

The Magazine for Golden Age, Silver Age, & Bronze Age Collectors!

COMIC BOOK



AP

No. 68
May 1999

MARVEL BRONZE AGE...

Planet of the Apes!

DC SILVER AGE...

Flash vs. Grodd the Super-Gorilla

\$5.95 U.S./\$8.95 Can.
A GEMSTONE PUBLICATION

Return to the **PLANET OF THE APES**

When French author Pierre Boulle's 10th novel was published in 1963, it was widely considered to be one of his lesser works. Certainly, said the pundits, it was neither as important nor as commercial as his previous smash, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, which became an Academy Award winning film.

The novel was called *Le Planete Des Singes* (or "Monkey Planet" in English), and like the prognosticators, who thought *Star Trek* would die when the TV show was canceled or those who suggested that comics would disappear after the advent of video games, the pundits were wrong.

Producer Arthur P. Jacobs was an old-fashioned Hollywood executive who had climbed his way up the ladder to a position of recognition among the elite of the movie business. He had most recently finished *Dr. Doolittle* and latched onto the film rights of Boulle's novel. He had the rights and the basic idea of what he wanted to do, but he didn't have a script, a star, or a studio. In Hollywood, that puts you on a par with the valet who parks your car. (The valet probably has an option on something, too.) Jacobs, though, believed in the property, and he doggedly pitched the concept around town in his unrelenting attempts to get the film made.

Even while he couldn't get a positive response from the studio heads, Jacobs started building his team. Charlton Heston was already a well-known and highly respected actor when Jacobs approached him. The star of such classics as *Ben Hur* and *The Ten Commandments* was intrigued.

"The novel was singularly uncinematic; there wasn't even a treatment outlining an effective script," Heston wrote in his 1996 autobiography (entitled *In The Arena*) "Still, I smelled a good film in it. All Arthur had was the rights to the novel and a portfolio of paintings depicting possible scenes. He came up to the house and displayed them, along with what Hollywood calls 'The Pitch.' When Frank Schaffner came by, he liked it enough to commit as director, but Arthur was a long way from persuading a studio to put up any actual money to make the movie."

With Heston and director Franklin J. Schaffner (Oscar winner for directing *Patton*



A large, detailed illustration of a Klingon warrior's face, wearing a traditional helmet with a prominent crest. The warrior has a fierce expression, showing sharp teeth and a wide-eyed, intense gaze. The background is dark and atmospheric, suggesting a battlefield or a cave.

in 1970) attached, the film still went nowhere for the next year and a half. If there truly is a "Development Hell" as it's called in the trade, Arthur Jacobs and his project were in it.

During that time, though, Jacobs was able to elicit some interest from Richard Zanuck, the head of 20th Century Fox. He was interested in the concept, but he wondered how audiences would react to the apes? Would they be believable or would moviegoers just laugh.

EASY, JASON... EASY...

YOU DIRTY, STINKING, CRAZY APE...!! WHAT'D YOU GO FOR...??

PLEASE, GRIMALDI-- YOUR TEMPER....!!

SO LONG AS I LIVE AND BREATHE...

--NO ONE WILL FLIRT WITH MY MALAGUENA!!

Return to the PLANET OF THE APES

In the amazing age of special effects wizardry that constitutes Hollywood today, it's hard to over-estimate the importance of the believability of the apes in the first film in its day. This wasn't going to be the guy-in-a-gorilla-suit stealing the pretty young woman in some 1930's or '40's grade B adventure. If this film were to be made, it would be a multi-million-dollar undertaking. Neither Zanuck nor his board of directors wanted to be seen as spending their stockholders' money on this movie if people were just going to laugh at it.

Jacobs, Heston, and Schaffner suggested a test film to show that the ape characters could be taken seriously. The result not only sold Zanuck, who in turn sold the Fox board of directors, it became one of the enduring underpinnings of the franchise's myths.

For many years this film was unknown to

fans, but once revealed there was much speculation as to whether or not it still existed. It was if not the Holy Grail than certainly a close second to Apes' fans. Until the recent documentary *Behind the Planet of the Apes*, only snippets of this film had ever been seen by the public. Even with the extended cut in the documentary, few have ever seen the entire test.

Starring Heston as astronaut Colonel Thomas (which, of course, became Col. Taylor) and Edward G. Robinson as the orangutan Dr. Zaius, this five-minute test film featured an early, much less detailed version of the ape faces which would later win acclaim for creative make-up supervisor John Chambers.

From the test one can see that Robinson would have made an interesting Dr. Zaius, but it would have been an almost entirely disparate version of the one portrayed by Maurice Evans (an acclaimed Shakespearean actor known to American audiences chiefly as Samantha's father on the sitcom *Bewitched*).

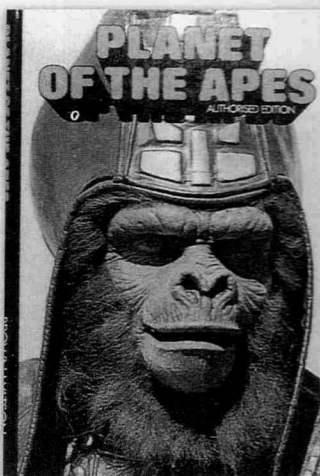
Although this script was more talky and differed dramatically from the finished version, there are some elements that survived in the feature film (particularly toward the archeological dig scene at the end where Taylor and Zaius exchange some of their best dialogue in the cave). Regardless of the differences and similarities, the test film enabled Zanuck to get the money to give the go ahead to Jacobs.

Next stop, The Twilight Zone

Jacobs had been in regular contact with writer-producer Rod Serling, known to fans of science fiction (and great television) as the man behind *The Twilight Zone* and later, *Night Gallery*. Serling's connection with *Planet of the Apes* pre-dated Jacobs' by several years.

The film rights had first been optioned by the King Brothers, "...who did mostly Indian elephant pictures shot for about \$1.80—because elephants weren't even scale then," Serling told Marvel's *Planet of the Apes* magazine in 1974. He was con-

Ed Hannigan's artwork from "Evolution's Nightmare" in POTA #5.



Apes around the world—(above) one of the British Apes annuals, and (below) Guide prices on the Marvel and Gold Key Apes magazines and comics.

PLANET OF THE APES GOOD 'N' CHEAP

SOURCES: *The Guide: The Overstreet Comic Book Price Update #2* (Dec 1998) and *The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide #28* (Apr 1998)

PLANET OF THE APES (Marvel Comics)

#	GD	FN	NM
#1	2.50	7.50	24.00
#2	1.50	4.50	12.00
#3-10	1.10	3.30	9.00
#11-20	1.25	3.75	10.00
#21-29	1.75	5.25	14.00

ADVENTURES ON THE PLANET OF THE APES (Marvel Comics, color reprints of b&w magazine movie adaptations)

1	1.10	3.30	9.00
2-5	2.00	5.00	
6-11	1.00	2.80	7.00
Buckler #2-c, Nasser #7-c, Starlin #1-c, 6-c			

MOVIE COMICS (Gold Key)

Beneath The Planet of the Apes #30044-012			
Pull-out poster, photo-c w/poster	6.00	18.00	60.00

vinced a movie could be made inexpensively, so he wrote a treatment with a scene-by-scene breakdown for the company. The rights next were acquired by Blake Edwards, known then for *Peter Gunn*, but later famous for the *Pink Panther* film series. Serling said Edwards told him not to worry about the budget. The resulting screenplay, he speculated, would have cost \$100 million to produce (in 1974!) and was very similar to the original novel in that there was an ape civilization on a par with our own.

When Jacobs acquired the rights and a more modest budget (\$5.8 million was the final reported figure) was arranged, Serling again went back to the typewriter. He wrote three drafts of the screenplay before the duties were handled over to Michael Wilson, who had previously worked on *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, among many other projects.

Among the many contributions to the mythos which stem from Serling's drafts, the structure of the film itself and the final scene in which Taylor realizes that he isn't on some distant planet after all.

Wilson, even according to Serling, was the one who added the inverted humor to the screenplay. Lines like "The dearly departed once said to me, 'I never met an ape I didn't like,'" or "You know what they say. 'Human see, human do,'" clearly helped inject the audience with the world-turned-upside-down feeling the character Taylor was supposed to be experiencing, though they did so in a humorous fashion.

With Charlton Heston as Taylor, Roddy McDowall as Cornelius, Kim Hunter as Zira, Maurice Evans as Dr. Zaius and Linda Harrison as Nova, *Planet of the Apes* was ready to roll... and roll it did! In addition to the average pitfalls that face a film crew, *Apes* had at least two, which were somewhat unique. The actors playing the lead apes spent four hours at the beginning of each day getting into make-up and two hours each night getting out of it, and if that wasn't enough, Heston caught the flu and almost couldn't work.

Like the scene in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* where Indiana Jones just shoots the mammoth, menacing swordsman (which came about because Harrison Ford had dysentery and could barely stand), the timing of Heston's illness lead to a great moment.

When he returned, his voice was weak. It was a struggle to get the dialogue out, but that effort paid off with one of the most famous movie lines in a science fiction film: "Take your stinking paws off me, you damn dirty ape." If he had been healthy, the line would have been the same, but would it have had that same raw quality? One can only speculate.

The film was released February 8, 1968, and a small dynasty was born. It was hailed on many levels. Though it is obviously a discourse on racism, it stirred up none of the reaction that a movie with a then-modern setting dealing with similar issues would have raised. To be sure, many of the viewers were children and they didn't care about messages. To them, it was just a great movie. According to all reports, *Beneath the Planet of*



the Apes and the other sequels were afterthoughts, reactions to the boffo box office reports for *Planet of the Apes*.

[Editor's note: Merchandising, too, was very much an afterthought then, but for more details on Apes collectibles check out Terry Hoknes' excellent contribution on POTA collectibles elsewhere in this issue. SEE PAGE 44.]

Rod Serling wrote a proposal for the sequel, as did Pierre Boulle (some of Boulle's *Planet of the Men* proposal made it into the third film, *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*) and others.

Although Heston did not want to participate in *Beneath*, he agreed to reprise his role as Taylor in the early scenes and again at the end of the film, donating his agreed-upon Guild-minimum fee to his son Fraser's school.

Roddy McDowall was tied to another project, making this the only live-action *Apes* film or show he didn't act in. He was, however, in the film, as it begins where the first one left off. Since his character, Cornelius, was an ape, McDowall could at least visually be replaced. Heston's Taylor, though, was the character the audience was supposed to identify

NBC's *Return to the Planet of the Apes* was the last new filmed Ape entertainment produced.

EDITORS OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

The mid-1970s wasn't exactly the easiest time to be an editor or editor-in-chief at Marvel. As matter of fact, after Stan Lee and Roy Thomas, the "chief" was almost a turn-stile until Jim Shooter arrived.

Marvel's Editors-in-Chief

Roy Thomas.....	#1-3
Marv Wolfman.....	#4-10
Archie Goodwin.....	#11-29

P.O.T.A. Editors

Tony Isabella.....	#1-3
Don McGregor.....	#4-8
Archie Goodwin.....	#9
John Warner (associate editor).....	#10-23
John Warner (editor).....	#24-29

Return to the PLANET OF THE APES

with, so replacing him was trickier.

James Franciscus was cast as Brent, an astronaut sent out after Taylor's original crew. He follows a different route, but basically ends up going through the same sort of things Taylor did, even finding out that he's back home on Earth, not some weird way-off world.

While the story lacks in originality (it was, after all, the sequel), it is still a gripping adventure and serves as a further exploration into the world the apes have built.

In the story by associate producer Mort Abrahams and writer Paul Dehn (*Goldfinger*), viewers discover that mute humans

hunted by apes are not our only inheritors. Below the surface of a nuked New York lives a race of radiation-scarred mutants with amazing telepathic powers. These mutants, lead by a man called Mendez XXVI, fear Brent (although it's not said why with their powers they couldn't tell he was telling the truth), but they fear the approaching ape army even more. Brent and Taylor are reunited and as the apes attack,

they set off a bomb, a last reminder of our civilization. Short on the subtle social commentary of the first film, *Beneath* goes for its legacy in one big action. Taylor, dying, presses the button that destroys the world.

Beneath the Planet of the Apes was released in 1970, and that should have been that. Except it did well enough that Fox want-

ed a sequel. Again. Since Colonel Taylor had just blown up the Earth in the year 3955, it didn't seem like there would be much ground on which to base a third film. To the financial types at Fox, that was just an annoying detail, a detail Arthur Jacobs was only too happy to confront and turn into another film.

Escape from the Planet of the Apes (1971) was written by Paul Dehn, who would then go on to write the screenplay for the fourth film and the story for the fifth.

In *Escape*, Cornelius (once again played by Roddy McDowall), Zira (still portrayed by Kim Hunter), and the previously unmentioned Dr. Milo (Sal Mineo) escaped the destruction of the Earth only to be sent back in time to the then current 1970s. Milo is killed right away before he can explain to their new human friends exactly how he figured out how to work Col. Taylor's spacecraft (which sank in a lake the last time the viewers saw it).

Many of the racial and societal themes addressed in the first film were confronted again from the reverse angle as the apes are made into first oddities, then celebrities, and then fugitives. Finally, they are killed in an attempt to prevent the downfall of man and the society they had come from.

