

buzz

Alas, Poor Y!

There was Batman, Spiderman, even Plastic man. Now, meet Y, the Last Man.

On earth, that is.

But wait! Here's a novel twist: His creator, former *Northern Ohio Live* intern **Brian K. Vaughan**, says the series, to be published under DC Comics' Vertigo imprint on the 17th of this month, is conceived and written for adults. Sorry, kids. We grown-ups discovered this last-guy-on-earth genre first – at least as far back as the 1959 fallout flick, *The World, the Flesh and the Devil*, in which Mel Ferrer and Harry Belafonte (OK, two "last" guys) do battle for the, er, hand of Inger Stevens after a nuclear holocaust.

In *Y*, the tables are turned: A cataclysmic plague suddenly kills all Y-chromosome beings but two, leaving Cleveland-born Yorick (wouldn't you know a Clevelander would end up

the last man on earth) and his pet monkey, Ampersand, to fend off a new world order of women – who, of course, lack that pesky "Y" chromosome.

If this weren't enough of a predicament, Vaughan has imaginatively woven into his tale (which will unfold over the next 60 months) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, love and heartache, cloning, politics and – you guessed it – sex. "I've always wanted to explore gender, which isn't covered much in comics," says Vaughan, who prefers to think of his metier as "social science fiction."

The Westlake native studied film direction and dramatic writing at New York University, and got his start in comics when the editors at *Marvel Comics*, home of Spiderman, went looking for new talent as part of their Stanhattan Project. Since then, he's written a Tarzan knock-off, *Marvel* superhero stories and the recently unveiled *The Hood*, and has

just had a screenplay optioned.

Well, he comes of good Midwestern comic-book stock. During his summer at *Live* in 1996, Vaughan interviewed **Brian Michael Bendis**, an independent Cleveland comic-book author and illustrator who's since gone big time with his critically acclaimed writing of an updated *Ultimate Spiderman*. Clevelander **Brian Azzarello** writes *Hellblazer* and the crime

comic *100 Bullets*.

"We're just three bald guys named Brian from Cleveland, writing comic books," shrugs Vaughan, who now makes his home in Brooklyn (New York, that is). Rest assured, the Last Man in *Y*, as drawn by Pia Guerra, is young, handsome, well-coiled and virile. Got a big job to do.

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– Anton Zuiker



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