















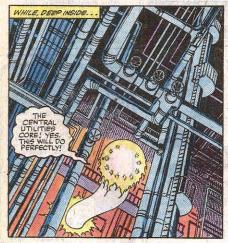
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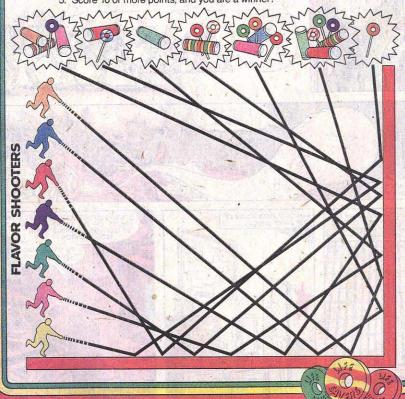
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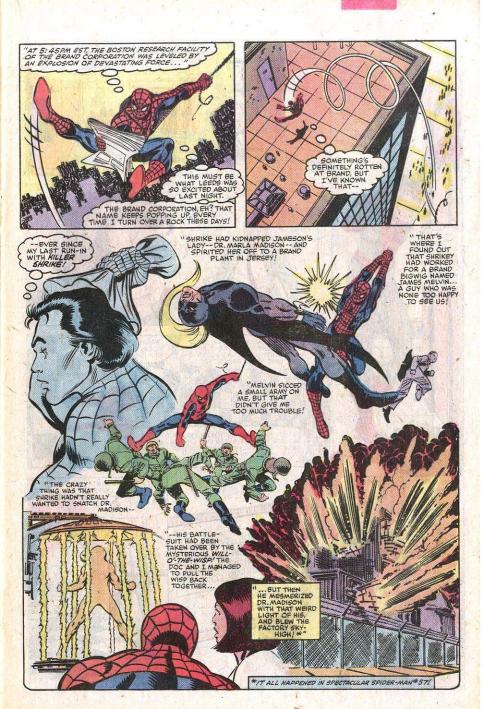




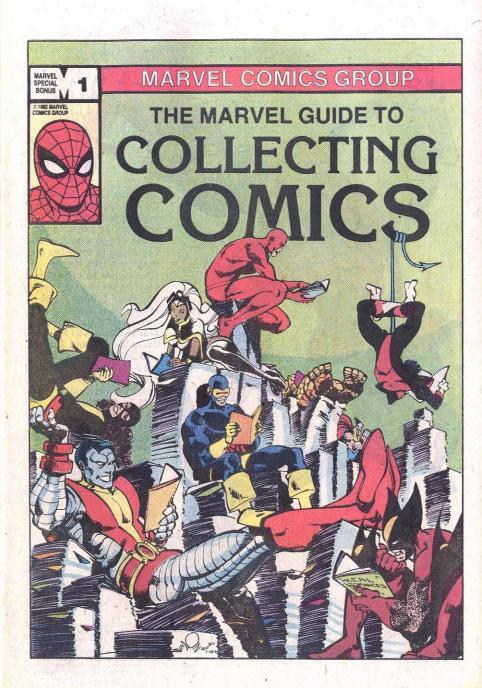














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Beginnings

The hobby of collecting specific things is one enjoyed by a great many people of all ages. The hobby of collecting coins and/or stamps can boast of having the largest number of enthusiasts, but the motivation here is primarily money. Coins and stamps are graded on rareness, condition, etc., and their appeal to collectors is generally based on their value. Coins can't really be admired like paintings. and while there is a certain amount of craftsmanship to be appreciated when studying a stamp, their artistic value is limited.

Probably the most artful hobby is the collecting of works of great art and antiques. At the same time, this sort of collecting can easily be the most expensive, and one can always see many of these things in a museum.

The collecting of comic books, while not the largest hobby in the world, is certainly growing larger all the time. More and more books are appearing about the art of collecting comics.

As one gets further into collecting comics, the value of certain ones becomes apparent, which I will discuss later on, but the primary appeal of comic books is the fun they offer.

Though most collectors discover comic books as children there are many fans who don't get interested until as late as adulthood. Career people ranging from writers and actors to doctors and scientists read and collect comics.

Kids discover comics in every conceivable way. I discovered them back in 1966 when the BATMAN television program starring Adam West was all the rage and everybody was wearing BATMAN T-shirts, doing the ridiculous Batusi, and reading BATMAN comic books. Though I had read a comic book every now and again before then, my "first" comic was an issue of DETECTIVE COMICS, and that led me into buying every comic I could lay my hands on. Back then comics were only 10¢ or 12¢, and you could buy almost 10 for a dollar

I was 11 years old when the collecting bug bit me and I still have a love for comics. When I was starting out, however, there was a lot I didn't know, and a lot I just plain didn't notice, realize or understand.

The purpose of this book is to try and make some of these things that confused me back in 1966 a little clearer to you, the new collector, now.

-Mark Burbey



The following are terms that you'll need to know in order to readily understand the basics of comic collecting.

BACK ISSUE: An issue of any comic book previous to the latest one. This can refer to last month's issue, or an issue published many years ago.



GOLDEN AGE: A period of time in the history of comics running from around 1935 (when comics began being published) until 1949. All comics published within this time are called Golden Age comics.

SILVER AGE: This period began in 1956 when THE FLASH appeared in DC's SHOWCASE No. 4, bringing in the new wave of super heroes. Marvel, however had the greatest impact on the future of comics when a few years later they published the first SPIDER-MAN story in AMAZING FANTASY No. 15. The Silver Age runs into the late 1960s.



ORIGINAL ARTWORK:

This is the actual artwork that the comic companies reproduce photographically and print as comic books. There is no color on the original art, as that is later added by a separate process.



