

# SPIDER - MAN

MARVEL COMICS' GREATEST SUPERHERO IS SPINNING

by Chris Baker with John Gaudiosi and SpiderFan.org

## "OW!"

When the fangs of a radioactive spider pierced the skin of Peter Parker, his response wasn't exactly the most eloquent in comic-book history—but the action itself certainly ranks among the most important. Instead of leaving a stinging, itchy feeling with Peter for a few days, this particular bite empowered him with the relative capabilities of a spider—superhuman strength and agility, the ability to crawl up walls and ceilings, and the power to sense imminent danger. It also resulted in a character millions would argue as the greatest superhero ever. It resulted in Spider-Man.

Over the years, Spider-Man has slung his way free of exclusively inhabiting the pages of Marvel comics, escaping to other media, as well. In addition to a few cartoons on television (even a short-lived live-action series and a recurring role on *The Electric Company*), multiple toy lines, and marketing products ranging the

A LOT OF DIFFERENT WEBS THIS SUMMER

gamut from Pez dispensers to telephones to asthma inhalers (really!), Spidey has also starred in his fair share of video games.

The latest gaming venture for the American icon created by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko finds its basis in one medium yet to host Spider-Man. The big one. On May 3, the wall-crawler slings his way to a movie theater near you for the first time. And we think it's fair to say, True Believers, that both Spidey's big-screen debut and Activision's PS2 game based upon it should have your spider-senses tingling.

DEATH-DEFYING  
AERIAL COMBAT!

pg. 86

DASHING DAMSELS  
IN DISTRESS!

pg. 90

RADIOACTIVE  
ARACHNIDS!

pg. 94



# THE GAME

Activision and Treyarch know their role in creating the next Spider-Man game—this one is based directly on the upcoming movie



1.



2.



3.

1. While many of your skirmishes with the Green Goblin occur via aerial combat, the ground battles might just shock you (or, in this case, him).
2. Before you can reach the Shocker, you must first seek shelter from his powerful blasts in the subway tunnel. Spider-senses have never been so useful!
3. Not only must you deliver civilians to safety—sometimes you only have seconds to swoop in before the likes of fallen stone pillars crush them!

For the past four decades, one simple message has resonated throughout Spider-Man comic books: “With great power comes great responsibility.”

But until about two years ago it seemed that, when it came to the majority of Spider-Man games, publishers largely ignored Uncle Ben’s immortal words to a young Peter Parker. Sure, the companies had the power of a Spider-Man license—but they usually lacked the responsibility to actually produce a quality game.

Then along came Activision. With the help of developer Neversoft (the company that helped make Tony Hawk a household name), Activision released a PlayStation title in 2000 that finally lived up to the wall-crawler’s game-starring potential, introducing him to a full 3D environment for the first time. And while a second offering, this time created by Vicarious Visions, failed to meet the greatness of Neversoft’s, it still provided a solid gaming experience few could dislike.

Now, Activision has handed development duties to Treyarch for arguably the House that Pitfall! Built’s most important Spidey release yet—this one based directly on the events of his soon-to-be-released big-

nemesis in the film—come to think of it, his *only* nemesis in the film. If the events of the movie set the stage for all of the PS2 game’s action, wouldn’t fighting the same pumpkin-bomb-throwing baddie over and over get kind of dull?

“It would get a little old,” admits Turndorf. “Where our game diverges from the movie is that we can’t follow the story completely, so we wanted to add a few classic Marvel villains.”

“This is a very origin-related game,” adds John. “So we had to pick sort of early supervillains and try to weld them into the story so it’s a younger Spider-Man.”

The result? The selection of three Spidey antagonists from the pages of *The Amazing Spider-Man* in its first few years: the Shocker, the Scorpion and the Vulture.

While gamers might remember fighting the first two extra supervillains in previous PlayStation Spider-Man games, the Vulture makes his 3D-gaming debut. And Treyarch chose him for a definite reason. “We’re trying something very new in this game, which is aerial combat, and we wanted to give the player sort of a training on how to fight a boss in the air,” explains Turndorf on the addition of a villain who spends most of his

## “We definitely tried to stick as close to the movie as possible.”

screen debut. And Treyarch is doing all it can to put the Columbia Pictures flick in your control. “We definitely tried to stick as close to the movie as possible,” says Gregory John, senior producer at Treyarch.

Helping to insure the synergy between movie and game was the involvement of Sam Raimi, the film’s director. “[He and Columbia] were really helpful,” says John. “They granted us access to a lot of their movie special effects and props—a lot of footage, a lot of stills, that sort of stuff.”

“Raimi was very involved with our final story and working it out,” chimes in Activision senior producer Marc Turndorf. “The one thing he did insist on, though, was the inception of the Green Goblin remain the same.”

Ah, yes, the Green Goblin. Spidey’s

time hundreds of feet above ground. “The Vulture is perfect for that.”

Indeed. The boss fight with the Vulture that Turndorf refers to occurs almost entirely in the vacant space between the buildings that compose the apex of the New York City skyline. It takes a little suspension of disbelief to relieve you from wondering what Spider-Man’s webs actually latch onto, but seeing the streets alive with activity several pops of the ear below does add a certain degree of excitement you likely have never before experienced in a game. You often freefall in an attempt to kick the living daylights out of the geriatric fowl opposing you.

“We really think the aerial combat is going to blow people away,” comments Turndorf. “And it’s something relatively



## ROGUE'S GALLERY

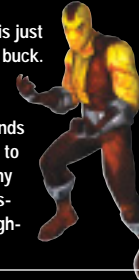
### Green Goblin

Driven insane by the use of an untested experimental formula, Norman Osborn uses the newfound powers it granted him—enhanced strength and intelligence, plus the ability to heal from normally lethal wounds—to terrorize New York as the Green Goblin, Spider-Man’s deadliest enemy. He flies around atop his Goblin Glider and likes to cause havoc using pumpkin bombs.



### Shocker

In many ways, Herman Shultz is just a common thug out for a quick buck. But then again, not many common thugs have the smarts to create their own device that sends out shockwaves strong enough to bring down a building. The funny suit the Shocker wears is necessary to protect him from the high-caliber machinery he’s packing.



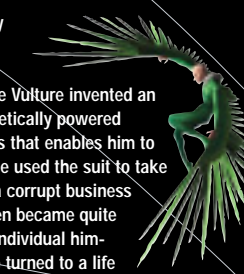
### Scorpion

When J. Jonah Jameson wanted someone to pursue Spider-Man, he hired private investigator Mac Gargan to use a new formula that would give him the proportionate powers of a scorpion. It worked, granting Gargan twice the strength of the wall-crawler. His suit only adds to his power, including a tail he can whip around at 90 miles per hour!



