

THE PULP ERA



In the early days of the pulps, one of the declared intentions of the s-f magazines was to educate the masses. Whether they succeeded, and whether the masses wanted educating are two other questions. However, the educational programme though self-imposed, and secondary to making money formed part of the scene.

Both Gernsback (in Wonder) and O'Connor Sloane (in Amazing) were fond of using their editorial pages as forums in which they could air their knowledge of science. Gernsback tending to be more sensational with his ideas of future developments in science and mechanics. Whatever became of those mid ocean platforms for Transatlantic flight, and those mono-wheel two seater vehicles where the driver sat within the hub of the huge wheel? O'Connor Sloane on the other hand preferred to air his classical and historical knowledge (or was it gained direct from a stack of convenient reference books) by such fascinating topics as, "The History of Measurement", or "Astrology", with the final paragraph or two devoted to a conservative prophecy or two. I quote an odd line or two from a 1936 editorial on Astrology. Note the classical expertise. "In the works of Herodotus....", "This is a sort of reductio ad absurdum", "'a swart, sour visaged maid', as Coleridge might lend us his words", and so it goes with references to a 'famous psychologist', 'applying Doppler's principle' and the like. It rounds off after kicking the hell out of astrology, by taking a side swipe at water divining by claiming that the hazel twig won't do any tricks if held over a bucket of water. So in that little package, you learn all sorts of interesting guff about Herodotus, the Oracle at Delphi, a spot of poetry, a mention of Doppler, and for good measure the fallacy of water divining and astrology.

Astounding managed to avoid these potted science lessons, as such editorial pages as Tremaine could squeeze in, were usually devoted to two topics....1. Telling the readers how good they (and the magazine) were, and 2 That the readers ought to go out and get more readers.

The science lessons continued in the stories. Asf having the (pseudo) science more or less incidental to what were basically stories of thud and blunder. In Amazing and Wonder, the tales were heavily laced with pedantic footnotes designed to clue the reader up as to what the action was about....I misquote, "A biting electric spark shot from the tip of the mpqtryx, momentarily lighting the hawknosed face of the elderly scientist as he bent over the controls. "Fornication", he exclaimed *1 staring back in surprise....."

*1 Doctor Foofniggle is referring to the recent investigations by Slapp and Tikkul into the nocturnal activities of certain British birds.

This of course meant that the science content was TRUE, and you could dash round to your friendly downtown library

and bone up on it all and thus emulating the ICS adverts, 'get ahead in your job and marry the daughter of the boss'.

Another favourite educational device was to allow one character - usually the hero - to display abysmal ignorance over the operation of the tri-monophase vacillator. When this happened, the bearded scientist (they were all bearded, it was a sort of badge of identification) would halt the action and use up two or three pages....at a cent a word....to explain everything in words of one syllable. This technique has recently been rediscovered by Mack Reynolds, who uses it to enable one of his characters to explain the social and political set up in his stories... naturally, the person to whom it is all explained is completely ignorant of the society in which he grew up.

Then of course, there was, "Test Your Knowledge" science quizzes featured in both Wonder and Amazing. These involved half-a-dozen or so questions based on the stories in that issue. In Wonder, the answers were given in a box at the back of the magazine, but as far as Amazing was concerned, you had to work your way through college. Their system went like this:-

"Which plant is a prolific source of slobbovakkian Iodide?" having posed the question, they then left it up to you to find the answer by telling you which story to read to find out all about it, so after reading through, 'The Crawling Green Peril of Pongtutti', you found yourself more confused than ever, and with a deep distrust of chlorophyll, the Venus fly-trap, and any weed over 6" in height.

Just in case you were too highbrow to read the stories, 'straight' science articles also appeared in the magazine from time to time. In 1933, Astounding ran a couple of 'science forums' purporting to explain current scientific theories, but since this vanished after only two issues, it was obvious that there wasn't a great deal about science which needed explaining. Anyway, it was 1936 before asf again began to feature the straight article in its pages. Incidentally, one favourite series of articles of these (and subsequent) days, was the trip round the solar system. Grab an encyclopedia, and you have at least nine articles in your typewriter, one for each planet. Clever writers could even squeeze out a few extra ones by dealing with the sun, the asteroid belt, and the visit of Halley's comet. No lesser person than JWC Jr. himself tackled this one for Astounding, but the same theme has been used by many others since. It must have been educational, as this is how I discovered that the Earth was the third planet from the sun.

Among the sources of sugar-coated science were the Posi and Nega stories of Joseph William Skidmore, which appeared in Amazing, and concerned the doings of two sub-atomic particles. Their adventures were usually caused by the chemical activities of the molecules of which they formed a part, and as far as story content was concerned they were about as good as 'Chick's Own'. In later

Cover - O. R. Sowers

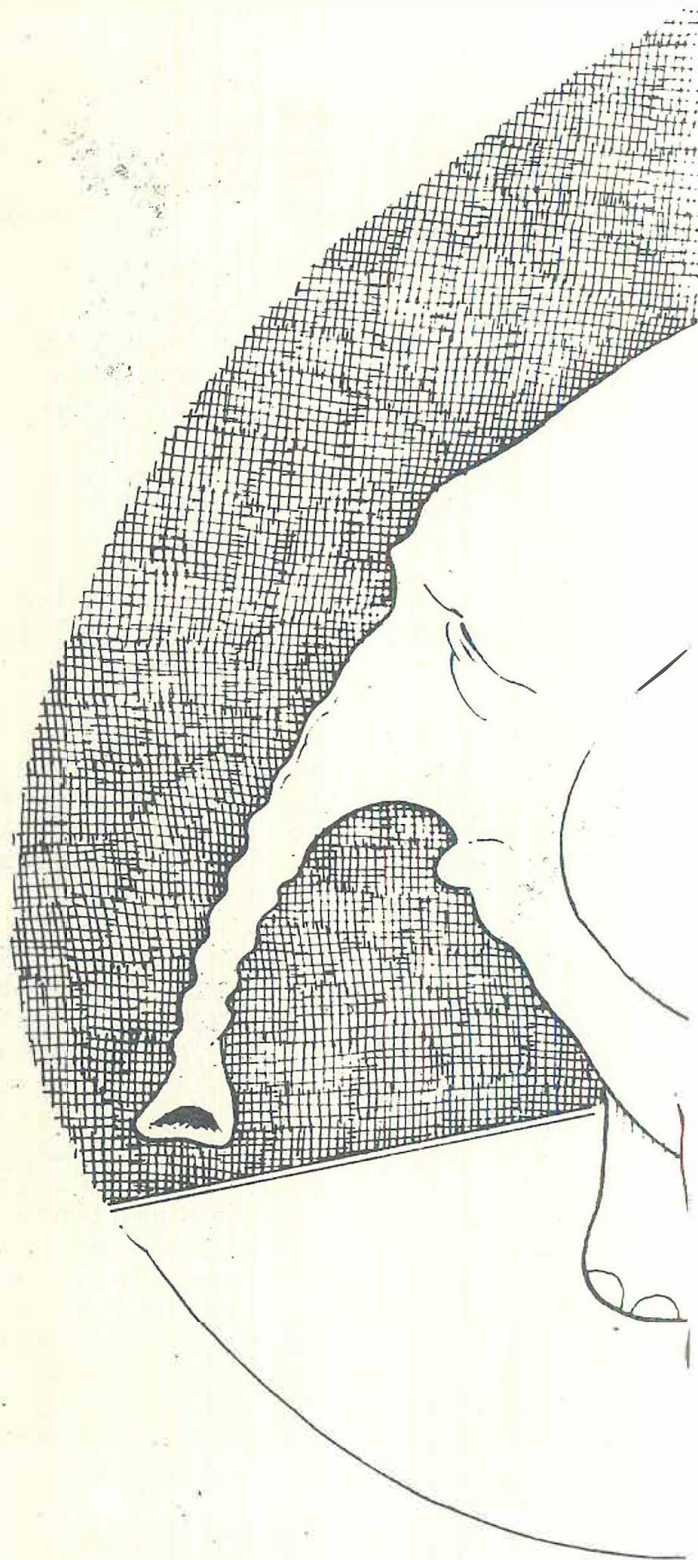
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Jay Kinney (17) Richard Flinchbaugh (back cover) plus plus cover cuts from The Spider and Texas Rangers.	