COMICS CONVENTION: A gathering of fans, collectors, professional comic artists and writers and comic book dealers, to enjoy, discuss and sell comics. Conventions are usually held in hotels, and also feature movies, original art displays, etc.

FANZINE: A magazine devoted to any facet of the comic arts published by someone other than a comics publishing company. Fanzines can sometimes be cheaply produced and amateurish in appearance, or often very professional looking and even better than magazines found at newsstands. Fanzines are usually found at comic shops or purchased through the mail.

COMICS CODE

AUTHORITY: An organiza

AUTHORITY: An organization that most publishers of color comic books must show all their material to before publishing. The Code judges whether or not the material is within the guidelines set by the Code to insure it is suitable to be read by younger (and presumably impressionable) readers.

The following is a guideline for the beginning collector. As you become more familiar with this hobby, it will become second nature to you to describe the condition (grade) of each book you encounter.

MINT: Perfect condition, complete, like new, still with original print lustre.

FINE: Slight signs of wear, but still with cover gloss – no tears or obvious defects.

GOOD: Complete with cover attached and some signs of soiling and wear in particular. FAIR: Complete but some tears in covers and some pieces of covers missing; soiling of pages, rolled spine.

POOR: Uncollectable, incomplete, badly worn, large pieces missing from cover, water damaged.

Again...the condition of your books determines the value of your collection.



It is important that the beginning collector know the issue number of his/her favorite title, i.e. 4th, 5th, etc. So, here with other valuable information is . . .

The Comic Book Cover

NUMBER AND MONTH OF ISSUES. All comics start with a No. 1 issue and a month (Jan. Feb. etc.). The number and month advance with each successive issue. Example: STAR WARS No. 52. Oct. STAR WARS No. 53. Nov. It is important that you do not miss an issue or you will not have a complete collection of the title you are collecting.

The number, month and price in this diamond shape means the issue was not distributed by Curtis Circulation and, that you probably got it from a direct sales comic shop or other outlet. The two boxes (not shown here) with a little "cc" symbol means it was circulated by Curtis. It means nothing as far as value is concerned to collectors. Please Note: MARVEL has recently replaced the diamond shape with this newly designed symbol:

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TITLE OR MAIN CHARACTER in book. (Note: some books rotate features therefore it is important to be able to distinguish the main title from the sub-title. Example: MARVEL PREMIERE, featuring ALICE COOPER. The name of the book is MARVEL PREMIERE not ALICE COOPER. Main titles are usually in smaller print above the sub-title (larger print).

On many copies this space contains the UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODE which allows comics to be sold in supermarkets and convenience stores across the country. All products sold in these stores have this code. The code symbol is "read" by cash registers which are hooked into special computers. Distributors also use 6 this code.

Tells you the COMPANY responsible for publishing the book.

PUBLISHER'S SUGGESTED PRICE. COMICS CODE AUTHORITY SEAL See page 5.



The Great Escape

As I mentioned in the introduction, most fans of comics collect them for fun, although many do take their monetary potential into consideration while collecting.

In my opinion, however, the fun should take precedence over the money. While this may be a slightly biased point of view, I've talked and corresponded with many fans who feel the same way.

I think the first things beginning fans notice about comic books is the artwork, and the bright and exciting colors on the covers and the inside. When one starts reading comics, he may find that some books have better artwork than others. He will not be as particular though, until he has read many more comics and knows who all the artists are.

In most cases, the beginner will not be able to immediately distinguish one artist's work from another's. The art will look obviously different, but the primary thing on the fan's mind will be the action taking place on the pages.

Even as one begins to take further notice of the artwork he will at first find it hard to believe that he will someday be able to immediately recognize and identify just about any comic artist simply by glancing at a single drawing. But he soon will, and this is when collecting comics becomes even more exciting, because the collector will then begin to choose favorite artists and seek out their work with a special fervor.

People certainly collect comic books to read rather than just to look at. But when I first started reading comics, I never gave much thought to who had written the stories. Even when I did. I

couldn't quite imagine how they went about it. It was obvious how the art was done: an artist simply took the pencil in hand and drew it. But what did the writer do? Was he even necessary?

I eventually realized that the writer was very necessary indeed, equally as necessary as the artist. While the monetary value of a comic is rarely based on who wrote a comic, the actual purpose of the comic is to entertain and whether it succeeds or not depends a great deal on the ability of the writer.

The younger reader of comics is generally attracted to the super hero comics, as those are usually the most visually exciting. As the reader/ collector gets a little older, he will have eventually come to notice most every book on the comic rack he/she visits every week. When he/she does, they will find that there are many different kinds of comics, such as horror/mystery comics, war comics, western comics, humor comics, and even love comics. It is when he/she begins to notice these various types of comics that he/she will begin to get more and more involved with the stories and the plots and the characters. He won't even mind as much if every page doesn't have a fight scene on it, or even a super hero on it. While before he may have bought a certain title just because he liked the character, regardless of whether or not he liked the artist or the storyline that had been ongoing for the last 6 months, he will become more discriminating. He/she will actually base their decision on who the writer or artist is. So. basically people collect comics either because they simply enjoy them or they find them profitable.

What's Right

As far as present day comic books are concerned, there are seven different companies to collect from: MARVEL, DC. GOLD KEY, CHARLTON, AR-CHIE: HARVEY and PACIFIC.

MARVEL and DC are the largest companies, MARVEL being the more popular of the two. Both companies publish super hero comics first and foremost. In addition MARVEL publishes science fiction comics such as STAR WARS as well as "reprint" comics that re-publish stories that have appeared before, MARVEI TALES, for example, reprints old SPIDER-MAN stories. Also every year, usually during the summer and early fall months MARVEL publishes what they call "AN-NUALS". These are special, large issues of their most popular super hero titles, and from year to year they might contain either new or old material or both.