### Vulture

Spidey’s only superior eligible for Medicare, the Vulture invented an electromagnetically powered body harness that enables him to fly. At first, he used the suit to take revenge on a corrupt business partner—then became quite the corrupt individual himself when he turned to a life of crime.



### Who else?

Activision and Treyarch only want us to know about four of the supervillains in Spider-Man—but they promise that true Marvel diehards will recognize a few other baddies thrown their way. We just have no idea yet as to whom.

unique—there’s no template in another game.

Not that a fair other portion of the 22 levels comes template-free. Spidey does set foot on the ground every once in a while, after all, and the gameplay there should ring a bell to those familiar with his PS one adventures.

“We definitely tip our hat to those games,” credits John. “Our game really comes out of the PS one games—a lot of inspiration. Obviously, we tried a lot of new things to take advantage of the new-generation console. But there’s a huge base of people that played the first Spider-Man game—we didn’t want to alienate them.”

And they don’t. All of the combat moves you might have utilized return for Spider-Man on PS2, often (especially in the case of web moves) enhanced greatly with the

new system capabilities. By no means are they the *only* moves at your disposal, though. As you progress through the game, Spider-Man collects special icons that enable new combos—around 40 total. “I kinda like kick-punch-kick,” answers John when asked his personal favorite combo. “It clears a lot of people out quickly.”

Adding more depth, Treyarch has instituted “dodge” moves. “Basically, the combos are either two-move or three-move combos,” explains John. “When you do a three-move combo and then you do a dodge move, you can link up into the next combo.”

But what about the casual gamers who have no interest in doing things like lasoing an opponent with their web and twirling him around to take out others? They’re covered too. “Some people are

going to go crazy with all the combos, and the dodging, and the linking, and the advanced web attacks,” says Turndorf. “And then others are just going to punch and kick and have a good time. It is balanced so that the experts are going to have a great time, and newbies also.”

We have a feeling that newbies and hardcore Spider-gamers alike will dig Treyarch’s new control scheme. Though fundamentally the same as before, the D-pad no longer serves a purpose for movement, and has now been optimized for directional and web attacks. Got a goon to your right? Just hit that direction on the D-pad as you punch or kick to knock him out of the way. This new scheme also simplifies web moves in that you no longer risk moving somewhere you didn’t mean to go should you improperly time your button presses.

## TIMELINE

August 1962

March 1963

May 1963

July 1963

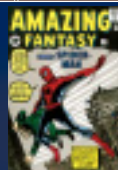
July 1964

January 1965

December 1965

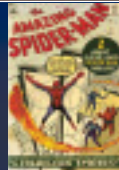
### Forty Years of Wall-Crawling

Since 1962, Spider-Man has encountered many a defining moment, whether it be an earth-shattering event in the comics or a brand-new TV show. This timeline indicates a few such notable instances.



### Amazing Fantasy #15

Spider-Man/Peter Parker appears for the first time anywhere in the final issue of *Amazing Fantasy*. Uncle Ben dies, too.

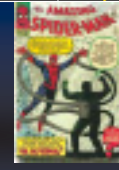


### Amazing Spider-Man #1

Spidey’s first series debuts, as does the character J. Jonah Jameson.

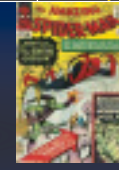
### Amazing Spider-Man #2

One of *Amazing Spider-Man*’s youngest issues features the first appearance of Spidey’s most aged foe, the Vulture.



### Amazing Spider-Man #3

Doctor Octopus pesters Spidey for the first time.



### Amazing Spider-Man #14

Norman Osborn (only we don’t know it’s him yet) begins his crime career as the Green Goblin.

### Amazing Spider-Man #20

The Scorpion tries to put the sting on Spidey in this, his first appearance.



### Amazing Spider-Man #31

First appearance of Gwen Stacy and Harry Osborn.



1. The Shocker is one of three supervillains not actually seen in the movie. 2. Sometimes a simple kick to the groin works as well as any special move. 3. A new feature, aerial combat yields the occasional intense freefall. 4. Save the innocents before their life-bars deplete.



### Tobey Games (Willem Doesn't)

When Tobey Maguire and Willem Dafoe recorded original voice work for Spider-Man, it was easy to spot which of the two knows his games. "Willem Dafoe is a fantastic actor," says Activision's Marc Turndorf, "and most of the lines he'll nail. But then there are lines that kind of give the player hints like, 'maybe that key will open that door'—stuff like that. Willem, because he doesn't know games, would get a little confused about those lines, and Tobey would say a line like, 'I'll bet if I press this button...' and go, 'Yeah, this is like when I played Driver! I know these lines! I can nail these.'"

Treyarch has also tweaked the classic hostage levels from past games, this time de-emphasizing stealth in favor of Spidey taking a more proactive approach, as the hostiles actually beat their captives to submission. If the web-slinger can't defeat the captors before the innocents' life meters expire, it's a quick game over. In similar instances, a civilian may be placed in imminent danger—a situation that requires Spidey to swoop in, actually pick them up, then deposit them at a designated safe point.

Once the hostage is all safe and sound, it's often time for Spidey to engage in a showdown with one of the game's fearsome foursome. And if you know our hero well, you'd better believe you can expect him to taunt away as he beats the crap out of any given adversary.

"So, you must be Quiltman," guesses the webbed one upon his first encounter with the Shocker. "Padded Pete? Mr. Triple Ply? Oh! I've got it!...The Cushion."

When you hear Spider-Man speak, the likeness in his voice to Tobey Maguire's (you know, the dude who plays him in the movie) might astound you. But there's a simple reason for this: It's his voice. Along with Willem Dafoe for the Green Goblin, Maguire recorded a great deal of original dialogue especially for the game. Interestingly, Spider-Man marks the first time in gaming history that two high-caliber actors have extended their roles from a major motion picture to a video game—it truly is unprecedented.

But the involvement of Maguire and Dafoe doesn't surprise Avi Arad, executive producer for the movie. "Actors

## "The aerial combat is going to blow people away."

understand the value of video games, and their work on the game was a real complement to the interactive experience," he says.

It's this kind of nice, unexpected addition—not to mention the improvements to an already solid gameplay scheme, all visualized by graphics living up to any adjective ever bestowed to Spider-Man—that demonstrate the respect held by Activision and Treyarch for both their power and their responsibility.

Uncle Ben would be proud.



