**Stan Lee Hijacked Popular Culture**

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**Abstract**

Stan Lee hijacked popular culture in the 1940’s and 50’s and has become the biggest name in all the comic universe, at least when referring to real life people and not one of his genius creations. The establishment of the Comics Magazine Association of America was the first clue that the trajectory of popular culture was evolving faster than most of the population at the time could fathom. This association stifled creativity to the core and nearly tore the comic world apart at the seams before Stan stood up and started his own thing, hijacking popular culture amongst younger readers. Stan’s influence over popular culture in the past 80 years is unmatched due to his personal experience in the Army as well as his ability to connect fictional characters and events to real life people and real life, historical, events. His ability to weave truth of our nation’s history into the pages of his comics will one day be looked at differently by the masses. The Marvel comics contain more historical fact than textbooks in schools today and they will soon be historical references to some extent once the world realizes we have been given the truth this entire time. We have been distracted by other, erroneous, truths. If we were to go back and really analyze the Marvel comics, from the beginning with Captain America, we would realize how many parallels there are between the Marvel stories and real-life history that today’s text books leave out.

**Stan Lee Hijacked Popular Culture**

Stan Lee was born December 28, 1922, in New York City. His born name is Stanley Martin Lieber and his parents were Romanian immigrants, Celia and Jack Lieber, who struggled through the Great Depression. Stanley and his younger brother, Larry, watched his parents struggle every day to keep a roof over their head and food on the table. One day in the late 1930’s, Stan found a job posting in the newspaper for a position at what would be his first experience with comic book animation, Timely Comics. He was hired as an office assistant but quickly advanced to interim editor where he first wrote his first comic book, Captain America – The Traitor’s Revenge. (Douglas, 2010) He learned much from his creative mentors and was glad to be helping his parents with money during such difficult times.

From 1942 to 1945, Stan served the Army Signal Corps, where he claims “I wrote training films, I wrote film scripts, I did posters, I wrote instructional manuals. I was one of the great teachers of our time!” (Trevithick, 2018) Every piece he created assisted in troop training as well as military recruitment during WWII. His continuance of Captain America was very obviously a unique political statement against the Nazi’s. After the war ended, Lee returned to his job at Timely, which later turned into Marvel in 1961, where he continued to parallel his stories with current events and social and political strife. Even today, we can see that the Marvel series, if that is an adequate word, references legitimate military operations.

In early 2020, before the United States COVID-19 outbreak, I had the unique opportunity to meet the United States Air Force’s very first female fighter pilot, Major General Jeannie M Leavitt. I listened to her history of how she got where she is, but what pertains to this is that she said she trained Brie Larson, the actress of the character Colonel Carol Danvers of Captain Marvel, on how to adequately pass as a true fighter pilot. This alone proves to me that the license holders of Marvel are just as dedicated to reality comparison as the original creator, Stan Lee. Besides the military, specifically, there are many instances where Stan’s writing was meant to help society of that time cope with the craziness of the world around them.

For instance, in The Hulk comic, Stan wanted to create a monster out of the fear felt all over the world. During a time where kids were taught to hind under their desks from the initial blast of nuclear attacks. Never mind the radiation cloud that would soon blanket the area around them for many miles. But nonetheless, Stan created this creature and storyline based off real-world troubles and likely helped many readers through the confusing times.

These stories became very controversial very quickly. Many individuals came forward to express their concern about the growing comic trend, fearful of what could accrue by reading the stories. In a 1953 letter, addressed to the New Jersey Senator, who served as the head of the Committee for the Investigation of Juvenile Delinquency; Robert Hendrickson, a woman states, “All the awful crime stories and murder mysteries sent out to pollute the air and corrupt the minds of our younger generation…as Dr. says, we have laws that prohibit selling poison, why can’t we prohibit these people from selling poison to our children’s minds?” (Genovar, 1953) In 1954, this mentality led to the formation of The Comics Magazine Association of America, where a psychologist and publishers were brought in to guide the association’s requirements based on their opinion of right and wrong. You can imagine this was quite a killjoy, smothering creativity throughout not only Stan’s comic, but every comic, which now had to be stamped with certification from the Comics Magazine Association of America.

