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## I'm Rich!

All those covers that sift through your hands every year—some to end up in your collections, some to end up in your trading stock, some basically garbage. But, did you ever stop to think exactly what all of those covers are worth? Which ones are the diamonds, and which are the lumps of coal? Sometimes, it's difficult to sort out because of our inherent prejudices—we all have our 'favorite' categories, and sometimes that blurs the difference between what it's worth to us and what it's worth to the rest of the world (*rest of the hobby, in our case, perhaps*).

Of course, being the true collectors we are, the monetary worth of our collections is beneath us. We don't collect for crass investment's sake. Still, it's kind of neat to know which of our covers are valued as treasures, and what their worth is in relation to other covers....although, even as I write this, I already know I might be opening a can of worms.

We're going to have to be rather vague, here, about actual dollars and cents worth, unfortunately, since there are no set prices on any of the material we collect. And, I'm going to have to keep the discussion limited to general categories rather than specific covers, or we'll be here all day. A few collectors may have rarities such as a Lindburgh cover, a MacArthur box, or a Bob Hope autographed VIP cover, but such material doesn't affect most of us and is, for the purposes of this discussion, more or less irrelevant.

There would be some conjunctives that would be crossovers, of course. But, for example, for the purpose of selling, if you had 10 Crowns in your Tobacco collection you'd be better off selling them as Crowns rather than Tobacco covers. There's a lot of 'randomness' involved here, though. You might very well find a Tobacco collector willing to pay more for those 10 Crowns because they're old Tobacco covers than a Crown collector would pay because they were Crowns. And, there's always the chance that all those Drug Stores that normally would bring you only pennies might be worth a small fortune to the right buyer, *if you could find him*. But those aren't typical situations, and, in general, I think my earlier supposition would be more likely.

Similarly, let me slip in a disclaimer here and also point out that should you find your most prized and cherished categories on my "Low Value" list, my intention is certainly not to slight your collecting preferences. Indeed, many of my own favorite categories are of little monetary value, as well. (*I think I'm the only person in the world, for example, that has any interest in Mirro-Gloss covers!...Doesn't dampen my enthusiasm for them, though!*)

One further stipulation—ebay. Ebay has shown over and over again that there's someone somewhere willing to buy anything! But, again, that's not normally going to be a factor here, because the great majority of collectors, when they go to sell their collections, aren't going to do so through ebay (*for a variety of reasons*) and neither are relatives dealing with the estate collections of collectors who have gone to that great convention in the sky.

OK, so let's just take a look at *your* collection, then. If you had to sell it piecemeal, by category, which would be winners and which would be losers? I suppose you could go about trying to determine such in a variety of ways, but I think if you took a guess, going by category popularity and hobby lore, you'd come out with a fairly accurate projection. For example, I'd have the following expectations: [*Note: I couldn't list every category, so I used my own categories as something to work with*]

## Sort of!

<u>High Value</u>	<u>Medium Value</u>	<u>Medium Value</u>	<u>Low Value</u>
-Features	-Cameos	-Gas Stations	-Banks
-Group I	-Uniglos	-Beer	-Restaurants
-DQ's	-Christmas	-Casinos [hmmm?]	-Hotels
-Crowns	-Filigrees	-Colleges/Universities	-Metallics
-Midgets	-Foilites	-Country Clubs	-Embossed
-Diamond Match	-Matchoramas	-Dated	-Errors
-Diamond Safety Firsts	-American Ace	-Full-lengths	-Foreign
-Lion Safety Firsts	-Pocketbox	-Fairs	-Boxes
-Girlies	-Jewels	-VIPs (depends on who)	-Hawaii
-Navy Ships	-Non-Sport Jewelites	-National Parks	-Indians
-World War II Patriotics	-Sports Jewelites	-Federals	-Hyatts
-Military	-American Legion	-Jerseys	-Hiltons
-CCC	-B.P.O.Elks	-Star (mm)	-Sheratons
-Coca Cola	-V.F.W.	-Union (mm)	-Marriotts
-Contours	-Moose	-Manhattans	-Ramada
-Knotholes	-Airlines	-Funeral Homes	-Travelodge
-Odd-strikers	-Shiplines	-Hillbillies	-Planet Hollywood
-Movies	-Railroads	-Lion 30-STICK	-Intercontinentals
-Major Political	-Trucking	-Lion 21 Feature (mm)	-Lighthouses
-World's Fairs	-Best Westerns	-Canadian Navy Ships	-Lobsters
	-Quality Courts/Inns	-Playboy	-Minor Political
	-Holiday Inns (hmm?)	-Radio/TV	-Satins
	-Dated Auto	-Soda	-Raised-Ink
			-Tall ships
			-VA hospitals
			-Woodies
			-Chinese Restaurants
			-Mexican Restaurants
			-Mermaids
			-Dogs
			-Country Clubs
			-Towns
			-Zip codes
			-Phone numbers
			-County Seats

There was a lot of agonizing here, but basically I thought of what would be High Value and what would be Low Value...and everything else ended up in the middle! I've left out almost all of the smaller categories; there were some that could have gone in each of the columns here, but I think the smaller categories might have even been more controversial...and there wasn't room anyway!

And, admittedly, there were some categories I would have liked to put 'in between' somewhere—Dated Auto, for example. I would *guess* that those covers would be very good sellers on, say, ebay, where there are a lot of car enthusiasts, etc. But, I don't see a lot of enthusiasm for them within the hobby, and so I don't think they would sell as well there.

On the other hand, even though we put so much time and effort into building collections of Hyatts, Hiltons, Sheratons, Ramadas, etc., their popularity has dropped like a stone since almost of those sites went to generic covers, or no covers at all. With categories such as Towns, Zip Codes, Phone Numbers, and even County Seats, the attraction, in my opinion, was never the individual covers, but rather the challenge of trying to complete the incredibly difficult category, itself., plus relatively few actual collectors..and thus, as far as actual cover worth...Low Value.

The High Value categories, for the most part, were the easiest to list. Most have been considered treasures within the hobby for decades, but they all have very high interest levels.