Yes, the films had killed their leading characters. Now no one from the first film was left alive. That could have been that if *Escape* hadn't performed at the box office, but it did. This time, though, Arthur Jacobs and his staff were prepared. During the story, Zira gave birth to a babe she named Milo. At the end of the film, we see that the humans have killed a baby chimp, but not the right one. Milo lives on with circus owner Sr. Armando (Ricardo Montalban).

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes (1972) is set in what was the near future, 1991. The dogs and cats have been killed by a plague, and apes have replaced them. First they were pets, but now they are slaves.

It is a bleak, brutal, and dark future explored in a fairly unflinching fashion by writer Dehn and director J. Lee Thompson. It is, as one would suspect, a further and perhaps more direct attack on racial issues.

Roddy McDowall was the only remaining cast member, this time playing the grown-up version of baby Milo. Now he goes by the name Cesar. In short order, he escalates the level of ape discontent into a full-blown insurrection. Man, in this city, is overthrown.

"Tonight, we have seen the birth... of the planet of the apes!" Cesar told the cheering throng of rebel apes. Only that dialogue and

Mike Ploog's fluid artwork brought apes and humans alike to life.



Jason & Alexander from "Terror on the Planet of the Apes," an on-going story in the Marvel magazines.





their other words in that scene were "looped," or dubbed in later. The original speech, perhaps lost to time, featured a call to genocide as well as the call to arms. Fox insisted that it be cut rather than be perceived as encouraging such behavior (the Watts Riots of the '60s were still fresh in everyone's minds).

Alpha... and Omega

When *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* began production, Arthur Jacobs knew it would be the last in the series. Budgets had dwindled from each picture to the next, dropping from \$5.8 million for the first film to \$1.8 million for *Battle*, and Jacobs wanted to move onto other projects (he had produced Woody Allen's *Play It Again, Sam* for director Herbert Ross in 1972). With Cesar (McDowall) now the leader of an agrarian ape-human city, the former slave masters (the humans) must now struggle for equality with their former slaves and current masters. The situation for the humans is, by and large, much better than it was for the apes in *Conquest*, but it is not freedom. This subtle point was not as powerfully carried out as it could have been with a larger budget, but that was not to be the case.

While of interest to *Apes* fans, there is little to recommend the last feature to outsiders. There is, though, one interesting point in this film that even many die-hard fans aren't aware of. There are two distinctly different prints of *Battle for the Planet of the*

Apes. In the second, more rare version (which follows the final draft of the screenplay), the viewer sees a few key scenes regarding the Alpha Omega bomb. The viewer also sees Mendez, the Governor's aide, decide not to use it. In this version it is clear that he is the forefather of Mendez XXVI from *Beneath*.

Battle for the Planet of the Apes was released in 1973, and Arthur P. Jacobs died suddenly in 1974. At the time, Ape-mania was in full swing. The Marvel Comics magazine *Planet of the Apes* was launched. For some reason it was made clear that Marvel could not adapt the upcoming television show, but they could adapt the films and create original stories [see sidebar]. While the royalties generated by the magazine and other products were not even a blip on the radar by today's *Star Wars*-inspired standards, *Apes* merchandise was a big seller.

That same year, Twentieth Century Fox and CBS teamed up to create the television series *Planet of the Apes*. Set in a different time (3085), earlier than the first film but later than *Battle*, the series followed the exploits of two human astronauts, Alan Virdon (Ron Harper) and Pete Burke (James Naughton), who enlist the companionship of a chimpanzee, Galen (Roddy McDowall) as they avoid capture by the ape authorities.

As with most dramas of the time, Virdon, Burke and Galen spent their time fighting social injustices (It was, after all, the '70s). The condition of humans in this period is substantially

One of Tom Sutton's vast city ships from "The Future History Chronicles" in Marvel's POTA magazine. See our exclusive Doug Moench interview beginning on page 31.

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Return to the PLANET OF THE APES

Continued from 25

below what it was in *Battle*, but still above what is was in the first film.

The Dr. Zaius of this period (Booth Colman) definitely knows that man once ruled the planet and fears Virton and Burke for that reason. His military counterpart, General Urko (*Star Trek's* Mark Lenard) just knows they represent a threat to their way of life.

The show was up against ABC's *The Night Stalker* and didn't do well at all in the ratings. It was canceled after just 14 episodes were filmed. For reasons lost to the murkiness of time, one episode did not air in the U.S. while the show was on network television (it did air overseas with the original broadcasts). The thirteenth episode, "The Liberator," got its first U.S. broadcast during the Sci-Fi Channel's *Planet of the Apes* re-runs.

Even that, though, wasn't enough to kill the apes off. The next year, NBC unveiled *Return to the Planet of the Apes*.

Return was yet another take on the same song. Three astronauts (Bill Hudson, Judy Franklin and Jeff Carter), crash land on the planet, meet the humans, meet the apes, find out it's Earth and so on. This time it's 3979.

The interesting twist was the Underdwellers, who were somewhat like the mutants in *Beneath*, but who worshipped a statue of Judy which read "Lost USA," so they called her "Usa." It was clearly in contradiction to some elements of the films, but by and large the stories were very inventive.

The series was produced by David DePatie and the legendary Friz



Freleng (without digressing too far into the realm of editorializing, it is safe to say that Freleng didn't get "legendary" with this show). As with many animated programs of its era, the most discernible feature of the program was the obvious cost-cutting approach taken in the re-use of standard scenes, action and backgrounds.

The above complaints notwithstanding, it is definitely possible to detect the influence of director-associate producer Doug Wildey in the production. *Return to the Planet of the Apes* was canceled after one season, though, and the Marvel magazine soon followed it. For many years, there were no new Apes stories.

The 30th Anniversary re-release late last year and the untimely death of Roddy McDowall soon after called attention to the films again, and critics seemed willing to take another look at the series.

Revivals have already happened in comics. Adventure Comics, then an imprint of Malibu Comics, published a series in the early '90s that was initially well received before getting buried by the marketplace. On the internet, ape websites abound. There are brand new trading cards and action figures. The boxed set of the videos is a top seller and the 30th Anniversary documentary *Behind the Planet of the Apes* has filled in the missing pieces for many collectors.

It is film, though, where the uncertainty lies. There have been many rumors of remakes or new *Planet of the Apes* films for several years now, but there has yet to be any concrete progress. A call to the right people at Fox will earn one the answer, "It's in development."

The phrase "in development," however, can mean anything from "we start shooting tomorrow" to a discussion where one executive looks at the other and asks, "Do you think we ought to remake *Planet of the Apes*?"

Thanks to Mark Haynes, Mike Wilbur, Arnold T. Blumberg, Terry Holknes, & the rest of the guys at Ape Management.

Doug Moench and Mike Ploog built on the movies' legacy in the Marvel magazine.

MARVEL PLANET OF THE APES CHECKLIST

Here's the Story

Adaptations

Planet of the Apes #1-6

Beneath the Planet of the Apes #7-11

Escape from the Planet of the Apes #12-16

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes #17-21

Battle for the Planet of the Apes #23-28

Original Stories

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

#1-4, 6, 8, 11, 13-14, 19-20, 23, 26-28

Evolution's Nightmare #5

Kingdom on an Island of the Apes #9-10, 21

Future History Chronicles #12, 15, 17, 24, 29

Quest for the Planet of the Apes #22 (two parts)

Return to the PLANET OF THE APES

The Apes books, though out of print, remain relatively easy to find.

Within the writing community as it exists outside of the comic arena, film and TV adaptations are generally looked upon as the unloved stepchildren of real novels; books that are written to capitalize on the success of a given project (or recoup expenses if the show is a bomb). The writers that take on these projects are, by and large, taking them on out of financial necessity.

Because of the stigma that goes along with the word "novelization" (sometimes deservedly so), substantial contributions are sometimes overlooked. For example, Alan Dean Foster's work on the Star Trek Log series, based on Star Trek's animated incarnation, contained significant enhancements in terms of drama and characterization.

This observation holds true in the novelizations of three of the four Planet of the Apes sequel films. While the original Pierre Boulle novel served as the foundation for the screenplay that started the series, writers such as John Jakes, Jerry Pournelle, and Michael Avallone took liber-

BOOK 'EM

Novel & Movie NOVELIZATIONS

by Mark Haynes & J. C. Vaughn

ties that not only enhanced their individual efforts but served to tighten an already strong continuity between the stories.

Planet of the Apes (original novel)

The entire Planet of the Apes phenomenon was born of the Pierre Boulle novel *Le Planet De Singes*, first published in France in 1963. In the translation to English it became known as *Monkey Planet*. He also contributed a draft screenplay for the first film and an un-produced sequel, *Planet of the Men*, elements of which showed up in *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*. The book is distinctly different than the film and there was no novelization.

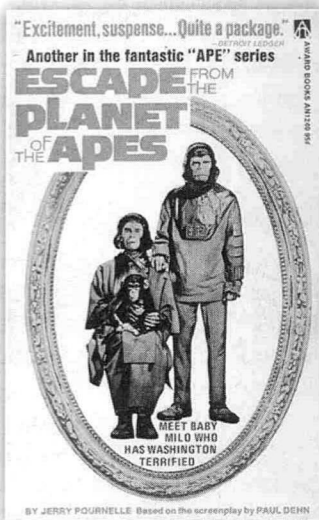
Astronaut Arthur Levain and his colleagues journey from Earth and end up on a world where apes are the dominant species. Aside from the astronauts themselves, major differences include the level of technology (much higher than the film apes) and the treatment of humans (mostly better, but still not good). The novel ends with Levain and Nova returning to Earth only to be greeted by apes. Interestingly, the novel touched on the subject of race conscious memory much earlier than many of its science fiction peers.

Beneath the Planet of the Apes (movie novelization)

This adaptation of the second Planet of the Apes feature is based on a screenplay by Paul Dehn and is the first look at familiar events from a different perspective. The differences between novelization and film are more psychological in nature in their examination of how his mission to rescue Taylor has presented astronaut Brent with a mind-bending contradiction that brings him to the edge of his sanity.

In the film, actor James Franciscus portrayed Brent as more of the action hero, using whatever means at his disposal in his quest to find Taylor. In the novelization, author Michael Avallone

The novelizations of the second (by Michael Avallone, left) and third (by Jerry Pournelle, below) Apes movies.



Beneath The Planet of The Apes

A novel by Michael Avallone based upon characters created by Pierre Boulle

When men discovered that the fantastic Planet of the Apes was their own Earth, it was only the beginning of the most incredible adventure of all time...

An Arthur P. Jacobs Production for 20th Century-Fox

paints a different portrait. His Brent is a man on the edge. The idea of ending up on a planet where apes talk and humans are dumb brutes is something that Brent fights as much with his head as with his hands. As the story moves underground, so does the mood of the writing. The realization that he is still on Earth sinking slowly in, Brent becomes more resigned and moves ever closer to madness as new proof of his fate confronts him at every turn.

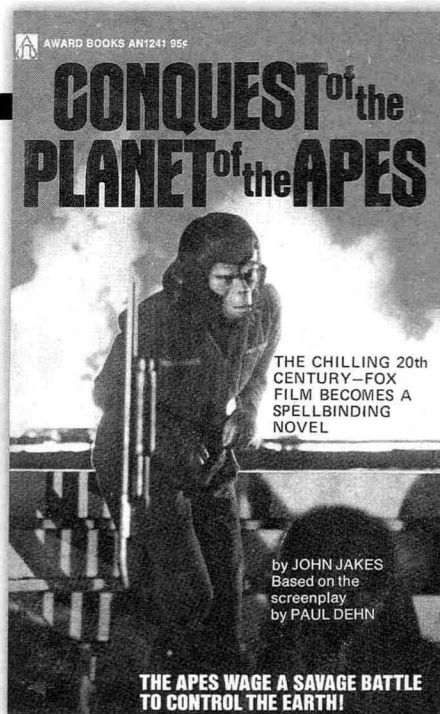
Escape from the Planet of the Apes (movie novelization)

This novelization had probably the toughest job of the series... because it required the author to explain how apes, who had no technology, no sources of power, and could not even conceive of flight, could repair and launch a spaceship. But Jerry Pournelle, writing from a Paul Dehn screenplay, does a masterful job of re-crafting ape society and avoids contradicting what has come before... all the while making us believe that apes can fly!

Several key sequences from the film are expanded in the book. While in the holding pen at the Los Angeles Zoo, the ape refugees marvel at the technological society commanded by man. The doomed Dr. Milo is moved to remark that "the stories were true" about man having such a culture.

Later, as Cornelius and Zira are examined by the Presidential Commission, Cornelius reveals that the apes did not have technological culture not because they didn't know how, but because they had no choice.

