

Author Unknown
Don Foster

I'd read newspaper articles about Foster and his seeming ability to identify authors with pseudonymous works, and I'd wondered just how he does it and if his methodology was sound.

While I found this book fascinating, I'm still wondering.

Foster's theory is that an author has a set of unique traits that can be identified by an expert. While he does use computers to do some of the tedious work of statistical analysis, contrary to some reports he does not have a computer program that just spits out answers for him.

Instead he looks at unique phrases, frequency of word use, grammatical tics and other clues to come to his conclusions.

Foster first used his technique to identify a poem, "Eulogy by TS" as being by Shakespeare. He seems convinced that he has, but not everyone agrees. Of course since it is his book, he puts forward his side of the case. One of the main arguments against it is that the poem is not up to Shakespeare's standards as a poem. While I think we'll never really know for certain, I can see Foster's point here and think he may be on to something, although I'm not so certain as he is. I can think of too many cases where I've read a minor piece by an author and thought that it wasn't up to their usual high standards.

Hammett comes to mind here. Reading "A Man Named Thin," "Tulip" or "Immortality" you wouldn't know that it was by the same person who wrote *The Maltese Falcon* or *Red Harvest*.

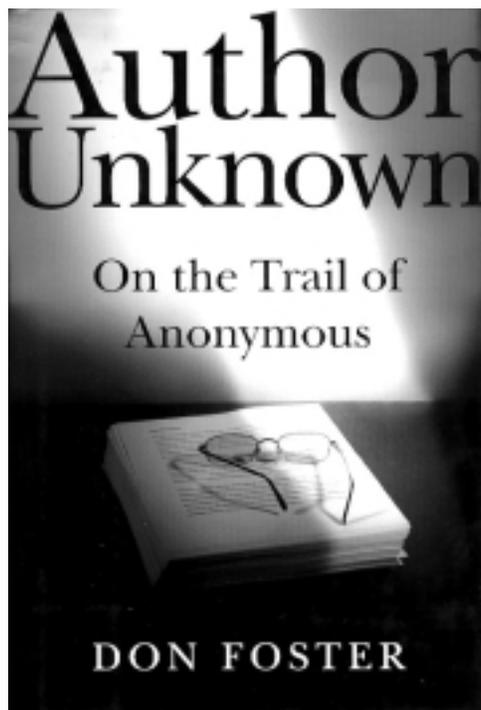
The next chapter is the most persuasive and the story related forms the basis for Foster's fame. "Anonymous" wrote a searing novel, *Primary Colors*, that was a thinly disguised look at Clinton and the 1996 campaign. Much media hype was given to finding the identity of "Anonymous" as he was clearly a beltway insider with lots of dirt to spread around. Foster, given a copy of the book and sample work by a number prime suspects, was able to identify the author, who, after first strongly denying it, admitted that he was the author.

This chapter has a lot to offer beyond the literary

points. It shows the differences between the academic world and the mass media world, the nature of fame and the pressures that surround something as simple as finding out who wrote a novel. Foster goes from being a minor scholar to a media figure overnight with all the perils and pitfalls therein.

This chapter also showcases Foster's technique at their best. He had a document with a questioned origin and a large sample of likely suspects with lots of material to work with. But it also raised some troubling questions about the limits of this sort of research that Foster doesn't seem to see.

Foster's technique relies on the unconscious traits and influences of a writer to match similarities. Do authors really have stable and identifiable traits? Such things as word and phrase choices, use and misuse of grammar, and the use of variant spellings. Clearly I, as a writer, have such identifiable traits. The use of the word "clearly" is one such trait. I've used it twice



just in this article. With a significant sample, such as the previous issues of Back Numbers, someone using Foster's techniques would have a reasonable expectation of identifying this review as one of mine.

But if the same researcher had a sample of my non-fiction writing from 15 years ago, would those similarities be there? I was writing for a very different audience. I was, quite frankly, a very different person back then. I've read more than 1000 books, I've discovered dozens of authors who've influenced me and, I hope, learned how to spell a little better.

I also tend to use the British spelling of grey. (But never "colour" which drives me nuts.) But I don't use "grey" consistently. And how often do I use that word in my writing? Not often enough, I think, to be a good clue.

Here's where I bring this back to discussing pulps:

Can Foster's ideas be used to identify the author of pulp stories? I think the answer to this question is no, and my reasons bring into question any attempt to use textual analysis to identify the writer of a work in the absence of supporting evidence.

In the case of *Primary Colors*, Foster had the evidence breaking for him. Joe Klein was writing about the Clinton campaign by day in non-fiction magazine pieces and then going home and satirizing that same campaign at night in fiction. With such a close correspondence between the known sample and the questioned document, in both concurrent time of writing and subject matter, it's no wonder that there are telltale similarities. I often find myself unconsciously repeating word choice or phrasing within a document, while if I have a sufficient time of separation between writing samples, I will choose a different expression. Earlier in this review, without realizing it, I started two consecutive paragraphs with the words "This chapter." Is this an unconscious give-away on my part that is consistent over time, or is it just a momentary lapse?

I also have doubts about applying textual analysis to pulp writing because of the inherent slanting of pulp stories. Yes, talent will out, but many pulp authors, particularly those hiding behind pen names and house names, are not artists striving for immortality, but craftsmen turning out a product that needs to match set criteria.

When Hugh Cave wrote for the slicks, he needed an entirely different style than when he wrote for the pulps under his own name. I suspect there is a further difference between the work he did under his own name for the major pulps and the work he did as "Justin Case" for the Spicy line. And Cave is hardly alone in being able to adjust his style to the market he was aiming toward.

I personally don't detect much similarities between Norvell Page's *Spicy Western* stories and "But Without Horns" written for *Unknown*. OK, I do detect a kinship between the later and his work on the Spider, but the differences between the execution are startling. With the Spider he was working with a company-owned character with set boundaries, one of which was that the Spider had to win. In the *Unknown* novella, he could cut loose.