Along with their super hero comics DC also publishes mystery, western and war comics. All these comics follow a fixed format, meaning that they look the same from month to month. DC also has revived publishing "annuals".

GOLD KEY ARCHIF and HARVEY aim their comics at the younger readers. GOLD KEY consists mostly of comics based on TV and cartoon characters, such as DISNEY, TOM & JERRY, MIGHTY MOUSE and BUGS BUNNY as well as more serious comics like RIP-LEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT and TUROK, SON OF STONE. ARCHIE and HARVEY publish comics intended for children between the ages of 5 and 12, concentrating solely on humor comics. Regardless of who AR-8 CHIE and HARVEY aim their

comics at however quite a few older fans collect their titles

CHARLTON, once a company that ranked 3rd or 4th insofar as popularity, now depends chiefly on material that has already been paid for and published by them, resulting in a line consisting entirely of reprint books. They publish ghost, western, war, and love comics only. If and when you go looking for back issues of CHARLTON comics, however, you will find quite a few super hero titles such as BLUE BEE-TLE drawn by STEVE DITKO, the original SPIDER-MAN artist, THUNDER-BOLT and the recent E-MAN. Quite a few artists who now work for MAR-VEL and DC began drawing for CHARLTON and you will find their work in many CHARLTON back issues. Some of these artists include JIM APARO TOM SUTTON, JEFF JONES, MIKE KALUTA DICK GIORDANO, JOE STATON and MIKE ZECK.

PACIFIC COMICS is a new comics publisher with just a couple of titles focusing on science fiction and fantasy.

Because today's comic books are so easy to get (you just go down to the comics store and buy them) this type of collecting would probably be referred to as "everyday collecting", the kind everybody does.

But there's another kind of collecting, the kind that takes a certain kind of knowledge and experience that slowly develops the more you collect.

This type of collecting involves hunting down comics from the early 1960s, 1950s and even the 1940s. It requires more money to collect these simply because these comics are harder to find and are more eagerly sought, but if you find



For Me?

the right comics and know how to deal, then you are bound to come out ahead in every case.

Among the old comics that are popular collector items are Golden and Silver Age* and EC comics.

Whereas more recent comics are collectable because popular characters are drawn by popular artists, many Golden Age comics are valuable merely because they're old and harder to get and they feature a highly popular character such as SUP-

ERMAN, BAT-MAN or (the original) CAPTAIN MARVEL. Also, there are many characters that aren't very well known today but were once quite popular and are now costly to collect such as BULLET-MAN, the original HUMAN TORCH and others.

Is liver Age comics, particularly those published by MAR. VEL, are not always as hard to find as Golden Age books nor are they as expensive in comparison. But Silver Age comics are probably the most sought after. A run of early issues of such titles as SPIDER-MAN or the FANTASTIC FOUR in mint condition can easily cost hundreds of dollars, even thousands. Many Golden Age comics can cost several thousand dollars apiece.

Still, as I keep emphasizing, the reason one starts collecting comics in the first place is because they find it fun. And for the collector, there is a way he can obtain some of these comics inexpensively.

*See definitions on page 4 and charts on pages 10 and 11:

Here's an example:

I am a big fan of STEVE DITKO's early SPIDER-MAN stories. His artwork appeared in the first 38 issues and to collect a mint set of these in 1981 would cost approximately \$2,000. The price is so high because these issues are fairly hard to find in mint and they are sought after by many collectors. But I wasn't interested in the rarity of the originals or in the investment potential. All I was concerned with was the quality of the art and the stories and the fun I'd have reading them. So, what I did was this: I made a complete list of every DITKO SPIDER-MAN appearance, and went about finding where each one had been reprinted. Most of them have been reprinted in the earliest issues of MARVEL TALES, but some were also reprinted in MARVEL COL-LÉCTOR'S ITEM CLASSICS and in several of the SPIDER. MAN annuals. What it finally came down to was that I was able to obtain every DITKO SPIDER-MAN story, including the first one in AMAZ. ING FANTASY No. 15, for less than \$75. It would have been over \$100 had I been seeking mint copies, but I wasn't. (By the way, if you want to collect the early SPIDER-MANs like this please note that issues No. 28 and 29 have never been reprinted anywhere, so you would have to buy the originals, costing between \$6 \$8 each in mint.)

The EC comics I mentioned earlier are highly popular and also expensive to collect. This company started publishing comic books in the late 1940s, but it wasn't until the early to mid 1950s, under the direction of William Gaines, that EC

began to publish an excellent series of horror, science fiction, and war comics. Of these particular genres, those published by EC are considered to be the finest ever produced. The quality of the art and writing were on an equal level, making for visually exciting, stimulating, thought-provoking stories. No one since has been able to rise to the greatness of EC's accomplishments.

At the time EC was publishing, there were many crime and horror comics on the market. many of which showed blood. violence, and suggestions of sex. Some parents objected to their children reading such material, but enough apparently didn't mind. EC's sales, in fact, were excellent, it was this blood and violence that prompted a psychiatrist named Dr. Frederic Wertham to write a book called SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT. The book attacked many comic book publishers, EC in particular, for creating questionable material for our nation's children. This all became a big news story of the day, and EC went to court to defend itself. The end result of the war between the comics industry and Wertham was the creation of THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY. This code still exists today.

The highly successful MAD magazine is published by EC, which still exists today.

I have barely skimmed the surface on the subject of comics that are most popular among collectors. The ones I've mentioned are the top collector's items, but there are many others, such as the older WALT DISNEY comics, that are also very popular.