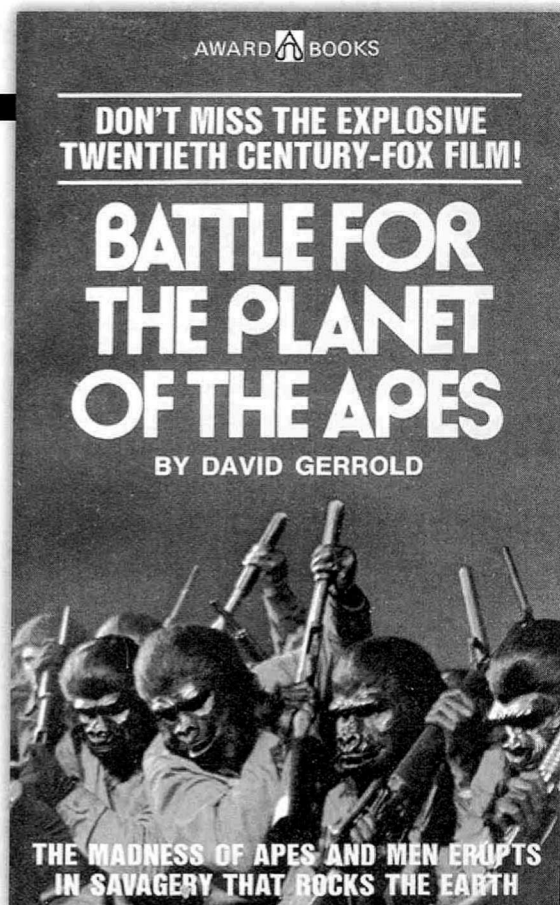
It seems that, although not revealed to the general ape public, man had completely depleted and exhausted the fossil fuels from planet Earth. Following these revelations, and the introduction of the kindly circus owner Armando (who will play a pivotal role in the next installment), the story moves forward and we are left with a greater sense of injustice at the fate of the apes, present and future.



Conquest of the Planet of the Apes (movie novelization)

In this installment of the series, director J. Lee Thompson (director of the original *Cape Fear*) created a level of violence that was unlike any previous apes film. Indeed, it was so violent and incendiary that a re-edited version with a new ending replaced the version that had been screened for test audiences. Following director

(Continued on page 30)



Before *North & South* and after "The Trouble With Tribbles," John Jakes and David Gerrold wrote *Apes* novelizations.

THE COMICS CONNECTION

Apes TV Novelizations and their tie to Bronze Age Marvel

The four *Planet of the Apes* TV show novelizations were written by George Alec Effinger, a Marvel horror veteran. He wrote such Bronze Age wonders the last four (of six) issues of *Gullivar Jones*, *Warrior of Mars* and the first four adventures of "Thongor, Warrior of Lost Lemuria" in *Creatures on the Loose* #18-25. He was pre-

ceded on the title by Roy Thomas and followed by DC sci-fi legend Gardner Fox and later Steve Gerber. *Creatures on the Loose* would later contain "Manwolf."

Planet of the Apes #1:
Man the Fugitive
Planet of the Apes #2:
Escape to Tomorrow
Planet of the Apes #3:
Journey into Terror
Planet of the Apes #4:
Lord of the Apes

PLANET OF THE APES CHECKLIST THE MAGAZINES

#1 (Aug 1974)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

Prologue

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Planet of the Apes

Part One

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#2 (Oct 1974)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"The Forbidden Zone of Forgotten Horrors"

"Lick the Sky Crimson"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Planet of the Apes

Chapter Two "World of Captive Humans"

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#3 (Dec 1974)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"Spawn of the Mutant Pits"

"The Abomination Arena!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artists: Mike Ploog &

Frank Chiarmonte

Planet of the Apes

Chapter Three

"Manhunt"

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#4 (Jan 1975)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"A Riverboat named Simian"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artists: Mike Ploog & Frank Chiarmonte

Planet of the Apes

Chapter Four "The Trial"

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#5 (Feb 1975)

Evolution's Nightmare

Writer: Doug Moench

Artists: Ed Hannigan &

Jim Mooney

Planet of the Apes

Chapter Five "Into The Forbidden Zone"

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#6 (Mar 1975)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"Maleguena in Zone Forbidden"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Planet of the Apes

Chapter Four "The Secret"

Writer: Doug Moench

Pencils: George Tuska

Inks: Mike Esposito

#7 (Apr 1975)

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 1

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 2

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#8 (May 1975)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"The Planet Inheritors"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 3 "The Warhead Messiah!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#9 (Jun 1975)

Kingdom on an Island of the Apes

Part One

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 4 "The Horror Inquisition!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#10 (Jul 1975)

Kingdom on an Island of the Apes

Part Two

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 5 "Children of the Bomb!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#11 (Aug 1975)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"When the Lawgiver Returns"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Beneath the Planet of the Apes

Part 6 "The Hell of Holocaust!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#12 (Sep 1975)

Future History Chronicles

"City of Nomads"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Tom Sutton

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 1 "Upward to the Earth!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

#13 (Oct 1975, cover says Aug)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"The Magick-Man's Last Gasp Purple Light Show"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 2 "Strangers in a Stranger Land!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

#14 (Nov 1975, cvr price drops to 75¢)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"Up The Nose-Tube to Monkey-Trash"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Mike Ploog

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 3 "Trouble in Paradise Lost!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

#15 (Dec 1975)

Future History Chronicles

"Dreamer in Emerald Silence"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Tom Sutton

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 4 "In The Cradle of a Father's Sins!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

#16 (Jan 1976)

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 5 "When the Calliope Cries Death!"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

Escape from the Planet of the Apes

Part 6 "But Who Shall Inherit the Meek?"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Rico Rival

#17 (Feb 1976)

Future History Chronicles

"Graveyard of Lost Cities"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Tom Sutton

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes

Part 1 "Slaves"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#18 (Mar 1976)

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes

Part 2 "Rites of Bondage"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes

Part 3 "To Serve the Slayers"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artist: Alfredo Alcalá

#19 (Apr 1976)

Terror on the Planet of the Apes

"Demons of the Psychodrome"

Writer: Doug Moench

Artists: Mike Ploog & Tom Sutton

(Continued on page 30)


BOOK 'EM *(Continued from page 27)*

Thompson's lead, author John Jakes (yes, that John Jakes) depicts a world of brutality and totalitarianism that makes this novelization a worthy successor to its film counterpart. Jakes, taking full advantage of his ability to create without a thought to movie ratings, leads the reader through a visceral study of apes in revolt.

Set in 1991, the story follows Armando and Caesar (the now fully-grown son of Cornelius and Zira) as they travel to a city where apes make up the cruelly treated servant class. Although it is not clear what specific events have happened to create such a drastic change in American government as depicted in the film, the novelization presents a theory. The abandonment of basic civil rights in favor of a police state is the direct result of the apes travelling to the past as seen in *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*. More specifically, Cornelius' testimony, at the time hypothetical, regarding how his society came to be, with the plague that killed all the Earth's dogs and cats, is confirmed as true and was the turning point that turned the United States into a police state. [See John Jakes sidebar]

Battle for the Planet of the Apes (movie novelization)

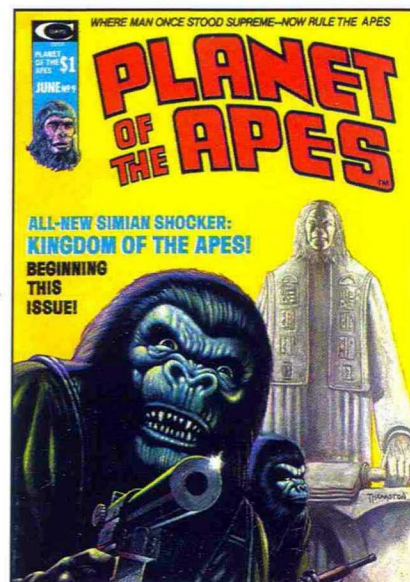
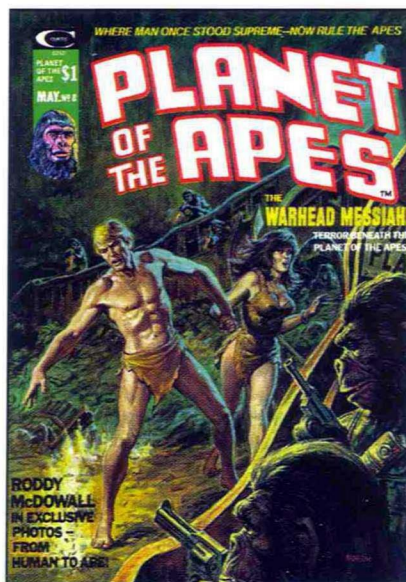
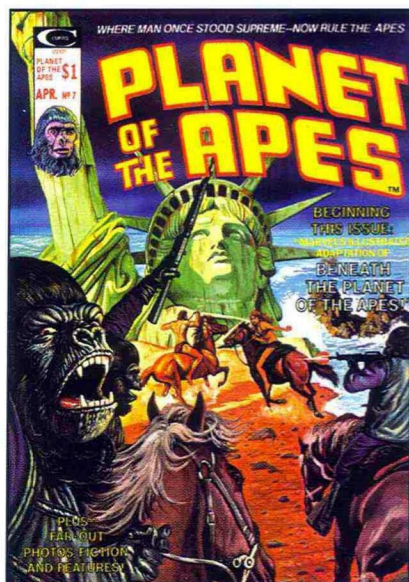
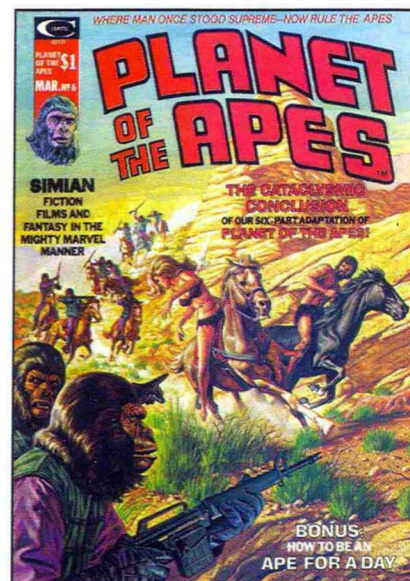
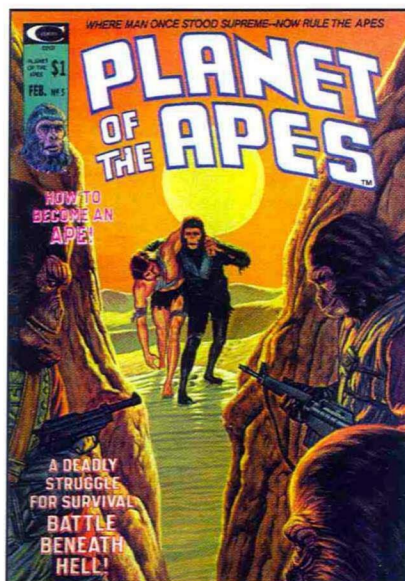
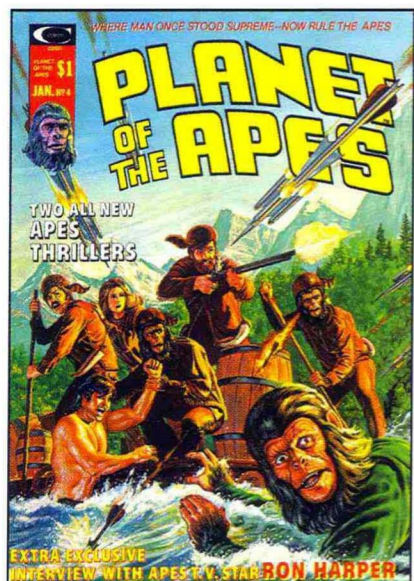
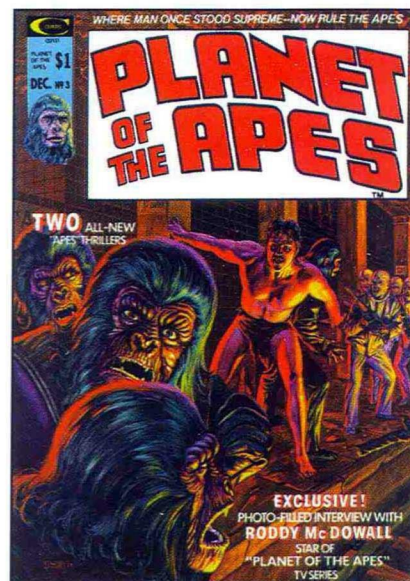
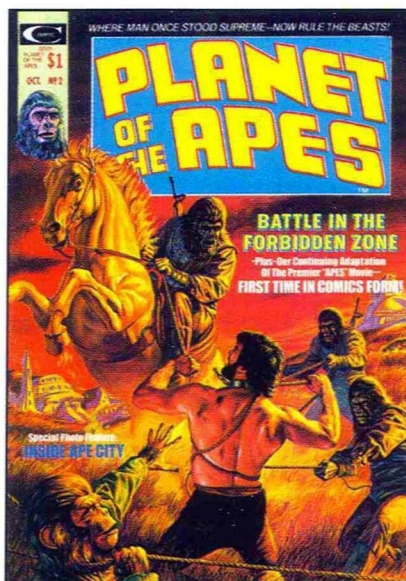
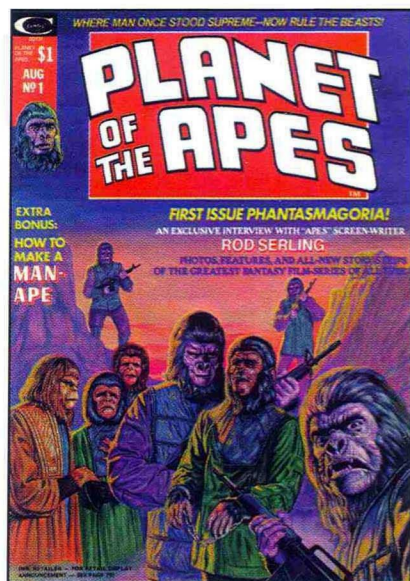
In the aftermath of nuclear holocaust, the fifth and final chapter of the apes saga follows Caesar as he leads a group of human and ape survivors into the wilderness to start a new world. While his intentions are noble, it is obvious that the humans do not enjoy equality with the apes. Further, there are apes (specifically General Aldo) that delight in bullying their one-time masters. This is set against the backdrop of Caesar's search for information about his parents and Earth's ultimate fate in the bombed-out remains of a nearby city. While in the city, Caesar's party is discovered by mutated humans who still live in the radioactive ruins. Again directed by J. Lee Thompson, this film is played more for its action-adventure content and less for its sociopolitical commentary.