And then there is the case of authors who deliberately imitate another. Sure it's easy to tell that Lin Carter isn't Robert E. Howard. But can you tell where Warren Murphy and Richard Sapir leave off and Will Murray kicks in? As an author, Murray has almost specialized in studying another author, such as Lester Dent, to the point where he can duplicate their work. I'll leave it up to Doc fans to evaluate how close he is to Dent, but I'll bet that Murray as Dent is far different than Murray as Murphy/Sapir or Murray as Ray W. Murill.

Some of Foster's other assertions are also questionable. In his chapter on the Unabomber, he says that he

believes that Kaczynski could have been caught by applying literary research techniques to the Unabomber documents. I think it's pretty easy to work a puzzle backwards when you already know the answers.

Along with a dull excursion into the talking points memo from the Clinton scandal, Foster looks at a couple of other interesting items.

The first of these is a literary mystery that takes place just north of Santa Rosa. Some of the local whackos up in Mendocino County were convinced that a mysterious correspondent with the local paper, a self-professed bag lady named Wanda Tinasky, was really the noted writer Thomas Pynchon.

I was pretty impressed with his literary detective work on this one, and I agree that he's probably right that the letters were written by a now-deceased local resident and kook, not by Pynchon.

The last chapter also seems to be very convincing, but again he's presenting his evidence in a way that makes it seem as if he's got to be right. I wonder what the other side would say about his claim that Clement Moore didn't write "The Night Before Christmas."

There's a great deal of literary detective work here, and it is interesting to read. When I read it, he convinced me of the correctness of his ideas, but in the cold light of day, I have to wonder if there isn't just as much evidence he didn't present that would counter his arguments. I guess I should move to Missouri. I'm a native skeptic.

Whodunit?

Edited by H.R.F. Keating

I'm trying to build a reference library of books on mystery and science fiction books, so I picked this up from Bay Books with some trade credit. I paid \$9, which I now think was too much.

I wasn't going to write about this, but as I read it, more and more things just don't seem right.

The book starts out with a series of essays on various sub-genres of mystery and crime fiction. I wasn't too impressed with any of these, a little too dry and professorish for my taste. I wouldn't have pared that apple in quite the same slices either.

This is followed by a section by a number of authors on "How I write my books." Better than most of the rest of the book, but with very little real information or insight.

The bulk of the book purports to be a consumer's guide to crime fiction. As a consumer of crime fiction, I didn't find this useful. More to the point, I didn't find it accurate.

Let's take the entry on Lester Dent:

"American pulp story writer and novelist who

between 1933 and 1979 wrote just under 200 novels about Doc Savage, hardboiled investigator..."

Boy, wouldn't you like to read those Doc Savage novels he wrote in the 50s, 60s and 70s? You Doc Savage fans can discuss amongst yourselves whether he should be described as a "hardboiled investigator" No mention here of "Angelfish" or "Sail" the two hardboiled short stories he's best known for in the mystery field and no mention of the titles of his mystery novels he wrote after his Doc Savage days. The one book the reviewers look at, *The Red Spider*, gets two stars for characterization, five stars for readability, five stars for tension and six stars for plot in a 10 star rating system where most books get at least an eight. I didn't find this system to be any use at figuring out which books I might like. There were too many eights, nines and tens and too little description of why they earned those marks.

The entry on Erle Stanley Gardner says he was a lawyer for 20 years before deciding to become a writer.

Now Gardner was a young lawyer, but he didn't pass the bar at the age of 12.

The entry for Fredrick Nebel gives high marks to "Six Deadly Dunes"

The entry for Sax Rohmer doesn't mention that his real name is Arthur Henry Sarsfield Ward, although most of the other entries make a point of noting real names.

Elleston Trevor's pen name of Adam Hall is listed, but no mention is made of Quiller, undoubtedly his most famous character.

In the entry for Rex Stout, the editor says of Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin: "their relationship is never spelled out." Just what exactly is being implied here? Goodwin is an investigator, he works for Wolfe. What's not spelled out about that?

For entries that I know a little bit about the author I keep seeing errors. This makes me wonder if there are errors in the entries for authors I know nothing about. This does not give me confidence in this as a reference work.

The next to final section of the book contains brief

descriptions and illustrations of notable mystery characters. Even this section has errors, such as saying that the first Mike Hammer book is titled "I, The Spy" and saying that *The Maltese Falcon* is Sam Spade's only appearance in print. These descriptions are oddly phrased in a manner I find disagreeable. Whoever wrote these was trying too hard to be "oh so clever."

The editor gets a professor of child psychology to write the last article--something about unresolved childhood traumas and people who like mystery fiction. I couldn't read it, psychobabble makes me fall asleep.

Mystery people who are not pulp mystery people seem to like these kind of reference books, but I can't say I do. They all seem to be trying to elevate the image of the mystery to "serious fiction" rather than just enjoy it for what it is.

The book does have a nice index.

The Hangman (Abilene #6) Justin Ladd (James L. Reasoner)

A good book, but I missed the regular cast. All of this except some framing sequences takes place in Colorado. It's a solo adventure for Marshal Travis. In other words, it's an out-of-towner.

The ending was plenty suspenseful.

I don't have much to say, but the following exchange did make me smile:

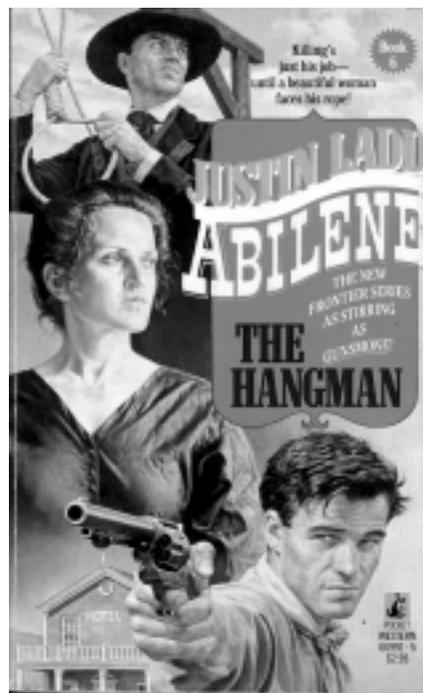
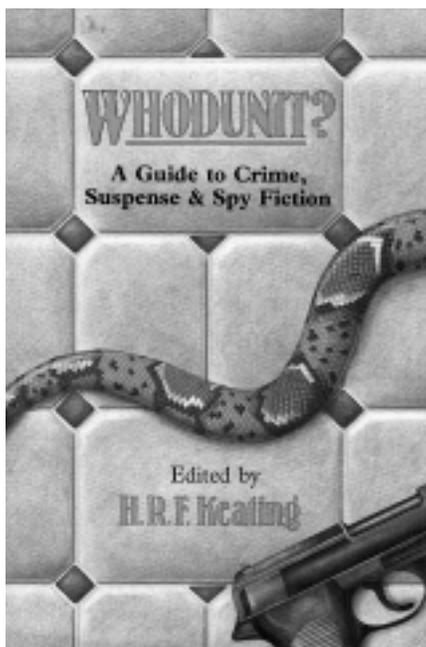
"There are a few boys who think they're mighty fast with a gun, but I just try to stay out of the way."

