

Pokemon Comics Add New Twist to Fad

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For background information about Japanese **anime** (animation) and **manga** (cartoons or comic books), read "[The Dangers of Role-Playing Games](#)" then visit the publisher at [Viz Communications](#) and click on "Going Global."

Definitions from Pokemon Comic Book

"Dream Eater: The gas pokemon's most effective attack. It sucks out the opponent's soul.... It's been preying on people and pokemon here for years. It appears suddenly, steals their souls, then vanishes as quickly as it came." [1](#)

"Night Shade: A type of spiritual attack." [2](#)

The worldwide fascination with Japanese animation (anime) has fueled a revival in the comic books (manga) industry. Two years ago, when President Clinton called for after-school [clubs](#) and organizations that would mold our children's values to fit the new global blueprint, the 21st Century comics store was already beginning to serve the same purpose.

Today, anime fans who congregate at these new gathering places to read the latest Pikachu story will surely not be touched by Biblical values. Instead they will be surrounded by indexed boxes and crowded wall shelves filled with all kinds of wildly illustrated tales -- mostly imported translations. These range from the innocuous Pokemon tales to soft-core pornography. The hardcore pornographic anime so popular in Asia is usually filtered out. But what children find when they look beyond the Pokemon section will be as sensual, promiscuous, violent and occult as most R-rated movies, if not more so.

On my first visit to a local comic books store, I scanned the [Sailor Moon](#) display then flipped through the catalogued box of [Dragon Ball Z](#) comics. The latter, a more openly violent and occult set of Japanese anime-and-manga tales, have captivated millions of fans around the world.

Next, I looked for the Pokemon section. It didn't take long to spot the happy face of the familiar little pocket monster, Pikachu. In the midst of the fast-action violence all around, he seemed disarmingly sweet and innocent. I picked up *The Electric Tale of Pikachu*, turned the cover page, and pondered a cardboard ad for Dragon Ball Z -- a brief reminder that seductive darkness lurks behind the sweet facade. Then I read the following story:

THE POWER OF PSI. Ash, the familiar young hero who has "always wanted to battle a PSI pokemon," arrives at the local pokemon gym which serves as a

stadium as well as a training center for pokemon trainers like himself. He stumbles and falls on his face in front of the pretty trainer Sabrina. She was expecting him:

"I dreamt that a handsome young challenger was on his way," she tells her friend.

"I guess a powerful psychic like you gets premonitions all the time," says the friend.

Understating her impressive occult talents, Sabrina then demonstrates her skill in practical magic. She sees that the soy sauce is missing from her lunch, she wills it to come, and it appears in her outstretched hand. Telepathy, conjuring, divination.... nothing seems too difficult for her.

Soon afterwards, Ash and Sabrina stand on their pedestals ready for battle. Their proxy warriors – the two pokemon chosen for this particular fight – have already taken their positions. Ash has sent Pikachu, the popular yellow mouse, onto the raised platform. Sabrina has dispatched Abra, her sleeping "PSI pokemon." Guess who wins. Not Pikachu! His impressive energy proved too puny for the combined psychic powers of Sabrina and Abra. (See also [The Pokemon Movie.](#))

<p>PSYCHIC (Ch'i, Ki, or PSI) Energy</p>	<p>"An intelligent, powerful, invisible force... capable of being controlled and directed by the human mind; 1. Capable of being channeled out through the brain, palms, and eyes; 2. Can be transmitted through space into other living organisms and through matter; 3. Occurs when willed or occurs spontaneously; 4. Invisible energy living in all</p>
<p>Defined from an occult perspective in the <i>Donning International Psychic Dictionary</i> by June G. Bletzer, Ph.D.</p>	<p>organisms and matter, connected throughout all the universes; psychic energy is an aspect of electricity...6. Controlled and employed under certain conditions that mankind does not fully understand... tunes into the etheric world vibrational frequencies reaching from cosmic consciousness.... 9. Transmits knowledge to the mind, and manipulates matter.... 10. Frequently comes from an intelligent, powerful energy field known as highly evolved soul-minds in invisible bodies... 12. A primordial form of intelligence pervading the universe and affecting its course."</p>
<p>Ch'i or Ki</p>	<p>(China & Japan) "An immutable principle in the... vital life force; Synonyms: Tch'i, Qi, Prana, Biocosmic energy, PSI (Psychic) energy...."</p>
<p>Psychic Consciousness</p>	<p>"An altered state of consciousness... as in sleep, hypnosis, meditation, and the opening of psychic doors...."</p>

HAUNTED BY BLACK FOG. A week later, Sabrina is found unconscious. While trying to save some friends from a Haunter pokemon, she had "fallen prey to the dream eater attack." The picture shows a huge demonic creature with long claw-like fingers encircling poor, screaming Sabrina. The comic book identifies the evil dream eater as "a high-level Haunter in this area, called the Black Fog." This monstrous pokemon, with no trace of the cuteness that characterizes more popular members of his species, "sucks out the opponent's soul." So much for the common argument that all pokemon are good (like Pikachu) or fun-loving (like other Haunters) and would never want to hurt or kill anyone.

