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This issue of *eI* is dedicated to the memory of Martha Beck---*too little, too late...*

## Good-bye, Martha

Martha Beck died peacefully in her sleep yesterday morning, Wednesday March 13 2002, of respiratory failure. She had been suffering from this condition for some time and been anchored to an oxygen tank for much too long that considerably restricted her movements and fan activities.

Since the 1950s she and her husband Henry Beck were fixtures within MidWest fandom and stalwarts of the Chicago fan group. Martha was a convention committee member for ChiCon III where she ran the hospitality suite for the N3F. Throughout the last fifty years she has been the soul and spirit of fandom, making every convention or just a simple party something extraordinarily special just by her presence.

Martha was mother to us all. She adopted my family and me in the 1950s where we regularly commuted from Gary, Indiana to Chicago for reasons that had nothing to do with science fiction or fandom. We were integrated into her family. Martha and Henry became godparents to my second son, Erik. All of us and all of our children more or less grew up together.

Throughout these years Martha has been one of the handful of people who insisted upon maintaining contact with me, wherever I was, when most others had abandoned me or long since lost track of my whereabouts, including myself. At times when I was at my very lowest in spirit and volition, Martha was always there, offering aid, comfort, and encouragement.

Martha took the place of her sister-in-law Sally Rand, my muse, and worked unceasingly at inspiring me toward a greatness that only she recognized. She alone has always insisted that I had something important to say and that I should be about saying it because she, at least, was waiting to read it...to hear it.

Oddly, I know that she still will. At this very moment she is seated in a plush, comfortable chair in the VIP section of the Celestial Science Fiction library surrounded by all the artifacts she ever wanted. She is breathing freely and naturally for the first time in many decades. She is free to eat her special treats and to indulge in her private pleasures and nothing can ever affect her adversely again. She is no longer burdened by the pain that

regularly ripped through her or the struggles just to get through each day. She is reading over my shoulder...all of our shoulders...every moment of every day and passing her blessings along to all of us.

The Spanish have a word for it, "adios." It really doesn't mean *good-bye* but literally "into God's hands, your keeping."

Martha is home, where she belongs and where she desperately wanted to be. Rejoice in her contentment and...at last...freedom from pain.

--Earl Kemp, March 14, 2002

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Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die.

--*Gilbert Keith Chesterton*

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**EVERYTHING** in this issue of *eI* was written by me. Everything in this issue is part of the ongoing rough draft outlining of my memoirs. As usual, I am presenting these fragments here, in this forum, in hopes of attracting corrections, revisions, additions, memories, photographs, covers, jpegs, etc. Please don't hesitate to pass them on to me at [earlkemp@citlink.net](mailto:earlkemp@citlink.net) at any time.

**SPECIAL** thanks for this issue go to Bill Burns, my producer and distributor at <http://efanzines.com> for his great services. Also to Elaine Harris for some extra heavy-duty photo restoration services and to Robert Spray for designing the layout and page make-up.

**THIS**, the second issue of *eI*, contains stories about one of my former obsessions, bullfighting. There are three related stories, "Death in the Afternoon," "The King of Somewhere Hot...", and "Blood and Sand," all dealing with this fascinating but outgrown past. These three pieces are followed by "Have Typewriter; Will Whore For Food" dealing with the paperback publishing boom of the 1960s.

THANK YOU for your wonderful letters and superlative blessings. Please don't stop.

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Without an element of the obscene there can be no true and deep aesthetic or moral conception of life... It is only the great men who are truly obscene. If they had not dared to be obscene they could never have dared to be great.

--*Havelock Ellis*

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EDITORIAL:

## "...For Nothin' Left To Lose...."\*

By Earl Kemp

"Freedom's just another word..." the lyrics tell us, and they tell us true.

The word represents one of the biggest myths and frauds ever perpetuated against those they are presumed to "protect and serve" by those charged with that responsibility in the first place.

These are, I swear, the unspeakable and unhearable words, the unthinkable words. They are also the undeniable words.

Everywhere I turn these days, following the terrorist attack last September 11th, I encounter much concern and dialogue about temporarily relinquishing portions of what it is that we think of as being our freedom to those very same people. And this comes from others who seem to think they have some voice in the matter. Sadder still, they seem to think and appear to feel that they have something to lose.

My long, bitter experience concerning fights for some of those very same freedoms, especially the First Amendment, has left me with the clear, unblurred knowledge of how ridiculous it is to believe that I, or any other citizen of the USA for that matter, felt I had any. I don't have valid comparisons for other countries.

Politicians, and you must know this even if you never allow yourself to bring it to mind, do not work for their constituencies. They work first for personal profit and fringe benefits in staggeringly obscene amounts, and second toward the secret ends of their political party. Everything and everyone else is totally expendable and can not be allowed to interfere, even briefly, with personal, private political goals.

Fuck the people!

Most people in the USA never travel any significant distance from home. They have nothing real or tangible within their own realities with which to compare anything, much less freedom. They know, because they have been taught to believe, that they live in the "greatest country in the world."

Not for a moment has a one of them compared statistics about where the USA stands, ranked among other nations, in areas of education, health, wealth distribution, childhood diseases, etc. They couldn't handle the truth that, in every area except political/military, we rank very low indeed compared with most of the third world, developing nations.

They believe that they enjoy and experience the very best of everything there is because they have been taught this ridiculous myth by rote and don't have a better to compare their fare with. They don't even believe there is a better, and much better after that, followed by very much better, etc.

Encountering these words would neither enlighten nor inform them. It would enrage and infuriate them that I

could be so callous, so unpatriotic, so treasonous...even so traitorous...as to express the concept publicly. It's "me and the Taliban" against them and, because expressing these things means automatically that I am un-American and against the War on Terrorism, I should be put away with all the rest of the nut-fringe loonies. It could happen....

Still others say that I am just bitter, a sore loser, cynical, too far out for everything.

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The law enforcement community within the USA represents the politicians and the status quo above all others. Without authority or authorization or even "probable cause," the law enforcement community at every level from the White House down to the local postman and dogcatcher routinely and customarily, whenever the whim strikes them:

Tap all your telephones (including auxiliaries and attachments thereto like PCs, e-mail, Internet, and WWWs).

Interfere with, open, and copy all classes of your mail.

Run records checks and keep dossiers on you and yours.

Plant bugs, microphones, cameras, transmitters, etc. on you.

Do much, much worse things.

And these things are done in cases involving known criminals and known criminal activity, in cases of suspected but unverified criminal activity allegedly perpetuated by anyone they don't like for any reason. The best part is just to hassle anyone they don't like, including persons known to have no possible criminal connection. And it goes on for years and years, as long as the thrill lasts for them....

So why are you concerned that President Bush has signed a bill temporarily (and what a farce that word has always been in similar situations) suspending the sham of a myth of a right you never ever had to begin with?

In the real world, it happens this way: Anyone suspected or disliked and singled out for this close scrutiny is eligible for the full treatment. It doesn't matter if they are aware that they are under a microscope or not; there is nothing they can do about it. Nothing at all. What the law enforcement community does, in place of solving crimes, is snoop, bribe, defraud, steal, perjure themselves and others, invent evidence, etc., and in general insist and appear to believe that "the end justifies the means."

They can not see themselves as being involved in the single most corrupt, illegal, criminal occupation in the entire country. They think they are doing good. To be true, I have encountered a number of honest, honorable law enforcement types but they are very few and very far between and, even then, the code of whatever drives them is hacking away at their honesty and honorableness, trying to force them to conform to the actions of the pack.

In Mexico, for instance, it is axiomatic that every criminal carries a badge on him somewhere. The bigger a criminal he is, the higher-ranking his badge, right up to the highest Federale level.

Badges, in the USA, appear to have been replaced with hard currency. That means large-denomination unmarked bills, no checks, receipts, or records. And, as in Mexico, a rigid pecking order is maintained. The Supreme Court Justice solicits and demands a considerably larger bribe than the one sought by the judge presiding over your local superior court.

In the USA, I've always felt that it is very difficult to distinguish between the law enforcement community and the criminal community. They all look alike, and walk and talk and swagger alike. They go to all the same places and know all the same lawyers, judges, and booking clerks. For the most part, they dress and act alike as well.

Finally I developed this theory: The only way to distinguish between the criminal and the cop in the USA is to determine which one of them has the badge and exactly where he stole it.

[I am well aware that there are exceptions to every case, including the ones cited here.]

And most good "merikans" agree with the law enforcement community and anyone else who tells them what to think and understand how really good they are and how helpful...until you actually need some help. Most USA citizens would say that I am way off the mark with these words, and in so saying, condemn themselves to yet more of it and less of the other...the personal stuff...the me or the you, my or yours.

Then, on the slim chance that some damaging evidence turns up through these illegal searches and seizures and invasions of privacy, the law enforcement community moves to the next plateau. This is the one where they go to a "friendly" judge who will sign and back date any legal document they care to ask for. For some reason they seem to feel the need to pretend to have been legal all the time when they never have been yet.

Surely there's no need to mention the fact that prisons all over this country house judges, lawyers, prosecuting attorneys, chiefs of police, sheriffs, marshals, patrolmen, and even an occasional presidential cabinet member or two. Let's not pretend that all of them pretend to be law-abiding citizens.



Next the file goes to some prosecuting division where the fragments of illegally obtained or paid-for bribery are lined up in some actionable order. At every gaping hole, notes are made regarding what is needed to fill them and, without regard to reality, they proceed to fabricate evidence or extort or pay for perjured testimony to do the same thing. Then the whole thing moves down the factory assembly line to the next stop.

It goes that way all the way to the courtroom and to the prison cell, well greased with lies, deceit, and unconscionable illegality. At every step along the way every perpetrator, with a wink, an elbow-jab, and a leer, congratulates the other with a pat on the back and a grab of the buttocks for a job well done for justice, liberty, and the American way.

Patriotism is what you call it or what you feel it to be. For years I felt I was nearly the only patriot left standing, fighting against them for whatever it was America was supposed to be. They had all the trappings of patriotism and I had none, yet it was still just me, defending the things I had always thought they were supposed to defend. It must be part of that flip-flop syndrome where every time the Administration needs a good war, our most recently last most bitterest and hateful enemy suddenly appears, shoulder to shoulder, as our staunchest ally now fighting with us against our most recently last most trusted and honorably ally.

And the cannons roar and the factories belch and Big Business makes Really Big Bucks that never dwindle down to the minimum-wage robots living in the best country in the world...and, where permitted by law, under God.