It's Better Than



It is rather unreasonable to expect the beginning fan to have the kind of money it takes to buy some of the older comics.

Still, there are many recent titles he/ she can buy at reasonable prices that he/she will make money on should he/she decide to sell them. In fact, comics appear on the stands every week that will be bonafide collector's items.

It is difficult to predict what books will rise in value and which ones won't. One can make very good guesses and take his chances, but one can never be sure.

The following is a list of comic books that are a good investment but are not as expensive as Silver or Golden Age books.*



1. Daredevil No. 158	\$30.00
2. Peter Parker No. 27	25.00
3. Hulk No. 181	25.00
4. X-Men No. 129	12.00
5. Teen Titans No. 1	12.00
6. Iron Man No. 115	4.00
7. Micronauts No. 1	4.00
8. Rom No. 1	4.00
9. Moonknight No. 1	3.00
10. Ka-zar No. 1	1.25

Just because a comic is old, it does not mean it is worth a great amount of money. There are 1940 comics that are worth just a couple of dollars. By the same token, there are certain recent titles such as HOWARD THE DUCK No. 1 that are worth a fairly large amount of money. Another, even more recent example is MARVEL's MICRO-NAUTS. Even though it has only been out for a couple of years, it has been rising steadily in price.



How does one go about deciding which comic books will become valuable and are, therefore, worth investing in? Well, after collecting awhile the collector will have enough knowledge and intuition to make wise choices without worry.

The wise collector bases his choices on who the popular characters are, as well as who the popular artists are.

For example, when SWAMP THING No. 1 came out, its artist, BERNI WRIGHTSON, was already well respected among fans and collectors. So, the facts that it was the first issue and that it was drawn by BERNI WRIGHTSON made SWAMP THING No. 1 a wise investment choice. SWAMP THING ran for 25 issues, but WRIGHTSON drew only the first 10 issues. So while all the issues will rise in value as time passes, the first 10 will always be the most valuable.

The situation with CONAN is slightly different. Its artist, BARRY SMITH, is today a much respected illustrator, but he wasn't very well known back in 1970 when CONAN No. 1 came out. The big attraction instead was not who the artist was but the fact that CONAN THE BARBARIAN, a long time popular pulp fiction hero, was a big news item in collectors circles, as well as a financial success among comic readers who weren't collectors. So, even though this comic came out not more than 11 years ago, it is worth over \$55.00.

Barry Smith sadly chose to stop drawing CONAN with issue No. 24, so issues after that number will never be as valuable as those before it.

There are some other interesting things affecting the worth of comics to note. Still using CONAN as an example, even among the first 24 issues, there are variances in values for different reasons. CONAN No. 3

Money in the Bank

is worth more than No. 2 because for some reason less copies of No. 3 were distributed to the public (comics of this type are called "low distribution books" and are usually worth more than surrounding numbers).

While the writer of a comic almost never determines its worth, there are rare cases where the storyline does. Two issues of SPIDER-MAN, numbers 121 and 122, featured the deaths of two major characters: SPIDER-MAN's girl friend GWEN STACY and the GREEN GOBLIN. This alone made the two issues worth six times more than No. 120 or No. 123.

It is very possible to make bad decisions when investing in comics as they come off the stands. I can think of two excellent examples: SHAZAM No. 1 and THE SHADOW No. 1, both from DC.

DC made a very big deal out of the arrival of SHAZAM No. 1, because after many years the original CAPT. MARVEL would again be appearing in new adventures. They were even going to be drawn by the original artist, C.C. Beck, When SHAZAM No. 1 finally came out, many collectors bought dozens of copies. Within a year however, people found themselves sitting on stacks of SHAZAM No. 1 worth little more than what they had paid for them due to poorly written stories. This comic is slowly rising in price but it will be a long time before it will be worth the trouble collectors and dealers went to get them.

THE SHADOW No. 1 was an excellent comic published in 1973, and for the collector of art comics, it looked like a fine investment choice. Its artist, MIKE KALUTA, is extremely talented and by all rights his comics should be demanding much

more than they do. The fact that they don't is great for the collector who buys comics to enjoy and keep but it just goes to show that what may look like a good investment choice may not be at all. Kaluta drew only five issues of THE SHADOW (No. 1 – 4, and 6).

The reasons why some comics succeed and some fail are many. The bottom line is this: know who the artists are and try to judge who are the most popular and who will become valuable artists to collect. You can be pretty sure that most No. I issues of just about any major comic from DC and MARVEL will become worth more than what you pay for it. The important thing to remember when investing in new or old comics is to take very good care of them and try your hardest to keep them in the condition you buy them' in.

The following is a list of the 10 most valuable SILVER AGE comics:*

-1.	Amazing Fantasy No.15	\$1.100.00
2.	Fantastic Four No.1	1,100.00
3.	Showcase No.4	1.000.00
4.	Amazing Spider-Man No.1	600.00
5.	Incredible Hulk No.1	600.00
6.	Journey Into Mystery No.83	420.00
7.	Fantastic Four No.2	400.00
8.	Showcase No.8	320.00
9.	Fantastic Four No.3	300.00
10.	Flash No.105	275.00

*These prices are based on an informal survey taken in the fall of 1981 and should not be considered definitive. Prices vary dramatically according to supply and condition.









Getting Them: Half The Fun

It is the obtaining of comics that is the true act of collecting and a lot of fun.

There are several ways to go about it. The best way is to check your local newspaper for conventions or your telephone directory to see what comic shops are in your area.

Comic shops are stores that specialize in comic books and related material such as plastic bags, fanzines, original art, etc. SUNSHINE COMICS in Miami, Florida, for example, carries all the new comics, plus many back issues. A specialty shop will give you personal attention and in many cases you can reserve your new comics in advance, thus assuring you don't miss an issue which is very important to a complete collection. Also, you can be guaranteed of receiving only mint copies.

