

**APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE**



AUTHORITY

THIS SEAL OF APPROVAL appears only on comic magazines which have been carefully reviewed, *prior to publication*, by the Comics Code Authority — an agency operating apart from any individual publisher, exercising independent judgment — and found to have met the high standards of morality required by the code of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc.

CODE

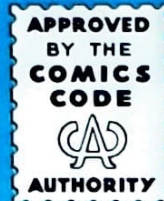
OF THE

COMICS MAGAZINE ASSOCIATION

OF AMERICA, INC.

CODE

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Originally adopted in 1954, and revised in 1971 to meet contemporary standards of conduct and morality, the enforcement of this Code is the basis for the comics magazine industry's program of self-regulation.

PREAMBLE

The comics magazine, or as it is more popularly known, the comic book medium, having come of age on the American cultural scene, must measure up to its responsibilities.

Constantly improving techniques and higher standards go hand in hand with these responsibilities.

To make a positive contribution to contemporary life, the industry must seek new areas for developing sound, wholesome entertainment. The people responsible for writing, drawing, printing, publishing and selling comic books have done a commendable job in the past, and have been striving toward this goal.

Their record of progress and continuing improvement compares favorably with other media. An outstanding example is the development of comic books as a unique and effective tool for instruction and education. Comic books have also made their contribution in the field of social commentary and criticism of contemporary life.

Members of the industry must see to it that gains made in this medium are not lost and that violations of standards of good taste, which might tend toward corruption of the comic book as an instructive and wholesome form of entertainment, will not be permitted.

Therefore, the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. has adopted this Code, and placed its enforcement in the hands of an independent Code Authority.

Further, members of the Association have endorsed the purpose and spirit of this Code as a vital instrument to the growth of the industry.

To this end, they have pledged themselves to conscientiously adhere to its principles and to abide by all decisions based on the Code made by the Administrator.

CODE FOR EDITORIAL MATTER

General Standards – Part A

1. Crimes shall never be presented in such a way as to promote distrust of the forces of law and justice, or to inspire others with a desire to imitate criminals.
2. No comics shall explicitly present the unique details and methods of a crime, with the exception of those crimes that are so far-fetched or pseudo-scientific that no would-be lawbreaker could reasonably duplicate.
3. Policemen, judges, government officials and respected institutions shall not be presented in such a way as to create disrespect for established authority. If any of these is depicted committing an illegal act, it must be declared as an exceptional case and that the culprit pay the legal price.
4. If crime is depicted it shall be as a sordid and unpleasant activity.
5. Criminals shall not be presented in glamorous circumstances, unless an unhappy end results from their ill-gotten gains, and creates no desire for emulation.
6. In every instance good shall triumph over evil and the criminal punished for his misdeeds.
7. Scenes of excessive violence shall be prohibited. Scenes of brutal torture, excessive and unnecessary knife and gun play, physical agony, gory and gruesome crime shall be eliminated.
8. No unique or unusual methods of concealing weapons shall be shown, except where such concealment could not reasonably be duplicated.
9. Instances of law enforcement officers dying as a result of a criminal's activities should be discouraged, except when the guilty, because of their crime, live a sordid existence and are brought to justice because of the particular crime.
10. The crime of kidnapping shall never be portrayed in any detail, nor shall any profit accrue to the abductor or kidnapper. The criminal or the kidnapper must be punished in every case.



11. The letters of the word "crime" on a comics magazine cover shall never be appreciably greater in dimension than the other words contained in the title. The word "crime" shall never appear alone on a cover.
12. Restraint in the use of the word "crime" in titles or subtitles shall be exercised.