You will never see the day when you get those temporarily disconnected freedoms returned to you. Get over it and get on with it. Just remember how happy you've been when you thought you had them but didn't; you can get there again, with even fewer freedoms to worry about this time around.

Either you baah! like a good little sheep or get in line for the mutton processing. You have no other option.

Amid all the flag-waving (and I am doing that too) and nation-reprouding and red-white-and-blueing going on everywhere, you're "with us" or "against us" and you don't matter, personally, alive or dead, for doodlie-squat.

"...and the land of the free...."

Very early on, whenever leaving the USA either on business or pleasure, I was struck by a tangible, warm, caressing of something I couldn't identify. I spent a lot of time working on it, trying to figure it out. I finally decided that that good-glow of personal completion and satisfaction was "freedom" and that I felt good because I was "free." Once I left the country of my birth and lair of those who think of themselves as being my controller.

Sadly, whenever it was time to start thinking about returning to the USA, darkness and gloom would set in. The awful dread of going through the Customs and Immigration gauntlet as a "tagged" person (without evidence, probable cause, or record, undergoing strip searches, genital grabbing and denigration, raucous jokes at my expense, anal probes, and other embarrassing realities all designed to make the day for certain in-the-know federal inspectors). Somehow everyone feels free to embarrass and criticize you directly in your face, to defame you and call you names, because they carry a badge marking them as minimum wage capable. They want their hooks in you again, to exercise their dominance and control.

Imagine how wonderful it would be if they could spend just a little bit of that time, energy, effort, and invective trying to do something good or legal for a change?

To double-check myself, I began surveying people I knew who traveled quite a lot about the same thing and almost without exception each one indicated to me that they feel more free outside the USA than they do inside it. Surely the proper feeling for any citizen to have about their homeland... "Homeland Security" or not.

Once, driving a visiting friend from Amsterdam into Mexico, just as we passed clear of the port of entry, he turned to me in amazement and said, "My God! You can feel the freedom surrounding you here the instant you leave the States."

Other visitors, notably from Denmark and Sweden, have approached me seriously on the subject of how could I live under such repressive conditions as they say they felt everywhere they went around our country.

[There are many countries where you can not feel free, and there are other countries where the local citizens can not feel free but absolutely nothing will touch a tourist there. Exceptions to every rule.]

I spent years of my life in the futile attempt to help people see what really surrounds them beyond the cloak of pretense that has been force-fed to them, daily, all their lives. It didn't work then, it won't work now, and tomorrow won't be any better. It has reached the stage where there is no longer a starting point. You can't begin from here. You have nothing to work with any longer.

Your children can't read or calculate.

Your grandchildren don't even understand the need for either.

You pay five times the world average price for prescription medicine and health care that is rendered to you 23rd in line, nationwide, right after Costa Rica and just before Cuba.

People in the USA live in streets, dumpsters, and shrubbery. People starve. People die. Women, children, the elderly die alone, unnoticed, and unwanted. People can't get to see a doctor for any reason and can't afford the medicine that would cure them if they could. Politicians eat cake.

Shame on them. There must be something they need to eat a great deal more of.

It makes me sad, again. I mourn, again. I die, again.

Only thing is, Patrick Henry don't ride no mo', there's no more of it left. I gave at the office.

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\*For Mohamed Yasin, my Islamic friend in Tangier, Morocco; face Mecca from the Star of the East and breathe deep of the hashish drifting heavily on the afternoon breezes. © 2001 by Earl Kemp. All rights reserved. Dated December 2001.

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It takes physical courage to indulge in wickedness. The "good" are too cowardly to do it.

# "Death in the Afternoon"\*

By Earl Kemp

When I was a youngster and impressionable, I was captivated by many things that were radically unusual and different from whatever it was I was exposed to within my native environment. Naturally, I found most of those things within books or movies or music, the only things that, somehow, managed to intrude into that environment. And, it seemed, the more divergent they were from the local norm, the more impressionable they were upon me.

One of those things became the mystique and romance of Mexico (or of Spanish things once removed) most prominently portrayed in a bullfighting setting. *Blood And Sand* was very formative to me, Tyrone Power, Anthony Quinn, my love Rita Hayworth (formerly Rita Cansino, an adept child flamenco dancer in Tijuana), Linda Darnell, and a cast of Technicolor bulls. *Death in the Afternoon* and all the rituals associated with same, Ernest Hemingway, et al. And even that was a remake of an old silent starring Rudolph Valentino.

In 1965, as I made my move to San Diego from Chicago, I met numbers of people who wished to show me around and acquaint me with all the local entertainments and diversions, among them being Tijuana, with which I became instantly fascinated. I couldn't seem to get enough of it.

I would go to Tijuana for lunch, for dinner...for a haircut...for absolutely any reason at all, should I have to have had an excuse, I'd make one up.

Tijuana was, at that time, Sin City to the world, with the downtown district itself a riot of strip joints, bordellos, pimps, and some unbelievably raunchy floor shows. There were shills outside each of these places, on the sidewalks, trying to entice people into the establishments that had hired them. "Fucking, sucking on stage; live donkeys..." was a part of each of their enticement spiels. Some of those places had already acquired world-class status among the notorious partiers of the area, most notably off-duty military personnel from the San Diego area where many, many such resided, being home bases for marines, air force, navy, etc. Naturally, Tijuana was off-limits to those military types, but what the hell, they were as mobile as anyone else and as capable of denying their status as well.

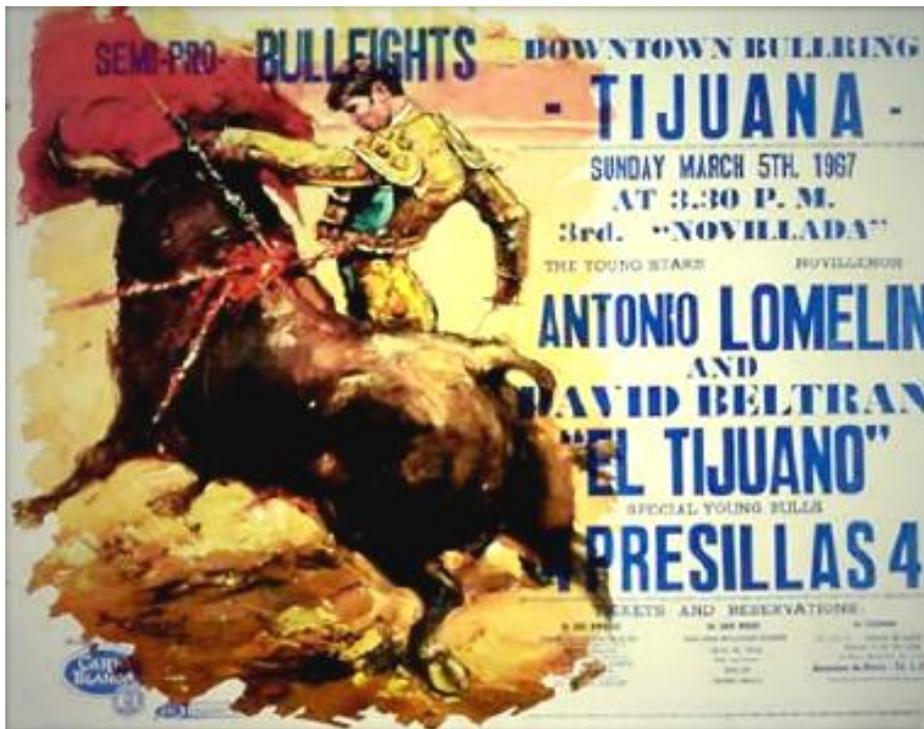
One such place, The Blue Fox, was particularly well known, having billboards, T-shirts, bumper stickers, and other things that those in the know proudly flaunted wherever they went, slogans like "Eat at the Blue Fox," "The Blue Fox blue plate special," "Tijuana Pussy Posse," and on and on. The Blue Fox, on its stage, featured strippers who would go all the way, but the real show was not the strippers, but the customers in the "restaurant" instead, who had perfected what might eventually evolve into something known as "lap dancing." The customers would go up onto the stage whenever they felt so inclined and whenever a particular stripper of their liking was performing, and sprawl out flat on the stage on their backs. The stripper, now nude, would sit on them if they were so inclined, and the customer would have the opportunity to partake of all they could eat. And they did, and the crowd roared and cheered them on and changed places and on and on.

One club was a transvestite joint featuring very elaborate stage shows. Above all these establishments were rooms where patrons could go with any of the entertainers of their choosing and do whatever it was they felt like doing inside those rooms, for a price...something less than \$10. There were numbers of bordellos around town of several class structures, from the commonplace quickie joint to the extremely elaborate executive type places for wealthy businessmen, etc. All staffed and priced according to what the traffic would allow.

Eventually, as progress caught up with location, all those places were either shut down or moved to an undesirable "Zona Rosa" (red light district) right up against the United States border in a location that did not attract so much tourist foot traffic.

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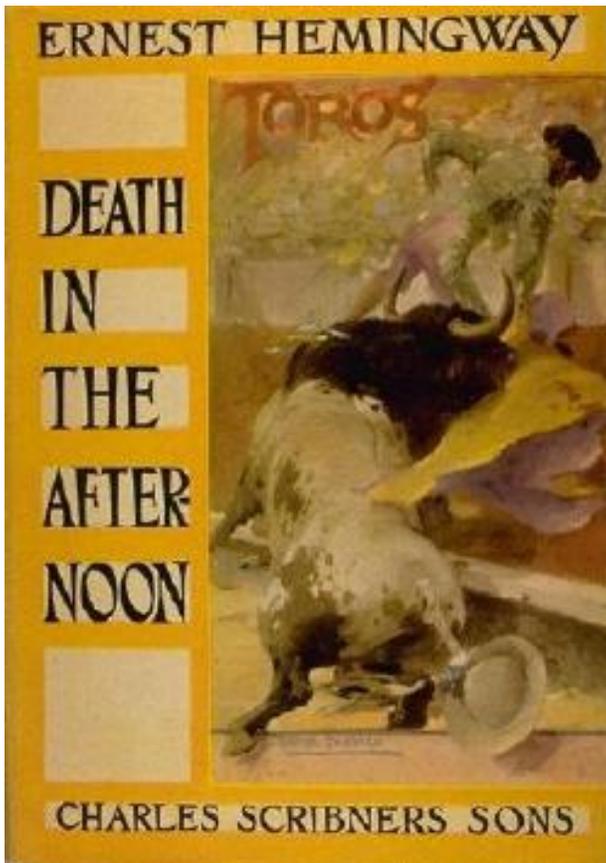
But that is not the story this started out to be. The story is about bulls. Some of my newfound friends in San Diego took me to the bullfights in Tijuana to see how I would react to them. I reacted positively so they took me several more times. I was captivated by the rituals and spectacle of the events. Not by the killing. I had by that time become such a pacifist that I couldn't tolerate killing of any nature except of course for food, etc. I wasn't going to give up beef, either.