For back issues, a comic shop is especially advantageous because you can look a comic over before buying it. When buying comics through the mail, you will usually get a fair shake but you can never be sure of what you're getting until it is too late.

Some comic shops don't always have a wide array of the older comics (1940 - 1960). However, some shops will make every effort to obtain older books for you if they don't already have them.

If you do decide to order books through the mail there are a few tips you should know: never send cash through 12 the mail, checks or money

orders only. Before making a purchase, try to compare prices from one dealer to another. Prices sometimes vary greatly as do grading systems. Before mailing an order away, make a note of what comics you've ordered, who you ordered them from, how much you paid, and when you sent the order in. Most dealers are prompt in sending books. However, if you do not receive your order within about two weeks it is wise to write regarding the delay. It's always good to be organized. Though there are always bargains to be found, beware of items that seem almost too good to be true. Normally, you can trust most mail order advertisers but you'll sometimes run into shady dealers who advertise books they don't really have. and sometimes comics that don't even exist. It is wise to buy from a reputable and established dealer.

One thing to beware of when purchasing back issues and old comics is reprints. There are various types of reprints such as MARVEL TALES (already discussed) in which previously published stories are re-published under a different title. There are also instances where comics are reprinted exactly as they were originally published, with little or no alteration.

Here's an example: SPIDER-MAN No. 1 was re-published in virtually its original form as part of a record package. For obvious reasons, this reprint is worth only \$4.50 in mint condition, whereas the original is worth approximately \$600.00.

More recent examples include STAR WARS No.s 1-5, which went through numerous reprintings following their original publication. (The COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE provides specific information to enable the collector to distinguish between reprints and originals.)

Two other prime examples to watch for are reprints of CHARLTON COMICS (BLUE BEETLE, E-MAN, etc.) by MODERN COMICS, and DC's FAMOUS FIRST EDITION series. Strange as it may seem, DC's oversized reprints of such famous comics as ACTION No. 1 and DETECTIVE No. 27 have been mistaken for the originals by novice collectors.

The fact to remember is reprints will never be worth anywhere near as much as the originals, and it's smart to be able to tell the difference.

Another alternative to a comic shop and mail order is a comic book convention. These are usually held in a hotel or an auditorium, and among its attractions might be guest speakers (professional comic writers and artists), art displays, auctions, and movies. The most active area of any convention is the dealers' room where you'll find the equivalent of dozens of comic shops, with many dealers right there to buy from. Look for announcements in your local paper.

If you live in an area where there are no comic shops or even newsstands, you might consider subscribing to your favorite titles. But stand warned that subscription copies are sent with very little protection and are easily damaged. There are, however, many subscription services where you can get new comics sent directly to you with maximum protection.

Bag'em and Box'em!





A UNBAGGED COMIC is fading, has rolled spine and creases.

B BAGGED COMIC has none of these defects.

There are articles in The Comic Book Price Guide and various other places expounding the elaborate measures a collector can go to in order to protect his/her comics thoroughly. These measures are perfectly valid, but they're rather expensive and somewhat impractical for the average collector; they're meant primarily for people who own very expensive and valuable comics.

Below I have outlined how I and many other fans protect our collections.

At most comic shops, collectors can buy plastic bags that

have been designed specifically to hold individual comic books. These bags are available in several different sizes and in several different gauges of plastic. The 3 mil (millimeter) size is the best. The bags will prevent comics from being soiled by dirt, bugs, moisture,

It is important to store your comics upright, no matter how you do it. Storing them flat tends to bend them at the spine. Since the spine is the most important part of your comic, it should be kept as free from defects as possible. The drawings above show the ef-

fects of improper storage. The unbagged comic (A) is faded and creased, and has a rolled spine. The bagged comic (B) shows none of these flaws.

I have all my bagged comics and magazines stored upright in a large wooden cabinet with many shelves. The comics are arranged within the cabinet by company and title. I'm not saying you should go out and buy or build yourself a cabinet, as this can be very costly. Mine just happened to be in my house and I was able to make use of it. Bookcases also make fine storage space for comics.







C and D are poor ways to store comics.

If you don't have a bookcase

handy, you should store your

collection in boxes. However,

supermarkets, are not cut to

the ones usually found at

most cardboard boxes, such as

the dimensions of comics. As a

result, they will not hold com-

ics snugly. Comics should be

stored upright in boxes made

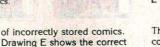
to hold them. Keeping them in

too large a box will cause sag-

ging and shorten the life of

your magazines. Drawings C

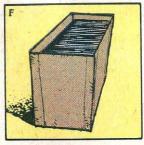
and D above show 2 examples



If you're going to collect comics for investment, it is wise to read the comic once and put it away. If you want to look at it more than once, buy a second copy. The more you handle a copy, the more soiled and less valuable it will become. Stains, dirt, tears, and holes will all detract from the value of a book.

way to bag and box your in-

vestment



E is the best way to store comics.

The ideal way for the average collector to store comics is in 3 mil bags, upright, in a dark cool place. (Sunlight will ruin comics no matter what you do.) And be sure you have every comic in a bag!

For the collector who is very concerned about maintaining the good condition of his/her comics, there are special bags (mylar) and acid free cardboard boxes available which will further prevent comics from yellowing and deteriorating.



Either Rags or Riches

The time may come when you may want/have to sell your comics. The following guide-lines should be considered:

TITLE: "Key" (popular) titles such as SPIDER-MAN or THE AVENGERS will always bring a higher price than minor ones.