During this time, Stan and most all comic creators were cautious with their admissions of profession. They were looked down upon similarly to how people today are treated for their political beliefs. Where today we are reluctant to share our love for the previous administration, Stan and his closest friends and acquaintances were reluctant to share their jobs as well. They knew they would be frowned upon by the public, who listens to the fear derived from close-minded civilians, and likely encouraged by the media and government who were afraid they could be painted in a negative light.

I was going to try to avoid bringing the government into this too much. Referring to their controlling nature only a little bit, but when my research brought me to this association, I realized the government and media may have had ulterior motives right from the start. This association was not created to protect the children from becoming delinquents with warped minds of crime and drug violence, it was created to protect the government and all it’s factions. These factions do not want you to know the truth about their doings.

The first category in the webpage from Comics Magazine Association of America Comics Code 1989 says it all; “In general recognizable national, social, political, cultural, ethnic and racial groups, religious institutions, law enforcement authorities will be portrayed in a positive light. These include the government on the national, state, and municipal levels, including all its numerous departments, agencies and services; law enforcement agencies such as the FBI, the Secret Service, the CIA, etc.; the military, both United States and foreign; known religious organizations; ethnic advancement agencies; foreign leaders and representatives of other governments and national groups.” (Comics Magazine Association of America Comics Code 1989) These requirements set a strict limit to how Stan could portray the characters in his stories. Most importantly they tell me that those at the top of this association feared what Stan and other writers, especially those who parallel their stories to real life, might illustrate in their comics which would likely become children’s and young adult’s primary source of current event education, even though it is portrayed as fictional content.

The paragraph goes on to say, “If, for dramatic purposes, it is necessary to portray such group of individuals in a negative manner, the name of the group and its individual members will be fictitious, and its activities will not be clearly identifiable with the routine activities of any real group.” So, basically, if you tell the truth you must change the characters from the real-life characters to a fictional group. For example, how the Nazi’s were portrayed as Hydra in Captain America as well as Agents of SHIELD and many others. And even how Iron Man was meant to portray the entire Military Industrial Complex, highlighting how United States based technology and weaponry is not only being sold to the United States military, but also the enemies our soldiers are facing.

The CMAA’s strict guidelines really caused the comic book world to take a major hit. Even Stan had to let many of his artists and writers go when viewership tanked due to these guidelines. Stan himself nearly gave up when his wife encouraged him to start writing his own passions once again. This is when Stan’s writing career really took off. It is hard to say Stan’s writing was good or bad, but I do believe there have always been intentions behind the stories that are trying to keep the general public informed about some truths that have been blanketed.

For instance, because Hydra was meant to portray the Nazi’s, we were shown in the TV series, Agents of SHIELD as well as Captain America and others that the Nazi’s never really lost the second World War. The Nazi’s (Hydra) merely concluded that the best way to continue their attack was not through invasion of the world, but through infiltration of every single corporation, government, and even smaller part jobs like accountants. A great quote of warning comes from Abraham Lincoln when he stated, “Nations do not die from invasion; they die from internal rottenness.” This internal rottenness can be easily compared to Operation Paperclip, which basically gave Nazi war criminals new identities amongst the American people, many placed at the top of corporations right out of the war.

First let me be clear, I am not familiar with the comic series storyline, only what has been made into movies and television shows. There is an especially important episode in the Agents of SHIELD TV series where Hydra finally tries to take over SHIELD from the inside, and they are successful, primarily because there were so many Hydra operatives within the SHIELD ranks. SHIELD faulters and is never the same, and though I have not completed the series, I know that they are working toward a positive outcome, which gives me hope in the real world. But the ultimate message throughout the storyline has not completed, so it is hard to say all this was intentional, however there are certain parallels I have put together. For instance, today we can think of Hydra as what President Donald J Trump refers to as “The Swamp”.

It is a personal deduction that Stan Lee has been preparing us for the outcome that will prove Stan’s “fiction” may not have been fiction. The only questions are, was this intentionally set before us in this manner to give us a general idea of what is really going on in our world? Or is there some kind of karmic reasoning behind all of this where their portrayal of the truth somehow makes them feel like they are not really lying to the public about their secret doings? Though I believe the latter is the case for many television and movie productions, I do not believe this is the motive of the Marvel enterprise, there that’s a better word.

