Topic 4

DC comics: Who's who?
Compare the characters or pick your favorite

Figure 1: DC comics characters

Context

DC Comics is one of the largest and oldest American comic book companies, and produces material featuring numerous iconic heroic characters including: Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, The Flash, Green Lantern, Martian Manhunter, Nightwing, Green Arrow, Starfire, Aquaman, and Cyborg (Figure 1).

Most of the material takes place in the fictional DC Universe, which also features teams such as the Justice League, the Justice Society of America, the Suicide Squad, and the Teen Titans, and well-known villains such as The Joker, Lex Luthor, Catwoman, Darkseid, Sinestro, Brainiac, Black Adam, Ra's al Ghul and Deathstroke. The company has also published non-DC Universe-related material, including Watchmen, V for Vendetta, and many titles under their alternative imprint Vertigo.

Random House distributes DC Comics' books to the bookstore market, while Diamond Comic Distributors supplies the comics shop specialty market. DC Comics and its longtime major competitor Marvel Comics (acquired in 2009 by The Walt Disney Company, Warner Media's main competitor) together shared approximately 70% of the American comic book market in 2017. Check this Kaggle kernel for more details.
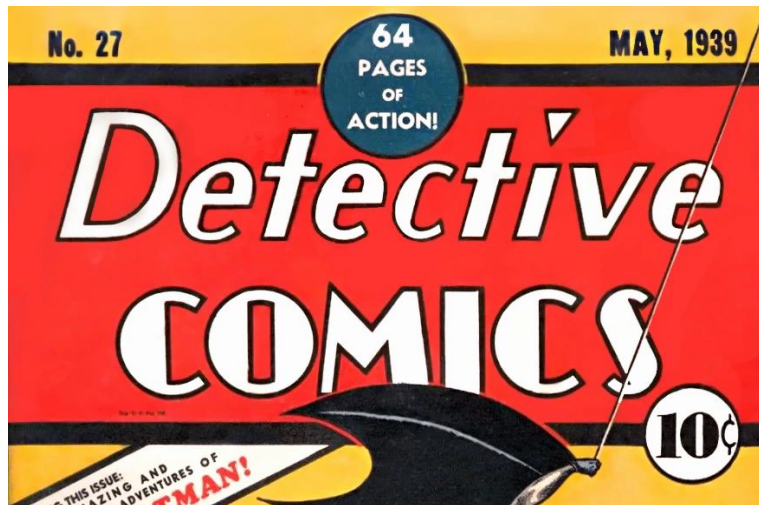
Figure 2: The initials "DC" came from the company's popular series Detective Comics, which featured Batman's debut and subsequently became part of the company's name.

As mentioned before, DC Comic has numerous well-known heroic characters. Familiarize yourself with some of the characters by exploring this webpage. If you are interested in movies about the characters, a complete list could be found here.

Data

The dataset originally comes from *FiveThirtyEight* hosted on their GitHub. Explore the data using Kaggle webpage or all of the data sources available through the *FiveThirtyEight* organization page!

Kaggle dataset: link
(use: dc-wikia-data.csv)

Check your Lab 4, the Kaggle webpage, or *FiveThirtyEight* GitHub page for more details regarding the dataset variables. This dataset is updated on GitHub page daily.

The Task

This week's task is all about the comics characters. The Lab 4 introduced you to the Marvel characters and now, in the Topic 4, you will learn more about the DC characters. You can compare different superheroes, try to understand the relationships, or simply focus on one and explore more of his/hers superpowers.

Use the dataset provided, but also feel free to explore additional datasets or external information sources (e.g. use DC news or any other interesting information to support your storytelling). In this Topic, we are focusing on *your own creativity* - use Illustrator to draw different visual figures as *you* would like to see them. But, bare in mind all Tufte's principles during the creation process.

Feel free to explore and play with the data and present them the way you want. However, there are a few components of this week's Topic we expect you to follow and provide:

- Use DC data (described above)
- Explore data with RawGraphs or Tableau
- Create 3 visualizations:
    1. using Illustrator prefab
    2. import SVG and *redesign* the visualization
    3. "freestyle" - observe the trend and *tell your story*[1]

Use all 3 visualizations (1-3 from the above) to create a final dashboard/artboard in Illustrator and export a jpg image. Bare in mind titles and legends.

This week, we are paying attention to a **Visual Consistency**. Visual consistency it's not only about the design elements, such as color and typography. It is also about visual marks and channels chosen. In order to come up with a "right" choice, understanding the **Concept** is the crucial component.

HINT: Read the DC news, explore the data, and *then* come up with *your* story.

As usual, the details regarding your work submission will be posted on Piazza.

Good luck!

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[1] Draw the viz in illustrator choosing the approach you prefer. You can also mix different techniques.