Twitter Thread by Samantha Benc ■

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I don’t want to put anyone on blast, but I’ve seen a few people saying, erroneously, that superhero comics sell more by the numbers, that they have the biggest sales overall and (most wrong of all) that they are the best selling comics globally. And, uh...Shounen Jump called. ■

I’m not saying this to detract the historical and global importance of B2 comics... they were once huge. They are also old, so as far as historically, yeah they have decently big numbers. They are not doing those numbers now, or anytime in the past decade.

The best selling series, ever, by a Big 2 is Spider-man, selling 650 million since 1963. You can tally up all their series together but that’s a bit unfair so let’s stick to individuals. 650 is VERY respectable.

One Piece, Japans top selling collected manga, has sold 470 million....since 1997.

But that’s collected volumes...manga magazines are really a more equitable competitor to floppies, although not exact because, in fairness, they contain several series. That said, shounen jump has sold 7.6 billion. There are several other shounen magazines in that range.

no matter how you slice it, marvel or DC have NEVER done these kind of numbers, ever with their series combined. And manga sales are strong, getting better. Big 2 have rarely cracked 500k for single issues in recent years...their biggest steady peak was the early 90s.

Getting more recent, its really, really hard to find numbers on comics sales, and often y only see the diamond sales, which do not include traditional publishing. As effect, they leave out huge numbers of current comics from the picture and statistically make GN look small.

But look at numbers that include them, and things change. Arguments that GN have a higher sales point fall apart because...SH TPB (considered GN by diamond) sell for a HIGHER dollar amount generally.

DC by far tops that list, with Watchmen, a 35 year old comic that sold a respectable 20,000 or so in 2019. Compare to Scholastic’s best selling GN, the lower priced Dog Man: For Whom the Ball Rolls which moved 1.1 million. The top 10 GN

were all above 200,000 units (in 2019).

The only metric by which SH comics can even be a part of the conversation, is by *historical* sales. Their recent sales are pretty slumpy or steady for their old standbys, while manga and GNs published by other companies are RAPIDLY growing.

And i haven’t even gone into things like Peanuts, an strip comics or the European Market.