"Pistoleros, eh?" Travis said.

"Or what passes for it up here. Down home, they'd still be fast, but nothing that special."

Travis glanced away so that Wray would not see the grin on his face. Like most Texans, Travis seemed to think that folks from the Lone Star State were naturally bigger, faster, and tougher.

So James, what do you think? What do you other Texans think?



Mailing Comments

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PEAPS #66 January 2004

Volume One:

Bold Venture Bulletins #1

Rich Harvey

Excellent introduction. Very attractive job of type-setting. Clean, modern, easy to read.

I vote yes for re-titling *The Flame Master* as *Lord of the Lightnings*. While you are right to be concerned over previous poor editorial jobs done by other reprinters, I think your audience will understand as long as you have a good introduction relating your reasons for the change. To add some practical backing, when you started talking about reprinting *The Flame Master*, I thought you were talking about the one that was already reprinted and couldn't figure out why you'd be reprinting it again.

Re: your comments about thick contributions from John and I: I don't know about John, I started with a 14 page first issue, but my second issue was my largest so far at 60 pages. 20-30 pages seems to be about my limit these days. Hum, it looks like I'll hit 54 pages this mailing. Spoke too soon.

Thoughts on *Thrilling Ranch Stories* continued next issue? Stay tuned!

Raycentric Universe

Ray Skirsky

This was an excellent first issue. Welcome aboard.

Isn't it funny how you start out thinking you won't have much to say and end up with a 28 page issue?

I enjoyed your description of your book collecting history and interests.

If you are looking for reprints of the excellent Kennedy and McBride series by Fredrick Nebel:

"Winter Kill" is in *The Hardboiled Dicks*, edited by Ron Goulart

"Take it and Like it" is in *The Hard-Boiled Detective* edited. by Herbert Ruhm and in *Detectives A to Z* edited by Frank D. McSherry, Jr., Martin H. Greenberg and Charles G. Waugh

"Backwash" is in *Hard-Boiled* edited by Bill Pronzini and Jack Adrian

One of the projects listed as upcoming from Black Mask is a Kennedy and McBride collection edited by Rob Preston. Last I checked, unfortunately, it has yet to be scheduled for publication.

I liked your reviews of *Anatomy of Bibliomania* and

Libraries of the Ancient World. Both are books I'd pick up if I found them.

Your description of the bookstore in Tulsa made me drool. I almost want to plan a vacation around it.

Lots of interesting stuff in your pages.

T'rilling Action

Duane Spurlock

So what do you think of Crowley's Aegypt series so far?

Sons of the Blue Wolf

Kevin Cook

I guess we'll have to agree to disagree on the value of the Peter the Brazen books. I've always thought a book was worth what somebody was willing to pay for it. It's worth the price to you, but not to me. I will point out that if you paid more to buy the issues of Argosy that the stories originally appeared in, you'd have more than just the Peter the Brazen stories, you'd have lots of other pulp stories to read besides.

Not Worth 1/4 Cent a Word

Rick Hall

I find Argosy from the period to be as uninteresting, if not more so, than *10-Story Book* from the early 1900s. At various times *10-Story Book* has stories comparable to the early Hot Pulps, ran detective and weird fiction and was certainly not aiming at a slick audience. I say it's a pulp, at least for a substantial part of its run. So there.

Rough Edges Revisited

James Reasoner

It's been a while, but I recall really liking *Outlaw of Torn*.

Volume Two:

Happiest Blue Elephant

Kurt Shoemaker

Kurt comments on my reaction to J.T. Edson's substitute cussing and compares it with traditional pulp cussing.

I find "My ----" less annoying in a 1920's era pulp story than "mother something" in a modern book. I can fill in the blanks without losing stride in the first, but I can't imagine anyone actually cussing as they do in a

Edson novel.

He inquires about the books left over from the Big Book Score and on store buying policies.

The store that did not want any science fiction, while they do sell the stuff, is more of a semi-upscale general used book store. There is much more space devoted to “serious” literature than genre fiction. I rarely find any good stuff there.

The books I donated were things like Executioner spin-off series, “adult” Westerns, lots of early 80s ex-CIA versus Commies or Nazi villain sort of stuff. It was really bad. There were three copies of Stewart Wood’s *White Death*. Much of it was in poor condition, rodent chewed or water damaged. The box or so I threw away was damaged beyond salvage. Pages missing, rodents had chewed so far into the text that the book couldn’t be read, that sort of thing. I did throw out the Danielle Steele novel and the beat-up translations of the Angelique series. I know real trash when I see it. If I thought a book could still be read and enjoyed, I donated it. This is stuff that I didn’t think was worth the price of shipping book rate to anybody. Ray and I went over much of it over the phone and if he sounded at all interested in a title I sent it his way. DeWalt and Rich Berman also got boxes of stuff from me. So I tried to get as much of it out in the hands of people who would appreciate it as I could, short of listing thousands of books here in my pages.

I suppose I should have offered them to the group, but I needed them out of my apartment so I could live there. And I’m terrible about shipping books, just ask James Reasoner, he’s waited months for me to get around to sending him a book.

He wonders if I’m serious about my despair over the number of unread pulps and books I own.