c o n t e n t s



The Pulp Era #71.
March-April 1969. The Pulp
Era is published bi-monthly
by the Pulp Era Press at 413
Ottokee St., Wauseon, Ohio
43567. Single copies 50¢.
5 issue subscription \$2.25.
10 issue subscription \$4.00

Editor: Lynn A. Hickman
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Zachrich





NOW
COUGH.

JAY LYNCH

ARGASSING

As you will read in News and Views, there is good news for pulp fans. Berkley Publishing will be bringing out the Spider and G-8 and his Battle Aces. Don Benson of Berkley called me the other day with the final news and a request to get copies of the first three issues of the Spider. Not having them myself, I told him to call my good friend Fred Cook (of Bronze Shadows) who I knew would be pleased to copy them for him. Fred is obliging, so early this fall we will see paperback publication of both titles. If these are as successful as I feel they will be, I look for more of the pulp hero characters to appear in paperback. Wouldn't it be nice to walk in your favorite book store or news stand and see once more issues of Doc Savage, The Spider, G-8 and his Battle Aces, The Shadow, Bill Barnes, Dusty Ayres, The Avenger, Captain Satan, The Black Bat, etc.?

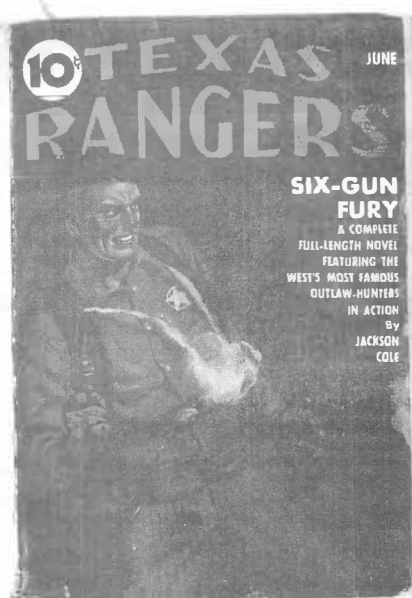
Issue #72 of The Pulp Era will (if present plans work out) be the last issue in this format. I am planning to go to a completely photo-offset zine in the digest size. I have the equipment to do this except for a plate camera now, and the savings on paper and postage should help pay for the cost of the negatives and extra cost on the plates. By Vari-typing the zine I should be able to keep the word count the same as in the larger size but still have more leeway in illustrations and cover cuts. The printing will be better and all in all it should be a much neater magazine. The price will stay the same as now and the publication schedule should be easier to maintain at a bi-monthly interval.

At any rate I would like to hear your opinions on it. I think after seeing issue #73 that you will like it. Next issue (#72) will feature the long awaited Fantastic Sisters by McGregor. It will be my 19th Anniversary issue, and while not a Giant like the 17th Anniversary issue, it will feature ~~some~~ excellent material plus some fine artwork and cover cuts. The other material is not yet all set, but I'll probably include Captain Satan by Dean Grennell and some other goodies.

Quite a number of readers have written in asking what has happened to Gary Zachrich's cartoon feature "The Pulp Collector". Now that is a funny thing, hardly anyone mentioned it while it was running, but as soon as we missed a few issues with it, it seems to be sorely missed. I've talked to Gary about it and he should have one or two for the next issue.

I included the contents page of the February 1928 issue of Triple-X for the benefit of those that thought Murray Leinster wrote only science fiction.

For the fans that have written in asking about my proposed zine Badmouth, it will still be published, but not in the original plan. The type of material I wanted for it did not appear in the quantity I needed. It will still be published but as a smaller zine that will eventually replace Troat as my OMPazine.



With this issue I am starting a new feature that I hope you will all enjoy and that should be fun to do. I will take an issue of a different pulp magazine each issue, reread it and offer comments on it. I will appreciate your reaction to a column of this type and your comments on whether you want it continued.

As to the magazines reviewed here, I will try to vary them as much as possible and hit on all types. Scheduled for future columns will be issues of DARE-DEVIL ACES, ALL-STORY WEEKLY, THE UNDERWORLD, Thrilling ADVENTURES, and ALL WESTERN. With each review I will try to include a cut of the cover of that issue.

First up will be TEXAS RANGERS for June 1940. The cover artist was not given credit in the magazine, but appears to be the work of Richard Lyon who did a considerable amount of work for the Thrilling group in the 1930s and early 1940s. The background was in red and the title in yellow (reds come out as blacks and yellows as grey when photographed). The interior illustrations for the lead novel were done by

Parkhurst who illustrated all of the lead novels in the six issues (ranging from 1938 through 1944) that I have left in my collection. He may well have done the whole series. I don't remember, but he was a prolific artist illustrating for many magazines during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

The lead novel, SIX-GUN FURY, by Jackson Cole (a house name) ran 75 pages and was supported by two short stories and two features. The stories were Owlhoot Outcast by Joseph F. Hook and Whit Castle's Town by Wayne D. Overholser. The features were Famous Texas Rangers, a two page cartoon feature and The Frontier Post conducted by Captain Starr. The artist for Famous Texas Rangers (which featured Pat Dolan) was not given credit but appeared to be the work of Clayton Maxwell who did a considerable amount of work for the Spicy group.

