On Campus

X-Men to Reside at Columbia

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An "Uncanny X-Men" comic written by Chris Claremont in 1980.

BAM! POW! ZONK! it’s not. When Chris Claremont started writing the storylines for Marvel Comics’ *Uncanny X-Men* in 1975, he introduced sophisticated plots and characters in a medium that had known little of the sort. In doing so, he turned an obscure comic book about mutant superheroes into a hit and helped create an audience for today’s graphic novels.

Columbia’s Rare Book and Manuscript Library recently acquired Claremont’s archives, which include intricate charts mapping the relationships between his X-

Men characters, the spiral notebooks in which he jotted down his ideas, and drafts of his science-fiction and fantasy novels, plays, and short stories.

Claremont, who collaborated with numerous graphic artists during his seventeen-year career writing for the X-Men series, is also credited with creating some of the first strong female characters in any comic book.

“For a long time, female characters in comics were either sidekicks or sex kittens,” says Carrie Hintz, a Columbia archivist who is organizing Claremont’s papers. “Chris’s women have depth and strength, they are intelligent, and they can go head-to-head with any male characters in a fight.”



Guide to school abbreviations

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