Well, I guess I’m sorta serious. I’m not going to be dumping my pulps in the trash anytime soon. But I do wonder just what I’m doing sometimes. The combination of moving, getting my stuff out of storage, and the big book score gave me much to think about. I’m on a limited budget, which just got more limited thanks to the company I work for screwing us over. I have a finite amount of space. I really don’t want to move again, but sooner or later I will have to. The temporary flood of books into my apartment gave me a good preview of what I can expect in five or ten years if I keep up my rate of acquisitions. My landlady is starting to make comments about the number of books in my apartment. Since I’ve been recording my books read and my books bought here, I see the number of books that I read is a fraction of the books I buy. It’s easy to say that I could read 800 books in 8 years. Ok, that’s doable, but if in the meantime I’ve bought 1,600 books, then that’s not so good. I don’t like the way things are trending. Since the article in the July mailing, I’ve increased the books on my to-

be-read list to over 920. The percentage of books I own that I’ve read has dropped from 64.2% then to just over 60%. And that’s just novels and single author collections. And this is with me trying to read more and buy less. I still haven’t read the Black Mask I bought last fall. Heck, I haven’t even read my featured pulp yet this quarter. (And at this point it doesn’t look like I’m going to before I have to have this in the mail.) (Nope, I had to abandon that feature again.) I read maybe two or three pulps a year. That’s terrible. I need to stop spending money on a hobby I don’t pursue and I need to stop cluttering my life with junk. I say this after having just put in a big order with Mike.

I think I’d feel a lot better about this if I wasn’t tripping over boxes of comic books and anime stuff that I no longer want. It’s too easy for me to see how my youthful enthusiasms have become a burden. And why the heck do I keep buying role playing game stuff? I hate role playing.

John ought to make up some buttons that read “‘tis better to die with books unread than money unspent.” He’d make a fortune.

Nevada, by the way, has a None of the Above option. Unfortunately, if none of the above wins, the next highest vote getter gains the office. I think it would be better if all the candidates were disqualified.

I drove over the Sierra-Nevadas, through Truckee and Donner Pass. I didn’t have any trouble with the moving truck. Good weather that trip—I’ve crossed that range before in a storm and it wasn’t fun.

In a Raycentric Universe, Starsky and Hutch novels ARE wonderful Pulpcon loot.

10-Story Book is physically pulp-sized, but thinner, usually 60 pages, saddle stapled rather than glued in signatures.

As per your comments, elsewhere this time I’ve got a detailed report on the progress I’ve made on my Men Who Make The Argosy Project.

The eventual goal is to collect as much biographical data from the pages of *Argosy* as possible and then assemble it like an encyclopedia. I’ve talked to Rob Preston about putting it up at the Black Mask Magazine website. I’d also like to do it as a booklet. I’ve also been talking to Monte Herridge about doing the same for the features in *Detective Fiction Weekly*. Then there’s *Blue Book*, *Short Stories*, etc. Since I’ve been working on the *Argosy* bios for six or seven years now, this is certainly shaping up to be a long-term project. Still, I figure I’m about a third done.

El Dorado 22
John DeWalt

That article of yours on the Collyers seems...famil-

iar. Hum. Wonder why.

I don't have an obit for Chidsey, but he died in 1981 in New London, Connecticut.

I'm not really that big of an Asterix fan.

I really liked *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (the comic) although I thought Moore went too far in the second series with the sex. I really liked the Mars sequence in the first issue of the second series, but I could have done without most of the next four issues and skipped to the sixth issue with the finale.

Where'd you turn up a copy of *How 7?* Details please. Just what is this thing?

So how is *The Amazing Bob Davis*? Is this a book I need? I suppose it is.

So did you find a copy of Lory's *Dracula Horror Series #9*? Or did you not know it existed?

You suggest to James that the Fisher and Savoy series by Donald Barr Chidsey would be a good reprint project. I thought the same thing and wrote a letter to Argosy Communications about obtaining reprint rights several years ago. I received no response. Perhaps someday I'll try again. Somewhere I still have the files on the first story all ready to go to press.

Thanks for the kind words about my Big Book Score article.

I was thinking about offering an edited version to an e-newsletter for booksellers that was asking for articles, but when I saw their standard contract I balked. They wanted to take full copyright in perpetuity. With no compensation. I wouldn't have minded submitting and not getting paid, but losing the right to use it anywhere else, and giving them the right to do whatever they wanted to with it, just wasn't going to happen.

Sulf V.2 #63
Norm Metcalf

Just how long ago was this Turk St. bookstore experience? (Visions of uncovering a stash of *Weird Tales* during my next trip to San Francisco pass through the air.)

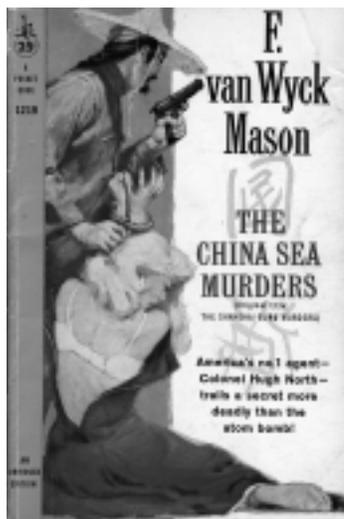
Here's the info on the F. V. W. Mason book you asked for:

The China Sea Murders

Original title: The Shanghai-Bund Murders
Publisher: Pocket Books, number 1219

Copyright 1933,
Copyright 1959

"The China Sea Murders was first published



by Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., many years ago, under the title *The Shanghai-Bund Murders*. This is a completely rewritten and very substantially changed version of the earlier adventure story.

The revised story has villains who are red agents of commie China in a spy thriller centered around North and South Korea. It is set after the Korean War. So it must be very different from the story that first appeared in 1933.

Thanks for the heads up about the abridgement of the American version of *Flat 2* by Edgar Wallace. Mine is the 1973 Arrow edition, and thus British, but it says "This revised edition copyright Penelope Wallace 1967." The original was published in 1927. So I wonder if this too is abridged from the earlier British editions.



Ramblings of a Perambulating Pulp Fan #60
Al Tonik

I think I can detect a "family" resemblance between the photos of Donald Barr Chidsey that I ran.

