

The Collectors Show Comic Book Collecting Resource

As a way to compliment the Collectors Show interview with Maggie Thompson on collecting comic books, we put together a primer on collecting comic books. It is very basic, intended for the novice who may be considering starting a collection. Of course this is offered free of any charge. In this document are:

- a very brief history of comic books,
- how to determine value,
- on line places to find the monetary value of comic books,
- the 6 ages of comic books,
- a few auction trends,
- a list of comic book collecting clubs.

I was surprised at how few clubs there were devoted to collecting comic books. If you know of more, please let me know. I hope folks enjoy this resource.

Introduction

Somewhere in your attic, garage or basement may rest a four- color fortune a relative may have paid an entire dime for a few decades ago. Or not. The books that are going to get you some crazy money -- this is almost a guarantee -- are the 10-cent super-hero comics from the late 1930s to 1961. If you have a 10-cent Superman or Batman or Wonder Woman or Flash or Captain America comic, chances are you could have some serious money if you sell it. Two cents more on the original cover price could still translate into a tens-of-thousands-of-dollars return on investment, with a select few iconic comics.

For instance, after a lull in publishing many super-hero titles during the Fifties, Marvel Comics galvanized its newsstand roster with new characters, such as Spider-Man, Thor, Iron Man and the Fantastic Four, that are still enjoying global popularity in print, on screen and in other media more than a half-century later. Crafted most notably by creators such as Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, those early Marvel issues have gained incredible, hulkish resale value as a result. Comics that sold for 25 cents or above, those are the books that potentially have the least amount of value. The breaking point is probably 1975. By then, we knew that comic books were worth money. ... But once people started to realize they were worth something, they started speculating and hoarding them and then they weren't worth anything. A comic book's condition can often make or break its value, too. There are some books from the 1960s and 70s that are not rare in number, he said, "but they're rare in high-grade condition.

Experts seem to agree that the first appearances of characters, as well as the character's popularity, make some comics worth astronomically more than others. The first appearance of Batman in "Detective Comics" No. 27 in mint condition is estimated to be worth \$580,000, while Wonder Woman's first appearance in "All Star Comics" No. 8 in the same condition has an estimated value of about \$58,000.

But for those who have a varied assortment or short run of a comic's series, there are ways of deciding if a book is worth enough to put braces on a teenager's teeth.

How to determine value

For the do-it-yourselfers, the first step is to determine the condition of the book. The grades include mint for perfect condition, near mint, very fine, fine, very good, good, fair and poor. Books should be judged on whether there are any tears, bent spines or modifications from its original form.

The next step is to use a price guide resource book. "Wizard Magazine" and "Overstreet Price Guide" are the basic reference books, but for a faster and cheaper answer, collectors can go to <http://www.comicspriceguide.com>. Registration is free, but inquiries must be pretty specific with the publishing companies, such as Marvel or DC, the title and the book number.

Stash My Comics <http://www.Stashmycomics.com> is another free alternative that allows collectors to create online categories and lists of comics. The site automatically puts an estimated value next to the title and keeps the list archived for future updates.

While an estimated price can give sellers an idea of a book's value, it is only worth what a buyer is willing to pay for it. Perhaps a better way to get an idea at a book's worth is to look at what it is selling for on auctions such as eBay or comic auctions like heritagecomics.com.

The Comic Guaranty Co., often referred to as CGC, will grade a book for a seller at a cost. Books can either be shipped to the company or can be brought to the experts at comic book conventions where they will be graded and sealed in an official CGC sleeve to prove authenticity. The books, which are permanently sealed, can then be sold at auctions, flea markets, conventions or comic book stores.

There are two basic types of comic book collectors: Those who buy the books in a series because they love the ongoing story line, and those who buy books because of their value. In addition to the average \$3 per book, interested collectors should be prepared to purchase comic book boards, mylar bags and comic boxes. The mylar bag is a sleeve that protects the cover of the books while the board can be slipped in behind it to keep it from bending before it is stored in the size-appropriate comic box.

Ages of Comic Book Production

There are 6 ages of comics, each related to the hobby and associated with value. Those are: the platinum age (1897 – 1937), golden age (1938 – 1955), silver age (1956 – 1969), bronze age (1970 – 1983), copper age (1984 – 1991), and the modern age (1992 – present).

More...

Auction Trends

According to Collectors Weekly, at this writing, there are 4,806 comic book auctions on a variety of auction sites, including ebay. Here is a sample look at those auctions.

- Marvel Silver Bronze Age Comic Collection Lot Avengers X-Men Amazing Spider-Man 1363 pieces, selling for \$4,450.00.
- Peanuts #1 CGC 7.5 second single Highest graded (1953) Snoopy Charlie Brown, selling for \$4,347.89.
- HIGH GRADE Marvel Bronze Age Comic Collection Lot X-Men 94 Amazing Spiderman 121, 468pc Avengers FF Hulk IM CapAm selling for \$3,500.00.
- Tales to Astonish #27 condition 8.0 selling for \$3,101.00.
- Giant Size X-Men # 1 selling for \$2,938.00.
- SILVER SURFER #4 selling for \$2,938.00.
- IRON MAN #55 selling for \$2,938.00.
- Fantastic Four #1 selling for \$2,020.00
- The Amazing Spider Man # 129 selling for \$1,159.00.