About the same time, I stumbled into a nice upscale bar in downtown Tijuana which was clean and inviting and offered a quiet place to get away from the hustle for a little while. In the evening, a rock and roll group would set up in the corner and shake the whole building with their very own rendition, shouted at peak voice, of "come on, baby, light my fire." *Las Puertas, verdad...*

I found it becoming one of my favorite stopping places. I think I had discovered classic margaritas by then; certainly not the awful things you get at most places today or from most well drinks. Naturally, I began to talk with the bartender, George (*Jorge*), and he with me. He was a regal gentleman with lots of dignity and bearing

who, it turned out, was actually an official at Plaza Monumental, the major downtown Tijuana bullring in his real life. (There are two bull rings in Tijuana, the second one located right on the beach.) He, like my San Diego friends, continued to encourage me to enjoy and attend bullfights.



In fact, George opened the entire bullring up for me, giving me access to most of the off-limits areas. I would go to Plaza Monumental early in the morning and spend most of Sunday with him (bullfights happen only on Sundays and major holidays) being shown around, led into heretofore forbidden areas for me at least. I would be there when they would bring in the bulls, draw lots for position and matador, then parcel them out into holding pens accordingly. I would be there when the cerveza trucks brought in the beer and when the Coca-Cola trucks brought in the refrescos. When the food vendors started working on the tortillas and the carne asada...the mingling aromas, so early in the morning, doing wild things with my senses.

From this vantage point I became saturated in the mystique of bullfighting, surrounded as I was by the actual bulls themselves, snorting and prancing through oceans of urine and fecal matter and stinking unbelievably. I got to believing I was Ernest Hemingway again, getting ready to go to Paris, living life to the fullest and getting right down in there with the damned beasts themselves.

I had total access to the ring itself, provided that I stayed behind the final protective barrier that was allegedly bull proof (though I have seen a bull or two with the powers to jump over that barrier and terrorize those standing behind it where I frequently stood) where I would hang over the retaining wall, camera in hand, and take the damndest photographs that have, regretfully, most all become lost as time passed by.

It was in Tijuana during this period that one matador, Anthony Lomelin from Acapulco, captured my fancy



because of his courage and his good looks. Lomelin was not only strikingly handsome, he had an audacious approach to fear that was intriguing and perplexing. He had already become the darling of the Acapulco social set and of the more affluent expatriates living there.



There were numerous prominent bullfighters of the day who appeared regularly in Tijuana, El Cordobes, the world leader at the time, Carlos Montoya, who fought his bulls from horseback, La Paloma Linares, beauty at work...etc. But Lomelin, the newcomer, the upstart, was my favorite. I wanted very much to meet him, and made that fact known loudly and clearly around Plaza Monumental.

I even went so far as to ask a friend of mine on the *Playboy* staff to fake an introduction to Lomelin for me on the pretense that I was researching an article about him. He did, only he signed the letter with a fake name. Then, in case of emergencies, he sent that letter to me with a care package of unused *Playboy* letterheads and envelopes and a note telling me to write my own damned not *Playboy* letters in the future without bothering him and besides, he doesn't even know me. I had occasion to use most of those *Playboy* letterheads, including most notably during my tour of Viet Nam as foreign correspondent for the Los Angeles *Free Press*.

My efforts finally paid off and the doors were opened to me.



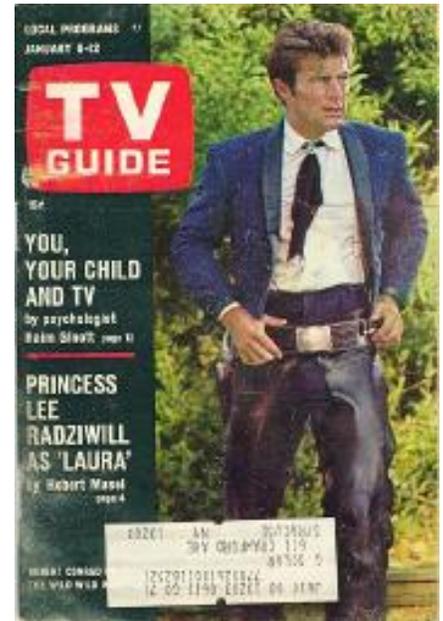
Antonio Lomelin at Plaza Monumental, Tijuana.  
Photo by (and © by) Earl Kemp dated 1967.

One Sunday morning I was told to go to Antonio Lomelin's room at the La Sierra Motel promptly at 2 o'clock where I would be allowed to meet him, speak with him, and observe him prepare for that afternoon's fight.

Much to my surprise, when I arrived at the La Sierra Motel, I was not alone...there was one other person similarly privileged, Robert Conrad, star of *Wild Wild West*, one of my favorite television shows. Conrad was at the peak of his personal perfection and at the top of his professional career playing the role of James T. West, Federal Agent, on one of the most popular television shows running.

Maybe I was actually Artemus Gordon cleverly disguised as me, only that wouldn't be revealed until just before the end of the episode. Jim knew it was me though, he could tell.

The La Sierra Motel, mostly because of its location, had long been the official residence of visiting bullfighters and other celebrities. It was a large, lavish, old-style motel with big rooms and even bigger suites. Antonio Lomelin, for the moment at least, was treated like royalty and assigned quite a nice suite.



Conrad and I were met by Lomelin's secretary who introduced us to each other and to Antonio Lomelin. We also got to meet his four groomers and handlers, and while both of us thought of them as being beneath my and Conrad's dignity, we were wrong. They were fellow participants in that day's fights, and were already partially dressed in their brilliantly exaggerated bullfighting costumes.

After that brief introduction, hand shaking, etc., and attempts to talk (Lomelin did not speak much English so that direction quickly proved to be a dead end), Conrad and I were directed toward seats and told to sit down and be quiet.

We were told that we were not to take any photographs, ask questions, talk, or in any way interfere, just to sit there quietly and watch and learn.

I had no idea what was going on, personally. Conrad might have known what to expect, but I certainly didn't.

Lomelin's handlers and groomers knew what they were doing, that was very clear to us. They began a long process of bathing Lomelin. This was followed by mass massaging and ego stroking being done to Lomelin by his dressers.

Now and then I would glance at Conrad, and he at



Bullfight drawing by Antonio Lomelin hanging on the wall of Restaurante Danubio in Mexico City.

me. My reactions to what was ongoing were confusing, to say the least. I couldn't imagine what was going on inside his mind.

Lomelin stood there like a statue, David perhaps, almost in a trance. I looked around me and checked closely for signs that alcohol or drugs were being used, but there were no hints at all about either. They finished bathing him and dried him and anointed him with various fragrant lotions and cremes. And while they were doing these things, almost as if they were chanting a ritual, they kept verbally giving Lomelin mentally uplifting encouragements. What they were doing, in reality, was psyching him up royally. Every touch of their hands, every word out of their mouths, was telling him that he could go out there and face those bulls like no other person alive. It was almost a lovefest, except for the possible deadly implications.

Next, they began dressing Lomalin in his suit of lights, the matador costume he would wear for that afternoon's engagements. It was quite a difficult thing to do, get him inside that costume. It was deliberately tight and it took two to three of them pulling on the shining fabric to stretch it enough to reach Lomelin's waist.

As I watched them, I could feel that tight suit reluctantly being pulled up my own thighs as well as his. I began sitting up much straighter. My voice dropped an octave at least the way my groin was so tightly bound. I felt so damned proudly masculine all wrapped up like that in bright pastel colors I just knew my steps would reflect my new-found pride of being.

Was Conrad's mind doing tricks on him as well? I couldn't ask him but I could see him cringing and shifting just a bit, trying to make getting into that suit of lights a bit easier.

After Lomelin had been completely dressed, candles were lit and everyone fell to their knees before a well-used altar. There was much, much praying and religious activities that, not being Catholic, I knew not much of. Then it was all over, the entire grand ritual. My appointment had me and Robert Conrad arriving at the La Sierra Motel at 2 p.m. and the grand festivities of the afternoon, as always, were scheduled for 4 p.m. exactly.

Finally it was time to make the short walk from the La Sierra Motel to Plaza Monumental, and we all went along together, in a little parade of quiet solemnity. It was machismoism at its ultimate peak. No one could walk so manly man-like as we could, on our way to extinction. Somehow I was wearing Jose Greco flamenco boots in a bright black glove leather. The heels were over two inches high. It was difficult walking in them the way the heels made you arch your legs and push your rear back, trying to keep pace with the loudly resounding sounds of guitars and "Bambolero" pounding out all around us like Gipsy Kings running wild on Owsley acid.

I could see some of the spectators gathering for the afternoon's event move aside and make way for us to pass, though no-one spoke. Now and then someone would make the sign of the cross in silent prayer for the death

that was already approaching.

Again I felt so proud, all of us...me and Conrad as well...dressed in those silky looking tight-ass suits and walking, matador-like, toward destiny. All of us stepped so proudly, so very manly, that afternoon. I fancied that my suit of lights was a bright, fluorescing puke green somewhere between chartreuse and key lime.



Conrad's suit of lights, I assumed, was burnished gold to beige, almost a flesh color. He walked so proudly and with such determination I swear he looked naked, there in the brilliant afternoon sunlight in the midst of all of our brilliant pastel colors. He didn't appear to mind at all; he radiated his best James T. West perfection smile and

moved resolutely onward.

Jim West's cinematic sequel son, Will Smith, couldn't have performed the part even with a crotch double.

Once our little procession was inside the ring, Conrad and I wished them well then we separated and went to our seats, and Lomelin went on into the arena itself to face his own worst fears alone.

Bullfighting is not, as most people think, a barbaric killing event draped in much blood and gore. It is a classic ballet of rigidly prescribed dance movements wherein everything has to be done just so. There are many, many performers and each of them has a separate part of the dance to perform. The more you know of the rituals, the more you appreciate them and the more you respond in accordance with tradition itself.