On 10-Story Book. The Daily Story Publishing Company was listed as the publisher for the magazine for many years. We know the pulp was edited in Chicago as Harry Stephen Keeler took over as publisher in 1919 and edited it until its end in 1940. Keeler was a Chicago character and an Illinois native who used Chicago almost as a character in his novels. Certainly his work shows an intimate knowledge of Chicago the way Hammett knows San Francisco. This issue is the only place I've seen a reference to the Fisher Special Agency though. That's why I wondered about them.

Hidalgo #66
Brian Earl Brown

You say that Bill Thom's website is ephemerical, well yes, but it is reprinted in both *Golden Perils* and in *Echoes*. That provides a paper record of the items he covers.

The New Complete... All-Comment Magazine
Michael Chomko

I have a hardback, ex-library reprint of *The Amazing Adventures of Lester Leith* that was published by the Dial Press. It's up for grabs if anybody needs a very beat up copy of this title.

Recently Read/Recently Acquired

Books Read

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Red Iron Nights | Glen Cook |
| Death of a Citizen | Donald Hamilton |
| <i>First in the Matt Helm series. Excellent.</i> | |
| Imaro | Charles R. Saunders |
| <i>Excellent.</i> | |
| The Astounding-Analog Reader Book Two | ed. by Harrison & Aldiss |
| Corpse on Ice | Robert Leslie Bellem |
| <i>I'm very disappointed here. I really enjoyed the first collection of Dan Turner stories from Black Dog Books, but this one has one story, "Death's Bright Halo" that has been printed in High Adventure #35 and another "Death's Passport" that was printed in Tony Goodstone's The Pulps and a third, "Homicide Hunch" that was in "Tough Guys and Dangerous Dames. So three quarters of the stories here are stuff I've already read. For \$9.00 I expect better. There are certainly plenty of unprinted Dan Turner stories available, there's just no excuse to reprint stuff that is already out there. It's not like these chapbooks are aimed outside the pulp collector marketplace. I would think that anyone interested in this booklet would already have Goodstone, the foundation pulp anthology, "Tough Guys" which is easy to find, and would be a subscriber to High Adventure. I've been buying almost every BDB chapbook as they come out without thinking about it, but now I'm going to have to start looking twice at what I'm paying for. \$9.00 for one short story is just not within my budget.</i> | |
| Avenger #30: Black Chariots | Kenneth Robeson (Ron Goulart) |
| <i>Slight, but enjoyable.</i> | |
| The Mammoth Encyclopedia of Science Fiction | ed. by George Mann |
| The Avenger #31: The Cartoon Crimes | Kenneth Robeson (Ron Goulart) |
| Graveyard Honeymoon | Arthur Leo Zagat |
| The Stinging 'nting and other stories | Hugh B. Cave |
| Compliments of the Domino Lady | Lars Anderson |
| Destroyer #2: Death Check | Warren Murphy and Richard Sapir |
| Head First (Yellowthread Street Series) | William Marshall |
| Destroyer #13: Acid Rock | Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy |
| Dr. Cyclops | Kuttner, Walton, Hamilton |
| <i>I suppose this counts as an anthology. Three stories reprinted from the pulps. Title story is terrible. Hamilton's Captain Future not as bad as I expected, Eugene Walton's story surprisingly serious and adequately written, but not my thing.</i> | |
| Excession | Ian M. Banks |
| <i>Excellent and quite challenging.</i> | |
| Tales of Known Space | Larry Niven |
| Treasure of Tartary | Robert E. Howard |
| The Rim of Space/The Ship From Outside | A. Bertram Chandler |
| Drachenfels | Jack Yeovil (Kim Newman) |
| Abilene #6: The Hangman | Justin Ladd (James Reasoner) |
| Star Ways | Poul Anderson |

Zines Read

- The Black Book #1
Pulpster 2003

Pulpgen/Black Mask Magazine/Adventure House/Pulprack downloads read:

The following can be found at pulpgen.com, www.adventurehouse.com, www.pulprack.com or www.blackmaskmagazine.com.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Through the Wall | G.T. Fleming-Roberts |
| A Dog-house Detective | Herbert MacAlpine |

Crook, Fire and Stinker	Tom Thursday
Man from the Wrong Time-Track	Denis Plimmer
South of Sarajevo	Fred F. Fleischer
White and Yellow	Sidney Herschell Small
<i>A Jimmy Wentworth story. Excellent. He's one of my favorite Chinatown detective characters. Small treated his Chinese characters better than anyone but maybe Erle Stanley Gardner. Lots of great local color here. I've always liked the San Francisco church inscription that Small uses here to start his story: "Son, Observe the Time and Fly from Evil"</i>	
Good Fishing	Harold de Polo
<i>Another Sheriff Ollie story. Yet again he catches his man with a fishing rod. This time it's a tough New York gangster.</i>	
Dicks Die Hard	Theodore Tinsley
Dumb Dick	D.L. Champion
The Witch of Venice	Dorothy Quick
The Wild Whampoo of the Whampolo	Thomas Thursday
<i>He used the same plot 18 or so years earlier in another story that Pulpgen has for download.</i>	
Stumps of Good Timber	Raymond S. Spears
On the Job	Carl Mattison Chapin
Pell Street Blues	Achmed Abdullah
<i>The first page of this has an illustration by John Richard Flanagan of Mongols storming the Great Wall of China, but the story takes place in modern times. I thought the ending was a bit contrived.</i>	
The Little Doc	Harrison Hendryx
Peace at Last	George Foxhill
The Gun Runners	J.D. Newsom
Gray Magic	Lew York
The Wood Devil Thing	Gordon McCreagh
An Inside Job	Neil C. Miller
The Sickie and the Hounds	MacKinlay Kantor
Time Will Tell	Joe Archibald
Round About Rigel	J. Harvey Haggard
<i>Were all Thrilling Wonder stories this bad?</i>	
Trick for Trick	Radnor M. Coote
<i>The single most sub-literate pulp story I've ever read.</i>	
A Doting Burglar	Ben Hecht
<i>Dated.</i>	
The Hick Cop	Leo Hoban
The Corpse in the Doorway	James H. S. Moynahan
<i>If this had been rewritten with an actual mystery story instead of just a chase sequence, it might have been ok.</i>	
Mis-Leading Lady	Mary Mason Beale
<i>What's wrong with me, I'm enjoying romance stories more than detective and science fiction stories. Aaugh!</i>	
Knife in the Dark	Robert Leslie Bellem
Whipped	Peter Grant
Rough Toss	George Allan England
A Death in the Family	R. D. Torrey
Captain Trouble	Perley Poore Sheehan
The Red Road to Shamballah	Perley Poore Sheehan
The Black Abbot	Perley Poore Sheehan
The Green Shiver	Perley Poore Sheehan
Clown of Doom	John L. Benton
Sweet Cheat	"Beryle Berle"
When Super-Apes Plot	Wilder Anthony
Crash on Delivery	Joe Archibald
Death on the Hook	John K. Butler
Harlem Magic	Reginald Vance Coghlan
Naughty Nightmares	Don Amour
Thirty Days on the Island	Raymond J. Brown