Ash and his friend, Brock, join the search for a way to save Sabrina and free her soul. Their guidance comes from an ordinary pen with extraordinary power. It mysteriously floats into the air, lands on a piece of paper, then writes a message exposing Haunter's hide-out. In the real world, contemporary spiritists call this phenomenon "automatic writing." It's one of many ways they can receive or "channel" messages from their spirit guides. The comic book explains its feel-good example of this practice:

"It's Sabrina," shouts Brock. The comic book narrator (not a character) explains: "She's telepathic. The Haunter may have eaten her soul, but she's still able to tell us where it is through telepathy."

"All right!" yells Ash. "I'm gonna catch me a Haunter!"

"Don't be a moron," shouts Brock. "What makes you think you can catch that thing?"

"Hey, it's a pokemon, right?"

"I guess so, but...."

"It may be big, but we'll make a really big pokeball for it! This is a piece of cake!" [3](#)

Equipped with their monster warriors and forceful weapons, Sabrina's would-be saviors soon arrive at the haunted tower where the vicious pokemon hides. Black Fog watches from a high balcony, peering out from behind the statue of a princess. In the cartoon picture, his claws seem to be groping the statue's breast and pulling at her low-cut dress.

The young heroes charge through the gate. The battle has barely begun when the "good" guys seem overwhelmed by the powerful assaults against them. But suddenly Sabrina's psychic pokemon gets the upper hand:

"Abra neutralized the haunter's attack!" shouts Ash. "I didn't know Abra had that kind of power!"

"It's Sabrina!" answers Ash. "Sabrina is combining her powers with Abra's."

It's also spiritual warfare, but not the Biblical kind. In the story, as in pagan cultures, one occult force fights another. The next two battle tactics -- Night Shade and Mirror Wave -- would determine the winner and loser. The comic book defines the two strategies:

"Night Shade: a type of spiritual attack."

"Mirror Wave: turns the enemy's attack back against it."

After a numerous pages of murderous assaults and angry growls, krakkl, wachhaaaahhs, and a final kkrmmbl, Black Fog collapses and "self-destructs." Sabrina re-appears with her soul restored, and the winners walk among the rocks listening to this bit of history:

"In ancient times, the people who lived here worshipped pokemon as gods. It's possible that the haunter grew accustomed to being treated like a god, until they abandoned it. That's why it wouldn't let itself be captured by a human.... It went out with an exit fit for a god."

ADDING "FACTS" TO FANTASY. True or false, "history" has a way of validating the myth in the minds of children. It gives the fantasy an air of factual reality. Sure, if you ask pokemon fans if this really happened, they will answer no. But with their emotions they have walked with Ash, worried about Sabrina, battled a deadly pokemon, shared a great victory, and heard a plausible explanation. It felt good and won't be quickly forgotten.

To the anointed -- the children and adults who are captivated by these pocket monsters -- the pokemon world is more than just fantasy. Click on [Comments](#) and read the arguments from visiting pokefans. Notice how the evolving pokemon myth has taken on a reality of its own. It's an exciting illusion, and children who love it feel more at home in the pokemon world than in their own family. They have entered a secret society -- an unearthly reality with its own myths, rules, gods (or idols), powers, joys and sense of belonging. This enticing society welcomes joiners, not visitors -- enthusiasts, but rarely parents.

In contrast to the fervent and often angry arguments that "there is nothing occult in pokemon" this comic book demonstrates the promotion of "spiritual" or "psychic" forces that

- Desensitize children to the spiritual power God forbids in His Word
- Stirs a fascination with supernatural experiences that clash with the Bible
- Builds a craving for more psychic thrills and emotional stimulation
- Divides families and stirs rebellion against God and traditional authorities

SEEING FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE. The Bible shows us the heart of God. Only by pursuing His will and way can we rest secure in His love and promises. That may sound arrogant, exclusive and hateful to those who have chosen other gods and spiritual pathways, but then the world never did accept the unworldly teachings of the King who two millennia ago found no room at the inn. The apostle Paul, who faced unthinkable persecution in his days, understood this well. His prayer for his beloved friends in Colosse encourages us today:

"...we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light." (Colossians 1:9-12)

The only way we and our children can be "filled with the knowledge of his will" is "through the spiritual wisdom and understanding" that comes from

- seeking to know God and His will through His Word
- allowing the Holy Spirit to make that Word alive in our minds
- committing ourselves to following His Word
- yielding ourselves to Him, trusting His grace to enable us to do His will.

While His Word never mentions pokemon, it provides plenty of guidelines that show us what will or won't "please Him." One of those Scriptures is Deuteronomy 18:10-13, which lists occult practices that are an "abomination" to Him. The list includes witchcraft (or magic), sorcery, spells, spiritism, and divination -- all of which were demonstrated in the above comic book.

When we choose to follow Jesus, He gives us the "endurance and patience" we need to stand firm in His truth, no matter the opposition. And in the midst of the spiritual battle, He fills us with His love, peace and joy. We, of all the people on the planet, need not fear the anger of those who would press us into their mold for 21st century conformity, for our God reigns! Blessed are the people who

who know Him, understand His will, follow His way, share His love,
and dare to shun evil. They will delight in the King forever and ever!"

*To better understand how the Pokemon phenomenon fits into the
global paradigm shift and the new worldwide education system,
you may want to read [Brave New Schools](#).*