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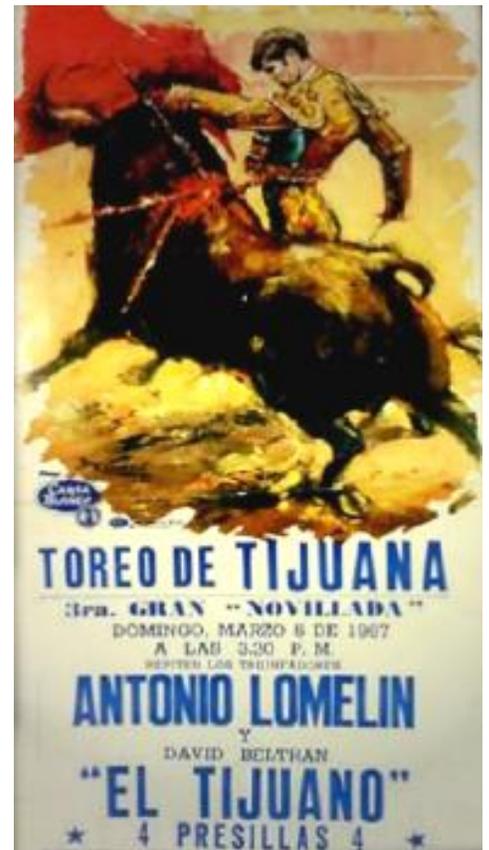
Much later I was saddened to learn that Antonio Lomelin had been gored seriously at least two times. Once when appearing in Tijuana he was gored in his liver and a second time in Mexico City he was gored in his

intestines. Both of these injuries happened as Lomelin was attempting to place his Banderillas. But the most distressing thing of all to discover was that somehow Lomelin had become quite an alcohol abuser, and with an impaired liver at that. Then he had a number of brushes with the law that resulted in his conviction of a crime and being sentenced to prison for a length of time. I couldn't discover any details, not even the country it happened in, much less the nature of the crime or length of Lomelin's incarceration.

After he was released from prison, Lomelin briefly attempted a comeback, but the effort was unsuccessful. The fans who once applauded him the most knew the flair and audacity of the beauty he once was could never be reclaimed again. They were right.

My affection for bullfighting followed me elsewhere, at different times and places, wherever a truly magnificent matador was booked and wherever it was possible to get scalper tickets on the spur of the moment.

Far removed from the incomparable skies of Jalisco, *la casa de me corizon*, where the clouds themselves feel most at home, lies another of my special favorite hideaways...Barcelona.



I just happened to be there one day and encountered much, much enthusiasm for a bullfight scheduled for the following afternoon. It was touted as something very special indeed. It was a "mano a mano" (hand to hand) competition. A challenge match between the No. 2 matador, La Paloma (the dove) Linares who had challenged No. 1, El Cordobes [Manuel Ben'tez Perez], to a duel to establish who was actually the best fighter in all the world (Cordobes was acknowledged world-class champion at the time).



The fight was to be held in a small little arena in a small little town in the middle of nowhere vaguely accessible from Barcelona. Naturally, I bought scalper tickets instantly and boarded a special bus on Sunday morning bound for the arena.

It was quite a spectacle. Each of the two fighters fought three bulls in rotating order.

I recall, in the end, it was declared a stand-off...probably no official would dare declare either one of them to be the better fighter at that point in time.

— — —  
\*In fond memory of James Haynes, a good old boy from Louisiana who was perfectly at home in Paris; he loved it when I showed him the real Mexico. Dated July 1999.

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Courage and grace is a formidable mixture. The only place to see it is the bullring.  
--*Marlene Dietrich*

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## "The King of Somewhere Hot"\*

By Earl Kemp

Donald H. Gilmore, Ph.D., was one hell of a guy. I never met anyone even remotely like him. On the surface he seemed to represent everything I didn't like, yet somehow I genuinely liked him. He was, without fear of challenge, the world's best asskisser. And, knowing that, I never once felt he was kissing mine, even when he was...he was that good. Everything, in fact, one would expect from a true King of Pornography.

He was pushy beyond description, and he moved onward and forward at a remarkably rapid pace. So much so, in fact, that it was almost incredulous to watch him in action. I never wanted to meet him, that's for sure, or anyone like him. He was a regular pain in the ass as he pushed himself onto me again and again as if he didn't notice the rebukes and dismissals.

I am glad he persisted, though. And that I begrudgingly allowed him access to me and at least tacitly granted him permission to keep at it...at me.... Otherwise I might have missed out on one of life's greatest gifts...a true friend.

Even then, as we only first met, he had some grand-scale schemes underway that clearly involved me, only I was resistant. He kept hitting me with his plan of moving to Guadalajara (the thought had never crossed my mind) and establishing a world-class pornography empire, one where he, as king, would rule, naturally. To that end he had already done much footwork and preliminary exploration. It was clear to me that with or without my involvement, he was proceeding full-speed ahead.

He did indeed move to Guadalajara where, without wasting any time at all, he rapidly started struggling right up to the top level of local Guadalajara politicians and power brokers through the most effective asskissing I have ever known. He was a real artist...within weeks there he was Patron to and fund raiser for the Salvation Army Orphanage, president of the 20,000 card-carrying-member expatriate U.S. citizen America Society, and first-name socializing with such exceptionally prominent local people as the Ibarras (chocolate), the Canadas (shoes), and the Sauzas (tequila).

Ordinarily, for most people, any one of those fetes would have been impossible to accomplish. Superman

couldn't do it. James Bond couldn't do it. An extremely well connected undercover CIA operative couldn't even do it...only Gilmore did.

(Years later, under equally mysterious circumstances, with an impossible amount of high-placed official help, the Gilmores abruptly and without notice relocated quietly and instantly in San Diego again. Don would never explain any of it, or his now-and-then ramblings about being on the last plane to escape from Havana, under gunfire, when Castro kicked the USA supported Mafia scoundrels out....)

Betty Gilmore wasn't wasting her time either. She produced a couple of dramatic coffee-table books on needlepoint. To this day I still sit on one of Betty's needlepoint pillows, a grand one featured in one of her colorful books.

(For the Gilmores' Phase II of Jalisco domination, they adopted two Mexican children, opened a chain of bookstores-*Libros, Libros, Libros*-and began buying up residential lots in Guadalajara's most exclusive, upscale locations.)

And, following his master plan, Don Gilmore had already located, identified, and contacted a core group of retired pornographers-to-be, and was already instructing them in Titillation 101. In his spare time, he wrote a best-selling travel book, *Mexico on \$5 a Day*, that saw a couple of reprintings.

*Ah, for the life of the idle rich.*

Don considered himself to be "best friend" with the United States Counsel (i.e. ambassador to Guadalajara). Don lived in the biggest, most pretentious, and prominently situated house on Avenida del Bosque, right next door to and sharing a common wall with the Bishop of Guadalajara.

This Bishop's house on Avenida del Bosque is not to be confused with the pre-Revolution Bishop's estate in suburban Zapopan. The Zapopan estate is liberally decorated with bullet holes, pockmarks, and other desecrations still left and still reflecting the consideration, reverence, and piety with which they evicted the previous despot. That estate was the residence of lovely Linda DuBriel, the pride of French Lick, Indiana, and the reigning Queen of Pornography. Her garden parties (whole roast pig in a pit) were as legendary as her athletic prowess (world champion, one-hand, perfect joint roller).

The Bishop next door to the Gilmores, it turned out, was alleged to be a pedophile, and there were endless streams of little boys going into that house to receive special blessings. Parents would bring their little boys there for that purpose, and wait outside the fence, in the street, however long it took for the Bishop to finish, comfortable with the knowledge that their sacrifice somehow moved them, personally, closer to heaven.

The Bishop of Guadalajara, at the time, also owned one of the largest supermarket chains (Hemuda) and was one of the municipality's (equivalent to a county's) biggest slumlords. All this despite Catholic law forbidding any church official to engage in public commercial enterprises. (In Mexico, by federal law, the church is not allowed to own anything including the church structure itself. Because they held such power prior to The Revolution, the revolutionaries took everything away from them forever; Clerics, nuns, etc. are forbidden to be seen in public in religious dress, yet they are everywhere.)

Directly across the street from Don Gilmore lived the Chief of Police of Guadalajara, whose eldest son could

pass for Jalisco's most prolific drug dealer, with endless streams of probable *narcotraficantes* going in and out of the chief's house.

Down the street on the next block lived the Zuno family...mother and father to then Mexican President Echeverra's wife, an avowed Communist who preached insurrection herself and dared to do the most blatant bad thing of all...loudly advocate contraception, birth control, and abortion for Mexico's female population. The first family were frequent visitors to the neighborhood, passing in front of the Gilmores.

This was also a rather sad time for U.S. history. It seems that Richard Nixon didn't like the recently elected President of Chile, Dr. Salvador Allende Gossens (a pediatrician) who, as candidate from the *Unidad Popular* party, in a clearly free and democratic election, became president. Dr. Allende, who had already earned a world-class reputation as a relentless champion for the poor and downtrodden, campaigned on a platform of peace for everyone and used doves as his personal symbol. He still turned out to be the person Nixon and the CIA least wanted to see as President of Chile. You might even go so far as to say Nixon and the CIA somehow felt they had a right to make the decision for all Chileans.

Nixon had his way. In 1973 he sent the CIA into Chile with \$10 million USA taxpayer dollars to spend insuring the assassination of Dr. Allende. It also had a great deal to do with threats directed at U.S. Copper holdings in Chile, with I.T.T. and with the Sheraton Corporation, all at times, especially then, closely associated with the CIA and its less savory activities.

It was the Echeverras, in Mexico, who gave asylum to the Chilean first family, Mrs. Allende and her orphaned children...a significant insult directed toward the U.S. Administration. The Echeverras, and Mexico, garnered a great deal of popular support and favorable publicity because of their actions; the U.S. Administration got understandably bad notices. Outside the USA, especially in Hispanic nations, explicit details of the CIA assassination of a peaceful and honored person, the deposing of a sitting democratic president of a sovereign nation, the replacing him with and supporting a decades-long malevolent dictator, Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, were clearly spread far and wide.

#

See the type of circles my friends the Gilmores moved around in? They seemed to know everyone around the area and how to find anything you might be looking for. Don could take you to the grubbiest, down-home southern barbecue joint (El Gallo) you ever saw...to walk-up sidewalk stands vending tacos al pastor.... Which store sold the yard goods, which store sold the thread, and which store sold the needles...in Mexico in those days you were never sure about those things. Regardless of how important the information was, or how insignificant, the Gilmores knew it.