The blurb for the lead novel runs: Follow the Lone Wolf Avenger of the West as He Fights Against Odds to Bring Peace and Justice to a Hostile Range Country When a Bloody Feud Takes Its Grim Toll of Death and Tragedy! The novel itself was an average pulp western, fast paced and readable, but with no real surprises in its plot. Jim Hatfield, Ace Texas Ranger is called in when the Sheriff cannot handle a developing feud between the cattlemen and the miners that looks as if it will develop into a range war. Of course most of the troubles and killings and rustlings are being done by a third party to get the war started to be able to buy the mining company out. How Hatfield solves it and finally finds the chief of the crooks is spelled out fairly early in the story so that even a young reader could solve it before our intrepid ranger does. I read the novel in about an hour, but it probably took me over twice that long when I was a kid.

All in all, it was enjoyable reading this story again and I will probably reread the others I have in my collection. The issues I have are April 1938, June 1938, June 1940, August 1942, October 1942, and April 1944. They are all in absolute mint condition.

In the next issue we'll delve into DARE-DEVIL ACES for August 1932.

Lynn Hickman

THE MANY LIVES OF NICK CARTER

by J. Randolph Cox

A fictional character whose 'life' in print spans many years goes through some inevitable changes. These are all the more obvious if the character has had such a long life as that durable detective-adventurer named Nick Carter. To keep his hold on his public, to retain the old readers and to capture new ones, he had to change to fit the times. Some will welcome change. There is no pat formula for success and public favor is a tenuous thing to be courted by both editors and writers. They have to be in tune with the changes in the world and keep their character in step with these changes. Some writers, it is true, have managed to serve the public a steady diet of variations on a theme and seem not to change at all. But even such prolific storytellers as P. G. Wodehouse and Edgar Wallace have not depended upon a single series hero. Nick Carter's biographers have been in a specialized class.

The origins of Nick Carter have become muddled through both accidental and deliberate distortions. So many writers have contributed to the series, all under the pen name of 'Nicholas Carter' for the most part, that it is necessary to consult the files of the original publishers, Street and Smith, to learn the truth. Even there, we find an 'official' story and an 'unofficial' one.

In both versions of the story, John R. Coryell is given the credit for writing the first Nick Carter story, **THE OLD DETECTIVE'S PUPIL**. This story was serialized in Street and Smith's **NEW YORK WEEKLY**, from September 18 to December 11, 1886. It was printed as being 'by the Author of **THE AMERICAN MARQUIS**,' which had appeared the year before in the same publication as being 'by Milton Quarterly.' Coryell, a cousin to Street and Smith president, Ormond G. Smith, had submitted the earlier story and asserted that he could turn out as many stories as the publishers needed. The company files indicate that Coryell was assigned to write a detective story (perhaps even a series) using a detective named Corter. Coryell was even furnished with a few suggestions about the plot. He admitted in a letter to O. G. Smith that this should help to 'avoid getting in too much mystery and complication.'

Later letters from Street and Smith editors to inquiring readers only mention Coryell as the creator of Nick Carter. The full story would have taken too long to relate in answer to an inquiry. It is usually the writer of the story who gets the credit and not his editor, although this is not always the case.

Coryell added to the Nick Carter series with two more serials, **A WALL STREET HAUL** and **FIGHTING FOR MILLIONS**. Nick Carter, detective, then retired from the stage to allow for two serials by Nick Carter, writer. These were about a young detective named Wat Denton whose only contact with Nick Carter, detective, came in the introduction to one of the stories. This is perhaps the origin of the Ellery Queen tradition of using the same name for both detective and writer.

There was no further word from Nick Carter in the pages of the **NEW YORK WEEKLY** for two years. Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey was hired in 1891 to write stories for a new weekly to be called the **NICK CARTER LIBRARY**. Coryell had accepted the assignment of writing new stories under the name of Bertha M. Clay for the **NEW YORK WEEKLY** and was not available to continue the Nick Carter tales. The original Bertha M. Clay, an English woman named Mrs. Charlotte Braeme, had passed away, but Street and Smith did not want to lose her readers. There have been assertions that Coryell wrote additional Nick Carter stories from time to time, but no documentary proof of this has been discovered as yet.

After the first 20 numbers of the **LIBRARY** had appeared, Nick Carter was brought back to the pages of the **NEW YORK WEEKLY**. The readers of these two papers were probably not the same group although there must have been some overlapping. **NICK CARTER LIBRARY** was directed toward boys while the **NEW YORK WEEKLY** was a family 'story paper' read by father and mother. The lead story was almost always a love story, something that would not seem to have had any attraction for boys. A comparison of stylistic differences in the stories in the two papers suggests this as well. The long series of serials and short stories about Nick Carter that began to appear in January of 1892, continued with some degree of regularity until November 6, 1915, just three issues before the **NEW YORK WEEKLY** itself ceased publication.

In 1897, the **NICK CARTER LIBRARY** changed to the **NICK CARTER WEEKLY** and then to the **NEW NICK CARTER WEEKLY**. It used a number of other title variations, including the **NEW NICK CARTER LIBRARY** during the next few years. In 1912 it changed title again to **NICK CARTER STORIES**. The numbering began again from number 1 in both 1897 and 1912. There were (including the **LIBRARY**) 1,261 issues in all. Many of the stories appeared several times under different titles.

It was also in 1897 that Street and Smith began the **MAGNET LIBRARY**, 'a weekly devoted to detective literature.' These were paper covered books which were the forerunners of the modern paperbacks. The contents were varied and included the exploits of many detectives besides Nick Carter. Some of the Sherlock Holmes stories were reprinted in this series. Some novels were original ones by Street and Smith writers while others were composed of the back files of several Street and Smith weeklies, revised and edited to fit the new format. The great majority of the books were signed 'by Nicholas Carter', the form of the name reserved for Nick Carter the writer. Not all the stories were about Nick Carter. Some stories that had first appeared in the **NICK CARTER WEEKLY** were changed to feature another detective when they appeared in the **MAGNET LIBRARY**. The very first title in the new format was an example. A **KLONDIKE CLAIM** had appeared earlier **THAT SAME YEAR** as the first four issues of the **NEW NICK CARTER LIBRARY**.

No wonder the hero's name was changed from Trimble Carter (son of Nick Carter's first assistant, Chickering Carter) to Harvey Stokes in the **MAGNET** reprinting.