CONDITION: A book in GOOD condition will never be worth as much as one in FINE or MINT no matter what the title.

DEALER/COLLECTOR
POSITION: It is important to
understand the difference between selling to a dealer or a

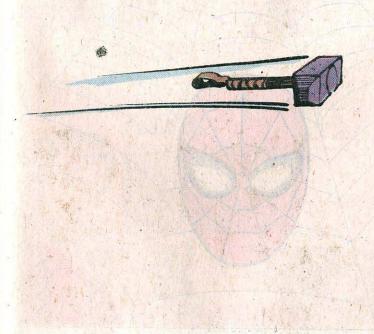
collector. The collector buys with the intent of keeping the books for a long period of time (and then maybe selling it); a dealer buys for immediate resale and since he has overhead (rent. utilities, etc.) he has to pay lower than the market value so he can make a profit.

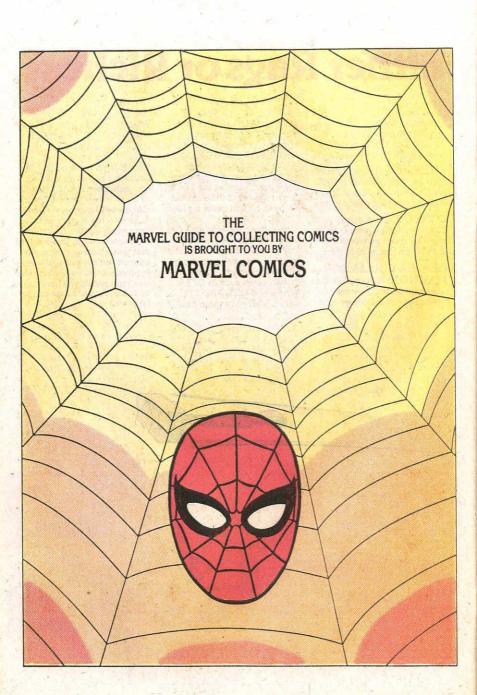
It takes time for a comic to become valuable. You can't buy a comic today and expect to resell it a week from now and make a profit. There are certain cases such as STAR WARS and HOWARD THE DUCK where the value has

skyrocketed overnight; however, this is the exception rather than the rule.

Now that you've read this booklet. I hope you have a somewhat better understanding of comics than you did before. Of course I have barely begun to scratch the surface of this fascinating hobby. As you collect more comics, you will find that you will be getting many hours of enjoyment and acquiring more knowledge along the way. Not only will you have comics for fun, but you will have comics for profit.

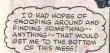
15







OH, YES! JUST SIGN IN HERE, AND REPORT TO ROOM 2715!









"...IT'S JAMES
AMELVIN! IF HE'S
AMELVIN! IF HE'S
STILL ON THE PAYROLL HERE, THEN
THERE HAS TO BE
'SOME DIRTY
WORK GOING
DOWN IN CLOSE
PROXIMITY!"



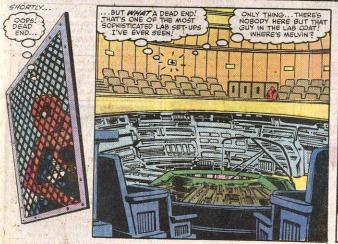
















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THE SPIDER'S WEB

W MARVEL COMICS GROUP 387 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10016

TOM DeFALCO EDITOR LINDA GRANT ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Tom:

There are innumerable phrases which can be used to describe the ol' wall-crawler. There is also an extremely large array of adjectives with which to refer to this magazine, the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, but there are a couple which stand brighter than others. You see, the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN contains the very identifiable element of the student facing all the problems posed by modern society. In these pages, Peter Parker is faced with the loss of loved ones. the problems of inflation, school, and peer pressure. Peter Parker is a most realistic young man. I guess that's why the AMAZ-ING SPIDER-MAN is really as popular as it

So much for the day's philosophical lesson...now on to the specifics about ASM #220

Stupendous! I've wondered how long it would take for some enterprising souls to bring back the Juggernaut. And the story had some excellent moments of humor (walking through a wall is undoubtedly one of the most...uh...efficient ways of getting rid

You can probably guess where I expect to see the unstoppable big guy next!

Daryl C. Collison 4602 Simcoe Street Niagra Falls, Ontario Canada L2E 1V3

Uh...no, Daryl. Where?

Dear Tom:

Once I saw the cover of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229, I knew I had to buy it. And, to be sure, "Nothing Can Stop the Juggernaut!" was superb. Still, the thought kept coming back to me: "Hasn't Spider-Man fought the Juggernaut before?" I checked through my old back issues...no! But, as I was looking through AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #37, something on the letters page caught my eye. Yes, there it was...a suggestion from one Bill Dargen of Manhattan Beach, California, to set the Juggernaut against Spider-Man! So, after one hundred and ninety-two issues, Bill finally got his wish!

Just a bit of information I thought might interest you. Again, my congratulations to all of you involved with AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229. I loved it.

> Todd Wilson 1401 Forest Hills Park Lenoir, NC 28645

Never let it be said that Marvel doesn't follow the readers' advice, Todd! Sure, ft may take a decade-and-a-half, but it's the thought that counts, right?

(Gee, I hope Bill didn't miss the issue!)

Dear Tom

"Roger Stern? Oh yeah, isn't he the guy that did the scripts for John Byrne's CAP-TAIN AMERICA?

While such a comment has yet to be heard by these ears, it does seem representative of the situation in which the artist tends to garner most of the praise on a stand-out magazine. This is probably only proper in a visual medium like comics - and certainly, while one can list "great" artists with ease, there are fewer "great" writers who come to

But if Roger Stern keeps up his current work level and continues to improve, he'll be in danger of going from being a solid, if somewhat obscure Marvel scripter, to a writer of considerable acclaim in the comics world. His current work on DOCTOR STRANGE is gathering fine praise, and his first two issues of GHOST RIDER show great promise.