They knew to the minute and to the centavo...weeks ahead of time...the time and amount of the next Peso devaluation. Investing with Don, in Mexico, was a sure thing. I know many people whose names are well known who took Don's advice on when and where to invest large sums of money, and exactly when to pull it all back out of the country. Every one of them made considerable profits because of Don's connections.

The Gilmores lived in this huge mansion with I don't know how many bedroom suites, with a full-time staff of seven maids, a live-in seamstress, and a cobbler, all residing on the top floor in rooms of their own...plus a cook and gardener who commuted to work. That house, today, is *La Casa de Cultura*, the Jalisco State office for "culture."

Little does Jalisco State know that I knew that house as a rampant party place, and as the factory producing large amounts of the pornography published in the USA at that time. I can still see the maids all lined up in a row on the third floor balcony looking down and giggling at the naked people diving into the swimming pool and running around the copings. The Gilmores' two steel-gray schnauzers were often underfoot as they gathered and hoarded the ripe mangoes falling around them.

I was a frequent guest in that house, as Don and Betty continued their relentless campaign to involve me in whatever was unfolding. They would do their best to show me how a king entertained a king...a bit beyond royally. Every night club, every showroom, every entertainment venue...the very best table in the very best restaurant served by the very best waiter with the chef, in trepidation, standing by...watching, terrified that he might somehow offend the delicate palate of *el jefe Don Don*.

The Gilmores did their best to persuade me that I really belonged there, in Camelot, as they called it. And they called it right.

It took them a few months to set me up in style, with a staff of my choice, in an enchanting little villa in the picturesque suburban village of Ajijic. The Indian fishing village beside Laguna Chapala was captivating and it instantly and permanently became *La Casa de me Corizon*...the residence of my heart.



*Laundry Day in Ajijic*, by John K. Petersen  
(pastels on roughed surface paper), dated 1965.

But surely that is another story....

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\*For Manuela, the Gilmores' housekeeper and cook, who always took very special care of me; her *nopales* were unforgettable. Dated July 1999.

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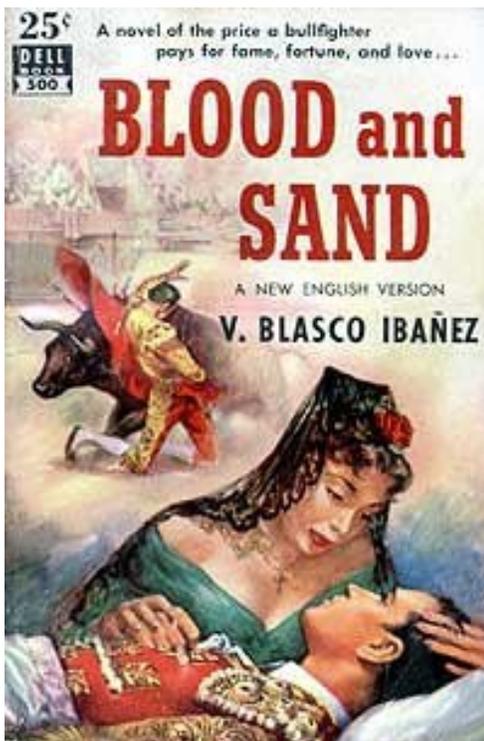
Bravery is believing in yourself, and that thing nobody can teach you.

--*El Cordobes*

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## "Blood and Sand"\*

By Earl Kemp



On one of my early visits to Guadalajara, as guest of Don and Betty Gilmore, they wanted to introduce my wife and me to local bullfighting. While I was already familiar with bullfighting in Tijuana, they assured me that Guadalajara had a style all its own, and were they ever right.

On Sunday, with some pre-arrangement, we got ready to go to the fights. (The Gilmores also introduced us to cockfighting, among other things, which is an entirely different story.) Getting ready included, for the ladies, visits to a local beauty parlor and complete hairdos, facials, etc., as well as select clothing. We were advised that one wears traditional spectator clothing to bullfights that is as white as possible, accented with blood red scarves, etc.

So there were the four of us, gringo yuppies to the max, decked out in white finery beyond the reach of most spectators at that event. We were seated right up in the front row in a large, pretentious box usually reserved for royalty. (I've always said Gilmore was a Class A asskisser. He was always able to come up with show-off things at the drop of a hat, and he did it every time something special came along: front row center seats for touring companies of *Disney On Parade*, *Holiday On Ice*, *Ballet Folklorico*, *Etc.*)

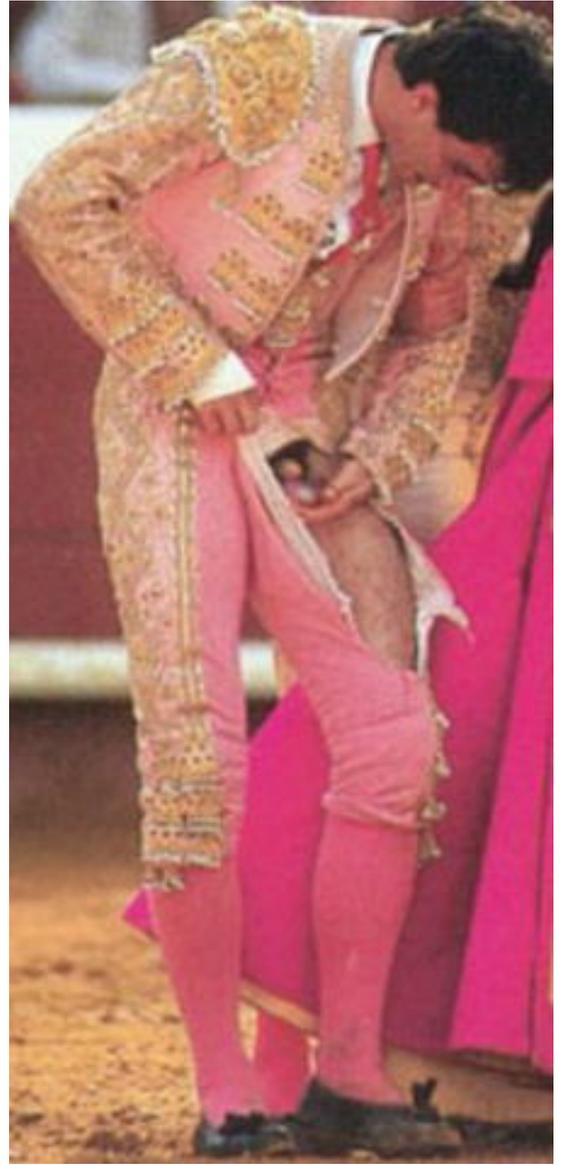
Directly across the ring from us sat a particularly notorious Guadalajara madam who was well known to have quite a thing for bullfighters...it was always open house and the main entrée always free at her bordello for any recognizable matador, toreador, etc. She was herself very spectacular, even if somewhat past prime, with long peroxide blonde hair and garish make-up, with her entourage and truckloads of fresh cut flowers. She would liberally sprinkle the arena with blossoms as each matador, etc. in turn would stop before her, bow to her and pay homage to some great *gratis* sex they had enjoyed in her presence, while she watched.

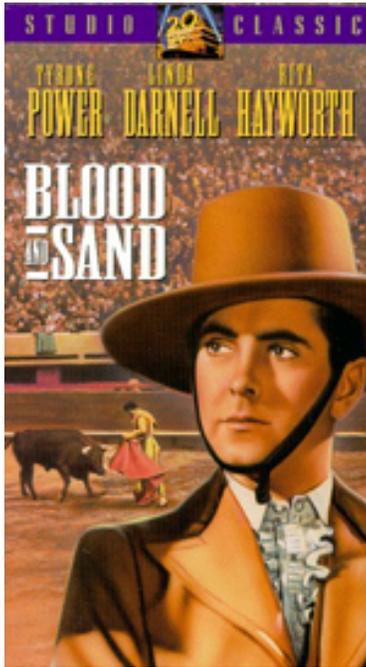
Naturally we four gringos attracted much, much attention, being so out of place and so obviously visible. Consequently, the spectators at that fight began sending us endless cocktails and beers, etc. There was a continuous stream of waiters and serving people bringing drinks to our box that we had not ordered and could not possibly drink. At times I remember as many as a dozen drinks each just lined up in front of us, waiting for us to try to consume them all.

Local customs had evolved some unique rituals...among them was a game of "catch the sock." When a bull would be killed, its beating heart would be quickly cut out and jammed down into the toe of a knee-high black sock. Then that sock, sling fashion, would be swung around in the air and tossed in a random direction across the spectators around the arena. This would go on for hours, it seemed, with the sock being grabbed up in mid air, swung again, then flung in a different direction only to be caught, swung, etc., etc. A grand game of "keep away."

And, not at all being adept at this game, none of the four of us could play it. Consequently, when that bag of blood came hurtling out of nightmare space directly toward us...we could do nothing in our almost drunken stupor by that time but watch it, slow-motion like, closing in right on us. Hitting, erupting, splattering all over us...all four of us...liberally covered in fresh killed bull blood.

Amid much cheering, laughter, and good humor...we bid *adios* to the crowd who had been so vigorously plying us with drinks, grabbed a *sitio* (taxi) and went to the Gilmores' *casa* for quick showers and quicker clothes junking. #





Finally, like most other affections, bullfighting faded for me and became replaced with something more demanding. But it still thrives there inside of me. Mostly because of *Blood and Sand*, that I saw when I was still a youngster, because it gave me permanent interest in the ritual. And in true Technicolor as well. I can still hear the roar of "Ole" from the crowd in that movie and see Tyrone Power battling Anthony Quinn for Linda Darnell, and really wanting my love Rita Hayworth all the time. And, when I try hard enough, I can still feel hot fresh bull blood all over me and running down my face and down my neck and inside my clothes and...

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\*For Gargantua the towel lady and all the gang at Casa Chelo; greetings from El Rey Sexo. Dated July 1999.

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Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear-not absence of fear. Except a creature be part coward it is not a compliment to say it is brave...

--Mark Twain

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## Have Typewriter; Will Whore For Food\*

By Earl Kemp

Many strange and unusual things occurred in the science fiction world in 1959 that set it on a collision course with the planet Pornographia.

In New York City, popular young science fiction writer Robert Silverberg discovered Bedside Books. At that point in time (1959), Silverberg had already acquired a serious case of Compulsive Writeritis and was looking for new markets to conquer. Bedside Books looked like a natural. In short order Silverberg was selling them manuscripts that appeared under the bylines of David Challon and Mark Ryan. The new market direction could be the answer to many writers' wildest dreams in the very near future.