### SECRETS REVEALED

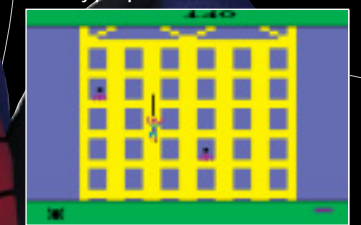
Treyarch and Activision remain tight-lipped about everything you can expect to unlock throughout the course of Spider-Man—but they have let slip one tasty bit: You can expect the characters to suit up in costumes designed in pre-production by artist Alex Ross, arguably the finest artist in the comics biz/ Even costumes for the Green Goblin. Ask about further extras, though, and they refuse to offer anything more than a teasing: "There's one particular secret that will BLOW players away," promises Marc Turndorf—something we know involves the Green Goblin. Guess we'll find out what they mean in late April.

## SPIDER-MAN GAMEOGRAPHY

For 20 years, Spider-Man has appeared in his own video games—some decent, a few excellent...but most total crap. We've ranked the best five, and denoted the worst of the worst with a big ol' pumpkin bomb. (Supporting roles weren't considered in the top five list.)

### STARRING ROLES

**SPIDER-MAN** (Parker Brothers, 1982—Atari 2600) Spidey's gaming debut pitted him against the Green Goblin in a Donkey Kong-like attempt to reach the top of a building without getting nailed by pumpkin bombs.



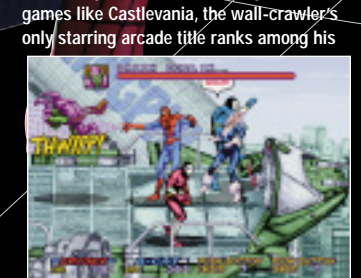
**QUESTPROBE FEATURING SPIDER-MAN** (Adventure International/Commodore, 1984—Apple II, Commodore 64, PC, Atari 400/800, Atari ST)

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN AND CAPTAIN AMERICA IN DR. DOOM'S REVENGE** (Paragon, 1989—Commodore 64, PC)

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** (Paragon, 1990—Commodore 64, PC)

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** (LJN, 1990—Game Boy)

**SPIDER-MAN THE VIDEO GAME** (Sega, 1991—Arcade) Combining elements of Final Fight and 2D games like Castlemania, the wall-crawler's only starring arcade title ranks among his



best games ever. Black Cat, Hawkeye and Namor were other playable characters in this four-player quarter-eater.

**SPIDER-MAN** (Sega, 1991—Sega Master System, Genesis, Game Gear)

**SPIDER-MAN 2** (LJN, 1992—Game Boy)

**SPIDER-MAN: RETURN OF THE SINISTER SIX** (LJN, 1992—NES, Game Gear)

**SPIDER-MAN/X-MEN: ARCADE'S REVENGE** (LJN, 1992—Super NES, Genesis, Game Boy, Game Gear)

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN VS. THE KINGPIN** (Sega, 1993—Sega CD)

Adapting the previously released Spider-Man Genesis/SMS game, the Sega CD version changed the name and added voiced cutscenes—plus music by Eric Martin of Mr. Big! (OK...maybe it wasn't perfect.)

**SPIDER-MAN 3: INVASION OF THE SPIDER-SLAYERS** (LJN, 1993—Game Boy)

**SPIDER-MAN [animated series]** (Acclaim, 1994—Genesis, Super NES)

**SPIDER-MAN/VENOM: MAXIMUM CARNAGE** (Acclaim, 1994—Genesis, Super NES)

Repetitive Final Fight clone? Yes. Next to impossible to beat? Absolutely. Yet somehow inexplicably hard to put down? You know it. (Plus, you got to play as Venom.)

**VENOM/SPIDER-MAN: SEPARATION ANXIETY** (Acclaim, 1995—Genesis, Super NES)

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: WEB OF FIRE** (Sega, 1995—Sega 32X)

The last 32X game released, Web of Fire is super-rare. Quite the collector's item, it's been spotted as high as \$130 on eBay.

**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: THE DEADLY FOES** [Japanese only] (1995—Super Famicom)

How does a game (a decent one at that) starring an American character only get released in Japan? We don't get it.

**SPIDER-MAN: THE SINISTER SIX** (Byron Preiss, 1996—PC)

**SPIDER-MAN** (Activision, 2000—PS one, Dreamcast, PC, Mac)

Not only the best Spidey game, it's also the best superhero game, period. For now...



**SPIDER-MAN** (Activision, 2000—Game Boy Color)

**SPIDER-MAN: MYSTERIO'S MENACE** (Activision, 2001—Game Boy Advance)

**SPIDER-MAN 2—ENTER: ELECTRO** (Activision, 2001—PS one)

Not as great as the other PS one web-slinger outing...but still a solid title.

**SPIDER-MAN 2: THE SINISTER SIX** (Activision, 2001—Game Boy Color)

**SPIDER-MAN [movie]** (Activision, 2002—PS2, Xbox, GameCube, Game Boy Advance)

### SUPPORTING ROLES

**THE REVENGE OF SHINOBI** (Sega, 1989—Genesis)

Spider-Man was actually a boss in this ninja classic. Beat him, though, and you'll discover his true, non-superheroic identity.

**THE PUNISHER** (LJN, 1991—Game Boy)

**MARVEL SUPER HEROES** (Capcom, 1995—Arcade, Saturn, PS one)

**MARVEL SUPER HEROES IN WAR OF THE GEMS** (Capcom, 1996—Super NES)

**MARVEL SUPER HEROES VS. STREET FIGHTER** (Capcom, 1997—Arcade, PS one)

**MARVEL VS. CAPCOM: CLASH OF SUPER HEROES** (Capcom, 1998—Arcade, PS one, Dreamcast)

**MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 2** (Capcom, 2000—Arcade, Dreamcast)

**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2** (Activision, 2000—PS one, PC, Mac, N64, Dreamcast, Game Boy Advance)

How much better do unlockable skaters get than Spider-Man?

**TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2X** (Activision, 2001—Xbox)

Aug. 1966

Nov. 1966

March 1967

Sept. 9, 1967

June/July 1973

Feb. 1974

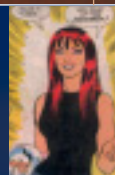
Oct. 1975

1977

July 1979

### Amazing Spider-Man #39

Norman Osborn revealed as true identity of the Green Goblin.



### Amazing Spider-Man #42

Thinking he was in for a blind date with a girl who looks like the Hulk (his words), Peter finally meets Mary Jane Watson. Stunned at the megahot redhead before him, he hears her say one of comicdom's most famous lines: "Face it, tiger... you just hit the jackpot!"

### Amazing Spider-Man #46

The Shocker sends shockwaves in Spidey's direction for the first time.



ABC debuts the first Spider-Man cartoon as part of its Saturday-morning lineup. Few forget its catchy introductory theme music. (Yes, that theme music.)



### Amazing Spider-Man #121/122

Gwen Stacy dies, marking one of the most poignant moments in comic-book history. The Green Goblin bites it, too (at least for the next 23 years).