Back Numbers

Don't Meddle with Murder	C.S. Montanye
Guiana Trap	Tom Curry
Leaf of the Lotus	Guy Russell
Death Dines Out	Paul Ernst
Playboy	Samuel Taylor
Win-Place-and Show	Roger Torrey
The Fighting Fool	Perley Poore Sheehan
Fatal Alure	Robert Leslie Bellem
Three Smart Silks	H. Bedford Jones
The House of Weird Sleep	Charles R. Allen
The Yellow Curse	Lars Anderson
Fear	Achmed Abdullah
A Meal For the Devil	K. Christopher Barr
Skip Tracer Bullets	Joe Archibald
Latin Blood	Robert Leslie Bellem
Staten Island Ferry	Ben Conlon
Fake it Easy	Richard Brister
Left fer the Buzzards	Allan R. Bosworth
The Tattooed Cobra	William E. Barrett
<i>Needle Mike story. I've always wanted to read one. Didn't care for this one though.</i>	
In the Clutch of the Turk	Benge Atlee
The Mystery of the Talking Idols	Achmed Abdullah
Jedrick the Unstung	Robert Leslie Bellem
The Widow's Bite	Joe Archibald
Grappling Trilby	Robert Leslie Bellem
War Plans Divided	Robert Leslie Bellem
The Cock Crows "Murder"	Robert Leslie Bellem
There are no Crooks	Frank R. Adams
The Shanghai Jester	Robert Leslie Bellem
A Repeating Romeo	May Belleville Brown
Jes' Natcherel Meanness	Franklin P. Harry
<i>O. Henry he's not.</i>	
Bolo Shadows in Shanghai	R. Martini
Wyatt's Hypnotizing Bird	Captain Frederick Moore
Corpses is Corpses	Richard Brister
The Nail Inside	H.E. Twinells
Hook, Line and Sinker	Robert Turner
Stand-in for Slaughter	Grover Brinkman
Borderland	Arthur J. Burks
The Executioner	Charles Phifer
\$50,000 Legs	Richard Sale
Skin Deep	Tom S. Elrod
The Crown Jewels	Robert Carlton Brown
The Mid-watch Tragedy	Vincent Starrett
The Colonel's Answer	Arch Whitehouse
Demons of Destiny	Johnston McCulley
The Fall of Frisco Freddie	Jerome Severs Perry
Trouble Goalie	Cliff Campbell
No Greater Love	Michael Bittner
When a Yank Gets Fighting Mad	Lieut. Jay D. Blafox
<i>Author of "Dive Bomb Those Nazi Dogs To Hell!" it says here. Now there's a title.</i>	
The Monkey God	Jacland Marmur
The Man Who Was Dead	Andrew A. Caffrey
Skyscraper Horror	Paul Chadwick

Beyond Justice	Robert Leslie Bellem
Score None for the Chair	Thomas Thursday
Ranger's Ruse	Charles N. Hechelmann
I'm a Bum	Cliff Campbell

Whew, I did it, I read every story I downloaded since December, plus some older stories. I'm actually making headway against the flood of stories available on the internet. Of course, the number of books I've read this time out is shockingly low.

Graphic Novels Read:

Asterix and the Soothsayer	Gorzini and Udero
<i>Smaller than the usual album, with all of the artwork reduced in size. Not for those who have trouble reading small type.</i>	
The Complete Dickie Dare	Milton Caniff
<i>Pretty good precursor to his Terry and the Pirates series.</i>	
Terry and the Pirates#21: Pat's Back	Milton Caniff
<i>Excellent, but then I had to reread a bunch of the other volumes in the series. Lots of loose ends though. Whatever happened to poor Willow Belinda, left behind by Terry in India as he flew off on a secret mission behind enemy lines? Why didn't Pat Ryan ever try to rescue Terry, or even look him up after the war was over, after being forced to leave him behind? Terry Lee sure was a love 'em and leave 'em kind of guy. April Kane, Willow Belinda, Hu She, etc. The term "Cad" comes to mind.</i>	
Tales of the Incredible	
Tintin in America	Hergé
<i>Very disappointing. Tintin escapes multiple times by luck or coincidence. I'm not quite sure if some of the gags here are Hergé's attempts at satire or are because he doesn't understand America. Is the presence of wild west cowboys and Indians contemporary with Chicago gangsters a satire of European views of America? One good gag though is when Tintin discovers oil (in another life-saving bit of random luck) and is immediately besieged by dozens of oil speculators who appear out of nowhere offering him money. When Tintin tells them the oil belongs to the Indians, it takes only a handful of panels before the army has moved the Indians off the land, the speculators have stolen the oil, and a modern city is built on the site.</i>	
Lone Wolf and Cub #9	Koike & Kojima
Lone Wolf and Cub #10	Koike & Kojima
<i>Both excellent as usual, although I liked #9 better. I'm slowly working my way through these volumes.</i>	