Harlan Ellison, along with his wife Charlotte, was preparing to move to Evanston, Illinois, to work for William Hamling. Silverberg approached Ellison with the glorious possibilities for the future for energetic young writers and had him all primed and ready for William Hamling so Ellison could lay out the road map to Toontown in front of him.

Everyone thought Ellison was in Evanston to work on *Rogue*, Hamling's *Playboy*-type men's magazine. Even Harlan thought so at times, and talked about it incessantly, thereby furthering his modest reputation.

It was also the exact same point in time when, in a bizarre different dimension, Harlan Ellison and I, vaguely

disguised, slinked along the night-time streets committing armed robbery upon poor, innocent, unsuspecting Chicago science fiction fans, according to D. Bruce Berry in his delusional "A Trip to Hell" (Robert Jennings, 1963).

Hamling liked the idea of the proposed books and grasped the concept of the throwaway sleazy paperback firmly in his hands. After a bit of formulation, Hamling sent Ellison back to New York City to start the ever-loving money-making wheels in motion.

Harlan Ellison went straight to Robert Silverberg to report on his success with Hamling in the initial set-up phase of the operation. It was Silverberg, not Ellison, who took the proposal to Scott Meredith that eventually opened the doors to the fabled black box clandestine enterprise that virtually flooded the country with soft-core pornography.

I could even stretch the point just a little and say that it was Robert Silverberg that made me what I am today.

*Daddy...?*

#

The modern pornography phenomenon in paperback books began taking shape then. It was spawned for many reasons and the largest one of all was profit. Evolution and sexual morals had reached the perfect point in time when mass-market pornography, in a number of different mediums, was not only inevitable but in increasing demand. With such a prospect before them, William Hamling and Scott Meredith made a grand plan to capture the bulk of that prospective market. Meredith would provide the raw material and Ellison, under Hamling's direction, would produce the final product. The two of them would be Emperors of a pornographic world that reached beyond the scope of their imaginations, as they first envisioned it.

In New York, Henry Morrison was assigned the task of making it all happen to the best of Scott Meredith's benefit.

Henry Morrison was the heart, soul, conscience, and taskmaster of Scott Meredith Literary Agency at the time. He was also janitor, gopher, and Meredith's toady. In his own right, Henry was very well respected and was rapidly gaining a reputation within the industry of being someone you could depend upon. In the office itself, where Morrison had the prized crown-prince office immediately next to Meredith's impressive corner office (Scott's brother Sidney's office was on the other side of that), he was almost a saint. Surrounded as he was by underpaid clerks, part-time typists, and wannabee writers, Henry acquired a reputation among them of being a straight-shooting, upstanding dude. Everyone who worked close to him admired and respected him. And wondered how he could possibly tolerate Scott Meredith and the way he acted toward Morrison on the few days a week Scott would manage to reach the office.

Sam Moskowitz was also a friend of mine. In the real world he edited a frozen food industry trade magazine. Chicago was the center of much frozen food industry commerce and Sam was often in town attending exhibits, conventions, seminars, etc. Whenever he had extra time, Sam would phone and ask if he could come over and visit. I loved to listen to his magical voice that was only slightly moderated inside a small room talking one on one. He was also quite a walking encyclopedia of fan information and could talk endlessly.

On one visit with me, I asked Sam if he had a dossier on Scott Meredith. It had been my habit, whenever I could, of obtaining all the information available about any particular party I might be attempting to joust with.

"Of course," Sam said. "When Scotty Feldman was thirteen years old, he stole the funds of the local chapter of the ScienceFictioneers. He was in disgrace for a long time for that."

When Henry Moskowitz went to work for Scott Meredith, he changed his name to Henry Morrison at the specific request of Scott, who was convinced there was anti-Semitism in the publishing industry and required all his reps to assume WASP names. Henry was proudly "Henry (Three Bridges, NJ) Moskowitz" throughout his career as a science fiction fan and a prozine letterhack who championed the return of *Captain Future*.

With Henry Moskowitz' name change to Henry Morrison and Scotty Feldman's name change to...to...who? really? What's going on? I've spent years trying to figure out who's on first base. This is as far as I can take it: Sidney Feldman changed his name to Scott Meredith and gave his birth name to his brother Moishe Feldman who changed his name to Sidney Meredith and could sign Scott's signature much better than Scott ever could. Only if that's the case then it doesn't follow consistently with Sam Moskowitz' story because Sam knew the Scott Meredith we all knew and loved, before, during, and after. Will the real slim-shady Scott please stand up?

The most logical explanation is that Sam Moskowitz (who was known to be wrong now and then) retroactively remembered Sid Feldman as "Scotty."

Henry Morrison was the King of Kings of Pornography. Admittedly he wasn't acting on his own volition but under orders from his boss, Scott Meredith the Emperor, but he still was the single keystone man in the entire scheme and plan for a profitable future. It was Henry who conceived the "black box" plan and set it up to operate out of a Grand Central Station post office box. There was an additional post office box arranged to receive the money that would eventually start pouring in in exchange for those anonymous black boxes.

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**INSERT SIDEBAR FROM HENRY MORRISON HERE**

**Awaiting reply...**

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At the time, everyone involved with the nefarious operation felt they were skating across very thin ice, legally speaking, and took extreme evasive measures to hide not only what they were doing but when, where, and how they were doing it as well. In particular, Scott Meredith and William Hamling were personally afraid of their involvement, which only served to redouble the cover and nonexistent security measures. There were no viable records of any of this commerce maintained by anyone involved in it until well into 1964. That made many parts of the operation unnecessarily complex and difficult.

Then Henry Morrison went to work with the writers...with Scott Meredith's existing stable of competent writers...to produce those magnificently erotic tomes. It was Henry, in fact, who set the very tone and tenor of the manuscripts themselves. Naturally, since the Meredith agency leaned toward science fiction, it "owned" numerous popular science fiction writers and a real stunner or two (Arthur C. Clarke comes instantly to my

mind as a personal favorite, and Robert Silverberg before and after he reached his stride, etc.). Plus every one of them jumped at the chance to make a few extra bucks for a little bit of their fantasizing time put down on paper. (And their cousins, neighbors, lovers, meter-readers, and delivery-men as well. In years later, Art Plotnik would write of these hectic extremes in his beautifully named semi-memoir *Honk if You're A Writer*.) Some of those writers were people of the stature of Evan Hunter, Donald Westlake, John Jakes, Lawrence Block, Hal Dresner, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and others but it was the science fiction writers who really shined and dominated the medium...at the beginning, in the middle, and in the end.

Writers like Robert Silverberg were routinely turning out from one to three manuscripts per month and some of them, like Silverberg, did that for many, many years continuously. Harlan Ellison made at least one contribution to the black box machine also. As did Avram Davidson, Gil Lamont, Art Plotnik, G.C. Edmundson, and yours truly (the real list, which does not yet exist, would be very long and contain a few names that might surprise some readers).

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...people who, like me, once earned most or all of their living from writing science fiction. After a nasty period of conversion, I'm now busily at work in other fields, and will be writing science fiction only when and if I have some free time and an irresistible idea. (I'll continue to write science fiction novels, though.)

--Robert Silverberg, *Who Killed Science Fiction?* Dated April 15, 1960.

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Because of the "risky" nature of the business, Scott Meredith demanded and got an exceptionally choice deal for providing those manuscripts. He insisted that he had to pay the writers \$1,000 for each manuscript and that he had to personally have an additional \$1,000 override, per manuscript, as his agency fee. These prices, for 1959, were in the neighborhood of grand larceny.

True to form, for those manuscripts, depending upon who wrote it and how valuable they were that day to Scott Meredith, the writers were paid from \$500 to \$800 each. Another miracle occurred then, as well; the writers were paid royalties, at the rate of \$200 per reprinting. I could not determine what amount of commission Scott Meredith received on those reprints.

Paying those royalties, along with the locked-in contract, became targets of mine. They were so unnecessary, intrusive, and expensive. There were dozens of manuscripts atop my desk noticeably better than the supply from the Meredith organization and I couldn't buy a one of them because we were prior committed and I could have any of them at one quarter the Meredith rate. It was driving me nuts trying to find a way to tap that reservoir of choice material.

After I finally got the door open, I simplified all manuscript purchasing down to the absolute minimum. Every manuscript, with very few exceptions, the Porno Factory used then was purchased "all rights outright" from a "writer for hire." This means that for the record the Porno Factory was the writer of everything it published and held all rights to that output rather securely. Everything was formally and officially recorded with the Library of Congress...who, like a number of other federal agencies, had much better records of our business activities than we did.

#

On June 13, 1959, I invited a few close personal friends over to my house for a little science fiction fun and games. Harlan Ellison was there. As were Bob Tucker, Bob Bloch, Dean McLaughlin, Ted Cogswell...the usual suspects...and most of Chicago fandom.



King of Pornography Harlan Ellison ROGUEing  
Ghod of science fiction Bob Tucker.  
Photo by (and © by) Earl Kemp,  
from *SaFari* #48, July, 1959.  
Courtesy Henry and Martha Beck collection.  
Dated June 13, 1959.

Bob Tucker wrote of his experiences at the party in an article named "Chicago Express."

---

"Is that you, Harlan?" I asked through the haze.

"Goshwowboyohboy!" the answer came instantly, "It's the mosta of the besta, and I do mean that great big thrilling magazine, ROGUE!" It was Harlan all right.

I listened to Harlan all night. I couldn't help it. I listened to him tell how he edited ROGUE, published ROGUE, illustrated ROGUE, and wrote for ROGUE. And I seem to have a faint memory of his saying once that he also sent a foreign correspondent to Europe for ROGUE-something about a war, or some fool thing, that he wanted covered there. I'll miss Bill Hamling: I always miss people after they are gone. They usually slip away like this without anyone telling me until later.

But perhaps it is for the better. Perhaps Harlan will put a dash of sex into ROGUE and liven it up a bit.

--Bob Tucker, "Chicago Express," *SaFari*, July, 1959, SAPS #48

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#

Harlan Ellison, in 1959, came into his own. William Hamling was taking Ellison's proposition literally and setting him up to be the King of Pornography at Blake Pharmaceuticals right down the hallway from *Rogue* magazine under Hamling's watchful eyes. All Harlan had to do was figure out how to make it all work, locate

the pieces, grease up the machine, and get it running. It wasn't easy being the one and only first and original genuine King of Pornography.