### Amazing Spider-Man #129

The Punisher (first appearance) attempts to kill Spider-Man! Also, the Jackal debuts.

### Amazing Spider-Man #149

The issue that set the roots for the much-maligned "Clone Saga" two decades later. The first Spider-Clone is created and, by issue's end, killed (but not really).



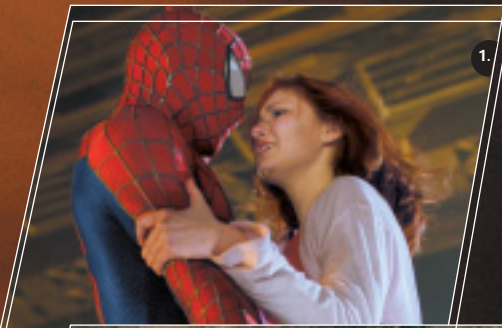
CBS brings Spidey to live action for the first time in *The Amazing Spider-Man*. It runs intermittently for the next two years—and it really, really sucks.

### Amazing Spider-Man #194

The Black Cat makes us purr in this, her first appearance.

# THE MOVIE

With all the ferocity of the Green Goblin gliding through Times Square, *Spider-Man* the movie flies into theaters on May 3



**S**pider-fans have waited long enough for a movie starring their favorite wall-crawler. They've watched the litigation between movie studios—the rights passed from Cannon Films to Columbia Pictures to MGM, then back to Columbia. They watched as various directors played musical chairs with the numerous scripts—even James Cameron was once involved. And now, they can finally watch him web-sling on the big screen in *Spider-Man*, kicking off the summer movie season on May 3.

Through all the tangled legal webs, one blessing in disguise resulted: As the lawyers cashed their fat checks, technology and special effects improved, opening the door for a fully realized Spidey film as seen through the eyes of Sam Raimi, a director perhaps best known for his cult-classic *Evil Dead* trilogy.

Raimi, a devoted Spider-Man fan since he was a kid (for his 12th birthday, Raimi's parents hired an artist to paint a picture of the wall-crawler above his bed), earned himself the director's chair by telling the suits at Columbia about his fascination with the superhero. "I went in and I explained to them what my love for the character was," recalls Raimi of his meeting with Columbia Pictures executives, "and about my respect and admiration for what all of the great Marvel writers and artists had created over the

treading on sacred ground with Spider-Man, because he means so much to so many people, to 40 years of readers and fans," he says. "I feel a terrific responsibility as a longtime fan myself, and I concentrated on the things that I felt were true about the character—to capture the spirit and soul of Spider-Man and to tell the best story that we possibly could."

Raimi's love for the material will show

**"I concentrated on the things I felt were true about the character—to capture the spirit and soul of Spider-Man."**

years. The next day, I received word that I was selected for the job."

Although Raimi did not hesitate to jump into the fray, he did realize the great fan expectations in realizing their beloved icon to the screen. "I was concerned about

at theaters worldwide, thanks to special-effects master John Dykstra. "I think one of the most exciting things about working on Spider-Man was working with Sam Raimi, because I like his sense of storytelling," says Dykstra. "[*Spider-Man* is]

going to be a superhero movie with people you can sympathize with, or that you can actually get involved with. I think that of all the films I worked on, not since the first *Star Wars* have I been involved in a project that does as good a job of storytelling."

With a few alterations (see sidebar on page 92), the film stays true to the comic-book material while offering an original story. As an orphaned—and somewhat geeky—teenager, Peter Parker (Tobey Maguire) lives in Queens with his Aunt May (Rosemary Harris) and Uncle Ben (Cliff Robertson). On the day of a school field trip, his life changes when a genetically altered spider bites his hand, eventually enabling him with spider-like superpowers. After inadvertently being involved in the death of a loved one, Peter decides to use his new powers for good and creates his heroic public persona: Spider-Man.

"The film features an original story that sends Peter to New York City, where he tries to do the right thing," says Avi Arad, executive producer of the

film. "He assumes responsibility for his powers and becomes a hero. Of course, he also has time to chase Mary Jane (Kirsten Dunst) and work at the *Daily Bugle*." It's here that Peter earns some extra cash working as a photographer for *Bugle* editor-in-chief—and notorious Spidey-hater—J. Jonah Jameson (J.K. Simmons).

Dykstra sees the story of Spider-Man running parallel to the normal changes that kids go through in adolescence. "He starts out a very intelligent but not fully matured person—both physically and mentally—and he ends up after the bite of the spider changing physically. He becomes stronger, he becomes more agile, and he also goes through a mental change—he has to think about things in a different way because of his new responsibility. He wakes up in the morning; the first thing he sees is that he doesn't need to use his glasses anymore. From there, he goes on—as you would if you discovered something had changed significantly—to try all these things out. And that's a

## CINEMATIC COMIC CAVALCADE

*Spider-Man* isn't the only movie based on a comic book headed your way—far from it. Quick visits to Web sites like SuperHeroHype.com and Comics2Film.com show many others planned for the next few years. And that means plenty of games based on their hype, as well. "The interactive world likes us because we have over 4,700 characters that are basically evergreen," says Russ Brown, SVP, consumer products, promotions and media sales for Marvel. "Our characters sell products day in and day out with a built-in audience. Movies and games act as events that lift the sales plateau and generate additional consumer awareness."

Here's the latest on just a few potential movies based on comic-book characters. Not all will happen—but it sure is fun, at least, to know they're being thought about.

- *Blade* sequels (New Line Cinema, Now Playing/TBA): It's possible you've already seen Wesley Snipes reprise his half-man/half-vampire role, when *Blade II* was released in March.

- *Daredevil* (Twentieth Century Fox, Feb. 2003): Ben Affleck stars as the Man Without Fear. Joining Affleck are Michael Clarke Duncan as the Kingpin, Jon Favreau as Foggy Nelson, Colin Farrell as Bullseye, and the oh-so-lovely Jennifer Garner as the sai-wielding assassin Elektra. Look for games from Encore, too.

- *Iron Fist* (Artisan, Spring 2003): Kirk Wong (*Six*) is set to direct Ray "Darth Maul" Park as Daniel Rand, a.k.a. Iron Fist, and a video-game publisher is close to being signed for the property.

- *X* (Twentieth Century Fox, May 2003): A year after *Spider-Man*, the cast of *X-Men* reunites with a couple new promised mutants to join the team (rumors suggest Beast and Gambit). Bryan Singer returns to direct, as does David Hayter to write (with help from Zack Penn). Expect Activision to capitalize on its X-Men license for this one, too.

- *Wonder Woman* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): Though nothing is confirmed as of press time, it looks like Sandra Bullock is far and away the leading contender for the role of the Amazon Princess. Other details remain scarce.