Books Bought

Take Off Too	Randal Garrett	\$4.00 in trade credit
The Sowers of the Thunder	Robert E. Howard	? in Trade
<i>Ace edition, needed for my REH collection</i>		
<i>At Fantasy Etc. I traded in some of the books left over from last December's bag sales and picked up \$14 or so in credit. I bought:</i>		
Avenger #30: Black Chariots	Kenneth Robeson (Ron Goulart)	\$5.00 in trade
Avenger #31: The Cartoon Crimes	Kenneth Robeson (Ron Goulart)	\$4.00 in trade
<i>More than I really wanted to pay for these, but I'm getting near to completing my set and it was trade credit that I didn't have any other books to spend it on.</i>		
Sally's in the Alley	Norbert Davis	(Xmas gift)
Oh, Murderer Mine	Norbert Davis	(Xmas gift)
Breakout	Richard Stark (Donald Westlake)	(Xmas gift)
<i>I ordered these online through Amazon.com. I had a certificate. The two Norbert Davis books are printed by a small press in Colorado. All three of the Doan and Carstairs series is available from them. Breakout is the last, so far, of the Parker novels.</i>		
Exploits of Elaine	Arthur B. Reeve	\$1.00
Asterix and the Soothsayer	Gorzini and Udero	\$1.00
<i>SF Friends Sale. I won't bother going to this sale again. Overpriced junk.</i>		

Back Numbers

Every year the Friends of the Oakland Museum have a giant White Elephant Sale. The sale takes place in a large warehouse that is filled with donated goods. In addition to picking up several decorative bookend sets, I found the following at the preview sale:

Space Time & Crime	ed. by Miriam Allen deFord	.50
The Star Kings	Edmond Hamilton	.50
Bran Mak Morn	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Upgrade</i>		
Wolfshead	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer, duplicate for trade stock</i>		
Conan the Conquerer	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer, earlier printing than I had</i>		
Conan the Avenger	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer</i>		
Conan of Cimmeria	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer</i>		
Conan the Warrior	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer</i>		
Conan the Usurper	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer, upgrade</i>		
King Kull	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer, earlier printing than I had</i>		
Conan the Adventurer	Robert E. Howard	.50
<i>Lancer, duplicate for trade stock</i>		
Conan of the Isles	deCamp and Carter	.50
<i>Lancer, upgrade</i>		
The Living Shadow	Maxwell Grant (Walter Gibson)	.50
<i>Bantam, upgrade</i>		
The Shadow: Destination Moon	Maxwell Grant (Dennis Lynds)	
<i>Belmont, upgrade</i>		

I also found three expensive books for the Call of Cthulhu game system. Original prices ranged from \$9 to \$30. These were \$1 each.

After pillaging the book section, I went over to the art section and in a corner with boxes of rolled up posters I found two 24 x 36 posters of G-8 pulp cover reproductions. I bought both of these for \$3 each along with a reproduction of a Dracula movie poster. The covers were from Wings of the Death Master and Bombs From The Murder Wolves. These were copyrighted by Portal Publications in Sausalito. I'll have to do some more research on this outfit.

Imaro II: The Quest for Cush	Charles R. Saunders	\$2.50 in trade.
I read the first book in this series within a day of buying it. I'm looking forward to this one. Now I'm on the hunt for the third book. I wish somebody would reprint these and print the unpublished novels in this series.		
Hit #29	"Joey" with David Fisher	\$7.50 in trade
Non-fiction (?) true crime as told by a hitman for the mob.		
Flim-Flam	James Randi	\$10.00 in trade.
I've always liked the work Randi has done to fight irrationality and bunko artists. I've been on the lookout for this for several years.		
The above three books were found on a local bookhunting expedition. I took in the leftovers from December bag sales and got \$15 in trade credit at each of two stores. With the trade credit I made last month and last year, I'm well over \$80 in trade credit ahead of what I paid in cash to get that trade stock. So I came out a little ahead on the day.		

Except that as I was driving down a country road I stopped at a flea market I'd never been to before and found a

stack of Destroyer novels sitting on a table. They were 3 for \$1 so I bought:

Destroyer #2: Death Check	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #13: Acid Rock	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #15: Murder Ward	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #28: Ship of Death	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #33: Voodoo Die	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #34: Chained Reaction	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #36: Power Play	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #38: Bay City Blast	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #42: Timber Line	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #43: Midnight Man	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1
Destroyer #45: Spoils of War	Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy	3 for \$1

To fill in an even 12 books I bought:

The Twisted Thing (Mike Hammer)	Mickey Spillane	3 for \$1
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At the same table I found:

A Coffin Full of Dollars (Man With No Name) Joe Millard	.50
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I ordered a bunch of books from a dealer who advertised his list on PulpMags. The following set me back \$45.00 including shipping.

Atlanta Deathwatch	Ralph Dennis	
<i>First in the Hardman Series</i>		
Violent Saturday	W. L. Heath	
The Corpse in the Picture Window/ If Wishes Were Hearses	Bruce Cassidy/J. Harvey Bond (Ace Double)	
Murder Picks the Jury	Harrison Hunt	
Murder Picks the Jury	Harrison Hunt	
<i>Second copy was for John DeWalt</i>		
What Price Murder	Cleve F. Adams	
No Wings on a Cop	Cleve F. Adams	
The Private Eye	Cleve F. Adams	
Stone Angel	Marvin Albert	
Bimbo Heaven	Marvin Albert	
13 West Street	Leigh Brackett	
Silent are the Dead	George Harmon Coxe	
<i>Flashgun Casey novel from Black Mask</i>		
Solomon Kane (Peter Haddock ed)	Robert E. Howard	\$15.00
<i>There was some question as to whether Peter Haddock published (or pirated) the third Centaur Press book, so I bought this from a dealer in Canada to prove it existed, and for my collection, which had lacked a Peter Haddock example.</i>		
Bloodletters and Bad Men Volume 1	Jay Robert Nash	\$2.50 in trade
Bloodletters and Bad men Volume 2	Jay Robert Nash	\$2.50 in trade
<i>Non Fiction</i>		
The Amazing Maurice and His Educated Rodents	Terry Pratchett	\$2.50 in trade
<i>This one was in like-new condition. Diskworld novel, although it looks like it was marketed for children.</i>		
Fantasy Literature	Tymn, Zahorski and Boyer	\$1.00 from library sale

Back Numbers

Imaro III: The Trail of Bohu	Charles R. Saunders	\$2.00
Whom the Gods Would Slay	Ivar Jorgensen	\$3.50

What? Why? How Much? I guess it was just the rush of victory at finding the Imaro book.