Stan has always been outspoken when it comes to politics. In fact, he even started a column which has been accumulated into one book called Stan’s Soapbox-The Collection which contains 14 years of Stan’s take on the world around him. “He never shied away from addressing hot-button topics, either, with multiple Spider-Man comics in that decade referencing the Vietnam War, student protests against that war, other forms of political corruption and activism, and other contemporary controversial topics.” (Biography, 2019) His words resonated with the younger generation who was more open to acceptance and unity than the generation they were raised by.

Stan was witty and genuine, and his soapbox likely holds many truths behind the fictional writings he created based off them. I am currently waiting for this book in the mail, so unfortunately, I cannot quote directly from the pages. However, in the Stan Lee documentary, With Great Power, there is a picture of one of his columns which states, “The only way to destroy them is to expose them. To reveal them for the insidious evils they really are.” (Douglas, 2010) This quote really stood out to me and I am glad I took the time to pause the movie and read the illustration. To me this is basically screaming for us to pay better attention to the man behind the curtain.

This message, along with many of Stan’s messages, rings true today. He is infinitely reminding us to look at the man behind the curtain, the one out there really calling the shots, who must be accounted for and must accept the punishment for their crimes against humanity. This expectation is unlike Operation Paperclip where even Nazi war criminals were accepted into our American society after the evidence of war crimes was overlooked to “harness German intellectual resources to help develop America’s arsenal of rockets and other biological and chemical weapons.” (Schumm, 2014) It is apparent to me that Stan’s writing, from the beginning, was trying to paint a fairer description of our nation’s true history, through fictional means.

Somehow, maybe through his ties to the Army, Stan understood the truth about our war history and has been warning us of its repercussions. “President Harry Truman forbade the agency from recruiting any Nazi members or active Nazi supporters. Nevertheless, officials within the JIOA and Office of Strategic Services (OSS)—the forerunner to the CIA—bypassed this directive by eliminating or whitewashing incriminating evidence of possible war crimes from the scientists’ records, believing their intelligence to be crucial to the country’s postwar efforts.” (Schumm, 2014) In other words, our past leaders literally let the enemy onto the base to set up shop, and it is unbelievably disappointing.

Not only was this against the President’s orders, but what is worse is they even allowed those with “incriminating evidence of possible war crimes” into our country to lead our corporations. They were placed in positions of power, such as CEO’s, scientists, doctors, and even politicians! I can see where this could be useful, but it is obvious, at least in the Marvel enterprise, that these war criminals did not have adequate surveillance once they were snaked into society unbeknownst to the American people. This likely also applies to the members of Operation Paperclip, who were left to roam free around our country.

I certainly wish I understood more about Stan Lee before, as this research has helped me connect many more dots, of which are infinite it would seem. I do believe Stan is a historical figure, even before his death one day after my birthday in 2018 which was coincidentally, no, ironically the start of my own Awakening to the realities portrayed by “fictional” stories. I had bought myself a subscription to a streaming platform called Gaia.com for my birthday and the shows opened my eyes so wide I thought I was going to cry myself dry. My entire mentality shifted after that fateful gift I gave myself and I restarted many of the Marvel’s shows and movies just to see what I can pick out of the storyline that parallels today’s events. It was insane, and my wife basically stopped watching with me because…well I guess she thought I was crazy and was annoyed that I wouldn’t shut up about some topics I would nit pick while watching.

Today, I wish there were still a Stan Lee, but I also wish there were still a Stan Lee’s Soapbox, as I’m sure I would be an avid reader and fan. Though I am sure I would not level with him on every topic, I know his perspective would have been added to my growing arsenal of educators. Stan Lee’s influence throughout history will remain for decades and even centuries to come, and I know that one day his stories might even be referred to for real-life historical reference. His unique ability to instill “his characters with a sense of humanity, tackling real-world issues like bigotry and drug use, would influence comics for decades.” (Biography, 2019) Knowing what I know now about the Marvel enterprise, I feel more inclined to read the actual comic books, rather than just watching the shows.