General Standards – Part B

1. No comic magazine shall use the word horror or terror in its title. These words may be used judiciously in the body of the magazine. *
2. All scenes of horror, excessive bloodshed, gory or gruesome crimes, depravity, lust, sadism, masochism shall not be permitted.
3. All lurid, unsavory, gruesome illustrations shall be eliminated.
4. Inclusion of stories dealing with evil shall be used or shall be published only where the intent is to illustrate a moral issue and in no case shall evil be presented alluringly nor so as to injure the sensibilities of the reader.
5. Scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, or torture shall not be used. Vampires, ghouls and werewolves shall be permitted to be used when handled in the classic tradition such as Frankenstein, Dracula and other high calibre literary works written by Edgar Allen Poe, Saki (H. H. Munro), Conan Doyle and other respected authors whose works are read in schools throughout the world.
6. Narcotics or Drug addiction shall not be presented except as a vicious habit.
Narcotics or Drug addiction or the illicit traffic in addiction-producing narcotics or drugs shall not be shown or described if the presentation:
 - (a) Tends in any manner to encourage, stimulate or justify the use of such narcotics or drugs; or
 - (b) Stresses, visually, by text or dialogue, their temporarily attractive effects; or
 - (c) Suggests that the narcotics or drug habit may be quickly or easily broken; or
- (d) Shows or describes details of narcotics or drug procurement, or the implements or devices used in taking narcotics or drugs, or of the taking of narcotics or drugs in any manner; or
- (e) Emphasizes the profits of the narcotics or drug traffic; or
- (f) Involves children who are shown knowingly to use or traffic in narcotics or drugs; or
- (g) Shows or implies a casual attitude towards the taking of narcotics or drugs; or
- (h) Emphasizes the taking of narcotics or drugs throughout, or in a major part, of the story, and leaves the denouement to the final panels.

General Standards – Part C

All elements or techniques not specifically mentioned herein, but which are contrary to the spirit and intent of the Code, and are considered violations of good taste or decency, shall be prohibited.

DIALOGUE

1. Profanity, obscenity, smut, vulgarity, or words or symbols which have acquired undesirable meanings – judged and interpreted in terms of contemporary standards – are forbidden.
2. Special precautions to avoid disparaging references to physical afflictions or deformities shall be taken.
3. Although slang and colloquialisms are acceptable, excessive use should be discouraged and wherever possible good grammar shall be employed.

RELIGION

1. Ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group is never permissible.

COSTUME

1. Nudity in any form is prohibited. Suggestive and salacious illustration is unacceptable.
2. Females shall be drawn realistically without undue emphasis on any physical quality.

* The Board of Directors has ruled that a judicious use does not include the words "Horror" or "Terror" in story titles within the magazine.



MARRIAGE AND SEX

1. Divorce shall not be treated humorously nor represented as desirable.
2. Illicit sex relations are not to be portrayed and sexual abnormalities are unacceptable.
3. All situations dealing with the family unit should have as their ultimate goal the protection of the children and family life. In no way shall the breaking of the moral code be depicted as rewarding.
4. Rape shall never be shown or suggested. Seduction may not be shown.
5. Sex perversion or any inference to same is strictly forbidden.

CODE FOR ADVERTISING MATTER

These regulations are applicable to all magazines published by members of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. Good taste shall be the guiding principle in the acceptance of advertising.

1. Liquor and tobacco advertising is not acceptable.
2. Advertisement of sex or sex instruction books are unacceptable.
3. The sale of picture postcards, "pin-ups," "art studies," or any other reproduction of nude or semi-nude figures is prohibited.
4. Advertising for the sale of knives, concealable weapons, or realistic gun facsimiles is prohibited.
5. Advertising for the sale of fireworks is prohibited.
6. Advertising dealing with the sale of gambling equipment or printed matter dealing with gambling shall not be accepted.
7. Nudity with meretricious purpose and salacious postures shall not be permitted in the advertising of any product; clothed figures shall never be presented in such a way as to be offensive or contrary to good taste or morals.

8. To the best of his ability, each publisher shall ascertain that all statements made in advertisements conform to fact and avoid misrepresentation.
9. Advertisement of medical, health, or toiletry products of questionable nature are to be rejected. Advertisements for medical, health or toiletry products endorsed by the American Medical Association, or the American Dental Association, shall be deemed acceptable if they conform with all other conditions of the Advertising Code.

THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

The Code Authority of the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. was established at the same time the Code was adopted, to ascertain compliance with the terms of the Code. It is headed by a Code Administrator, who has no connection with any publisher, and who exercises independent judgment to determine whether the material intended for publication meets Code standards.

Publisher-members of the CMAA are required to submit their original text and art-work to the Code Authority, *in advance of publication*. The staff carefully checks each panel of art and every line of text, ordering such changes or deletions as in the judgment of the Administrator violates any tenet or the over-all principle of the Code. Being an industry self-regulation program, the publisher may appeal the decision of the Administrator to the CMAA's Board of Directors, but in nearly two decades of operation, this privilege has been rarely used. In almost every instance, the decision of the Administrator has prevailed.

Finally, each individual page must receive the stamp of approval of the Code Authority, or authorization from the Board of Directors, before the publisher may place the official Seal of Approval on the upper right-hand portion of the comics magazine's cover.



*Look for the
comic book
with this seal.*

Additional copies available by writing to:

COMICS MAGAZINE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.

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