

Spidey 81 Ep 18 – “The Capture of Captain America” - AIRDATE: 1/9/82 VILLAIN: **Red Skull**  
GUEST TEAM-UP: **Captain America**. *First appearance of Red Skull AND Captain America:*  
Captain America Comics #1, March 1941. *First appearance of Red Skull with Spidey:* Amazing  
Spider-Man annual #5, 1968; *first visit from Cap in Spidey comics:* Amazing Spider-Man 187, Nov  
1978

**THE QUICK UPSHOT:** J Jonah Jameson hosts “Captain America Day,” ostensibly for the opportunity to make nice with his childhood hero. The Red Skull lies in wait to make a move for a classic “body switch.” Compelling and fun for kids, but also with hints of some fairly grown-up themes related back to the War and fascism. Important to keep in mind how much fresher those memories were for all parties 40 years ago. There’s also some contemplation to be done here about glorifying those times and the heroes of WWII while still in the shadow of Vietnam (in 1982). Digging deeper into the idea of “Spider-Man the Menace” was another strong aspect of this episode. Problems here are very few, IMO.

#### **THE HIGH-END COMMENTS**

- Voice of Red Skull? That’s right, Peter Cullen again.
- It’s kind of freaky how similar JJJ is modern conservative media; drapes himself in the flag, harkens back to the “good old days” of American exceptionalism, uses his media empire as a thin veil for his own self-aggrandizement. Chilling, actually.
- Spidey has been labeled a menace on this show before, but this is an all-time low, for sure. The scene with the kid throwing out his comics was just tough.
- Spidey in the ill-fitting Cap costume is a fun touch in this ep.

#### **THE TIME-CODED ITEMS**

10:55 – “Go back where you came from” – wow. Where have we heard that before?

12:44 – Love, LOVE “Stan’s” (haha!) Costume Shop. Just excellent.

14:00 – Wait, wait: so, where are we supposed to think that Red Skull’s castle is? That was a very small plane to make a trans-Atlantic flight.

14:50 – Ah, the classic “mind switch” trope, make popular by such films as *Freaky Friday*, *Vice Versa*, and the remake of *Freaky Friday*.

16:04 – is that possibly a Pong machine in Red Skull’s castle??? Nah, probably Defender.

Possibly Pac-Man.

21:30 – wow, what an end for the Red Skull! And redemption for Neiman.

#### **OTHER THINGS TO TALK ABOUT:**

- WWII in contemporary culture?
- Body-swap movies!
- The enduring legacy of Nazism as America’s worst villain
- Comparison of a movie like *First Avenger* to the stuff that can be handled in a short-form cartoon: substance vs. spectacle