On Line Resources

Comic Book Collecting Association

<http://www.comiccollecting.org>

The Comic Book Collecting Association (CBCA) is a non-profit international organization made up of comic book enthusiasts who share an appreciation for the history, artistic merit, and significance of the comic book medium as an important element of popular culture.

The mission of the CBCA is to promote the comic book art form and hobby of comic book collecting for people of all ages by encouraging fellowship among comic book enthusiasts, providing information and education to the public, and helping to facilitate the buying, selling, and trading of comic books and related material in an environment of trustworthiness and integrity.

Information & Questions info@comiccollecting.org

Membership membership@comiccollecting.org

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McMurray mmcmurray@comiccollecting.org

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Mailing Address:

Comic Book Collecting Association

P.O. Box 655

Valley Center, CA 92082

Cartoonists Northwest

<http://www.cartoonistsnorthwest.com>

Cartoonists Northwest is an association of illustrators, cartoonists, animators and other creators.

Contact is via their website only. No published e-mails.

Cartoonists Northwest

P.O. Box 31122

Seattle WA 98103

CGC Collectors Society

<http://comics.www.collectors-society.com/default.aspx>

This vibrant online community supports collectors across the world by providing exclusive resources and acknowledging remarkable collections. Membership is open to collectors of all levels and gives you access to the CGC Registry, the latest news and events, and more.

No published e-mail addresses

Collectors Society

P.O. Box 4711

Sarasota, FL 34230

1.800.587.1897

Comic Preservation

<http://www.comicpreservation.com>

This site is devoted to presenting issues in the preservation and conservation of physical structure comic books and concepts underlining classic storylines. Part of our mission is to present reference material to help you make to informed choices in the care of your comic book collection and understanding the psychosocial relationship of their themes. See bottom of the page for consulting services in the New York City Area. Because comic books were often, at certain points in their history, published on low quality paper, they often don't age very well. Great care must be taken to preserve the original status of comic books. Much of the material on this site will be links to other sites that have more comprehensive material on the overall subject of paper document preservation, such as the [CARING FOR WORKS OF ART ON PAPER](#) or [Library of Congress](#).

Fawcett Collectors of America

<http://www.marvelfamily.com/comics/search/issueinfo.aspx?title=FCA&issue=56>

The Marvel Family Web is the unofficial home of the original Captain Marvel and the Marvel Family as well as the other Fawcett heroes of yore.

Email: marvelfamilyweb@gmail.com

Friends of Lulu

<http://friendsoflulu.wordpress.com>

Friends of Lulu is a national organization whose main purpose is to promote and encourage female readership and participation in the comic book industry.

P.O. Box 1114

Canal St. Station

New York, NY 10013-0866

email: friendsoflulumail@yahoo.com

Nitro Comics and Collectibles

<http://www.nitrocomics.com/club-guidelines.html>

The Nitro Comics Collector's Club was initiated to reward those customers who are serious collectors and pre order merchandise through us to guarantee delivery. By pre ordering items from us before we have to order from our distributors, those collectors are helping us track & manage our inventory. As a reward we pass along substantial savings to those collectors who pre order through us.

E-mail: info@nitrocomics.com

Nitro Comics

PO Box 563

Berkeley Heights, N.J. 07922

Order line: 908-464-1249.

Comic Book Collectors Club

<http://comicbookcollectorsclub.com>

Email contact on the site only.

Comic Collector Live

<http://www.comiccollectorlive.com/Default.aspx>

Comic Collector Live is a product of MidTenMedia.com, Inc of Hendersonville, TN. It was born from the company founder's love for comic books, and the desire to give the community of comic enthusiasts a new way to buy, sell and complete their collections, as well as provide the latest information on events, issues, and industry happenings.

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Comic Book Daily

<http://www.comicbookdaily.com>

Comic Book Daily is a website dedicated to bringing a virtual comic shop environment to you: a discussion of the minutiae of comic book collecting. If you have the insider's scoop on what's

going on in the comic book world, a publisher who would like a book reviewed, interested in advertising or just plain old have some feedback, drop us a line: info@comicbookdaily.com.

Spider Fan

http://www.spiderfan.org/comics/title/msh_collectors_club.html

The unofficial Spiderman home page.

E-mail list of the staff is included.

Sanctum Sanctorum Comix

<http://sanctumsanctorumcomix.blogspot.com>

Comic and Dr. Who fansite.

E-Mail: sanctum.blog@gmail.com

League of Comic Geeks

<http://leagueofcomicgeeks.com/?gclid=CJTuhur26r8CFSdp7AodHxkADw>

The League of Comic Geeks website features a robust cataloging system that utilizes a variety of sources to ensure new release information is the best on the 'net. Beyond that, the database is curated by the community. Anyone can request corrections to individual entries in the database.

To support those efforts is our moderator team, who ensure everything submitted is quality.

Collectors Weekly Vintage Comic Book Section

<http://www.collectorsweekly.com/comic-books/overview>

Super, in-depth information about collectibles, and comics in that section.

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