One comic I did start reading is Marvel’s Runaways, where I think I found the most relevance to this entire topic. In the comic, the children of wealthy parents discover that their parents have been sacrificing teenagers to an alien force to provide vitality to said alien. And I’m over here, learning about things like adrenochrome and satanic sacrifices from Gaia.com, or at least through research after learning something on Gaia.com…and I cried. I cried a lot. It hit me to the core because I think I know what demonic force is being depicted in the show and it goes by the name of Baal, sometimes referred to as Moloch.

Historically, Moloch was the top god throughout the Middle East, “including but not limited to the Jewish, Egyptian, Caananite, Phoenician and related cultures in North Africa and the Levant.” (Admin, 2015) And because I do not want to have to think about this to rephrase, I will quote again. “The principal pillars of Baalism were child sacrifice, sexual immorality (both heterosexual and homosexual) and pantheism (reverence of creation over the Creator). Adults would gather around the altar of Baal. Infants would then be burned alive as a sacrificial offering to the deity.” (Admin, 2015) Marvel’s Runaways has many commonalities about this satanic deity.

For one, the teenagers being sacrificed represent the “innocent, or the babies”. Two, the sacrifice is used to convert energy to an off worldly creature who shrivels up when he needs to feed once a year. And three, and most significantly, the parents of this show are depicting what some might refer to as the Bohemian Grove cult. This cult was initially depicted as a outdoor get away for wealthy, primarily white, men also once per year.

It is said that the Bohemian Grove, located north of San Francisco, “serves as a camp for the masters of the universe, where they can sit back, relax, and get rowdy.” (Serena, 2018) Others believe this is just a front for the 2,700-acre retreat, where the truth is much more satanic. “Amid horrific screams and the stench of charred human flesh, congregants – men and women alike – would engage in bisexual orgies. The ritual of convenience was intended to produce economic prosperity by prompting Baal to bring rain for the fertility of “mother earth.” (Admin, 2015) There have been many articles and even books that have been written on the legitimacy of this cult.

In a 2000 Documentary, Dark Secrets: Inside Bohemian Grove, Alex Jones sums up how and why this cult remains in the shadows. “The government was conditioning the public that anyone that talks about global government is a kook, a weirdo, a terrorist, a racist. And now they’re out on the nightly news saying ‘global government is here, you better except it. We’re getting rid of juries all across the planet. The IMF, the World Bank basically runs things now, the WTO decides what you can buy and sell and trade on the international market’. But see, they’ve preconditioned us that it doesn’t exist. They’ve preconditioned us that anybody that talks about this stuff and who is against it is a kook or a racist because it doesn’t exist. And then everybody has decided well I’m gonna be culturally cool, I want to be accepted. So even when they’re hearing the news admit it and tell us how great it is, they already prepositioned it psychologically that it’s not acceptable to discuss it.” (Archive, 2005) Unfortunately, this rings true for many more topics of concern, many of which Stan has tactfully referenced in his literature.

A conspiracy theorist, a term created by the CIA to discredit accusers, “is considered unhinged or at the very least, delusional and misguided.” (Painter, 2018) They make it more than just ‘it isn’t cool to talk about these things. They, the CIA and ultimately members of Bohemian Grove, turned the phrase into a cult, essentially mirroring the exact same thing they had been accused of in the first place. That seems to be common amongst this shadow government. But I digress.

Stan Lee’s impact on popular culture will ring throughout the ages, especially now that there have been television shows as well as movies made based from the comic books, making the comics more accessible to the technology age. The advancement of technology both aided the Marvel enterprise as well as hindered. Upon the birth of the internet, Stan Lee Media made it’s debut. Unfortunately, in 2000 there were legal issues that led to it’s demise. Soon after, Stan Lee started POW Entertainment Inc., “a multimedia entertainment production company.” (About POW Entertainment) This platform was meant to reach out to fans, as well as “to create and license intellectual properties for entertainment media.” (About POW Entertainment) This platform is still being used today.

In conclusion, Stan Lee and his hijacking of popular culture has and will continue to impact society, probably more than any writer in recent history. With the growing list of Marvel productions and limitless potential going forward, the superhero themed creations will go down in history. And, because of all the similarities between the Marvel universe and reality, it is my own conclusion that mankind will one day look at Stan’s work for historical references. I’m not calling it the Bible, but in similar ways it could potentially serve as such with tales full of lessons which have been methodically weaved into each story.

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