And then there's the issue at hand: AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229. The cover declares, "Nothing Can Stop the Jugger-naut!" Oh yeah. Ho-hum. Another slugfest between Spider-Man and a goon who's seen better days. But no, Roger shows us that nothing really does stop the Juggernaut! And he builds into the story all sorts of elements that have been seen all too infrequently in this comic...such as Spider-Man's true determination in the face of great personal danger. It may sound trite, but Roger made us feel it! (Hey, Spidey's overmatched here — he could get killed!) Add to that the bizarre pathos of Madame Web, the breakneck pace of the tale, and the fine art of John Romita Jr. and you have an utterly enjoyable issue. Now the crucial test: Can he cap off the tale next issue?

T.M. Maple (No address given)

Toronto, Ontario AGELY BRUTAL HE IS TRULY THE MOST TERRIFYING CREATURE OF ALL!

Dear Tom:

Congratulations on your amazing dovetailing of the adventures of everyone's favorite Web-head. All the plotlines are meshing nicely. I have always enjoyed his adventures, but had trouble figuring out what was happening when. Thank you for clearing things up.

In AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229, I got a good chuckle out of seeing a Spider-foe pull a "funny" on the hero. I'm referring to Juggernaut's comment about Spider-Man wanting to stick with him, as Juggy blithely walked through the side of the building.

One question: Madame Web's apartment was supposedly on the top floor of her building. Yet, when Juggernaut comes to her door on page 19, there was a full-fledged staircase continuing upwards. What gives? Barry Pidcork

521 Business Highway 190, #82 Harker Heights, TX 76541

No big mystery, Barry! The stairs continued on up to the roof!

Dear Tom:

I thoroughly enjoyed AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229. The dream sequence was very nice, especially the way in which S-M's spider-emblems were represented as real spiders. I was also glad to see Madame Web again. I'll be deeply disappointed if she dies.

I wasn't all that happy to see the Juggernaut. While he is powerful and has background in the X-MEN and DOCTOR STRANGE (two of my favorite comics, after AMAZING SPIDER-MAN), his early appearances have left me frustrated, because he really was unstoppable. I want to see him get trashed, and I don't think Spider-Man has much of a chance of doing the trashing.

It was good to see Betty Leeds again, and to hear that she and Ned are working things out. Too often, the marriages in comics are depicted too simply. It's difficult for people to live together on a day-to-day basis without some problems. And the answer is not always divorce:

I just hope that Peter can eventually make some sense of his love life.

J. Kenneth Riviere 932 Austin Avenue NE-Atlanta, GA 30307

Did you reserve your copy of this par's AMAZING SPIDER-MAN AN-NUAL? You didn't?!? Tsk-tsk! Haven't you heard that it tells the origin of Marvel's newest super-star? Didn't you know that it guest-stars the mighty Avengers and that ever-lovin', blue-eved Thing? And surely I told you that the creative team behind this extravaganza was Roger Stern, John Romita Jr., and John Romita Sr.! Didn't 1?!

Hey, look - don't panic yet! There may still be time to get a copy of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #16! But don't delay, ya hear?

And while you're at it, don't forget to set aside a few shekels for AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #235! Okay? Okay!

Tom DeFalco

BULLPEN BULLETINS

STAN LEE'S OLD JOB.

...for better or worse is in my hands. Yes, I'm the Editor-in-Chief of the entire Marvel Comics line, and I love it! Tomorrow the world!

BUT FIRST, THIS IMPORTANT MESSAGE!

Last month I mentioned (barely) something called EPIC COMICS! I promised to tell you more about them this month. And so...

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE EPIC COMICS GROUP! A lot of our ideas start with a "What if...?" A

A lot of our ideas start with a "What II..." while back, Archie Goodwin, who's the Editorial Director of EPIC Illustrated Magazine, was sitting in a corner of the Bullipen sulking because his Associate Editor, Mary Jo Duffy, is so brilliant and efficient that he's always winding up with too much spare time. As I was walking by, I noticed AI Milgrom pull up a chair beside Archie to console him. Al, as if you didn't know it, is the genius editor of Marvel. Fanfare, a few other terrific series, and the outrageously successful Marvel Graphic Novel, The Death of Captain Marvel (Twas only the best-selling trade paperback in the country early this year!). Not being one to miss out on a chance to loom over people, I, too, joined Arch in his corner.

My keen mind instantly deduced the cause of the problem: "Arch," I said in a wise, fatherly tone, "what you need is more work!" Staring into the studge in the bottom of his coffee cup, Arch slowly, quietly muttered, "What it." what if we got together some of the best comics creators available..."

"Arch, um... that's our job, man! That's what we always do!" said Al, looking concerned that Goodwin had finally flipped.

Goodwin had finally flipped.

"Let him finish, All" said I. "He may be onto

something. Hope..."
Still staring into his cup, Archie continued.
"We'll get the best! The very best! We'll pay them
a lot of money so they can take their time..." He
looked up, wild-eyed, his voice growing louder.
He uttered each word as though it were meant be
carved onto stone tablets.AND THEN
WE'LL LET THEM DO WHATEVER THEY
WANTTHE was shouling.

"Shhh" I said. "You'll wake Hobson!" Mike Hobson, of course, is our Vice-President of Publishing. He doesn't really take aftermoon naps in his office, but I started that rumor hoping to keep the noise level down in the Bullpen.

"Don't you see?" Goodwin hissed. "We'll encourage them to go nuts! All new characters! All new universes! New concepts! A whole new line of comics!"