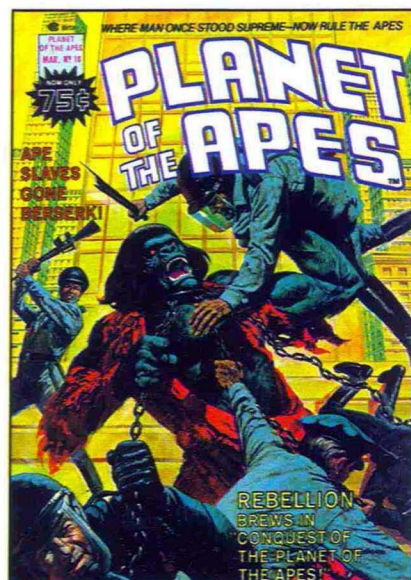
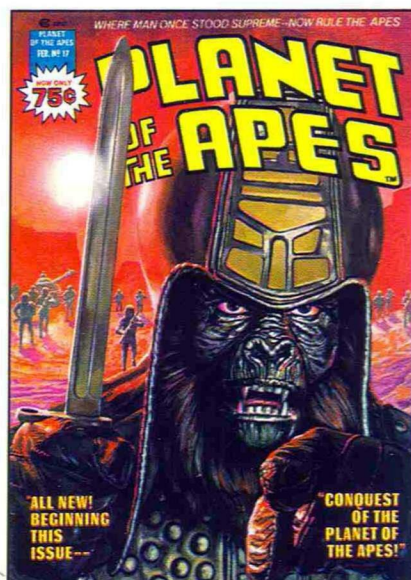
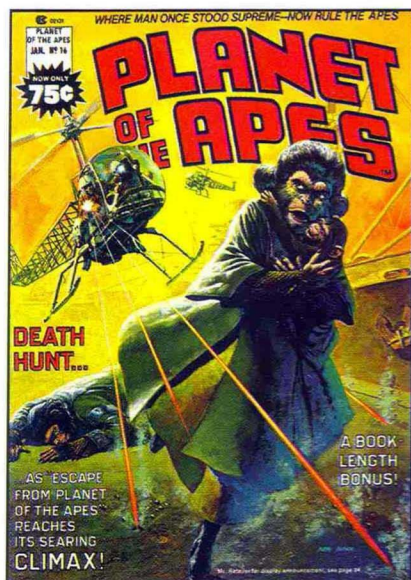
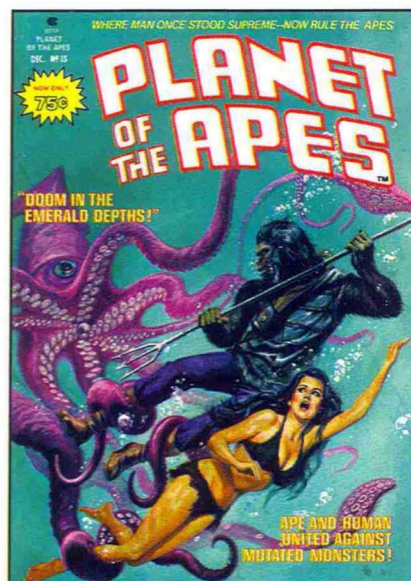
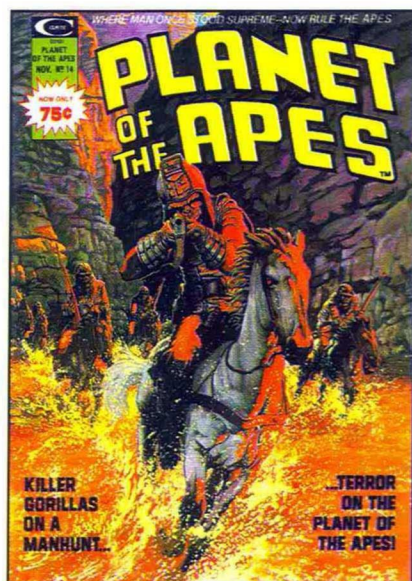
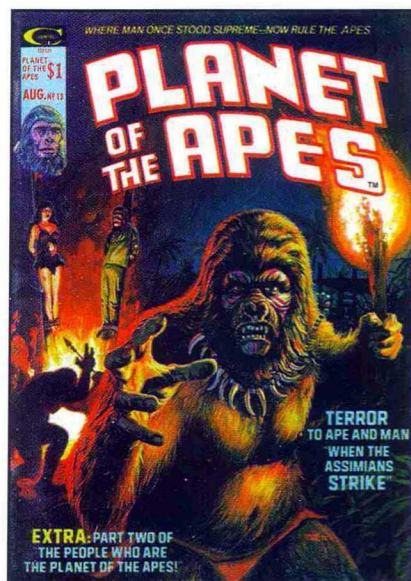
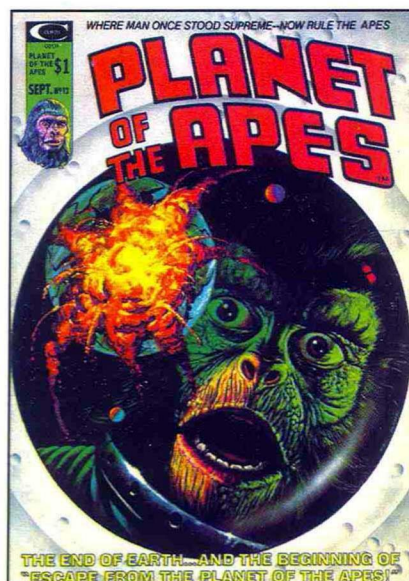
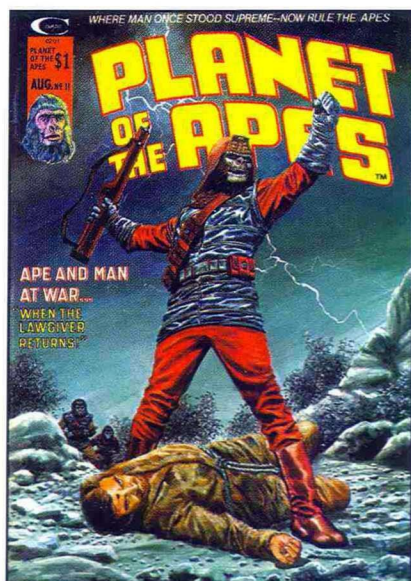
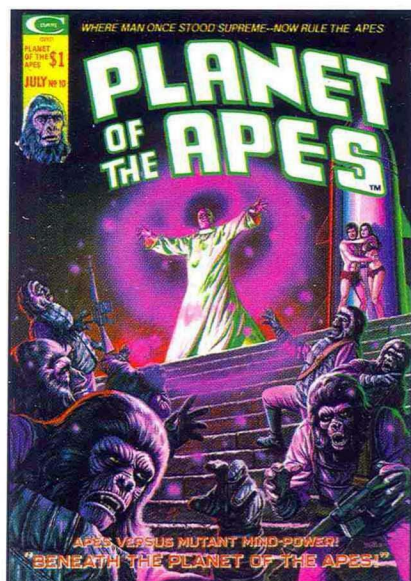
The novelization by David Gerrold follows this lead and the result is little more than a bland retelling of what was, essentially, a film for children. While there are some notable elements to this adaptation and there is a brilliant scene with the humans as they share a forbidden meal of meat (the apes have dictated a vegetarian diet), the novelization follows the film almost like a blueprint. 

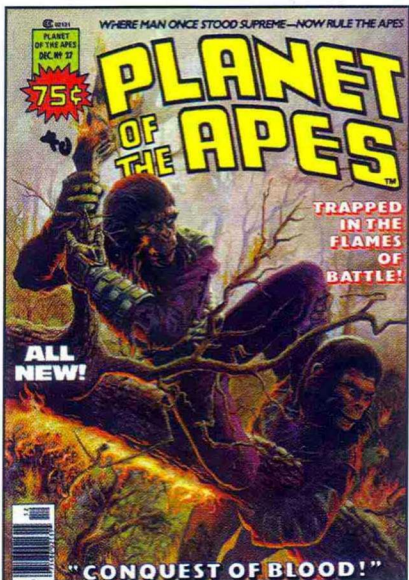
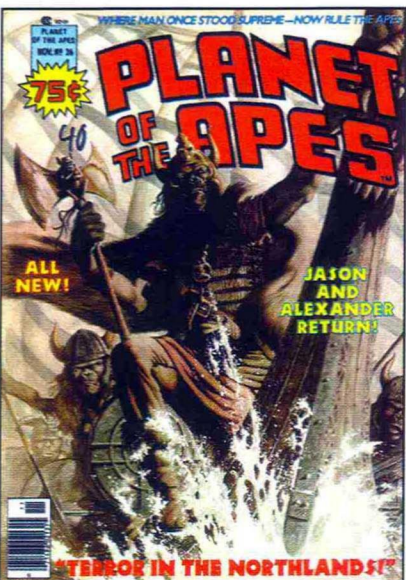
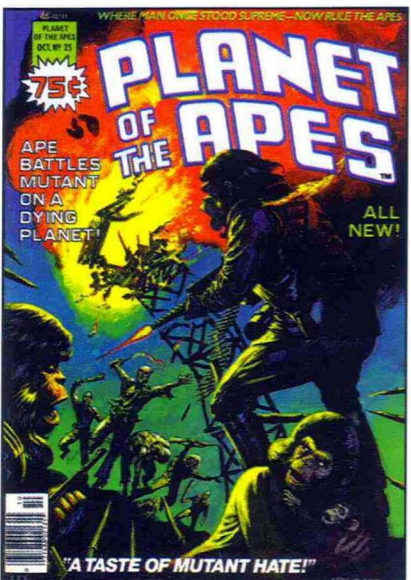
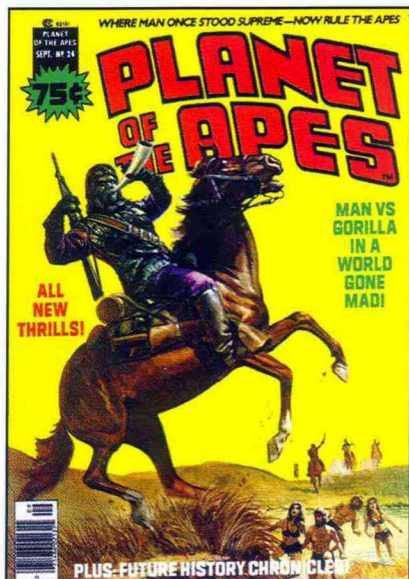
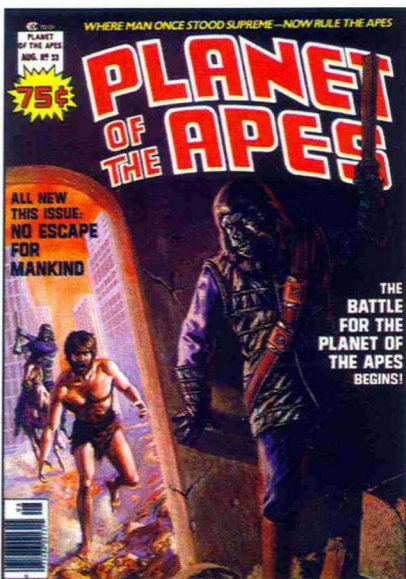
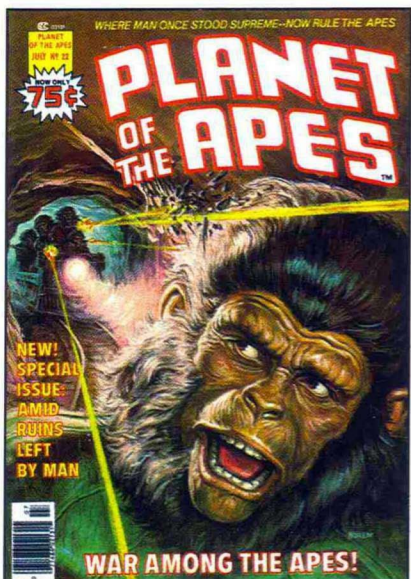
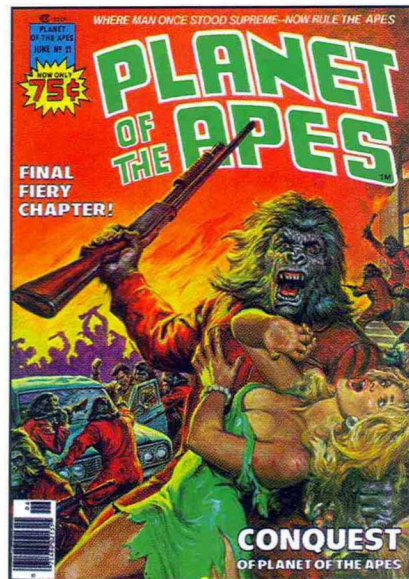
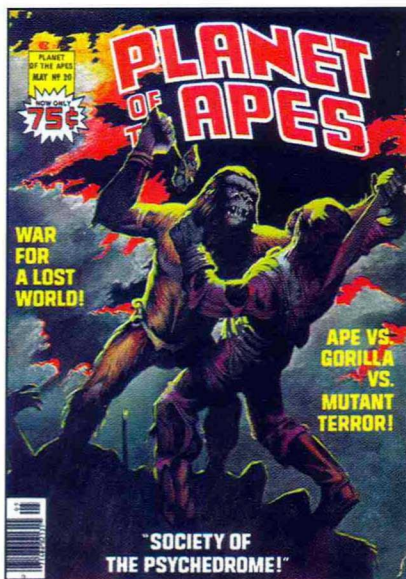
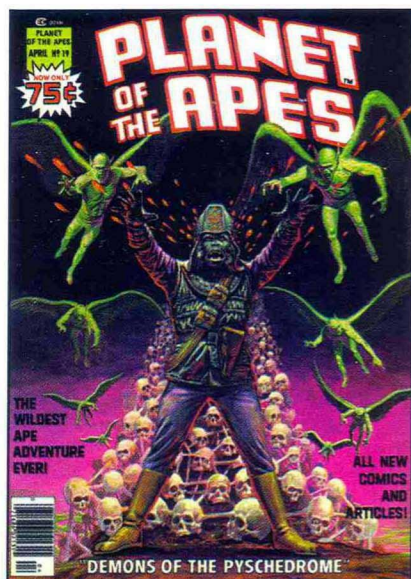
PLANET OF THE APES CHECKLIST