Some of the volumes in the **MAGNET LIBRARY** were reprinted in later years when the series changed its title to the **NEW MAGNET LIBRARY**. There were 1369 volumes (including reprints) before the series ended in 1933 and was replaced by the **NICK CARTER MAGAZINE**. **NICK CARTER STORIES** had been changed to a pulp magazine format in 1915 and was now known as **DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE**. While the **MAGNET** editions were appearing, Nick Carter was kept alive through stories, both new and old, in this pulp magazine. If there were fewer and fewer Nick Carter stories in the pages of **DETECTIVE STORY** after 1920, it may be that the public may have preferred Edgar Wallace Carolyn Wells, Sax Rohmer, and Johnston McCulley, who were also appearing there.

NICK CARTER MAGAZINE with its '80 page novels' and frequent novelettes about Nick Carter lasted only 40 issues. The novels were the work of Richard Wormser, the novelettes that of Philip Clark and John Chambliss. The novels were by 'Nick Carter' (the writer half of him had become less formal) and the novelettes were by 'Harrison Keith'. Keith had been the name of a detective whose collected exploits had appeared in the **MAGNET LIBRARY** over the by-line of 'Nicholas Carter.'

After this, there was silence with only an occasional story in **SHADOW MAGAZINE**. 'Nick Carter' dropped his pseudonym and the stories were signed by Bruce Elliott, a staff writer for Street and Smith. Elliott wrote the scripts for a number of features in Street and Smith comic books, including the Nick Carter comic strip. This comic strip was a regular feature of **SHADOW COMICS** until 1949. A new medium was attracting the reading public....radio.

On Tuesday evening, April 20, 1943, the first of the weekly radio series, **THE RETURN OF NICK CARTER**, went on the air over WOR-Mutual. The episode was called 'The Strange Doctor Devolo', and in it (according to **NEWSWEEK** for April 26, 1943) Nick 'picked three locks, fought his way into a den of mobsters, exchanged bullets with a kidnapper-hypnotist named Dr. Devolo (Devolo missed) and rescued his secretary (same old patsy) and a dozen other victims from a roomful of hungry lions.' The early scripts were edited by Walter Gibson to ensure their faithfulness to the Street and Smith concept of the character. The actor who was to be Nick Carter for the next 12 years was Lon Clark. In 1947, the series altered its general title to the more familiar, **NICK CARTER, MASTER DETECTIVE**. It left the air in 1955, six years after Street and Smith ceased its work as a fiction factory, and discontinued all of their pulps.

As recently as 1964, Nick Carter was brought before the reading public in the much altered form of a secret agent in the James Bond style. At this writing, 32 of these books have appeared in paperback editions. Like many of the older stories (as well as the three movies featuring Walter Pidgeon) these books have also appeared in England.

After such a long and illustrious career, Nick Carter could hardly be the same man he was when he began in 1886. There have been four (and perhaps five) distinct versions of Nick Carter. The first was the self-confident young man in Coryell's novels, who met his future bride on his very first case. He grew into the second Nick Carter, a more mature man in his early thirties with a large organization dedicated to fighting crime. His house (built by himself) served as home for his family and headquarters for his detective agency. He took life more seriously than his younger self, who often seemed to have a perpetual twinkle in his eye. He still retained his sense of humor and could even kid his own methods.

The third Nick Carter was the man in the pulps of the 1920s and 1930s. He presented a tougher exterior to the world. This Nick Carter, unlike his predecessors, was unmarried. He still managed a large agency with a number of assistants (some carried over from the earlier days) and spent much of his time fighting the rackets and organized crime.

The fourth Nick Carter was the radio character: a private detective with a secretary and girl-friday, a foster son who was also a detective (and even had his own radio show, CHICK CARTER, BOY DETECTIVE), and a reputation for being New York's greatest detective. This Nick Carter managed to be quite as successful as the first three, but without the large agency.

The fifth Nick Carter (who can say if he is to be the final one?) has been a complete departure from the others. He is Nicholas J. Huntington Carter, known variously as N3, Killmaster, and the Man from AXE, who receives his orders from a government man named Hawk and carries the fight for justice to the far corners of the world, with frequent detours through the bedroom. In spite of references to and scenes inside a penthouse apartment, this Nick Carter seems to have no real home base except the world of intrigue.

It may be of some interest to contrast the style of writing which has introduced each version of Nick Carter. The following are the opening passages of several stories which may be considered representative. A short story from SHADOW MAGAZINE is presented in lieu of a sample radio script.

'Gentleman wants to see you, sir.'

The police sergeant handed Inspector Byrnes a card. 'Gerald Livingston!' exclaimed the Inspector, as he glanced at the card; 'what does he want? Show him in, Tom.'

A moment later a noble-looking man was ushered into the private office of Inspector Byrnes, at police headquarters, in Mulberry Street

THE OLD DETECTIVE'S PUPIL (1886)

'Mr. Nick Carter?'

'Yes.'

The celebrated detective stood at the entrance to the Columbia Safety Deposit vault, in New York city.

It was midnight; the streets were silent, the air haunted with a misty fog that gave things a weird and unnatural look.

NICK CARTER CORNERS A BANK PRESIDENT
(1900 NCW No. 161)

In the softly lighted lobby of the Hotel Regal the orchestra was playing dreamily in a bower of ferns and palms, the uniforms of the musicians appearing in flecks of blue and scarlet behind the dark-green foliage. Groups of men and women in evening dress on their way to theater and opera were passing from the elevators to the broad, marble staircase leading to the street...

NICK CARTER AND THE SHADOW WOMAN
(1927 - DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE)

A uniformed policeman put out his hand and caught Nick Carter's arm just as Nick put his hand on the knob of the door marked 'Waltham & Truesdale.'

Nick shook the arm free, stared coldly at the cop. 'I want to see Mr. Truesdale,' he said. 'He sent for me.'

'You can't go in there,' the cop said sullenly.
THE 20-YEAR CRIMES (1934 - NICK CARTER MAGAZINE)

'There, in that lovely, century-old house, in Martha's Vineyard, evil walks on silent feet! Oh - I'm sorry, I don't mean to be melodramatic, Mr. Carter,' the girl said.

'Yeah,' thought Patsy, 'well, you're doing a pretty good job!' Patsy brought herself up short with a scolding. Just because Dolores Moran combined the best features of her Spanish mother and her Irish father was no reason for Patsy to get green-eyed. Dolores couldn't know that she was breaking up Patsy's plan for Nick to grab a much needed vacation.

DEATH PACES THE WIDOW'S WALK (1944 - SHADOW MAGAZINE)

Hawk spoke around the dead cigar in his thin lipped mouth. 'You've finished your briefing for Mission Pilgrim?'