- *Iron Man* (New Line, 2004): Known for his writing on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Joss Whedon will direct Matt Stark's first silver-screen appearance. It's possible Activision may release a game or two beforehand.

- *The Hulk* (Universal, June 2003): Eric Bana (*The Nugget*) plays Bruce Banner (not his incredible alter ego, though—that's CGI), with the lovely Jennifer Connelly (*A Beautiful Mind*) as Betty Ross. Ang Lee comes hot off of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to direct the flick, with gamer-favorite David Hayter (*X-Men*) contributing to the script. A \$120 million budget should help. Look for games from Universal Interactive, as well.

- *The Fantastic Four* (Twentieth Century Fox, 2003): Peyton Reed (*Bring It On*) directs the yet-to-be-cast film debut of Stan Lee's original superhero team (the unreleased \$1 million Roger Corman version doesn't count). The script is in the capable hands of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* writer/director Doug Petrie. We hope Activision's related game beats the horrendous PS one title from a few years back.

- *Superman* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): The Man of Steel finally returns to the big screen next year, with McG (yes, that's really the name of the guy best known for *Charlie's Angels*) in



the director's seat. J.J. Abrams (*Alias*, *Felicity*) is handling the script. Still no word on a star, though.

- *World's Finest: Batman and Superman* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): This dream team

could come to be, courtesy of director Wolfgang Peterson (*The Perfect Storm*).

- *Batman: Year One* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): Adapting Frank Miller's retelling of the Dark Knight's early years, *Batman: Year One* will be directed by Darren Aronofsky (*Requiem for a Dream*, *Pi*), who is co-scripting the screenplay with Miller himself.

- *Catwoman* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): Ashley Judd has been purr-fectly cast (sorry, we had to say it) as Selina Kyle's alter ego. According to *Batman-on-Film.com*, Kinka Usher (*Mystery Men*) is the leading directorial candidate.

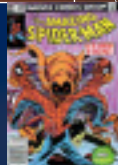
- *Ghost Rider* (TBA, 2003 or later): Nicolas Cage is set to star as Marvel's hell-on-wheels anti-hero, with Stephen Norrington (*Blade*) directing and David Goyer (*Blade*, *Blade II*) writing the script. They just need a studio to get things kickin'.

- *Wonder Woman* (Warner Bros., 2003 or later): Though nothing is confirmed as of press time, it looks like Sandra Bullock is far and away the leading contender for the role of the Amazon Princess. Other details remain scarce.

- *Iron Man* (New Line, 2004): Known for his writing on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Joss Whedon will direct Matt Stark's first silver-screen appearance. It's possible Activision may release a game or two beforehand.

1982 Max, 1983

Parker Brothers pits Spidey against the Green Goblin in his first-ever video game, a Donkey Kong-like Atari 2600 release simply titled Spider-Man.



### Amazing Spider-Man #238

With the original Green Goblin now "dead" 10 years, Marvel decides it's time for a new version of the villain in a different suit. Hence, the Hobgoblin's first appearance.

### Amazing Spider-Man #252

Spider-Man dons the black alien costume found in the Secret Wars for the first time, which enables him unlimited webbing.

### Marvel Super Heroes: Secret Wars

The 12-issue *Secret Wars* teams Spidey up with other big-time Marvel heroes on an otherworldly fight against Marvel's allied powerhouse villains. Issue 8 (Dec. 1984) tells the story of when he first encounters the alien suit.

### Amazing Spider-Man #290

Peter pops the question to Mary Jane (for the second time—the first was in Issue 182). She accepts two issues later.



### Amazing Spider-Man Annual #21

Peter Parker marries Mary Jane Watson.



### Amazing Spider-Man #300

The art of Todd McFarlane introduces Spidey fans to their first full look at arguably his most popular nemesis: Venom.

### Spectacular Spider-Man #158

Spider-Man goes cosmic, temporarily becoming the most powerful hero in the Marvel Universe.

### Spectacular Spider-Man #200

Harry Osborn dies as the Green Goblin, after adopting his father's guise 44 issues sooner.



Thanks to the special-effects talents of John Dykstra—you might say he has a little experience in the field having led the team behind *Star Wars*—you will believe a man can climb walls. Need to see for yourself right now? Check out the trailer on your *OPM* demo disc.

fun part of the story."

In addition to the fun to be had by the character, Peter Parker himself is what drew Maguire to the film. "He's a great character because he's so relatable," he tells Cinescape.com. "He's a regular kid who gets these superpowers. But he's conflicted about it in our script, which makes him interesting."

For *Spider-Man*, conflict also exists externally of the character upon the introduction of the Green Goblin (Willem Dafoe), Spidey's pumpkin-bomb-throwing arch-nemesis. The fact that the villain is the evil alter ego of businessman Norman Osborn, the father of Peter's best friend Harry (James Franco), adds another degree of depth to the film that furthers the story's intrigue. A story that also allows for several amazing action sequences.

"Having Raimi and Dykstra working together is a real luxury," says Arad. "Audiences are going to see Spidey in all of his glory. CGI allowed us to create the most realistic, amazing movements. It looks like the real deal."

"The fact that we don't have a face to work with in order to create the emotional context for the character means that we have to use body language," explains Dykstra. "To keep that personality of body motion throughout the entire picture is going to be the hardest thing. Plus, [Spider-Man] does stuff that normal peo-

ple can't do. So to keep the reality quotient high, we have to try to make sure that—even though the guy's 10 times stronger than a normal human being—he's capable of doing these things within the context or mechanics of the human world."

The big-screen Spidey will be able to do everything a spider can, including spinning a web of any size. "He has all the capabilities he has in the comics," Dykstra adds. "There's no limitation to what the character will be able to do with the webs. He will sling them and use them in all of the fashions you've seen before—and maybe some innovative new ones."

It all adds up to something likely to thrill both diehard Spider-fans and those who have never even read an issue of *The Amazing Spider-Man*. Maguire's comments to CNN.com certainly indicate as much: "I think people will be ready this summer to watch a good guy in New York who has fun and goes around and beats up the bad guys."

With early screenings testing through the roof, Arad hopes for Raimi to helm a second film, while Maguire has already committed to "beat up the bad guys" at least two more times. With shooting scheduled to begin in January 2003, we could see a sequel as early as summer 2004. And to the millions of Spider-fans who've waited this long, that's practically tomorrow.