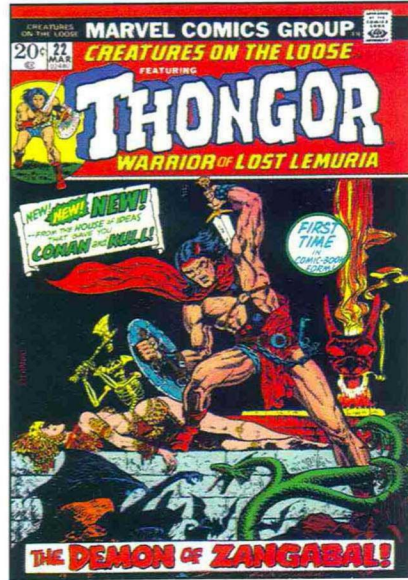
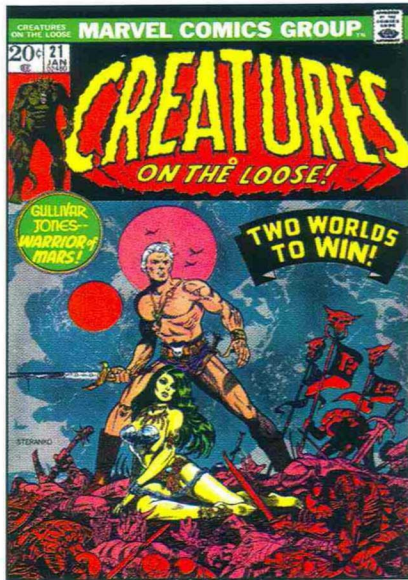
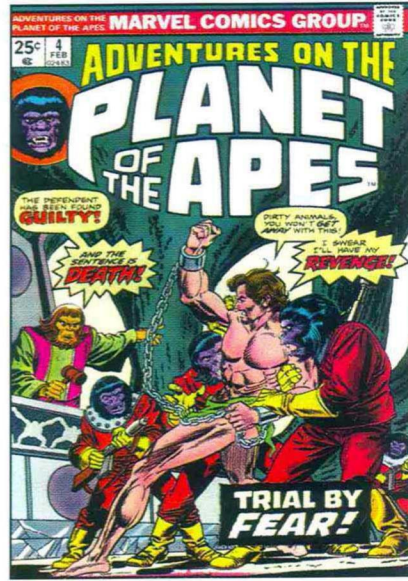
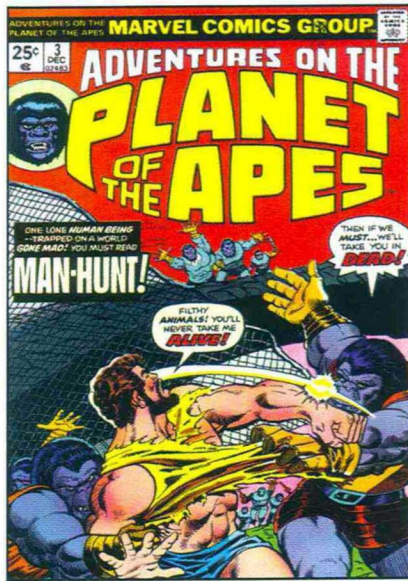
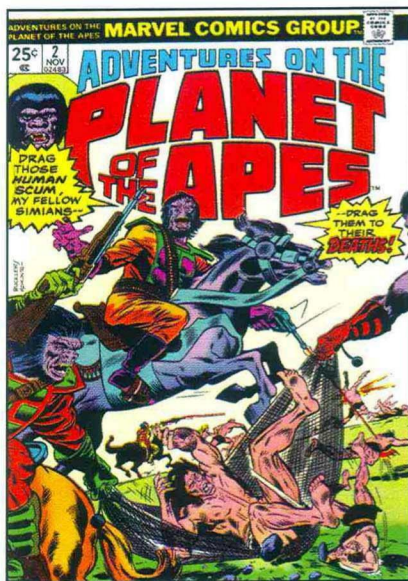
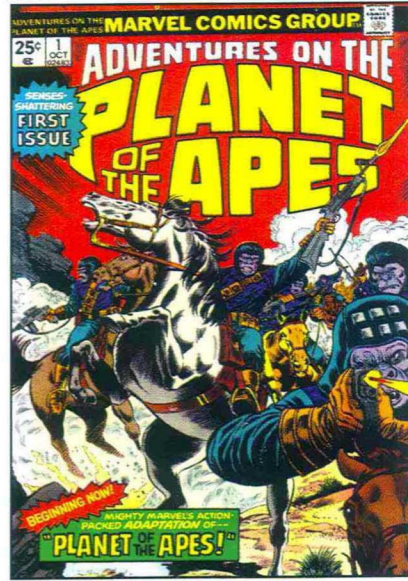
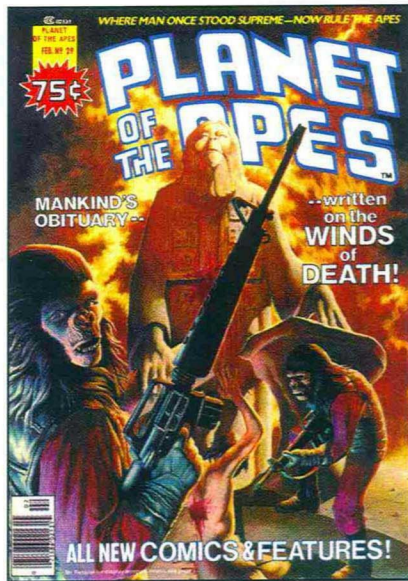
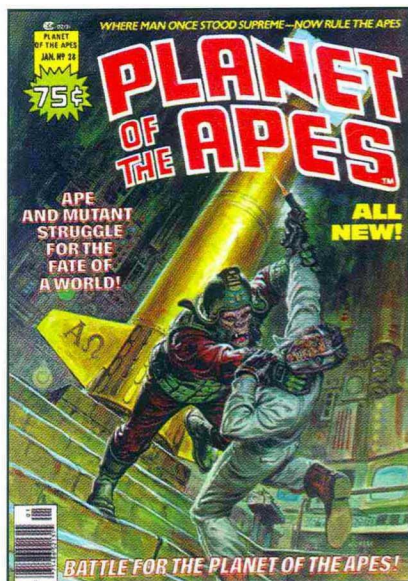
(Continued from page 29)

Conquest of the Planet of the Apes Part 4 "The Savage is King" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Alfredo Alcala	#23 (Aug 1976) Terror on the Planet of the Apes "Messiah of the Monkey Demons" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Tom Sutton	#26 (Nov 1976) Terror on the Planet of the Apes "Northlands" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Herb Trimpe and Virgil Redondo
#20 (May 1976) Terror on the Planet of the Apes "Society of the Psychodrome" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Tom Sutton	Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 1 "The Weapons Shop of Paradise" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Vincene Alcazar & Sonny Trinidad	Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 5 "Assault on Paradise" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Dino Castrillo
Conquest of the Planet of the Apes Part 5 "Army of Slaves" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Alfredo Alcala	#24 (Sep 1976) Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 2 "The Doomsday Spawn" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Alfredo Alcala	#27 (Dec 1976) Terror on the Planet of the Apes "Apes of Iron" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Herb Trimpe
#21 (Jun 1976) Kingdom on an Island of the Apes "Beast on the Planet of the Apes" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Herb Trimpe & Dan Adkins	Future History Chronicles "The Shadows of Haunted Cathedrals" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Tom Sutton	Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 6 "Conquest of Blood" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Virgil Redondo
Conquest of the Planet of the Apes Part 6 "Hail Caesar! Hail the King!" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Alfredo Alcala	#25 (Oct 1976) Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 3 "The Doomsday Spawn" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Sonny Trinidad, Young Montano, Dino Castrillo, & Marshall Rogers	#28 (Jan 1977) Terror on the Planet of the Apes "Revolt of the Gorilloids" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Herb Trimpe and Virgil Redondo
#22 (Jul 1976) Quest for the Planet of the Apes Part 1 "Seeds of Future Deaths" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Rico Rival	Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 4 "The Doomsday Spawn" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Sonny Trinidad & Virgil Redondo	Battle for the Planet of the Apes Part 7 "Tremor of Doom" Writer: Doug Moench Artists: Virgil Redondo
Quest for the Planet of the Apes Part 2 "Keepers of Future Death!" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Alfredo Alcala		#29 (Feb 1977) Future History Chronicles "To Race the Death Winds" Writer: Doug Moench Artist: Tom Sutton









Charlton Heston's likeness couldn't be used for Colonel Taylor. The man writing the adaptations didn't even see the fourth and fifth films in the series. The later adaptations changed artists between chapters, and the whole film series was over before the magazine even got started.

Why then is Marvel's *Planet of the Apes* magazine collected so avidly and remembered with such affection by its fans? The answer probably does not rest with the strip itself.

The recent 30th Anniversary re-issue of *Planet of the Apes* and its four sequels (*Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*, *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes*, and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*) stirred up great memories for long-time fans. The re-release and its surrounding hoopla also brought many newer fans into the fold.

With the films cleaned up, enhanced and restored, and with a brand new documentary about the series, it seemed apes fans had everything they wanted except the one thing they've wanted since 1973 when *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* ended: more.

The ill-fated TV series, the cartoon series, the toys, the novelizations... none of it has ever proved enough.

Like a somewhat cerebral, regularly bathed version of *Star Trek* fandom, *Apes* fans have talked about and sought the films and their related collectibles for years. The marketing arm at 20th Century Fox wasn't as savvy in those days as they later proved to be with *Aliens* and *Predator*, so while there are a lot of great apes items, there aren't as many collectibles as fans would like.

Unlike those and other properties, though, there's never been a fictional accounting of what life was like on the rest of the Planet of the Apes, how things got that way, and so on. Except in comics.

Marvel's *Planet of the Apes* was part of their old black and white magazine line that included *Deadly Hands of Kung-Fu*, *Dracula Lives*, *Savage Sword of Conan* and others. In this incarnation, fans got to see not only adaptations of the five films but exploits set in a variety of

A WRITER ON THE **PLANET OF THE APES**

Writer
Doug Moench
looks back
at Marvel's
*Planet Of
The Apes*
magazine and
working with
Mike Ploog,
Tom Sutton...
and all of
those apes.

**AN INTERVIEW
BY J. C. VAUGHN**

different regions, eras and conditions. Eventually the comic version even filled in the missing years between the fourth and fifth films.

The stories were generally (but not always) matched up: one chapter of an adaptation and one chapter of an original tale. Marvel's *Planet of the Apes* featured different environments, different artists, and different relationships between men and apes, but only one writer.

Veteran comics scribe Doug Moench is known to many Bronze Age collectors for his long run on Marvel's *Master of Kung-Fu* where his collaborations with artists Paul Gulacy, Mike Zeck, and Gene Day turned the book into a cult favorite. He also created and wrote a lengthy run on Marvel's *Moon Knight* and has had a long association with Batman, writing many of DC's Bat-titles including *Batman* and *Detective Comics*, as well as graphic novels and "Elseworlds" stories. Along the way he wrote just about every major Marvel character and developed his creator-owned *Six From Sirius* at Marvel's Epic line with fellow *Master of Kung-Fu* alumni Paul Gulacy.

Moench, in addition to writing several Batman stories, is presently developing a conspiracy theory television program with *Homicide: Life on the Streets* star Richard Belzer. CBM asked him to turn back the clock and take a look at his work a quarter century ago on *Planet of the Apes*.

CBM: You're noted as the driving force behind both *Shang-chi*, Master of Kung-fu and Moon Knight. Master of Kung-fu began around the same time as Apes while Moon Knight came much later. What was your background prior to Apes?

MOENCH: I started with Warren which was of course *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella*. Then for Skywald I did *Nightmare*, *Psycho* and some other titles. I had written for the *Chicago Sun Times* [Moench lived in Chicago at that point]. I sent some scripts to Archie Goodwin, who was editing the war comics at DC, and Joe Orlando, who was editing the horror titles like *House of Mystery*.