Nicholas J. Huntington Carter, N3 for AXE, said that he had indeed finished his briefing. He was up to his ears in details about Turkey and the opium poppies grown there. A new crop of the red poppies -- the color of blood -- was due to start blooming in southwestern Anatolia around May 15th! He, Nick Carter, would be there when the poppies bloomed. This was going to be a hell raid, the way he understood it. With himself, N3, raising the hell! Good. Fine. He was prepared.

ISTANBUL (1965 - AWARD BOOKS)

The cover pictures on the weeklies and pulps mirror the changes in fashion, transportation, and architecture. In this and other ways the different versions of Nick Carter reflect the times during which the stories were published. The earliest

stories appeared during the transition from the Victorian era to the modern one. Patterns of behavior conformed to the accepted pattern before the Great War shattered illusions and ideals. Dialect humor, now considered oldfashioned and even taboo, was much a part of the early stories. A tougher and freer atmosphere follows into the thirties and forties with more emphasis on plausible situations. After the second World War, the bizarre episodes of the dime novel days would have been out of place.

The radio series, with the limitations of a 30 minute script, brought about some further changes. The basic situation in the stories was made more simple and straight forward. No recourse to the numerous disguises and meandering dialogue of the penny-a-line days was acceptable. Patsy Murphy Garvan, Nick's second assistant in the old days, was replaced by secretary Patsy Bowen. His first assistant, Chickering Carter, became just Chick Carter, foster son and boy detective. (Chickering had been an orphan who adopted Nick's surname because he had none of his own. The discovery at one point that his real surname was Valentine is too lengthy to go into here). The presense of Sergeant Mathison (Matty) explained Nick's source of information about current crimes. This situation was fairly standard in many detective and crime shows (both radio and movies). Nick had always worked closely with the police, even in the early days. First there was Superintendent (sometimes referred to as Inspector) Thomas Byrnes (a real life figure in New York police history) and later there was Inspector McCluskey.

The secretary and girl-friday was also a necessary character in the days of radio adventure. Patsy Bowen can trace her lineage in the Nick Carter saga to Ethel Carter (the first Nick Carter's wife) and to a girl assistant named Ida Jones. Relations between Nick and Patsy were cordial but there was never anything to suggest a closer intimacy. Not so with Nick Carter, Killmaster.

If James Bond and his imitators can be called a reflection of our times, then the latest version of Nick Carter is following in the tradition of his predecessors. The new Nick Carter is the sort of hero who is 'tougher than the toughies', cooler than anyone else on the scene, and very good, even monotonously good, in bed. The old Nick Carter represented his generation in the appropriate way. Someday when we can look back on the Swinging Sixties with more detachment we may be able to judge how well Killmaster reflected his times. We may then be reading of the exploits of the Nick Carter of the 21st Century as well.

J. Randolph Cox

years, TWS featured the 'Tubby' stories whose hero...a self taught, popular science addict, invariably fell asleep at some lecture or other and then experienced fantastic dreams inspired by the topic of the lecture. Asf had no direct parrallel to these 'science' stories....thank Ghu, but Campbell himself would often shovel large gobs of elementary science into his Seaton and Crane stories before extrapolating the principle way out of sight.

By the mid thirties, Asf was the unchallenged master in the field, and both Wonder and Amazing had degenerated to long-winded dusty dull stories where even the science bored one to tears. However, in 1936 Wonder was taken over by the Thrilling group of publications, and became THRILLING Wonder Stories....that high pitched whirring noise is Jules Verne spinning in his grave....The number of stories per issue rose sharply, their style became less pedantic, they boasted more action and incidentally became more juvenile. Illustrations improved in number and quality, though Marchioni produced some ghastly work. A department of science questions and answers supplemented the usual quiz, but what really set the fans on their ears, was the appearance of the Cartoon strip ZARNAK, by Max Plaisted. The science was nonexistent, the drawing poor, and the story level suitable only for morons....ZARNAK sank without a trace a few months later.

I had hardly recovered from the metamorphosis of TWS, when Ziff Davis took over Amazing and gave it a shot in the arm, which included much

(Continued on page 13)

Fawcett's Triple-X Western-Adventure

FEBRUARY
1928



H. H. Fawcett, Publisher Roscoe Fawcett, Managing Editor Jack Smalley, Asst. Man'g. Editor

A Complete Cowboy Novel

WILD HORSE RANGE J. Allan Dunn 86

Bill Reid wanted Black Samson, the outlaw horse he had sold to Jim Purdy—and he wanted more.

A Novelette of the Rangeland

BONANZA BACKS THE LAW Richard A. Martinsen 156

Jerry Bolsam, one-time outlaw, becomes deputy sheriff in the county that once sought his life

Beginning a New Novel of the Cow-country

THE KID DEPUTY Murray Leinster 20

Outlaws had killed The Kid's best friend, and he rode forth to bring the gunmen to justice

Six Western and Adventure Stories

ORDERS ARE ORDERS Raoul F. Whitfield 40

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SLIM PETERS FROM CACTUS FLATS Jay Lucas 50

Southwest—The kid from desert went gunning for a killer—but he didn't know his man

THE FIREBUG'S TRAIL Allan R. Bosworth 64

Southwest—Jim Wilson was suspected of setting the fires so he had to bring in the real firebug

BIG TIMBER BULLIES L. Paul 72

North—Blake of Whitewater told Bartibog he had to fight with him—or for him

MANAGER'S CONSENT Bill Smith 116

Sports—Joe Mahaffey's contract with his star leather-pusher was supposed to be fool-proof

THE FINN WITH THE RAG PAW Chester L. Saxby 142

Jungle—The crew of the Agatha mutinied when they learned there was a Finn on board

Concluding a Great Cowboy Novel

RED GUNS OF THUNDER RIVER H. Bedford-Jones 126

With a complete synopsis of the most absorbing novel ever published in Triple-X

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FAMOUS FRONTIER FIGURES (Wes Hardin) Eugene Cunningham 155

Cover by Irvin Shope Illustrations by George Roun

Published monthly by Fawcett Publications, Inc., at 1518 Tower Bldg., 6 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Entered as second class matter June 29th, 1927, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under the act of March 3, 1879. Application for entry as second class matter in Robbinsdale, Minn., postoffice now pending. Editorial office, Robbinsdale, Minn. Copyright, 1928. Title registered. Advertising office at 1518 Tower Bldg. (Phone: State 2855), Chicago, Ill., and 52 Vanderbilt Ave., Room 1214 (Phone: Vanderbilt 3498), New York City. All manuscripts should be addressed to our editorial office at Robbinsdale, Minn. Advertising forms close on the 15th of the third preceding month. Price 35 cents a copy; \$2.50 a year in the United States and possessions. In Canada, 30 cents a copy. Other foreign unions, \$3.00 per year. Printed in U. S. A.

the same mixture as TWS, but with better artwork....and a baccover as well. However, despite the quizzes, and the depth of questions and answers the science content of the stories fell pretty low as the 'popular adventure' element crept in. Instead, Asf under Campbell's able leadership now held and carried the educational torch, with at least one article in every issue, and with a story content far above the other two magazines.