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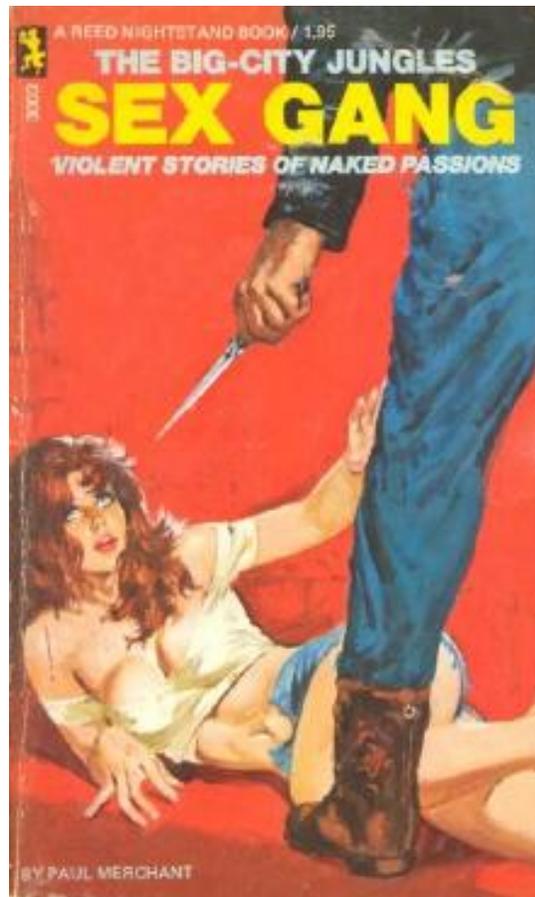
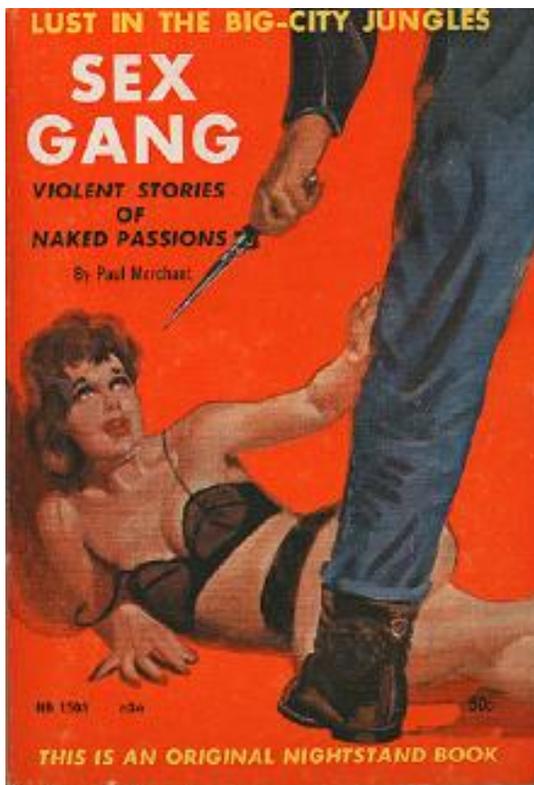
## AWAITING REPLY FROM HARLAN ELLISON

Harlan Ellison, writing as Paul Merchant:

NB1503 *Sex Gang*, 1959

NB1503R *Sex Gang*, 1960

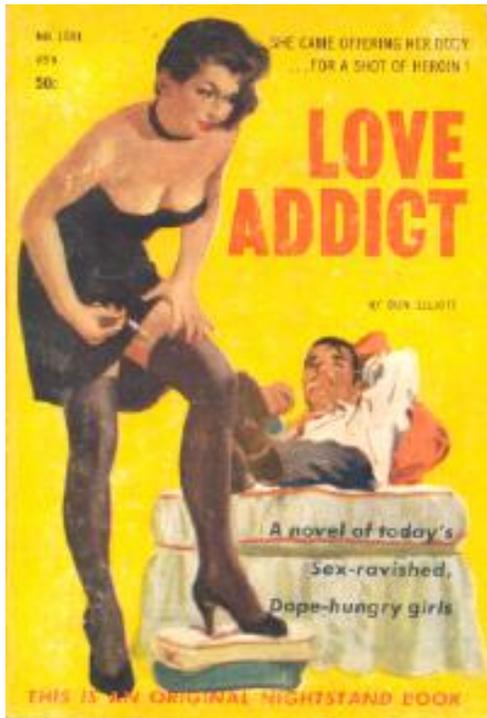
RN3003 *Sex Gang* (revised text), 1973



Above left is the cover of the first Nightstand edition of Harlan Ellison's *Sex Gang*, by Paul Merchant. Above right is the cover of the 1973 Reed Nightstand reissue of *Sex Gang* with the revised text. Note the differences in the cover paintings.

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In October of 1959 all those efforts began to bear fruit. Nightstand Books, blatantly patterned after Bedside Books, produced its premier volume, NB1501, *Love Addict*, by Don Elliott (Robert Silverberg). It also featured



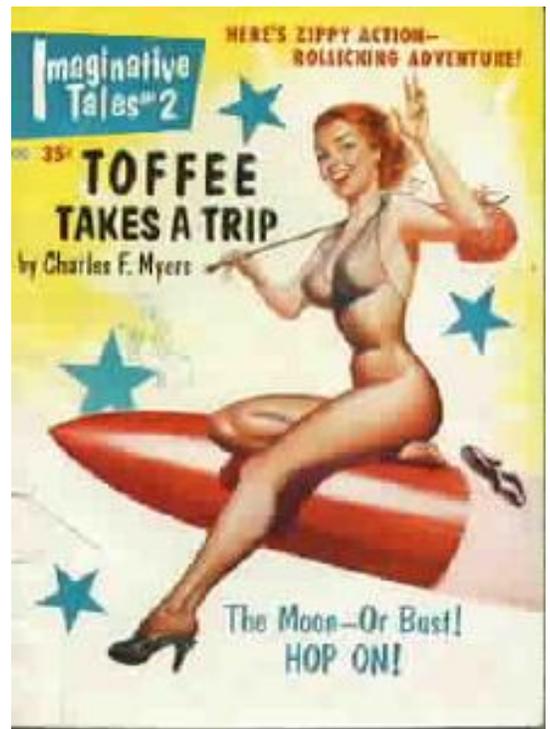
what would become a trademark of the earlier Nightstands, a stylized Harold W. McCauley cover painting using flat backgrounds and pastel colors. The McCauley paintings with their heavy emphasis upon sexy women set the style for all the early-on Blake Pharmaceuticals publications. NB1503 was *Sex Gang*, by Paul Merchant (Harlan Ellison). Both books carried the cover price of \$.50.

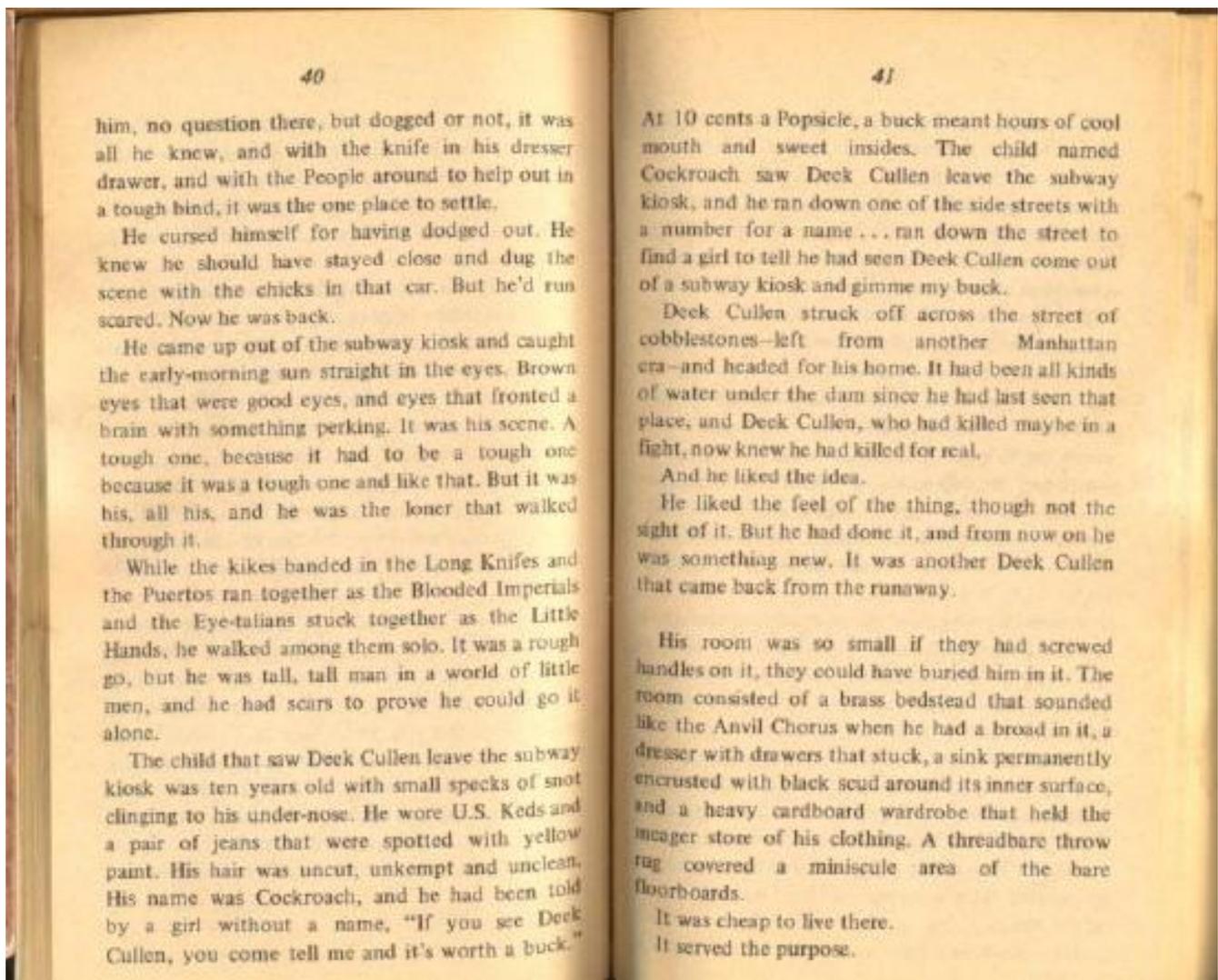
In the beginning those books appeared under the imprint of Nightstand Books. Two titles were published every month by a company named Blake Pharmaceuticals in Evanston, Illinois. Blake Pharmaceuticals was a defunct Illinois corporation that was purchased cheaply by William Hamling. Illinois corporate law, at the time, required three legal Illinois residents to become a corporation. Blake Pharmaceuticals' three ex-coworkers from the Ziff-Davis Chicago era were William L. Hamling, Raymond A. Palmer, and Richard S. Shaver. Only thing was, Palmer was a legal resident of Amherst, Wisconsin and Shaver lived even further north in Wisconsin.