Actually, Archie was the editor at Warren when he bought my first story, (Continued on page 54)

A WRITER ON THE PLANET OF THE APES

(Continued from
page 31)

so he was the one who bought my very first story. I sold some scripts to DC and I was about to do even more work for them. I went to New York and Julie Schwartz took me into his office, swept his hand at some art and asked, "What do you see? What do you like? Justice League? Flash? What do you want?"

I went back to Chicago and thought I should send some stories to Julie. I had also done a proposal for a big coffee table hard cover book, *The Encyclopedia of Horror*. The day that A. S. Barnes—now Barnes & Noble—accepted the book and sent me a contract, Roy Thomas at Marvel called saying, "Why don't you come to New York and work for Marvel?" That was in 1972.

I told Roy I'd try it out for two weeks. It was Manhattan, it was the middle of summer, and it

writing to do. [These pieces] were just like the Warren material. They were 7, 8, 10-page horror stories for *Dracula Lives* and *Tales of the Zombie* and so on. That was to give me enough money to make the move. They told me to voucher as many stories as I wanted. So I was just making up titles, filling out "9 pages" or "8 pages" and putting in the vouchers and they paid me, and then I had to write all of these stories later.

Ghost Rider was the first color book they offered me. I only wrote one issue of that and then they offered me *Manwolf*. That was J. Jonah Jameson's son, if you remember. Then very quickly, it seemed like almost a book a day, I got *Frankenstein*, *Werewolf By Night*, and *Master of Kung-Fu*. This was on top of my editorial duties.

So after seven or eight weeks of this, Roy called me in the office and said "We need more writing from you." I said, "Roy, I'm working here eight hours a day on staff, plus I'm already writing more than any of your other writers. If you want any more writing out of me, I've got to stay home."

He said, "Well, I thought you'd say that... wait until you train your replacement." That's how it happened. After that came *Planet of the Apes*, *Deadly Hands of Kung-Fu*.

CBM: Don McGregor (writer of *Sabre*,

Nathaniel Dusk, and one of the assistant editors on *Planet of the Apes*) has described you as an infuriatingly fast writer. He said you could get an assignment on Friday and turn it in on Monday.

MOENCH: I could have turned it in on Saturday! I did not know that I was fast until I got to New York. I had no idea. When you write in a vacuum, all alone, you don't know if you're

fast or slow. Then I get to New York and I start hearing comments like Len Wein saying "I had a great day today. I wrote six pages of dialogue."

I said, "What do you mean a great day? Were they really good pages?" He said "I mean it was six whole pages. Usually if I can do two or three I'm lucky."

I've done 28 pages of full plot and script in one day without a problem. That's when I found out I was fast.

CBM: Before you got the assignment to write the POTA adaptation, were you a fan of the films?

MOENCH: I enjoyed the first film a lot. I cannot say I was a big fan of the franchise. I liked the second one, but not quite as much. It was better than most sequels. I'm not even really sure I saw the third one. I know I didn't bother with the last two.

CBM: Did you really write the last two adaptations without seeing them?

MOENCH: I wrote them from the screenplays. That's why the comic adaptations are not accurate with the finished films. I've been asked by many fans "Why did you put that in there?" about several scenes. I worked from the screenplays, so the stories were accurate but not all of the scenes made the final cuts of the films.

CBM: There were two distinctly different prints of *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*, one which had many of the references to the Alpha-Omega bomb from *Beneath in them*. They were in your adaptation and it always seemed to make it a more complete circle.

MOENCH: I was accused of taking all these liberties, but at the same time they would tell me the scenes were really good.

CBM: When you took on the series, did you know it was going to be an on-going thing?

MOENCH: You didn't think like that back then. I loved those days. I hate the way the business is these days. It's such an ordeal to get something going. You have to write a proposal, and then you have to write a shorter proposal because they don't have time to read something that long... then you have to wait for contracts, the lawyers are monkeying around... then you sign the thing, then the editor gets a budget... and so on.



was really awful, but I ended up getting really excited about it. I went back to Chicago, packed up everything, and moved to New York.

CBM: What was your first assignment?

MOENCH: I was hired as an assistant editor which was a glorified proofreader. I think I probably had the shortest tenure on record, something like two months. They gave me all this

Back then you could make a deal with Roy Thomas on second base at the Marvel softball game. You'd run to second base, Roy would be playing short stop or something, he'd say, "Hey, Doug, you want to write the *Inhumans*?" and you'd ask, "What's that?" He'd say, "Monthly, color" and you'd ask who the artist was. He'd say "George Perez" or someone else and you'd agree.

He'd say, "Okay, first one next week" and that would be that. You had no editor looking over your shoulder at that time. The writers were more responsible. Don McGregor was his own editor, I was my own editor, Steve Gerber was his own editor, Steve Englehart was his own editor. Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Roy Thomas... we all pretty much wrote what we wanted.

CBM: *Don't you think more was actually expected of the writer under that kind of system?*

MOENCH: Yeah. Not only did the editor not tell us what to do, we didn't have to tell the editor what we were doing. Who likes to be a zombie robot? That's why all of the stuff I'm doing now is self-generated.

I still have to go through the hassle of writing a proposal or two proposals and having it read by a committee, having it approved, having contracts and all that, but at least it's all me. I come up with it and they say yes or no. When you're on a monthly book these days, [particularly] if it has to tie in with other titles and that nonsense. It used to be rare and have some weight, and it used to be a big deal. Well, it's not a big deal anymore.

CBM: *What was the approval process like for *Apes*?*

MOENCH: I don't really know. Everything had to be sent to Apjac [Arthur P. Jacobs was the producer behind the film series and Apjac was his production company] and I know there were some issues with the art. It was always things like, "The character can't look like Charlton Heston." In the original stories I did with Mike Ploog and Tom Sutton there were never any complaints that I know of. The only thing I ever



heard was that they were really big fans of what we were doing.

CBM: *Do you still get feedback from fans?*

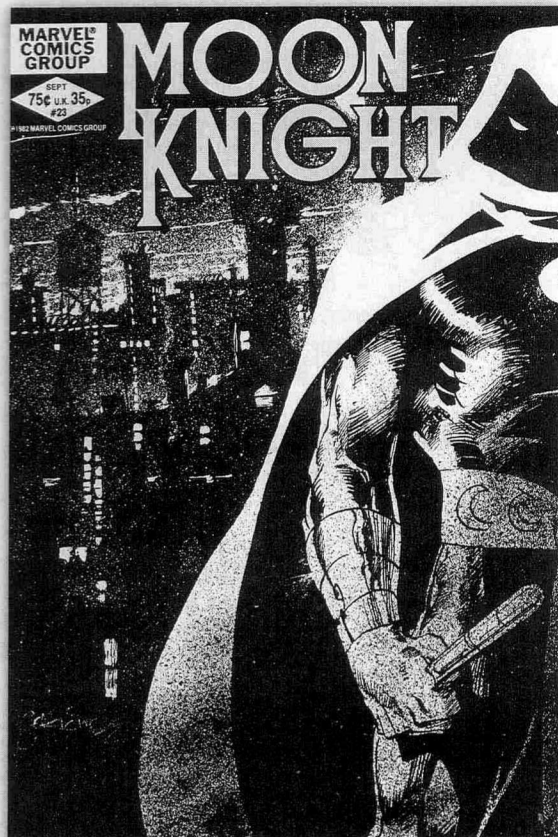
MOENCH: Yes. It's really funny. Because I've done so much, I don't if there are any "Doug Moench" fans, but I've got people who know me only because of *Aztec Ace* [Eclipse series from the '80s] or only because of *Godzilla*, only because of *Planet of the Apes*, only because of *Batman*... there doesn't seem to be anyone who knows all of my work. There is a group that seems to know me from both *Master of Kung-fu* and *Moonknight*. I just did an interview with a guy who only knew me from my horror work, the Warren stuff, Skywald, and the Marvel black and whites.

CBM: *Mike Ploog's artwork on "Terror on the Planet of the Apes" really set an artistic standard for the magazine. What do you think made his work so good?*

MOENCH: I don't know. I could theorize a number of things. Innate talent, and he is old enough to have looked at the masters rather than just comic book guys. And he was trained to a certain extent by Will Eisner.

I don't think there's a better teacher on Earth. If I wanted to be trained by someone, I'd say it would have been Will Eisner or Harvey Kurtzman, and Eisner would probably get the nod.

Not only does Mike know the comic book medium as well as Kurtzman, I think he could



draw a little bit better. I don't know what makes Mike so good. Some guys just are.

CBM: *Were the original stories more of a collaboration than the adaptations of the movies appeared to be, at least in some cases?*

MOENCH: Yes, definitely. I wrote the adaptations full script where I generally prefer to work plot-pencils script.

CBM: *Ploog is someone who drifted—some might say "sprinted"—away from comics pretty quickly. What do you think would have to happen to get someone like that back into the medium?*

MOENCH: We're in contact right now. We're talking about doing something. This is probably the fifth time Mike has said "I'm sick of Hollywood. I'm getting out. Let's work together again." This time it sounds like it might happen. He had some especially bad experiences on the last couple of movies he worked on. He actually sold his house in California and bought a house in England. I think he's in the process of moving in right now. I think he's just tired of the Hollywood nonsense... I think he wants to tell stories again, and I hope we're going to do that soon.

A WRITER ON THE PLANET OF THE APES

CBM: In addition to Mike Ploog, Tom Sutton worked with you on several different stories, including the

"Future History Chronicles" with that great City-Ship he illustrated. What was Tom like to work with?

MOENCH: Fantastic! He worked on these gigantic pages whereas most other artists were working on pages 1½ up [the art pages were half again bigger than they were reproduced], he was working twice up. My desk wasn't big enough to hold his pages. You could get more copy on the pages and get some denser stories out of it. He could get more detail in. He really got into *Planet of the Apes*. I happen to think that it sort of jazzed him up for a sort of renaissance in his career. It seemed like a quantum leap at the time.

CBM: Was there a distinct difference in how you wrote a script if you knew specifically who would be illustrating it?

MOENCH: Going back to your question about collaboration, I could say things to Ploog in the beginning and then later on I wouldn't have to say them. I could ask him what he liked to draw and then tailor a story to his preferences, and when a guy is drawing what he likes to draw he does a better job, right? That's where the riverboat stuff [in "Terror on the Planet of the Apes"] like Gunpowder Julius and Steely Dan came from.

I forget now what it was he liked, but he had mentioned that he liked Davy Crocket or frontier-type things, and that gave me the idea for those characters. Steely Dan is my version of Mike Ploog. He's the huge guy just roaring with laughter, an extrovert. I just magnified that. He just loved it and did a great job. He got into one so much that we actually just printed the story from his pencils.

CBM: How did you come up with the characters in "Terror?"

MOENCH: You know what I'm most proud of in there? They used all Latin names in the movies, but they didn't think of Brutus. I used that for my evil gorilla leader. I thought that was great. Anyway, Roy called me in and told me that

Marvel had acquired the rights to *Planet of the Apes*. He said Gerry Conway was going to do it, but he had to drop out. He had written one page of notes. Roy gave it to me. It was a very loose thing, but it had the names Jason and Alexander, one human, one ape, they're friends and they get into trouble. From that, I made them young. I wanted to make it an allegory on racism, which was implicit in the movies. And it seemed to me that kids are not as hung up on race.



CBM: You did a one-shot with Ed Hannigan called "Evolution's Nightmare."

MOENCH: Ed became a buddy of mine. I think he was in the Bullpen doing corrections and stuff. He wanted to do his own story. Back then it was easy. You just had to convince Roy or someone to give you a chance. . . I can't remember if Mike Ploog was running late or they just decided to give him some extra time, but Ed wanted to prove he could do a story. That's pretty much how "Evolution's Nightmare" came about.

CBM: There was another one of the originals called "Kingdom on an Island of the Apes" illustrated by Rico Rival.

MOENCH: It gets back to what I was saying before. I used to get these calls like, "Can you do a one-part Apes story?" and I'd ask when they needed it, and that would be that. I think England went *Planet of the Apes* crazy. Marvel

UK started doing a weekly and they actually got ahead of us at one point.

CBM: At least at one point it was called *Planet of the Apes and Dracula Lives!*

MOENCH: We couldn't keep up with their weekly schedule. They asked me to do this original stuff for England that we later put in the American version. That later happened with *Master of Kung-Fu* and *Deadly Hands of Kung-fu* as well. It didn't last very long. . . and I couldn't keep up with their weekly schedule. I don't remember all the stories.

CBM: So you don't remember all of the stories you've written?

MOENCH: No. Every once in a while someone will put a comic in front of me for an autograph and I'll say, "I'll sign a blank piece of paper, but I won't sign something I didn't write," and the person will say, "Yes, you did write this," and I won't believe them. I'll open it up and there will be my name on the credits. I'll read it and then maybe it will come back to me.

CBM: Do you ever get ones that you read and you still don't remember?

MOENCH: Yes. [laughter] I'll actually go back and find a carbon copy of the story and finally have to admit I wrote it. [more laughter]

CBM: Do you have a favorite moment from the series?

