THE FALL OF THE CCA
Oct 25, 1954 - Comics Magazine Association of America (Comics Code Authority)

Based largely on the 1948 Association of Comics Magazine Publishers code

The CCA had no legal authority over other publishers, but magazine distributors often refused to carry comics without the CCA’s seal of approval

Most established publishers shifted their focus (away from crime & horror) - only a few publishers went out of business
Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to create sympathy for the criminal, to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate criminals.

Policemen, judges, Government officials and respected institutions shall never be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority.

No comic magazine shall use the word horror or terror in its title.

All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, masochism shall not be permitted.

Divorce shall not be treated humorously nor represented as desirable.

Illicit sex relations are neither to be hinted at nor portrayed. Violent love scenes as well as sexual abnormalities are unacceptable.
THE CCA IN THE 21st CENTURY

- Despite periodic revisions (1989 being the most recent), the influence of the CCA began to wane.

- The Direct Market offered an opportunity to sell non-code books to a wider audience - while the newsstand market disappeared.

- In 2001, Marvel completely withdrew from the Comics Code Authority in favor of its own rating system.

- As of 2007, DC Comics and Archie Comics are the only major publishers submitting comics for Code approval - DC only submits comics from their Johnny DC and DC Universe superhero lines.
MARVEL RATING SYSTEM

marvel replaces the CCA
The first Marvel Rating System, implemented in 2001, used the following categories:

- ALL AGES
- PG (Parental Guidance)
- PG+
- PARENTAL ADVISORY/EXPLICIT CONTENT

Motion Picture Association of America complaints resulted in a new system:, as it holds a trademark on such classifications as PG and PG-13

- ALL AGES
- PSR (Parental Supervision Recommended)
- PSR+
- PARENTAL ADVISORY/EXPLICIT CONTENT
**ALL AGES:** Appropriate for readers of all ages.

**A:** Appropriate for ages 9 and up.

**T+ TEENS & UP:** Appropriate for most readers 13 and up, parents are advised that they may want to read before or with younger children.

**PARENTAL ADVISORY:** 15+ years old similar to T+ but featuring more mature themes and/or more graphic imagery. Recommended for teen and adult readers.

**MAX: EXPLICIT CONTENT:** 18+ years old Most Mature Readers books will fall under the MAX Comics banner, (created specifically for mature content titles) MAX and Mature-themed titles will continue to be designed to appear distinct from mainline Marvel titles, with the "MAX: Explicit Content" label very prominently displayed on the cover. MAX titles will NOT be sold on the newsstand, and they will NOT be marketed to younger readers.
BEYOND THE BIG TWO

the face of modern indie publisher
INDIE STRATEGIES

mix of creator owned (ongoing & mini-series), internally developed, and licensed properties (tie-ins, original works, ongoings, etc.). Individual publishers are often defined by their particular mix.
DARK HORSE

- Founded in 1986 by Mike Richardson (Portland, Oregon)

- *Dark Horse Presents* - black & white anthology featuring a rotating cast of characters and creators

- Focused on publishing licensed properties: Aliens, Star Wars, Predator (Buffy, Angel, Firefly)

- largely steered clear of superhero books - one of the reasons for their success
IDW

- Founded in 1999 - Idea + Design Works (IDW)
- Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kris Oprisko, and Robbie Robbins - media executives and artists
- Media company - video games, movies, TV, collectible card games, comic books, and trading cards
- **IDW Publishing** - comics, children’s books (Worthwhile Books), classic comic strips (Library of American Comics)
- 2007 - purchased by IDT (communication corporation)
ONI PRESS

- Founded in 1997 by Bob Schreck and Joe Nozemack
- Creator owned - exclusive original works
- Coined the term "real mainstream" to suggest that it publishes comic books and graphic novels whose subject matter is in line with the popular genres in other media
- Avoids superhero genre - unless creator approaches from an unusual angle
founded (1992) by a number of high profile creators as a way to get a larger share of the profits from their creations

When founded, Image had two provisions:

1. Image does not own a creator’s work; the creator does.

2. No Image partner would ever interfere, creatively or financially, with any other’s work.

Organized into a system of “studios” - each of which were controlled by one of the partners and completely independent of one another - but all published under the Image Comics banner
IMAGE “STUDIOS”

- Extreme Studios - Rob Liefeld
- Highbrow Entertainment - Erik Larsen
- ShadowLine - Jim Valentino
- Todd McFarlane Productions - Todd McFarlane
- Top Cow Productions - Marc Silvestri
- Wildstorm Productions - Jim Lee
RED 5 COMICS

- Founded in 2007 - Paul Ens (director of Lucasfilm’s StarWars.com and Lucas Online) and Scott Chitwood (co-founder of TheForce.net)

- Creator owned and internally developed comics with a cinematic aesthetic

- Many creators recruited from other media - film, TV, & web
NEXT CLASS:
comics in the digital age