Looking back, I realise that I ought to have become a scientific genius with all this sugar coated science floating around. The trouble was, that apart from my innate laziness, I had little or no interest in the vast majority of information offered....biology, zoology, archeology etc, all bored me to tears, and the articles on physics were way over my head.

However, the stories, quizzes and articles while probably not of any great educational value directly, were certainly a stimulus to make one read more technical books, and attend lectures and courses to find out more. In this direction at least, I think that the s-f magazines have fulfilled some sort of educational function. I wonder how many of to-days scientists and technicians owe their first interests in their field to an early exposure to s-f in the form of 'those trashy pulps'. I wonder if their real contribution will ever be estimated?

Looking over the current 'New Wave' in s-f, I wonder if there will now be a complete falling away from the field. Certainly, if magazine s-f was born in America, it is being murdered in England, and with it will go much of that 'Sense of Wonder' and a desire to find things out.

Argassing (continued from page 6)

Tommorrow Gary and I are taking our boys (and some neighbor boys) to Toledo to watch the Toledo Mud Hens play Rochester in the International League. Toledo was the champion last year and is off to a good start again this year. Then on the seventh of June we'll take them up to watch the Detroit Tigers play and also stop in for an evening at the Triple Fan Fair. So I guess I'll get to four conventions this year. Things are looking up for my convention going.

There has been a rash of exceptionally good zines come this way in the past couple of months. I usually don't review fan-zines in The Pulp Era and won't start doing so now unless enough of you request it. Let me hear your opinions on this.

Took an afternoon off last week and went to Toledo to a graphic arts show sponsored by the Cannon Paper Co. Man!! Was there a bunch of equipment there that I would love to buy. It is surely a sorry thing to be so poor. The 3M company had a combination plate camera, plate maker on display. It takes the picture (enlarging or reducing as you wish) makes the negative and then makes the plate all in one operation. Only \$7,600.00.

(continued on page 23)

THE

MASTER OF MEN!

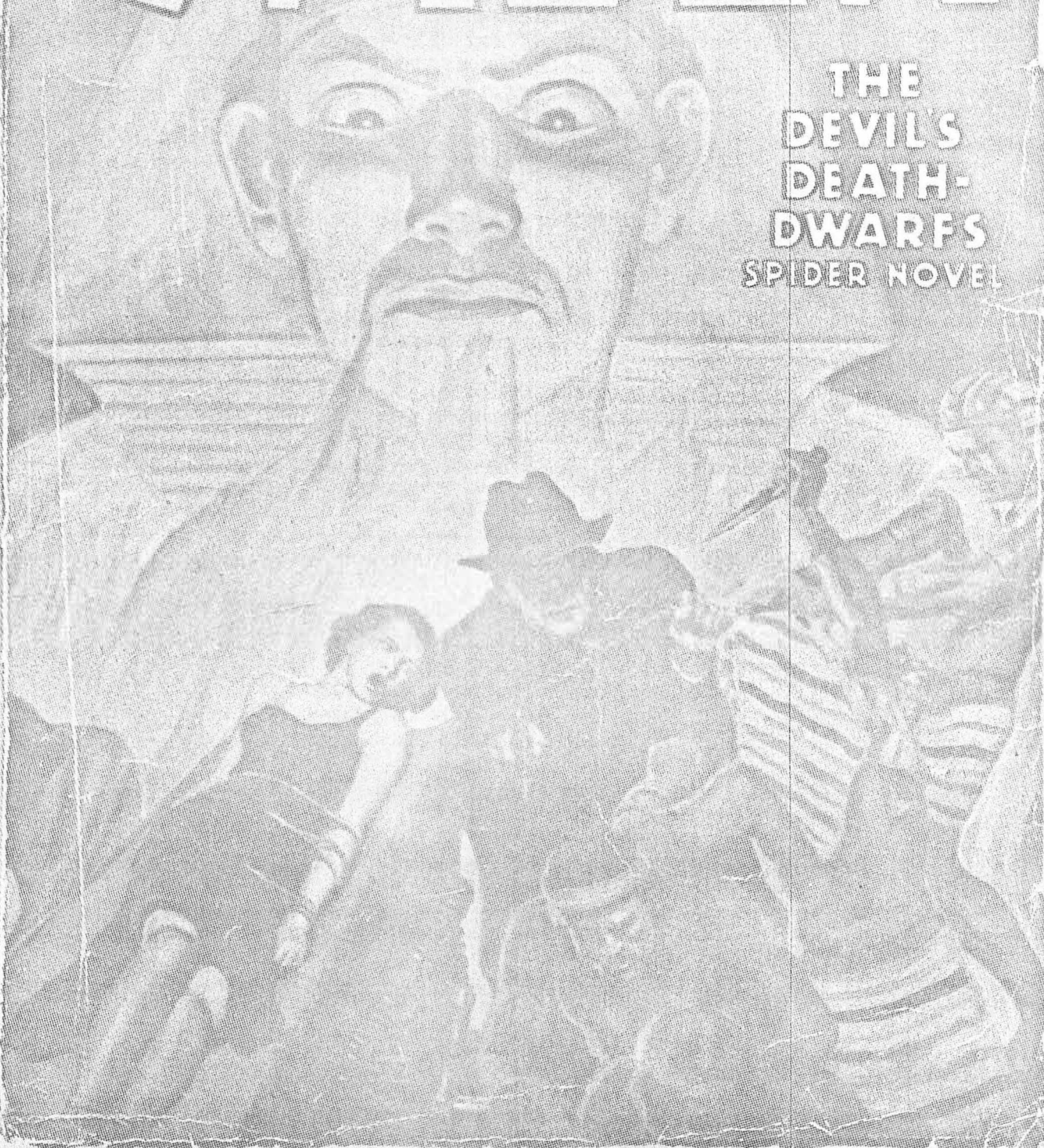


OCTOBER

10¢

SPIDER

36
THE
DEVIL'S
DEATH-
DWARFS
SPIDER NOVEL



Lead story by Grant Stockbridge.

Interior illustrations by J. Fleming Gould.

Cover illustration by John Howitt: The Spider, caped and masked, is climbing a web, drawing up a red-clad, horrified girl from a cloud of gas - two armed men in gas masks are threatening them.

Cast of Prince of the Red Looters:

Wentworth, Nita Van Sloan, Kirkpatrick, Ram Singh.

Rosetta Dulain, beautiful red-head, in the power of The Fly, master criminal - the Prince of Red Looters.

Sam Boughson, second vice president of Race National Bank.