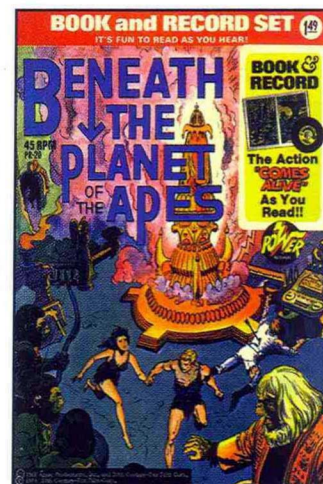
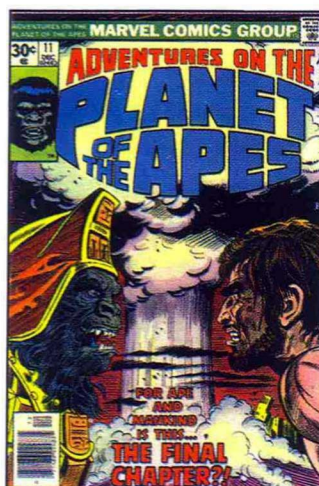
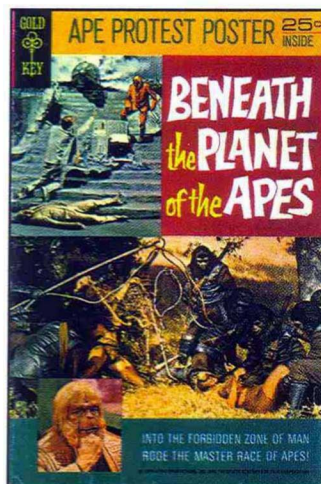
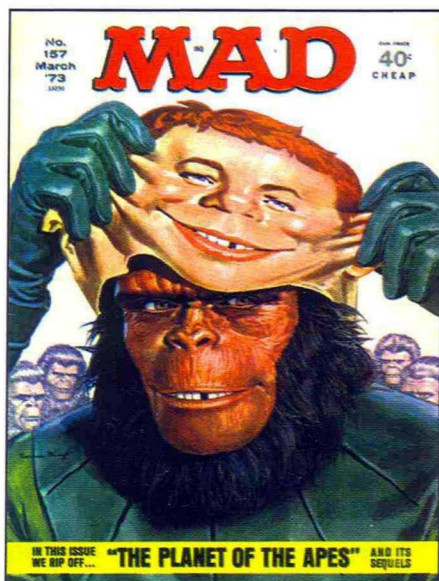
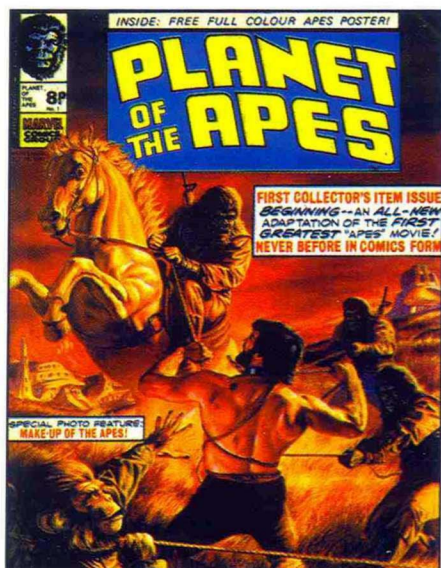
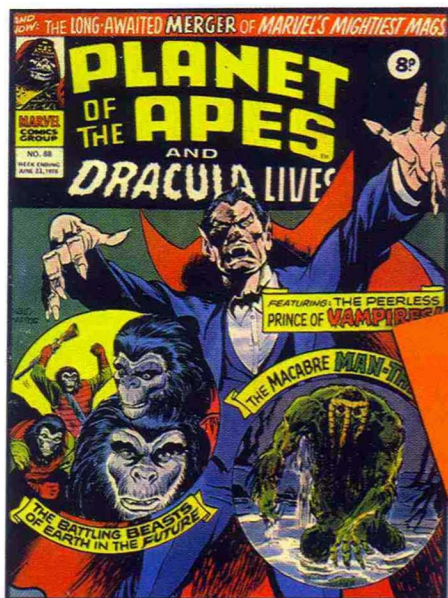
MOENCH: I was at an ACBA meeting [the Academy of Comic Book Arts]. Neal Adams was President, I was Vice-President. Ploog was there. I always loved getting together with that guy. He's a rodeo rider, a bronco buster. . . he's just this big guy. He's shorter than I am, but he seems bigger. He had this huge beard. He showed up for a meeting, which he generally didn't do, with the riverboat pages. After the meeting, looking at those pages, that was probably the best time. That was really a quantum leap for Ploog. He was capable of it all along, but he really got into that story. That was really great.

CBM: Hey Doug, thanks for talking with CBM readers.

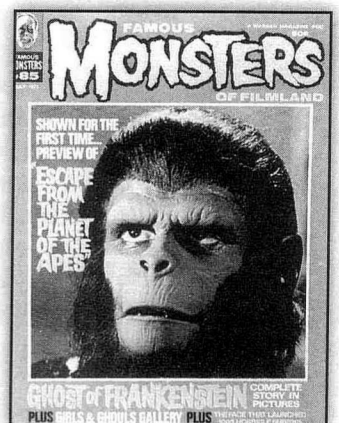
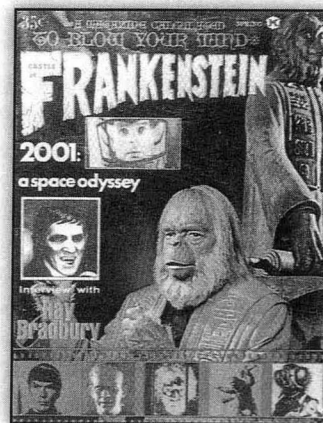
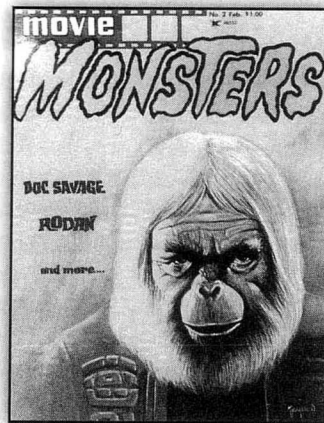
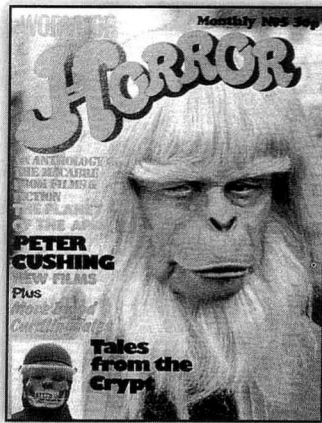
MOENCH: You bet. . . it was fun.



Want to read more about *Planet of the Apes*? Check out CBM on-line at www.gemstone.com.



POTA & Dracula Lives #88, British POTA #1, MAD #157, Beneath the POTA #30044-012, Beneath the POTA book & record set, Adv. on the POTA #11, and Mighty World of Marvel #231.

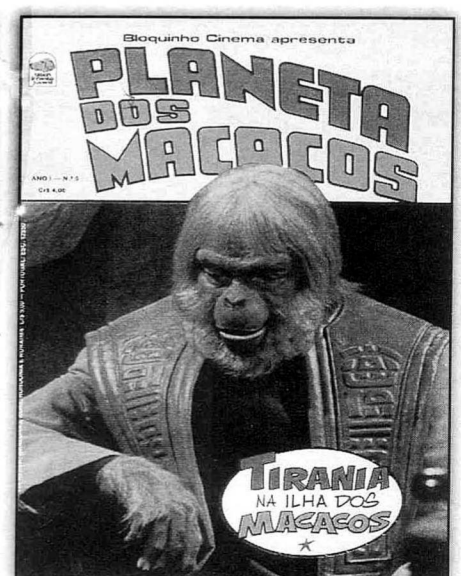
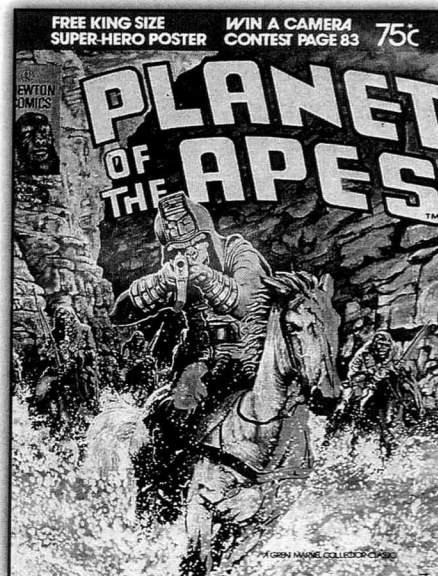


The first Planet of the Apes comic book adaptation came in late 1970 after the second film, *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, was a huge hit. Gold Key had a series called *Movie Comics* which ran from 1962 to 1972 and featured over 50 movies adapted into comics. The *Beneath the POTA* issue is one of the most popular and valuable of the 10-year series. The comic book is numbered 30044-012, dated December 1970, has a photo cover, and came with a bound-in poster. This is the very first *Planet of the Apes* comic and is the scarcest and most valuable of the regularly distributed POTA comics. The Gold Key comic would have been the only ape comic produced if not for the hype of the new TV series in 1974. Marvel jumped on the bandwagon early and released a bi-monthly black and white comic magazine titled *Planet of the Apes* (#1 August 1974). Issue #2 was published before the TV series even debuted. The magazine run lasted until #29 (February 1977) and to this date is the longest-running POTA publishing project in US history. 1969-1975 was a popular time for horror and mystery books by Marvel which gave them good reason to publish POTA as a "monster" book. Secondly 1973-1975 was the peak period of Marvel's black and white magazines. Marvel had 19 different titles published during these years. By lasting 29 issues, *POTA* was one of the most successful magazine titles for Marvel. It was surpassed only by *Deadly Hands of Kung Fu* (33 issues), *Crazy* (94 issues), and *Savage Sword of Conan* (235 issues ending in 1995). The Planet of the Apes magazine contained comic versions of the films, new stories written by Doug Moench and art by Mike Ploog. It also contained articles, reviews, and interviews. The magazine was so popular that it became a monthly with issue #3. Now, 25 years later, this series is collected by a fairly large population. Because it is movie and TV related, many collect the Marvel magazines who are not regular comic book hobbyists. Marvel completists want the

series, as do fans of the art of Mike Ploog. Ploog's original pencil artwork is highly collectible and was selling for \$175 a page back in 1992; now it rarely turns up. Marvel Comics was also involved in a series of comic book/45-rpm record sets during the height of the Bronze Age from 1974 to 1978. The 31 sets contained mostly reprints of previously published Marvel stories. The 7x10" comics were 20 pages and each came with a record narrated, with characters and sound effects, costing \$1.49. Four of the Apes movies (not *Conquest* for some strange reason) were released and are quite visually appealing... and were the first color POTA comics published by Marvel. At the same time as magazine #14, Marvel decided to reprint the stories from the movies in color in a regular comic format for 25¢ rather than the hefty \$1 price tag of the mags. The comic series *Adventures On The Planet Of The Apes* lasted 11 issues (until December 1976)... just long enough to reprint the complete stories of the first two films. POTA fans could see apes in print twice a month during this time. In 1976 Marvel produced a trial run of most

World of Horror #5 (1975), *Movie Monsters* #2 (1975), *Castle of Frankenstein* #13 (1969), *Famous Monsters of Filmland* #85 (1971).

Planet of the Apes #17 (Aug 1976, Newton), *Planeta Dos Macacos* #5 (date unknown, Brazil).

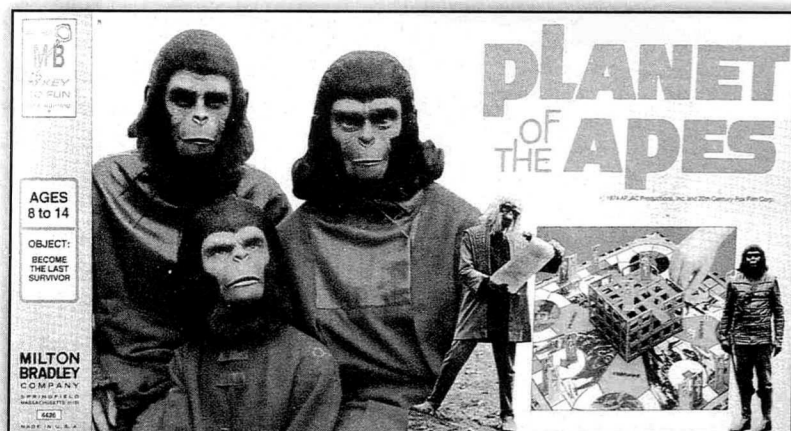


COLLECTING PLANET OF THE APES

of their titles in various cities with a price change. *Adventures On The Planet Of The Apes* #5, 6, and 7 all have variant cover price editions. These are definitely the rarest POTA comics ever made and these variants just "never turn up"! By the time the cartoon series debuted, sales were already sagging and the magazine was reduced in both page-count and price with #14 (November 1975). POTA was very well-publicized and Marvel was busy promoting POTA worldwide. I have confirmed that there was a *POTA* comic series in Brazil, Australia, and Sweden. The Americans were happy with their 11 comics and 29 magazines but in the UK there

material. There were always backup stories of other reprinted US Marvel characters that had nothing to do with POTA. The Planet Of The Apes title changed when sales declined. The series was combined with another title... *Dracula Lives*, so the mag was then called *Planet Of The Apes And Dracula Lives* starting with issue #88 (June 23, 1976) priced eight pence an issue. (In the US, *Dracula Lives* debuted in 1973 lasting 13 issues until July 1975. It was the first of the 19 Marvel magazines to be published). The *POTA/DL* comic lasted 36 issues ending with #123 (February 1977).