"How's that different from EPIC Illustrated...or our Graphic Novels, Arch?" I asked softly, trying not to upset him further. Clearly, he was already raving. "I'm talking about comics! Not short stories!

Not limited runs! Not novels or one-shots! I'm talking comics!

"You mean... you're talking about new, ongoing titles, like *The Amazing Spider-Man?*"Yes! New series! But *not* like Spider-Man!

"Yes! New series! But not like Spider-Man!
Different! Weird, even! But just as great!" Arch
was shouting at me again. Meanwhile a light
seemed to go on in Al's eyes.

"Yeah... Yeah?" said Milgrom. "I can see it now! We'll print on good, white paper... in full color!"

"We'll offer great deals to creators!" I added, catching on. "Incentives to make 'em pull out the stops and create! Special contracts, like the Graphic Novels and EPIC Illustrated use—that Ill bring the superstar talent running!"

"Wait! What'll we call this new line?" Al bellowed. The entire Bullpen answered him. "THE EPIC COMICS GROUP!" They were on

their feet, cheering.
"Your problem is solved, Arch," I said, smugly.

But he was sitting again, hunched over, staring at the sludge. "Hey, what's wrong?" I asked.

"This is a big project," he muttered without looking up, "I don't know if I have time to fit it in. I may need another assistant..."

THUS, IT BEGAN!

Something like that, anyway. I'm pleased to announce that the first issue of our first EPIC COMICS GROUP series will go on sale in October. It's called *Dreadstarl* It's by Jim Starlin, and it's everything that such a historic premiere issue ought to be. It'll be on sale through stores serviced by our Direct Distributors only. It'll be priced at \$1.50 and a steal at that price. Lonfidently predict that its value as a collector's item will quickly soar.

If you don't live near a collector's store or another outlet serviced by a Direct Distributor, I'd suggest that you avail yourself of the special subscription offer below. That way you can be sure to get every issue!

STAN LEE'S NEW JOB ...

...the one glommed onto a couple of years back, as V.P. of Creative Affairs, which entails being creative boss, big deal producer and high-cosmic muckamuck for Marvel's film studio, Marvel Productions, is keeping him very busy. Why so, you say? Well, I've managed to talk Stan himself into explaining what's up in Hollywood in a special Stan's Soapbox appearing on this page next month! That's quite a feat, considering how busy he is with the four new shows and... oops! Almost stole his Hollywood Mogulship's lines! I'd better cool it...



THE HYPE BOX

DAZZLER #21—The story so dramatic, so moving, we had to make as season double-scale to ordain and the season double-scale to ordain and the shameful series lister. Bazzler's Camegle Hall debut, and more super hero guest-scare, then you can imagine! And don't mise this issue's senses-shattering photo-cover!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #234—This time for sure—in addition to our usual STERN/ROMITA JR. Spider-Man magic, there's a special free bonus insert for you this month: the Marvel Comics Guide to Collecting Comics.

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #93 - The Thing and Machine Man and Jocasta! TEAM AMERICA #6 KING CONAN #13 G. I. JOE #5 DA771 FR #21 KA-ZAR #20 **DENNIS THE MENACE #13** DAREDEVIL #188 AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #234 CAPTAIN AMERICA #275 THOR #325 MICRONALITS #47 **GHOST RIDER #74** MOON KNIGHT #25 **HERCULES (Limited Series) #3** CONAN THE MOVIE #2 WOLVERINE (Limited Series) #3 **INCREDIBLE HULK #277** AVENGERS #225 **CONAN #140** MARVEL TALES #145 Y-MEN #163 **ROM #36** POWER-MAN/IRON FIST #87 VISION AND SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series) #1 ANNIE #2 FANTASTIC FOUR #248 MARVEL TEAM-UP #123 - Spider-Man and Daredevill IRON MAN #164

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 ROM ANNUAL #1

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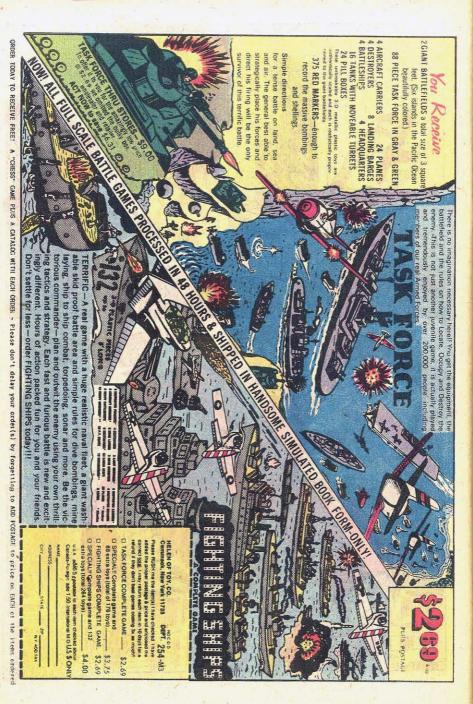
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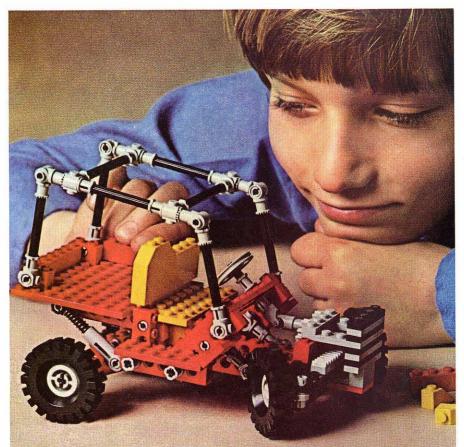
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