

HOLY ILLUSTRATION!

COMIC BOOKS DRAW NEW DEVOTEES

"THERE'S ALL KINDS OF BOOKS ... FOR ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND SOMETHING OUT THERE YOU CAN ENJOY."

— GEORGE COMITS, BCS BOOKS AND VIDEO MANAGER

BY PATRICK HAYS
OF THE BATTALION STAFF...

Comic book collectors and merchants say the comics industry is out of this world and shows no signs of returning to Earth.

They say last summer's Batman movie was partly responsible for the renewed interest in comic books —

even though comics sales were at their lowest when the original Batman series was on TV.

But now comic books are hot items, and collectors and merchants are reveling in the success of a booming industry.

Kevin Raley, a senior environmental design major from Richardson, has been a comic book collector for many

years. He became a collector at a young age, when his father bought comic books for him.

He never lost interest in them, and he now buys 40 to 50 comic books every month. Overall, his collection contains more than 10,000 books.

Raley has seen the evolution of comic books, and he says vast improvements have been made. The quality of writing has been upgraded, he said, and several books address social issues in their storylines.

"It's a big moral thing now," Raley said. "It's taken a real social outlook."

He speculated that financial considerations may have been one cause for the maturation of storylines.

"I think they (writers) think if they

can capture adult interest, they can capture the adult pocketbook," he said.

David Buchta, a senior journalism major from Richmond, has been collecting comics since he was 12. He agreed with Raley about the change in substance of the storylines.

The newer comic books deal with issues such as the environment, animal rights and morality.

Comic book art also has improved greatly, he said.

"The art is diversifying and there's a lot of different styles being used now," Buchta said.

Raley agreed: "The quality of art is unbelievable."

Buchta said the advent of specialty shops has been an asset to the comic

industry because they give smaller publishing companies a sales outlet.

George Comits, manager and buyer for BCS Books and Video in Bryan, pointed out an advantage for collectors that specialty shops have over other bookstores or drugstores.

Specialty shops place orders directly to the publishing companies, which means they get higher-quality books that don't suffer from careless storage on drugstore shelves.

Comits said BCS Books and Video serves a wide variety of collectors, ranging in age from 15 to late 20s. Many of the collectors get enthusiastic

about their comics.

What is business like when a new shipment of comics comes in on Fridays? "Besides maddening?" Comits asks.

The shop also receives the newsletter Comic Shop News on Fridays. All 200 copies are gone by mid-Saturday, he said.

Some kind of comic book exists to suit nearly anyone's interests, he said.

"There's all kinds of books ... for all kinds of people," Comits said. "You should be able to find something out there you can enjoy."



PHOTO BY STEVEN M. MOREYKO
CALDWELL RESIDENT RENO AMAYA PICKS OUT SOME NEW COMICS AT BCS BOOKS AND VIDEO. HE HAS COLLECTED COMICS SINCE AGE 8.

By PATRICK HAYS
Of The Battalion Staff

Just when you thought it was safe to go back out on the dance floor ...

It's hip, it's hot ... it's 'trash'

What is being called the return of "trash disco" is sweeping through nightclubs, causing dancers to make moves that would make John Travolta jealous.

The '70s music/dance fad has gained popularity during the past couple of years, and now has become a standard part of some clubs' repertoires.

Club A in Dallas devotes the dance floor to trash disco every Sunday night. The club brought back disco last May, and assistant manager Tammy Starling said response to the old dance hits has been very positive.

"Everybody's in a good mood," Starling said.

She said Club A usually draws about 2,000 people on Sunday nights, and the crowd ranges in age from 18 to 40. She added that a 62-year-old couple are also disco night regulars.

"It's just a huge variety of people," she said.

Club A's musical selections include many of the biggest hits from the disco era, including songs by The Village People, KC and the Sunshine Band and Donna Summer.

The club plays only original '70s disco — it will not play disco remakes, she said.

Starling was quick to add that she believes the return of the disco fad is less than serious.

"I think it's just a nostalgia thing," she said.

Baja Yacht Club co-manager Jack McGregor says the

club started playing disco songs last September.

Response has been great, he said — people don't hesitate to get up on tables and perform disco moves.

"YMCA" by the Village

People is definitely the biggest

crowd pleaser, he said. Also popular are songs by the Bee Gees, Brick House, Michael Jackson and Donna Summer.

McGregor echoed Starling's feelings about the temporary trendiness of trash disco.

"We basically just do it for the goof," he said.

Co-manager John Whittington agreed.

"I think it's a tongue-in-cheek part of the night," he said. "We threw out the glass ball."

He said that the club is not looking for John Travolta records.

Chuck Lovejoy, a junior journalism major from Texas City, took part in the disco craze, but said its time has come and gone.

He said popular spots for trash disco included Rich's in Houston and Club A and Decadance in Dallas. But now, he said, the fad is dying.

People are getting tired of disco again, he said, and the amount of music to play is limited.

"It's just not as big anymore," Lovejoy said.

He believes the popularity of the new disco fad experienced was fueled by the enthusiasm of young people fulfilling a dream.

The people who got into the

return of disco were too young to go to clubs when disco was really big. Its resurgence provided an opportunity to relive the craze.

Some club owners would disagree, however, and have dusted off the old stacks of disco tracks.



Saturday Night Fever is burning again. This album was one of the top sellers during the disco era.

TRASH

DISCO

WH... WE OFFER IN CELL... OLOGY... IF YOU A... EST IN M... GRADUA... OLOGY... HEALTH... YOUNG, B... SEARCH... ART INST... GRADUA... FOR FUR... ZANT, G... WEITL... WRITE TO... TEXAS... DEP... Sun... Li... V... Present... Educati... Su... Broug... MY... * 10... aca... Col... dem... * A... Cer... 505... * A... 199... SALE SALE... Sale... \$... incl... tenc... SAR... CHA... VISA... SALE SALE