

# Cosmic Comic Capsule: 'worthwhile' comics rated

That old "Fantastic Four" comic you bought when you were ten years old, long since thrown away in disgust by Mom, may well be worth between \$5 and \$10 today, and quite possibly more. In fact, practically any Marvel or D.C. comic you purchased over a decade ago can probably be measured in dollars today, according to the latest official bonafide Comic Book Collector's Price Guide.

By WALT HAIGHT

For the true collector (of whom there are many), the value of a comic book is measured by the quality of both the artwork and the story, and over the past few years there has developed a rather high standard by which they are judged. This means simply that your hopes for sudden wealth will be in vain if all you have in the attic are copies of "Baby Huey" or "Deputy Dawg." If you have some old Marvels or C.C.'s tucked away, your chances are better, and this brings me around to the gist of this article.

Once you are able to discern the trash from the collectibles, you may see that, currently, there are a handful of comics appearing monthly which possess that touch of artistic or literary class that will make them worth a pretty penny a few years hence. You will also see, not surprisingly, that there are hundreds of "other" comics, those suited for wrapping fish and insulating the ceiling, and these I will strive to omit from the list below.

Making up this list are the major titles appearing on the stands this month which give emphasis to art and story, and beside each is a rating of from (1) to (10). A "ten" means that they don't come any finer in either department, and you should get at least several copies of it, while a "one" indicates that you've got either a lemon or this month's issue of "Shazam!" And, of course, your own judgment may vary from the suggested rating.

**WARLOCK #12 (9)** — Writer-artist Jim Starlin's madness carries over beautifully onto the printed page. Not quite the epic that the last few issues have been, but still far superior to most of the other titles this year. Excellent.

**SWAMP THING #22 (8)** — One of D.C.'s most consistent mags, this one is a little heavy on the social comment theme, but there's still the usual great artwork.

**CAPTAIN AMERICA #196 (8)** — Jack Kirby is back, the creator of Cap back in the early 40's. There's a bicentennial theme which will culminate in, quite appropriately, Issue #200.

**TOMB OF DRACULA #43 (7)** — They keep killing him, reviving him, killing, reviving. The question is, how do they maintain the originality? A Berni Wrightson cover is an added plus mark for a plus issue.

**CONAN THE BARBARIAN #61 (7)** — Standard Conan tale, loosely following a short story written by the creator of Conan, Robert E. Howard. John Buscema is a good artist, but he does so much work in other mags that he can't devote the amount of time this book deserves.

**KA-ZAR #15 (7)** — Val Mayerik has improved a lot since he drew the Man-Thing book. This issue is a good indication.



**BLITZGRIEG #2 (6)** — If the art was as good as the story, this would be the finest D.C. comic on the market. As such, the story alone should surprise you with its boldness.

**DR. STRANGE #13 (6)** — The world gets blown up, but as usual, it was just a dream.

**SUB-MARINER (MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #27) (5)** — Jim Mooney proved himself to be an excellent artist in the Man-Thing book. The story gets waterlogged after the first few pages, though.

**INHUMANS #4 (5)** — I was apprehensive after seeing the cliché cover, but the story was surprisingly good. Fair art.

**THOR #246 (4)** — Lacks the usual cosmic touch.

**AVENGERS #146 (4)** — An assassin is out to get our heroes. He shouldn't bother. The artist would be a more fitting target.

**AMAZING SPIDERMAN #155 (3)** — Marvel's answer to soap operas. For fans only.

**DAREDEVIL #132 (3)** — Some original settings, not a bad plot, but DD needs a new artist.

**X-MEN #98 (3)** — The new stories don't match up to the epics from the 60's.

**GHOST RIDER #17 (2)** — Don't let anyone tell you differently: Frank Robbins' artwork is terrible.

**DEFENDERS #34 (2)** — The best thing about this magazine is the Valkyrie's breastplate.

**BLACK GOLIATH #2 (2)** — Change Luke Cage's costume, give him a mask, make him taller, and you have Black Goliath. Give it another 3 issues . . . . .

**FANTASTIC FOUR #169 (2)** — Whatever it is, it's definitely *not* the "world's greatest comic magazine."

The cellar-dwellers rating a (1) are: **ACTION #457, BATMAN #274, CHAMPIONS #4, HERCULES #4, IRON MAN #85, JUSTICE LEAGUE, KOBRA #2, HULK #198, OUR ARMY AT WAR #291, STARMAN #12, STAR-SPANGLED WAR, SUPERMAN #298, TARZAN #247.\***



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