Another co-worker from those glorious Ziff-Davis days, the *Amazing* and *Fantastic* cover artist Harold W. McCauley, was also close at hand. Since the company moved to New York, McCauley had been doing lots of artwork for Coca-Cola, creating that fantastic looking virginal girl next door...and an occasional Santa Claus...that adorned many of the Coca-Cola billboards worldwide. During the era of Hamling's *Imagination* and *Imaginative Tales*, McCauley painted numerous covers for them as well. He would soon be called into action once more.

Once reincorporated, Hamling redirected Blake Pharmaceuticals into publishing pornography and Harlan Ellison was running the whole show while seemingly running *Rogue* instead. In those days, in spite of the popular acceptance of soft-core pornography in movie theaters all across the country, an operation like Blake Pharmaceuticals was at the very least frowned upon and was kept, as much as possible, completely under cover.

Producing Nightstand Books turned out to be more work than Harlan Ellison had originally expected to be involved with while operating Blake Pharmaceuticals. So much so that, in early 1960, Harlan quit and returned to New York City. He did, however, continue to write cover blurbs for the books from there for a long time, at \$45. per blurb. For a while, it was Harlan's major source of income.





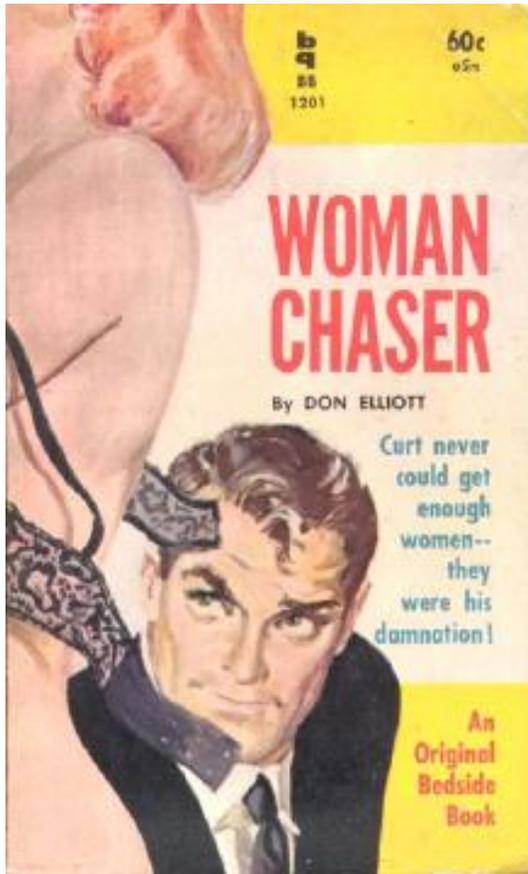
Pictured here is a typical example of the typesetting and page makeup of the period.

Back home at Blake Pharmaceuticals, Frank M. Robinson, under orders from his boss at *Rogue*, filled in as editor with the help of some reliable freelance editors. Evanston was home to Northwestern University, the Medill School of Journalism, etc. and overflowed with an abundance of competent, willing freelancers. Only Frank didn't like being forced to help with the operation and felt he had his hands full being the real editor of *Rogue*.

At the same time, in New York, Harlan Ellison was arrested in early September 1960 for possession of a handgun, brass knuckles, and a switchblade. He briefly resided in The Tombs and wrote a real piss-off report about it that inspired William Hamling again. All he needed was for Harlan to return to Evanston and take over where he left off, only this time it would be under the brand new disguise as editor of Regency Books, which would appear and pretend to be a straight book publisher. One of the earliest titles, Hamling assured him, would be *Memos From Purgatory*, Harlan's fictionalized account of his arrest and incarceration.

Harlan Ellison was once again crowned King of Pornography at Blake Pharmaceuticals, now aka Regency Books.

In 1961, in an ironic twist of fate, Hamling acquired Bedside Books from New York, completing the circle to where it had all began in the first place. In a further twist, the first Hamling Bedside Book (1201) was Robert Silverberg's *Woman Chaser*, by Don Elliott.



In the fall of 1961, Harlan Ellison moved A.J. Budrys (affectionately known to one and all as Ajay) into position to be his assistant. Only in reality he was working on a secret long-range plan of his own to leave Evanston again, but with Ajay replacing him as the man in charge and the new King of Pornography.

Alas, Ajay couldn't wait. He went behind Harlan's back and exposed his plan to Hamling and had Harlan kicked out prematurely, much to Harlan's astonishment (he loved Ajay).

My tenure with Blake Pharmaceuticals began shortly after that, in early 1961 when I was hired on as a bottom-rung apprentice. At the same time, we began production on two new lines of books, Idle-Hour Books and Leisure Readers, producing four titles for each line every month. The workload, producing as many books as we were every month, was really heavy. (Four each in four series of books plus two Regency titles meant 34 books a month.) There were a number of freelance editors working at home almost full time trying to keep up with the public's demand for more and more pornography.

Simultaneously, Ajay hired Larry Shaw who moved to Evanston

as Ajay's assistant.

The experiment didn't work out well for anyone concerned. Larry Shaw, another of Ajay's oldest and best friends, said later, after he'd moved back to New York, that Ajay had been impossible to work for, full of dark and paranoiac moods. (Shortly after that, Larry accepted the job he wanted and dreamed over all the time he worked at Blake, as an editor for one of the imprints of Blake's competing Milton Luross pornography organization, American Arts Enterprises, in Los Angeles.)

## **AWAITING REPLY FROM AJAY BUDRYS**

Meanwhile, back at the agency: Henry Morrison was growing increasingly discontent at what he thought of as being baddaddyism and plain old ignoring him while he kept on doing the bulk of what got done. Finally, in one of those classic "You can't fire me, I quit!" situations, he started forming his own agency. Scott Meredith sued him for everything he was worth, and lost. Henry was finally free, only he was stuck with the Meredith-decreed Morrison name because by that time everyone knew him that way.

Meredith recalled Richard Curtis, who had worked for him previously, to take over the crown-prince chair, wear the crown, become the King of Kings of Pornography, and keep the money and love juices flowing. This worked out exceptionally well because Richard was a favorite with the science fiction crowd anyway, especially the writers. Why not, when he had worked for Scott Meredith before, Richard had helped created many of them.

For him, it was relatively easy to keep the black box manuscripts flowing just that much quicker. Richard Curtis kept them flying back and forth across the country for years.

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## INSERT SIDEBAR FROM RICHARD CURTIS HERE

**Awaiting reply....**

### **Richard Alan Curtis:**

BB1210 *Isle of Wantons*, by Curt Aldrich, 1961

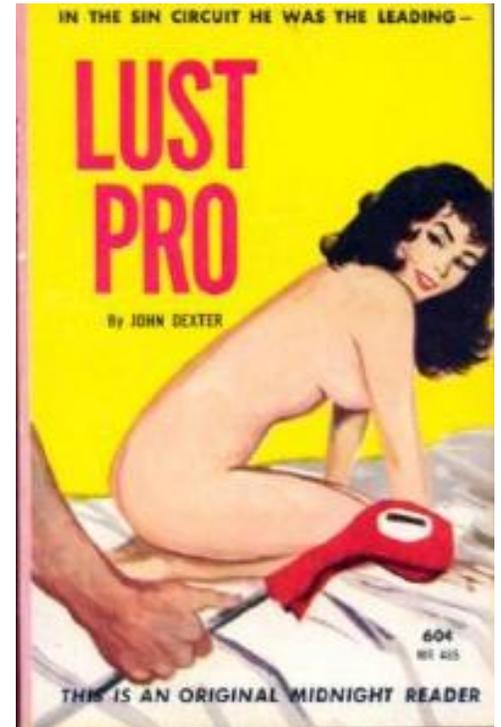
MR465 *Lust Pro*, by John Dexter, 1962

LB615 *Jet Set Sinners*, by Curt Aldrich, 1963

PB801 *The Sin Makers*, by Burt Alden, 1963

PB809 *Sin Sell*, by Burt Alden, 1963

PB814 *Passion Spree*, by Burt Alden, 1963



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In short order Ajay Budrys revealed his own secret agenda, to leave the Porno Factory and take a job with a bigger, more reputable company. He set his sights on an editorial position at Playboy Press, the magazine's book division. Eventually his dream was realized and he left Blake behind in the dust.

Bruce Elliott was brought in briefly, from New York City, to be the new King of Pornography, only Bruce carried around some heavy baggage that precluded working at anything resembling a regular job. [And, even with a handicap like that, I liked Bruce Elliott a lot. He was very helpful to me personally, took me everywhere with him and introduced me to everyone he knew and he knew a lot of people in a lot of nice places.] Bill Hamling, recognizing his mistake, eased Bruce out of his position as gently as possible. [In an ironic twist of fate, Bruce Elliott committed suicide after relocating in New York by taking a walk through heavy rush-hour traffic.]

Finally, after years of patiently waiting, I inherited the crown of the King of Pornography by default; I was the only one Bill Hamling could trust to hang around a while.

I became the fourth King of Pornography at Blake Pharmaceuticals and I held onto the crown for a full decade,

moving with the Porno Factory in and out of numerous locations and legally dictated corporate name changes. There is very little about any part of it that I have ever thought I might want to try to change were it possible to go back and do so.

I had been arguing against having the contract with the Meredith agency from the first minute I ever knew it existed. Everything about it struck me as being insane. I did everything in my power to short cut any business with the agency. It took me some time to convince Bill Hamling to take the risk and dump Meredith and every other agency who couldn't understand the need for following the new rules...my rules.

We canceled the contract with the Scott Meredith Literary Agency Black Box pornography mill in 1964.

Everything, quickly, improved. Especially the corporate financial picture.

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\*In memory of Scott and/or Sidney; whichever. Thanks for everything. Special thanks to Ted White and Robert Silverberg for helping with this memory. [Paperback thanks to Victor Berch, Robert Bonfils, Howard DeVore, Pat Hawk, Lynn Munroe, Robert Speray, and Mark Owens.] © 2001 by Earl Kemp. All rights reserved. Dated July 2001.

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Every man has inside himself a parasitic being who is acting not at all to his advantage.

--*William S. Burroughs*

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