—John Gaudiosi

## SPIDEY ON TV

Before hitting the big screen, the only way to see an in-motion version of Spider-Man was on television. It all started in 1967 with ABC's cartoon that coined the legendary lyrics, "Spider-Man, Spider-Man, does whatever a spider can." From 1974 to '77, a speechless live-action Spidey educated youngsters on PBS' *The Electric Company*, his thoughts displayed via thought bubbles. The live action continued in 1977 on CBS' nearly unwatchable *The Amazing Spider-Man*, which ran off and on through '79. NBC's *Spider-Man* cartoon improved things a bit come 1981, evolving into *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* (Firestar and Iceman) the next three years. Fox had the best animated series, though, as *Spider-Man* offered 65 sophisticated episodes. However, its futuristic *Spider-Man Unlimited* would last only three.



If you make a quick trip to your local toy store right now, chances are you'll find Toy Biz's line of action figures from *Spider-Man*. As you see here, the webbed wonder is represented in many ways, varying from a fairly normal representation, to a totally battle-ravaged version, to just plain ol' Peter Parker. And don't forget great-looking plastic versions of Mary Jane, the Green Goblin and others. Our favorite, though? J. Jonah Jameson comes complete with desk-pounding action, along with loose articles that bounce around as a result. Definitely worth a look for Spidey toy enthusiasts.

## NOT EXACTLY THE SAME

Diehard Spider-fans are mixed when it comes to some of the changes to the Spider-Man comic-book myths that Sam Raimi has made for his movie. A few of the biggies follow:

**NO RADIOACTIVITY:** As opposed to the radioactive spider that bit Peter Parker in the comics, the film gives the gig to a genetically altered one.

**ORGANIC WEBS:** In the comics, Peter Parker had to build his own contraption to shoot webs; the ability comes with the spider bite in the flick. However,

rumors suggest he still needs to build a device to better control power and aim.

**WALL-CRAWLING:** The comics enable Spidey to climb walls by use of sheer mind-power, though his Hollywood self has special retractable hairs.

**THE GREEN GOBLIN:** Though he is the proper color, he looks completely different in the film. Raimi's reasoning for this makes sense: It's a flight suit designed by Norman Osborn's company for use with the Goblin's glider, also created by OsCorp.



May 1993

1994

Nov. 1994

Apr. 1995

### *Spider-Man Unlimited* #1

The 14-part Maximum Carnage story begins, teaming Spider-Man with Venom (and a slew of other Marvel heroes) against Carnage. The story is later adapted for a Final Fight-like Genesis/SNES game.



*Marvels* portrays the Marvel Universe through the eyes of an everyday person. The death of Gwen Stacy is retold in issue 4, brought to vibrant life by the talents of Alex Ross.

The first episode of the newest—and best yet—*Spider-Man* animated series airs on Fox Kids. The series lasts 65 episodes and four seasons.

### *Amazing Spider-Man* #400

Aunt May dies. Or, as we find out three years later in *Peter Parker: Spider-Man* #97, a genetic construct of her (sort of like a clone) created by Norman Osborn croaks, as he holds the real May captive. Sheesh.

# THE COMICS

Symbiotes. Clones. Deaths of loved ones. When you're Spider-Man, anything can happen—and Marvel Comics has insured as much for four decades

## THE LEGEND BEGINS

In 1962, Marvel Comics writer Stan Lee wanted to introduce a new superhero named "Spider-Man" to the company's line-up—but he was continually rejected by publisher Martin Goodman. At a time when problem-free adult superheroes like Superman and Batman were the status quo, who wanted Lee's proposed geeky kid with the powers of a spider as a hero, anyway? And besides, who likes spiders? But when the time had come to end a series of plot-twisting horror and sci-fi stories called *Amazing Adult Fantasy*, Lee saw his opportunity. With Steve Ditko bringing Peter Parker and his arachnid alter ego to life, Lee dropped *Adult* from the series' title and introduced Spider-Man to the world in *Amazing Fantasy* #15 (recently voted the greatest single Marvel Comics issue of all time by fans).

As Midtown High's resident "bookworm" and "wallflower," Peter Parker often

stood in position to slow down a thief being pursued by a cop, but opted not to help. A few nights later he returned home to find a police car—his beloved Uncle Ben had been killed! In reaction, Peter pursued and captured the murderer in an abandoned warehouse—only to find it was the same thief whom he refused to hinder earlier that day. Believing his uncle's death to be his own fault, Peter realized that "with great power there must also come great responsibility."

And thus, a new superhero was born.

## SPIDEY FAILS BIG TIME

Many times in comics, the deaths of major characters aren't taken seriously—they'll just come back to life somehow later on.



Gwen was dead. This kind of thing was virtually unheard of in the happy, go-lucky-times of comics circa 1973. An established character—someone readers

loved and respected—was killed at the hands of a hero's archenemy. Spider-Man couldn't save the day this time. He failed.

As if the death of Gwen Stacy wasn't enough to alter the unwritten rules of comic-book stories, the "snap" depicted when Spidey's webbing caught his doomed girlfriend offered a deep psychological dilemma: Was Spider-Man's attempt to save Gwen what actually killed her? Did the sudden jar of the web's impact break her neck? Or was, as the Green Goblin claimed, the fall itself enough to end her life? The debate as to which is true still rages on today among Spider-fans.

The story ended with the death of another main character (at least for nearly another quarter-century). An enraged Spidey continued to battle the Green Goblin, nearly beating him to death. However, Peter's conscience didn't allow him to kill the maniac when he had the chance. While the web-slinger pondered over how close he came to becoming a killer, the Goblin mentally summoned his glider to deliver a death blow to Spider-Man. Spider-senses activated, our hero dodged it, his next sight being that of the Goblin impaled by his own trademark mode of transportation.



◀ From *Ultimate Spider-Man* #1

escaped his lack of popularity with nerdy activities like trips to science exhibits. At one such demonstration, a spider that had absorbed an immense amount of radioactivity in the lab bit Peter in its final moments of life. As a result, Peter soon discovered amazing powers, such as the ability to crawl up walls along with inordinate strength and agility. In an attempt to test out his new superpowers, he took on a pro wrestler and won, leading to media stardom as the costumed "Spider-Man." To further the spider theme, he created contraptions designed to shoot artificial webbing. One night, Peter

That's not the case with Spider-Man's first love, Gwen Stacy. In "The Night Gwen Stacy Died," one of the most emotional stories ever told in a comic book, the Green Goblin kidnapped Gwen and held her hostage atop the Brooklyn Bridge, hundreds of feet above the water below. Like any good superheroic boyfriend, Spidey rushed to her aid, and a fierce battle ensued that eventually led to the Goblin knocking Gwen off the ledge. In a desperate attempt to save her, the wall-crawler slung a web out, which caught Gwen's feet and seemed at first to save her from certain doom. But after pulling her back to the top of the bridge, a harsh reality dawned on Spider-Man—

July 1995

Oct. 1995

Summer 1996

Dec. 1996

Dec. 1998 to Oct. 1999

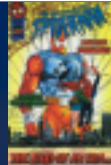
Jan. 1999

May 28, 1999

Oct. 2000

## Spectacular Spider-Man #226

Ben Reilly is revealed as the true Spider-Man—and Marvel actually expects fans to happily accept it.