So I went back to the Oakland Museum's White Elephant Sale during the weekend it was free to get in.

Death Angel's Shadow	Karl Edward Wagner	.50
<i>Duplicate, but of the Warner Paperback Library edition that I didn't have.</i>		
The Harp and the Blade	John Myers Myers	\$1.00
<i>Duplicate, but this was the Donning Starblaze edition illustrated by Charles Vess. This says it was edited by Hank Stine in large letters on the cover. I suppose I need to pull out those Argosy issues where this ran as a serial and find out how much damage was done by the editing.</i>		
DemonTech II: Rally Point	David Sherman	.50
Quiller Bamboo	Adam Hall	.50
The Werewolf of Paris	Guy Endore	.50
<i>The find of the sale.</i>		
Night Watch	Terry Pratchett	.50
Swamp Man	Donald Goins	.50
Chessboard Planet	"Lewis Padgett"	.50
<i>Galaxy Novel No. 26</i>		

Then I drove to the Pleasant Hill Library booksale.

Swords Against Darkness III	ed. by Andrew J. Offutt	.50
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I left and went to Bay Books. I was looking for Prestige Conans and other Howard books and found a good selection.

Three-Bladed Doom	Robert E. Howard	\$5.00
<i>They claimed this Ace was a first edition. Didn't seem interested when I told them there were earlier printings by other publishers.</i>		
Conan the Wanderer	\$2.98	
<i>Prestige Books, Boris cover.</i>		
Conan the Adventurer	\$2.98	
<i>Prestige Books, Frazetta Cover</i>		
Conan the Warrior	\$3.50	
<i>Prestige Books, Frazetta Cover</i>		
Conan the Conqueror	\$2.98	
<i>Prestige Books, Frazetta Cover</i>		
Conan of Aquilonia	de Camp and Carter	\$2.00
<i>Prestige Books,</i>		

Then I returned to the Pleasant Hill library sale for the bag sale. In addition to most of a bag of trade stock I picked up:

The Difference Engine	William Gibson and Bruce Sterling	
The Old Gods Waken	Manly Wade Wellman	
<i>Book Club Edition</i>		
Sabre-Tooth	Peter O'Donnell	
A Taste for Death	Peter O'Donnell	
<i>These are hardback, look like may be first edition, Modesty Blaise novels. Formerly the property of the SF Press Club.</i>		
Summertide	Charles Sheffield	
Divergence	Charles Sheffield	
Transcendence	Charles Sheffield	
The Best from F & S, 3rd ed.	Ed. by Boucher and McComas	
The Golden Years of Science Fiction, 4th Series	ed. by Asmov & Greenberg	
Best of Weird Tales	ed. by John Betancourt	
Time Wars	Created by Poul Anderson	

Somewhere, and it may have been at the above bag sale, I picked up
 A Century of Noir Ed. by Mickey Spillane and Max Allan Collins

Then I went to Kayo books on the way home.
 Shadowed Millions Maxwell Grant \$12.00 in trade
I could swear I had this one, but it's the last one I need to fill in my set of Jove/Pyramid Shadows.
 Contraband Cleve F. Adams \$3.00 in trade
 Murder All Over Cleve F. Adams \$3.00 in trade

A couple of weekends later I went to the Marin Free Library's book sale. It was disappointing this year, they moved to a smaller space and didn't have the selection they used to. No respect for genre fiction either.
 When Demons Walk Patricia Briggs .50
 The Great SF Stories 14 ed. by Asimov & Greenberg .50
 Taran Wanderer Lloyd Alexander .50
 Operation Luna Poul Anderson .50
 Illegal Aliens Nick Pollotta & Phil Foglio .50
 The Kalif's War John Dalmas .50
 The Best of James Blish James Blish .50
 The Destroyer #63: The Sky is Falling Sapir and Murphy

Somewhere I picked up:
 The Lust Lizard of Melancholy Cove Christopher Moore
Hardback. Looks interesting. Good buzz on the net.

Since I was in the neighborhood, I stopped by a bookstore I'd never been to in Novato. I brought in the bag of books from the Pleasant Hill sale and got \$21 in credit. I spent all but \$1 on:
 Intrigue in Paris Sterling Noel \$2 in trade
 Again the Ringer Edgar Wallace \$3 in trade
 The Forger Edgar Wallace \$4 in trade
 Room 13 Edgar Wallace \$4 in trade
 The Green Ribbon Edgar Wallace \$4 in trade
 The Score Richard Stark \$3 in trade
Yeah, it's a duplicate, but it had a different cover and a title change.
 Pulp Masters ed. by Gorman and Greenberg \$8 in trade.

In a very generous trade, James Reasoner sent me:
 Under Outlaw Flags James Reasoner
 The Hunted James Reasoner
 The Hawthorn Legacy James Reasoner
Hey James: *let me know what you're looking for, I owe you some more books for these.*

Graphic Novels Bought

Tales of The Incredible (EC comics Reprints, paperback format) .50
Also from the Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale.
 Terry and the Pirates#21: Pat's Back Milton Caniff \$6.95
I've been looking for this for years. Now I only need #3 and #17 to have the full set.
 Tintin in America Hergé \$5.50 in Trade
 Lone Wolf and Cub #9 Koike & Kojima \$6.00 in Trade
 Lone Wolf and Cub #10 Koike & Kojima \$6.00 in Trade

A good use of my trade credit. I've not paid full price for any of these Lone Wolf and Cub volumes. John scored quite a few of these at \$2.00 each a while back for me and I've been finding missing volumes here and there. With 28 volumes at \$10 each, I can't justify paying full price for them, even if it is a classic series. The store had more of these, but they were duplicates of ones I had. They didn't last long, all of these were gone within a day of my first spotting them.

JAPANESE SCIENCE FICTION COVER ARTIST

ORAI NORIYOSHI

The Novels of E.E. "Doc" Smith