By 1977 the horror genre had faltered and Marvel canceled all their horror titles. The apes lost their starring role and were joined with another Marvel "monster," The Incredible Hulk. They shared cover appearances in *The Mighty World Of Marvel* starting with issue #231 (March 2, 1977), and lasting 16 issues until June 15, 1977 when POTA made its last appearance in the UK. In the UK, hardcover annuals featuring original stories, art and comic strips have always been popular. Publisher Brown And Watson took advantage of this by publishing three *POTA* annuals from 1975-1977. The first annual (1975) featured a balanced mixture of text articles, original comic strips, and text stories all based on the TV series. Some common POTA publicity color photos were included. There are also some b&w text illustrations done by an uncredited John Bolton (of Batman fame). The second annual (1976) had no text articles and no photos. It did however have more comic strips and original stories, plus activity pages for kids. These included dot-to-dots, cut-out figures, coloring pages, etc. Again, uncredited b&w illustrations by John Bolton were included. The third and final UK annual (1977) was aimed at an even younger audience and was the most interesting of all. It includes two superb drawings by John Bolton (comparable to the best work of Mike Ploog). Also the text stories are illustrated with stills from all five movies, many of which have probably never been reproduced anywhere



Milton Bradley
POTA board game
(1974?).

were 139 comics published! For seven pence fans could buy the weekly *POTA* comic which debuted on October 26, 1974. The British series was, in general, just a slimmed down reprint version of the US magazine. The number of pages and content was only a third of the US version though the UK comics had fascinating new covers and a letter section from UK fans which was very intriguing. The UK books are 1" higher and ½" wider than the US magazines. However, the UK books were not all Ape

PLANET OF THE APES TIMELINE

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1963 <i>Monkey Planet</i> by Pierre Boulle is published | 1969 1st official merchandise Topps Bubblegum cards | 1973 The first three films are shown on TV and receive the largest recorded viewership for sci-fi movies ever on TV. Apemania sweeps the country | 1974 Marvel Comics in the US and UK start ongoing magazine-format comic |
| 1965 Charlton Heston is hired for the lead in the role of a new film <i>Planet Of The Apes</i> written by Rod Serling and Michael Wildon | 1970 <i>Beneath The Planet Of The Apes</i> debuts, and is adapted for the first POTA comic book | 1974 Anticipation for a new POTA TV series leads to mass marketing of merchandise by dozens of companies. Items include cards, toys, books, puzzles, dolls, etc. | 1975 The cartoon series <i>Return Of The Planet Of The Apes</i> debuts |
| 1968 <i>Planet of the Apes</i> debuts in theatres on February 8th | 1971 <i>Escape From The Planet Of The Apes</i> debuts | | 1977 All POTA products are discontinued |
| | 1972 <i>Conquest Of The Planet Of The Apes</i> debuts | | 1982 The TV series is reformatted into TV movies by combining two episodes into a single 90-minute film |
| | 1973 <i>Battle For The Planet Of The Apes</i> debuts | | |

else. Due to the reprint nature of the weekly UK comics they were not sold in the US for copyright reasons and vice versa with the US books. The first issue of the US magazine did ship to England since the UK series did not start until two months later. *The Adventures on The Planet Of The Apes* series did not get distributed in the UK at all. The weekly comics and the hardcover annuals are surprisingly scarce... even in their home country! They are, naturally, very rare in North America because they were never distributed here. These are always overlooked and undervalued. In April 1990 publisher Adventure Comics (Malibu Graphics) started a new series of original Planet of the Apes stories. The first issue was a surprise hit with Dale "Hulk" Keown cover art and had to be printed three times. The bi-monthly series was quickly changed into a monthly ongoing series due to the overwhelming sales of the first issue. With a hit on their hands Adventure Comics put out a line of spinoff mini-series based on the POTA concept with different creative teams on every series. Writer Charles Marshall even wrote a series entitled Ape Nation which contained concepts from POTA and Alien Nation in one series. They also put out four graphic novels including three which reprint the movie adaptations from the Marvel magazines. POTA became possibly the biggest success for the small publisher lasting until March 1993. Out of all the POTA comics the Adventure Comics releases are criticized for being of lower quality and for drifting away from the original concept, however, Adventure should be thanked for breathing new life into a title that had not seen print for 13 years. In fact Adventure Comics put out 56 POTA releases, and holds the distinction of putting out more POTA products than any other company in US history. Outside of the regular POTA titles were a few parodies of the Apes. *MAD* #157 did a 10-page spoof and cover story on March 1973. *Cracked* #123 also featured an Apes parody cover story in 1975. *Apes Chronicles* was the fanzine of the International Planet Of The Apes Fan Club. In its pages they

published their own POTA comic strip starring the ape, Veetus created by Jeff Krueger. The strip ran 35 episodes from 1992-1994. Another POTA fanzine, *Ape Crazy*, started in 1993 and ran seven issues. Created by Mark and Tim Wasylsyzyn, *Crazy* also featured original comic strips: #6 featured an eight-pager titled "Adventures On The Planet Of The Apes" by Jerry Brown, and #7 offered another Brown eight-pager "Trouble On The Planet Of The Apes." Also of note is the Brazilian POTA fanzine *Century City News* by Luiz Saulo Adami. Saulo has recently published some comic strips too.

The POTA Comics Market

The Marvel POTA magazine issues climbed steadily in value while the series was being published, peaking at \$3.60 for #1 in 1979. Interest in the books dropped throughout the 1980s and started picking up again in 1992. The series turns 25 years old this year, and is presently one of the more sought after titles from the mid-'70s. Many collectibles dealers price the Marvel magazines at around \$10 each regardless of condition (VG or better) with exceptional high grade specimens bringing as much as \$25 a copy for single digit issues. Many movie/sci-fi collectors report that having the issues and filling the holes in their run is often a greater consideration than waiting for high grade copies. Many VG issues sell at higher than Guide to non-comic collectors. The #1 issue of the Marvel magazine in general is the most requested; however, it is also the most common due to the large print run and doesn't sell for multiples of *Guide* like the later, scarcer issues. By 1977 sales were almost non-existent thus the last issue, #29, is very scarce. If I had any #29s in stock in high grade I would price them at around 5x *Overstreet*. Issues #19-26, and 28 are also scarce. I've found issue #27 to be more common because of two different warehouse finds in Canada. At this time the market is not very strong for the British issues unless priced cheaply. On average, copies of the UK series sell (in FN) for about \$10 each. Higher grade copies are almost never found because of the tabloid-like format. Most of the 1990's POTA comics are fairly common and early issues don't sell well although this is not true for the latter issues from 1992-1993. The Forbidden Zone was the last mini-series and is the scarcest. Also the last few issues of the ongoing series #22-24 are uncommon and can sell for



Now extremely collectible, the Planet Of The Apes lunchbox (Aladdin, 1974-75) is becoming more and more difficult to find in acceptable condition.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1987 The influence of POTA is shown in the new movies <i>Spaceballs</i> and <i>Time Of The Apes</i></p> <p>1990 Adventure Comics starts a huge line of POTA comic books</p> <p>1991 <i>Ape Chronicles</i> fanzine begins (for the International POTA Fan Club)</p> <p>1994 Oliver Stone (<i>Platoon</i>, <i>Doors</i>) announces</p> | <p>plans to create a new POTA film</p> <p>1998 Director Michael Bay (<i>Armageddon</i>, <i>The Rock</i>) replaces James Cameron as the director attached to the prospective remake. William Broyles (<i>Apollo 13</i>) is presently writing a screenplay.</p> <p>1999 <i>CBM</i> denotes a special issue to "The Apes"</p> |
|---|--|

COLLECTING PLANET OF THE APES

2x Guide. Here are some of sales from the last nine months. The magazines rarely turn up in true NM. 1977 UK Annual VF+ \$50;

POTA UK Magazines, all issues, VG to FN \$10@;

POTA #1-27 FN the set \$230, #1-29 VG the set \$150, #1

NM \$25, #1 FN+ \$7.75, #2 NM \$20, #2 FN+ \$10, #3 NM \$20, #3 VF- \$11, #4 VF- \$8.25, #5 NM \$20, #5 VF- \$7.50, #6 NM \$20, #8 VF \$12, #9 VG+ \$6, #10 FN+ \$11, #11 FN+ \$12, #13 VG \$6, #14 FN+ \$10.50, #18 FN+ \$12, #19 VF \$18, #22 VG \$15, #23 FN- \$9.50, #24 VF \$22, #25 VG \$12, #27 VF \$22, #28 FN+ \$15, and #29 FN \$30.


Planet of the Apes Memorabilia

When the original film debuted in 1968 there was no thought of producing any merchandise... only the odd item was occasionally released at the time of a movie. After the first film became a big smash, Topps put out a 66-card bubblegum set for 5¢ a package, and Pierre Boulle's book was re-released as the movie's adaptation and titled *Planet of the Apes*, although different from the film script. After the second movie came out, Gold Key produced the *Beneath the POTA* comic book adaptation. A paperback adaptation of the movie was released with two different covers. Another paperback movie adaptation was published for the third film. In 1972 *Cinemafantastique* magazine published an all-POTA special issue with interviews with the stars and cast from the first three films. POTA had articles in various magazines and a few cover appearances on *The Monster Times* and Forrey Ackerman's *Famous Monsters Of Filmland*. The merchandising frenzy didn't happen until after the films were aired on TV. A

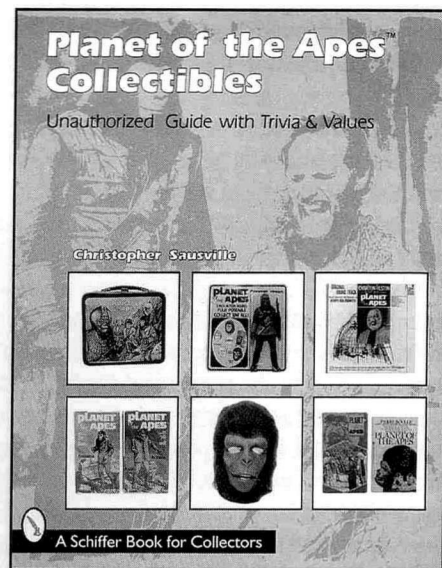
"go ape" marathon started up across the country... theatres showing all the films in a row.

The first successful POTA line of products came from a company called Addar who produced a line of model kits based on the ape characters from the first film. In preparation for the new TV series a tidal wave of products hit stores in the summer of 1974 and continued for a year or so. The most successful items included the Mego action figures and playsets, coloring books, board games, hal-loween costumes, ape masks, candy boxes, trashcans, mix-n-mold models, bottle super scenes, puzzles, plush dolls, skydiving parachutist figures, wind-up horses, piggy banks, bend-n-flex figures, 8MM film kits, and, of course, the comic books. The main reason POTA has achieved cult status is due to the ape-mania that came and went from 1973 to 1975. Almost all of the

items came out during this short period. Kids and collectors alike were caught up in the excitement of all the products coming out. Some of the items are superb quality while others were put out cheaply and quickly to make a fast buck for the manufacturer. I haven't found sales figures for the POTA items therefore it's hard to say how big the craze really was. Obviously it had to be making money to keep putting out products, but if sales were really high than why did it die off so quickly? and why was the TV and cartoon series canceled so soon? Could it be that 20th Century Fox and the manufacturers were trying to hype a market that wasn't really there? In 1976 a new *Star Trek* toy line came out, and *Star Wars* debuted in 1977. These two series became the big sci-fi leaders and are possibly the reason why POTA got pushed into the background.

1998 was the 30th anniversary of the first film, and the series got some good press along with a brand new documentary, *Behind The Planet Of The Apes*, a two hour special that aired on AMC hosted by Roddy McDowall just before he passed away in October. A new line of action figures is now on the market as well as a newly packaged set of the five films on VHS and Laser Disc with DVDs most likely on the way. Many of the original cast got together to celebrate at Starcon '98. A new wave of merchandise is coming and three books have recently been published to cover various aspects of the POTA craze. Ironically in the movies, apes overtake the humans in 1991 so in real time we have already passed the predicted timeline. Yet in many ways apes do have "dominion" over humans—as collectors open their wallets and dish out hard-earned money for POTA comics and memorabilia. 

Terry Hoknes and CBM would like to thank Dave Ballard, Alan Maxwell, and Jeff Krueger for help and information.



20 Most Valuable POTA Collectibles with estimated values:

1. Display box from UK for POTA rings set.....\$1,500
2. Coloring book display rack.....\$1,000
3. "Test card" set from Topps movie cards.....\$1,000
4. Sealed box of Topps movie cards.....\$1,000
5. Ape masks with hair (each).....\$600
6. Individual rings from the UK set (each)\$385
7. Rapid Fire Gun with mask.....\$360
8. Tommy Burst Gun with mask\$360
9. Sealed box of Topps TV cards set\$350
10. Candy boxes store display box\$350
11. Ape masks (each)\$350
12. Apes sculpted masks (each)\$350
13. Comforter Blanket.....\$300
14. Adventure playset\$300
15. Playset.....\$300
16. Drumset\$300
17. Boxed set of 5 movies (Japan).....\$300
18. Lunch Box with Thermos\$260
19. Ape On Stallion Model.....\$260
20. Plaster Statues (each).....\$260