## Spectacular Spider-Man #229

Ben Reilly takes over as Spider-Man for good when Peter quits the web-spinning gig.



## Marvel Comics Versus DC Comics #3

Based on fan votes, Spider-Man (well, if you can really call Ben Reilly Spider-Man) not only hits on Lois Lane in front of Clark Kent, but defeats Superboy, helping to lead Marvel to victory in this 1996 crossover series.

## Amazing Spider-Man #418/Peter Parker: Spider-Man #75

In the final battle with a newly resurrected Green Goblin, Ben Reilly dies, leaving only a pile of dust. He wasn't Spidey after all.

## WHAT MAKES SPIDER-MAN SO GREAT?

Spidey is our everyman and woman. In a world where most superheroes are parental or authority metaphors, Spidey is us, the reader. As a young boy reading Spider-Man's adventures, I remember that in my mind every time he leaped off a building's parapet and swung across the city, it was me inside that costume.

—Joe Quesada, Editor in Chief of Marvel Comics

The strength of the character has always been that he is a real person. He's one of us. He's gone through junior high and high school. He's a bit of an outsider. He can't get the girl. He's broke. Then an extraordinary event happens to him, and he becomes a superhero. But he still has to do his homework in the evenings.

—Sam Raimi, Director of Spider-Man

He's the walking epitome of Catholic guilt. Peter Parker can slip into the red and blue tights and crack wise, but underneath he is desperately seeking to atone for his "original sin"—a sin of inaction that resulted in the death of someone close to him that he'll never atone for. Unlike Batman, Superman or, say, Captain America, Spider-Man is not super. He's just trying to be.

—Axel Alonso, Editor of three Spider-Man comics

What makes Spider-Man great is that he isn't. He's just a kid named Peter who puts on the costume and carries the weight of the world upon his shoulders. Sure, the kid has the proportional strength of a spider, but we're talking about the weight of the world.

—Bill Jemas, Chief Operating Officer of Marvel Comics

He's one of us. You want to be Superman? Better get born on a foreign planet just about to explode, of wealthy, educated parents. Want to be Spider-Man? All you need is a little bit of weird luck at a radioactivity demonstration. Superman? Strong and confident. Attractive, mature, financially secure. Well-known and well-liked. Spider-Man? Shy and insecure. Rather dorky, teenaged, always broke. A few good friends, but many ordinary problems. Now, who do you think a teenager is most likely to identify with?

—Jonathan Couper, Chief Editor/Webmaster of SpiderFan.org

Why is he great? It's not the Spider in the man. It's the Man in the spider. It's Peter Parker.

—Henrique Ferreira, Contributor/Reviewer for SpiderFan.org

He's just like me...only I get all of his troubles and none of his superhuman abilities. It's nice to know there is someone out there just like me who can beat the bad guys, get the girl, save the world, and come out on top...once in a while.

—Byron Sanders, Subeditor of SpiderFan.org

[Spider-Man is] possibly the most realistically human of all superheroes. He never has enough money, he's constantly beset by personal problems, and the world doesn't exactly applaud his deeds—in fact, most people tend to suspect and distrust him. In short, he's a lot like you and me.

—Stan Lee, Co-creator of Spider-Man [from *Spider-Man: The Ultimate Guide* by Tom DeFalco, DK Publishing, 2001]

## TOP-10 STORYLINES

With 40 years of crimefighting to his credit, Spider-Man has starred in quite a few high-quality adventures—but a few lousy ones as well. As voted upon by the Spider-Maniacs at SpiderFan.org, we present the 10 best web-slinging storylines...and, on the following page, the five worst.

### 10 THE CLONE SAGA

(*Spectacular Spider-Man* #216 [Sept. 1994] to *Peter Parker: Spider-Man* #75 [Dec. 1996] and roughly every issue in between)

Even though "The Clone Saga" ended badly, and Marvel lost many a fan, this entire storyline shook up Spider-Man's life like no other and did many things well. If this story had been done correctly, and not dragged out for so long, it easily would have been No. 1. (Too bad its faults earn it the numero-uno position on a certain other list...)

### 9 SPIDER-MAN VS. VENOM

(*Amazing Spider-Man* #315-317)

Venom is easily one of Spidey's all-time greatest enemies. Defined in *ASM* #300, we didn't get to see a real battle between the two until this storyline came along.



### 8 SPIDER-MAN UNMASKED

(*Amazing Spider-Man* #39-40)

There you have it. Archnemesis Green Goblin and hero Spider-Man discover each others' identities and fight to the finish.

### 7 DEATH OF AUNT MAY

(*Amazing Spider-Man* #400)

Future revelations aside, when this book hit the shelves, it was an instant classic. One of the few truly moving stories in comics.



### 6 IF THIS BE MY DESTINY

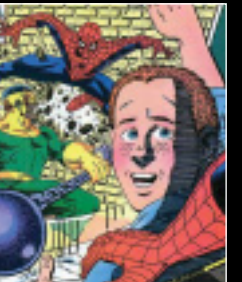
(*Amazing Spider-Man* #31-33)

One of those stories where Spider-Man battles against all odds (in this case, against the Master Planner), yet still manages to come out on top.

### 5 THE KID WHO COLLECTED SPIDER-MAN

(*Amazing Spider-Man* #248)

Surprising how (probably) the shortest story became one of his best, Spider-Man has arguably never displayed the definition of "hero" better than he did in this issue.



### 4 THE DEATH OF JEAN DEWOLFF

(*Spectacular Spider-Man* #107-110)

No one saw this coming. But if a writer kills off an established character, it has to stand up to the quality that this one provides. Spider-Man nearly crosses the line, and Daredevil is there to remind him. One of the few stories that can be considered frighteningly realistic.



### 3 KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT

(*Web of Spider-Man* #32-33, *Spectacular Spider-Man* #131-132, *Amazing Spider-Man* #293-294)

Dark, riveting story of Kraven pulling out all the stops. Always underestimated, he shocked everyone with his passion and method for besting Spider-Man—not to mention the ending!

### 2 ORIGIN OF SPIDER-MAN

(*Amazing Fantasy* #15)

The story that started it all, introducing one of the greatest heroes ever conceived.

### 1 THE NIGHT GWEN STACY DIED

(*Amazing Spider-Man* #121-122)

Archnemesis kills the woman you love? No other story brings out such painful emotions and drive in Spider-Man (which at times continue to haunt him to this day), with an ending that was anything but anticlimactic (again, future revelations aside). These historic two issues shocked fans at the time, and helped revolutionize comic-book storytelling.