Jack Holland, new Deputy Commissioner of Police, appointed to track down the Spider by

W. O. Purvis, new reform Mayor.

Fred Cook, former racketeer who can use a sabre.

Joe Stull, banker who can use a sabre.

Corcoran "Corky" Kirkpatrick, Stanley's nephew.

Chief Inspector MacTivish, of the New York Police Dept.

Ginnie Clark, Rosetta's beautiful young sister.

The Story: An audacious criminal calling himself the Fly has boldly robbed an insurance company and openly advertises a challenge to the Spider. When Rosetta Dulain proclaims that she knows the true identity of the Spider, Wentworth realizes that this is the trap mentioned by the Fly. Disguised as a milkman in order to get through the police guard, Wentworth enters Rosetta's apartment and meets the Fly who is awaiting him with sabres. The two duel and the Spider disarms the Fly, but refuses to kill him in cold blood. The Fly draws a gun, but spares the Spider's life and leaves. Rosetta aids the Spider in his escape from the police, telling him that ^{the} Fly will strike at her younger sister if she does not aid him.

The Fly, single-handed, robs the Race National Bank, mailing the loot to various criminals and asking them to join him. Wentworth finds that someone has forged a note which seems to prove that Commissioner Kirkpatrick has neglected his duty. Reform Mayor Purvis places Deputy Commissioner Holland in charge. As he and the new Commissioner leave City Hall, Wentworth saves both their lives when a machine gunner attempts to kill them. Wentworth recognizes the gunman as a former employee of Fred Cook, one-time gang lord who is an expert with the sabre. Another sabre expert is Joe Stull, a banker with offices in the Race National Bank.

Wentworth, Nita, Kirkpatrick, and Kirkpatrick's nephew, Corcoran, have dinner in the Marlborough Hotel, where Fred Cook maintains

an apartment. When Rosetta Dulain and her sister, Ginnie, join Cook, Wentworth decides that Cook is the Fly. Going to Cook's apartment, the masked Spider challenges him to a sabre duel. One of Cook's henchmen draws a gun but he and Cook are killed by the real Fly who appears and informs Wentworth that their score is now even. From then on it is to be a duel to the death.

Learning that the Fly has abducted Ginnie and Corcoran, Wentworth is warned to stay clear of the Opera House where the Fly is to strike next. Nevertheless, Wentworth and Kirkpatrick attend the performance where fire breaks out. All of the doors, except those leading to the area housing the very rich, are jammed. As the rich leave, they are gassed with phosgene and robbed.

Escaping, Wentworth captures a thug named Gus and disguises himself as that gunman after learning the gang's meeting place. Wentworth goes there but his disguise is penetrated by the Fly. When the Fly escapes as Wentworth turns the tables, Wentworth disguises himself as the Fly and learns from the gunmen that the Fly plans to rob four city banks the next day. The real Fly appears but Wentworth cleverly persuades the gang that the real Fly is the Spider in disguise. Unable to keep up the masquerade, the Spider escapes just as the Fly proves his true identity to the gang.

Kirkpatrick and Wentworth have men stationed at the bank the next day. The gang attacks in dirigibles which alight on the roofs. Phosgene gas is used on the police but planes, summoned by the Spider, shoot down the dirigibles. Wentworth confronts the Fly, unmasks him and the two duel with sabres. As the Spider makes a killing thrust, the Fly's dead body tumbles from the rooftops.

Critical Comment: Prince of the Red Looters is a top-notch Spider adventure. Again the reason is partly because of the stature given the antagonist. The Fly is in many ways the equal of the Spider and Stockbridge himself emphasizes this, revealing that the criminal might have been a pulp hero had he turned his talent and energies toward good rather than evil. The villain's daring in robbing the bank single-handedly is akin to many episodes in which the Spider accomplishes his deeds against similar odds. There is some inconsistency in the character, however; it is difficult to relate the courageous and noble adversary of the first chapter with the whimpering villain of the last chapter. If Stockbridge purposefully wanted to show deterioration of character, he should have laid more groundwork.

A sex element in the opening chapters is quite explicit. Rosetta helps Wentworth to escape from the police by pretending that she has been entertaining the milkman in her bedroom. Wentworth disguises his shoulder wound (by the Fly's sabre) by having Rosetta bite his shoulder! One policeman lewdly remarks that he's going to try to be transferred to the beat which includes Rosetta's address.

Additional Contents:

Arthur Leo Zagat, Doc Turner Visits a Slaughter House
Winston Bouve, Dynamite and Stone



NEWS AND VIEWS by Lynn Hickman and Gary Zachrich

As I mentioned in the last issue, we will soon have paperback reprints of G-8 and his Battle Aces and The Spider. The publisher will be Berkley Publishing Corporation. Don Bensen, who gave us many fine sf books while with Pyramid, is executive editor at Berkley and is very strong on this project. I do not have the information on the first Spider releases as yet, but will bring them to you as soon as possible. The first in the G-8 and his Battle Aces series will be The Bat Staffel. This introduces G-8 and shows his meeting with Nippy Weston and Bull Martin. This should be on the stands in September. In October they will follow with G-8 #2, Purple Aces.

Lin Carter is to be the editor of Ballantine Books new Adult Fantasy Series. Following the success of Tolkien, E.R. Eddison and Mervyn Peake, Ballantine Books will launch in 1969 a new Adult Fantasy Series. The series will concentrate on those novels and collections which have never appeared in paperback before. Each volume will have an introduction by Lin Carter and will appear at the rate of one a month. While reprints will constitute the series at first, original works will be sought. The first releases in this new series will include The Blue Star by Fletcher Pratt, The King of Elfland's Daughter by Lord Dunsany, The Wood Beyond the World by William Morris, The Silver Stallion by James Branch Cabell, and Lilith by George Macdonald.

Ballantine Books has now published in one paperback volume Smith of Wootton Major & Farmer Giles of Ham by J.R.R. Tolkien. There are now over 5,000,000 copies of Tolkien's books in paperback! This volume is on the stands now at 95¢. Also from Ballantine and also on the stands now, is Tolkien: A Look Behind The Lord Of The Rings. This is a critical appraisal by Lin Carter of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy and detailed tracing of the development of the epic fantasy. It is priced at 95¢.

Ace Books have brought out a novelization of one of my favorite past tv series, The Prisoner. At this writing, I haven't completely finished the book but it seems to be following the tv show quite closely.

Also on the stands from Ace Books, #3 in the Starwolf series by Edmond Hamilton, World of the Starwolves. Written in the best pulp tradition, priced at 50¢. Other Ace Books of interest are: The Jagged Orbit by John Brunner, 95¢; The Silkie by A.E. Van Vogt, 60¢; The High Hex by Janifer & Treibich and The Rim Gods by A. Bertram Chandler, an Ace Double at 60¢; and The Zero Stone by Andre Norton, 60¢.

