing him for the third time.

This basically teaches girls that love is some magical force and True Love actually exists and that they are "destined" to be with Mr Perfect.

[Insert vomiting sound here.]

In the first novel's climax, she willingly walks into a death trap because she wants to sacrifice herself for a man she's known for all of six months.

If you were like me, when you read that passage you stood up from your chair, threw the book across the room, kicked your pet and screamed "what the [expletive removed]!" Now, not only do inexperienced young girls think that someday some random jackass will solve all their problems, but that said jackass is worth dying for.

Damn it! Women are already too trusting of men as it is, and *Twilight* continues to make the issue worse because Bella and Edward don't actually have a reason for being in love.

Bella's only characterization is that she loves Edward; and Edwards only characterization is that he's misunderstood and -guess what- he loves Bella too.

If you read their dialogue, you'll find that they don't actually talk about anything.

The dialogue consists of: "I love you," exclaimed Bella. "I love you more," mumbled Edward, sculpting his hair.

"OMG, let us frolic!" Ready to claw your eyes out, yet? That's the entire saga.

New Moon is even worse. What does Edward do at the first sign of trouble? He leaves!

Partners are supposed to work through problems with each other, not leave you stranded in the woods.

New Moon's ending then proceeds to tell the reader that Mr. Perfect will come back after leaving them.

Fantastic. I should install a turnstyle in my doorway so I can console my female friends more efficiently.

Thanks to Edward and *Twilight*, the Personal Counseling Office better be expanding for a massive influx of people in the next few years, because when these teens get into college, they'll need all the help they can get.