## SYMBIOTE MADNESS

During the course of 1984's *Secret Wars*, a huge 12-issue crossover event that teamed Marvel's most popular heroes against its most popular villains, Spider-Man chanced upon an otherworldly black substance that joined with his body to form a symbiotic relationship. This alien symbiote served as a new, organic costume for Spidey, covering his body in what appeared to others as an entirely black suit with a white spider. In addition to making him look cool, the web-slinger's new duds granted him unlimited webbing. It soon became apparent, though, that the symbiote had selfish intentions as it slowly tried to take over Spidey's body. But when Reed Richards discovered its weakness to certain sound frequencies, Peter managed to rid himself of the alien menace for good inside the bell tower of a cathedral. But that wasn't the last he'd hear of the symbiote. Not by a long shot.

Four years later, the symbiote found a new host in the form of Eddie Brock, who blamed Spider-Man for the loss of his job and wife. The result of the two together

was Venom. With all of the powers of Spider-Man and even greater strength, Venom arguably is Spidey's most popular antagonist. However, occasions have risen (most notably in the case of Carnage, a serial killer who merged with a piece of the symbiote detached from Eddie) where the two have unwillingly joined forces.

## ATTACK OF THE CLONE

Who says one-shot adventures from two decades in the past lack any significance? In 1975's *Amazing Spider-Man* #149, a

supervillain known as the Jackal created a clone of Spider-Man meant to destroy the real web-slinger. By issue's end, Spidey defeated the clone—in fact, fallen debris resulting from an explosion appeared to kill the adversary. Not so.

Nineteen years later, the infamous "Clone Saga" began when, having survived the explosion, the Spider-Clone resurfaced in the comics as Ben Reilly. Living out his own life in the meantime (complete

with all of Peter Parker's memories from beforehand), he felt compelled to visit Aunt

May before she passed away. Of course, this led to him meeting Peter Parker, as well as Ben's own adventures as his own superhero—the Scarlet Spider.

About a year later, a revelation occurred that rocked the comic world: Ben Reilly was the real Spider-Man! In other words, for the past two decades Spidey fans had thrilled to the adventures of the Spider-Clone, while the real Peter Parker was nowhere to be seen, living his own life (which didn't include things like marrying Mary Jane). Believe it or not, Marvel actually expected fans to embrace its "ambition" with this story, and for them to accept Ben Reilly as Spider-Man from there on out.

Nope.

Vehement fans demanded the reinstatement of Peter Parker as their webbed hero—and Marvel listened. In late 1996, a story called "Revelations" lived up to its name, bringing back the long-thought-dead Green Goblin into the mix. As the madman revealed, he himself had plotted the whole thing as he led a cabal called the Screamers in Europe. A climactic battle ensued, which ended with Ben giving his life to save Peter. After making the ultimate sacrifice, Ben's body crumbled into dust, revealing him as the clone and Peter as the true Spider-Man.



## A WEB OF ODDITIES

Ever hear about these interesting, often ridiculous Spider-Man moments and tie-ins?

**Ridiculous Crossovers:** Spider-Man has teamed up with such unlikely allies as Howard the Duck, the Transformers, *Ren & Stimpy's* Powdered Toast Man and the '78 cast of *Saturday Night Live*.

**Adventure Spider-Man Toy Line:** You haven't lived until you've played with Spider-Men of the Beach, Safari, Baseball or Football variety.

**The Bombastic Bag-Man:** When the web-slinger needed a replacement costume during the Secret Wars, the Fantastic Four offered him a uniform...but a brown paper bag had to do for the mask. (It's a PS one game unlockable costume, too.)

**Only in Japan:** A late-'70s Japanese TV show portrayed a dirt-bike-riding, supercar-driving Spider-Man with powers granted by aliens. He would sometimes grow to the size of Godzilla to battle Power Rangers-like foam monsters, and he spent his free time hovering above Earth in his flying fortress, the Marveller.

**Peter Parker, the Spectacular Spider-Ham:** Star Comics created a porcine version of Spidey in the mid-'80s, who battled enemies like the Kingpig and Ducktor Doom. A funny concept...but not a very funny read.



## THE FIVE WORST SPIDER-MAN STORYLINES

### 5—LIVE AND LET DIE

(*Web of Spider-Man* #113-116)

Facade, a battle suit with an unknown assailant inside, kills *Daily Bugle* photographer Lance Bannon for discovering his true identity—but since the story never reveals Facade's alter ego, what purpose does Bannon's death serve? Nothing worse than pointlessly ending the life of an established character.

### 4—MAXIMUM CARNAGE

(*Spider-Man Unlimited* #1-2, *Peter Parker: Spider-Man* #35-37, *Amazing Spider-Man* #378-380, *Spectacular Spider-Man* #201-203, *Web of Spider-Man* #101-103)

Good guys chase bad guys. Fine for two or three issues...but 14? Well, at least the Genesis/SNES game was decent.

### 3—SPIDER-MAN: CHAPTER ONE

(*Spider-Man: Chapter One* #0-12)

John Byrne attempts to update Spider-Man's origin—but fails big time. Rule No. 1 in pleasing fans: Never actually try to *change* certain events. Proof that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

### 2—THE FINAL CHAPTER

(*Peter Parker: Spider-Man* #97-98, *Amazing Spider-Man* #441, *Spectacular Spider-Man* #263)

Marvel brings back Aunt May, instantly destroying the classic story depicted in *Amazing Spider-Man* #400. Boo.

### 1—THE CLONE SAGA

(*Spectacular Spider-Man* #216 [Sept. 1994] to *Peter Parker: Spider-Man* #75 [Dec. 1996] and roughly every issue in between)

It did enough things right to earn a spot on our Best list, but otherwise, everything that could have gone wrong in this story did. Next time you find yourselves in a bind, Marvel, ask the guys at [SpiderFan.org](http://SpiderFan.org) for ideas.



2001

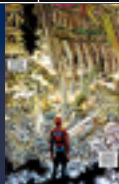
Dec. 2001

Feb. 2002

May 3, 2002

### Amazing Spider-Man Annual (vol. 2) 2001

After months of marital problems, Mary Jane and Peter separate.



### Amazing Spider-Man (vol. 2) #36

Spider-Man witnesses and, along with other Marvel superheroes, learns to deal with the ramifications of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Fan reaction is mixed, some applauding the move, while others find it in questionable taste.



### Amazing Spider-Man (vol. 2) #38

After nearly 40 years of cluelessness, Aunt May reveals to Peter that she knows he is Spider-Man.

Spidey makes his motion-picture debut in Columbia Pictures' Spider-Man.