Of special interest from Ace Books is their Air Combat Classics. While I have only seen one of them, Ace of Aces by Capt. Rene Fonck, they advertise two others in the back of the book, Winged Warfare by Lt. Col. William A. Bishop and A Killing For The Hawks by Frederick E. Smith. Priced at 75¢ these should be good buys for air war fans.

Ballantine Books is reissuing their Tarzan series and the first 6 books in the series have been published with all new covers, that to me are a definite improvement over the previous edition. The six that are out now are: Tarzan of the Apes, The Return of Tarzan, The Beasts of Tarzan, The Son of Tarzan, Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar, and Jungle Tales of Tarzan. These are priced at 50¢. Other Ballantine books of interest are: The Caves of Karst by Lee Hoffman, 75¢; The Aliens Among Us by James White, 75¢; Xenogenesis by Miriam Allen deFord, 75¢; Deadly Image by Edmund Cooper, 75¢; A Fine And Private Place and The Last Unicorn by Peter S. Beagle, each of these books is priced at 95¢.

Avon Books has issued a paperback under their Discus imprint, that while it has no special interest to the pulp fan, struck me as worth commenting on. The book is The Me Nobody Knows: Children's Voices From The Ghetto. It is edited by Stephen M. Joseph and is priced at 95¢. In this book, editor Joseph has collected the writings of his own students and those of other teachers working in youth houses and ghetto schools in New York City. In the book nearly two hundred primary and secondary school children, ranging in age from seven to eighteen are represented. Most of them are Black or Puerto Rican. All of them live in the slums.

These children have written on "How I See Myself", "How I See My Neighborhood", "The World Outside" and "Things I Cannot See Or Touch". Following are a couple of examples from the book.

Rhonda I Have a Dream age 7

I wish that I could have a better block then I have now. My landlord said that He was going to put Swings in my back yard. How can he do that When the backyard is junky I do not like people throw junk and I demand a Pretty good houses and more food to eat thats what I demand and I better get it.

Lorraine I'm Having a Terrible Dream age 7

I wish they will stop killing people around My block and Rhonda's block. I keep dreaming that I will get hurt. But that is not true. I keep saying to my mother I don't want to go out. But my mother says it is sunny out. I said that is not what's wrong. I'm scared that someone will hurt me.

Nellie Holloway Locked in the Outsides age 16

Here we go again, man,
I'm locked in the outsides of the white man's world
I hear them saying "We can work it out."
Yeah, they can work it out.
By giving us welfare and fixing the slums.
Of course, baby, how else
Listen to them laughing and declaring
"Give the n..... and spics some money,"
"Give them a shack to live in
And they'll be alright."
But don't pull tight, kid, don't fool me.
You Boss man, you may

Give me a house and some bread
 and I'll pretend I'm your perfect brother.
 (A long time ago, huh
 Old times and all that)
 Now I want my share of the deal.
 You live in the nice Park Avenue house,
 While I slave to keep you there,
 You wore pearls and diamonds
 And I, costume jewelry.
 Like they say, "A man's got to walk someday."
 So it might as well be now.
 Mr. Charlie is scared in his Bostonian shoes
 And GGG suit
 How he hears about Now.
 He hears, "Black Power, Baby."
 Yea, Yea Black Power, Now.
 Not tomorrow or Monday,
 But now.
 You there, Mr. Yessir!
 It's time to remember,
 It's time to see just who you are messing with.
 Not your little pink lipped,
 Black faced slave,
 But a man and a people who are going to win.
 Who are going to have power.
 So listen, Mr. White Man, listen good.
 You may give me some money
 And a new house.
 But a new house just don't make a new man.

No matter how you feel about the racial situations, riots,
 and such, this is a book to read and ponder. It shows the thoughts
 of many of the coming minority generation.

Reviews by Gary Zachrich

The Space Swimmers, Berkley Medallion, 60¢, Gordon Dickson.

This book has been out a few months, but I just can't resist
 reviewing it. It's interesting from an objective point. In the
 past, Dickson has put through a few good books (about class B)
 because he could carry a line well enough to keep your interest.
 At least well enough to keep you at it until finished. Now this
 thing is another story.

Of everything he has out, that I have read, The Space Swimmers
 has probably the best story line and character basics that he has
 come up with. But, where other authors feed on a well set scene,
 whip up interest to a high pitch and carry on an interesting series
 of byplays, this piece seems to fall flat. I would hazard a guess
 that he wrote this under pressure or was distracted enough at the
 time to stop writing at the wrong time so that he lost the flavor
 of the work. I found that I could not finish this thing in less
 than three passes and it caused me to wonder. Like I said, it
 does have the basics. It would be interesting to me if there were
 a few comments from someone else who has read it. Maybe I had a
 couple of bad nights.

The Swords of Lankhmar, Ace Books, 60¢, Fritz Leiber.

Fafhrd the Barbarian and the Gray Mouser.

Pick up and twizzle an old enemy of man, namely the rat, work him into a formidable early times foe and put him up against a couple of genuine rowdy type heroes in a sword and sorcery pestle and you have it. Really grade A good.

Leiber has ground his two characters (do I ever like the name the Gray Mouser) to a fine edge between no good rowdies and come from behind heroes. Very fine character development.

Wit and humor that bounds on the ridiculous such as in Bill The Galactic Hero ricochets through this cover, though never stepping over that invisible line that leaves you flat. Such things as a lisping enemy that never becomes quite laughable, a love affair conducted by rote that never does come to fruit, one that does with a humanoid with crystal flesh that exposed the bones, and your usual but well written series of rescues, chases, fights, and climaxes. And by the way, who ever heard of a hero riding away into the dusk with a young woman who insisted on being completely shaved every day? If he had even left out the eyebrows I would have been satisfied. If you like the sword and sorcery bit, you must read about this couple of rogues that have come to full life ~~in the mind of~~ Mr. Leiber. He surely must have lived with these people and enjoyed every minute of it.

I have a second grade boy who is wont to read his school books at the table. At supper last night, he looked up at me and asked me a riddle.

"Dad" he said. "Why do some tortoises live to be three hundred and fifty years old and men don't?"

"I give up" I said, between forkfulls of goodies.

"One reason is that tortoises don't smoke" he replied.

By golly, I snatched that book out of his hands to check and it was really in there.

Now how long do you think it will be before main characters and heroes stop for a milkshake before winding up a hair-raising episode.

The God Machine, Bantam Books, 75¢, Martin Caidin.

Steve Rand matches wits with the most complex and detailed thinking machine ever built by man. Of course we've seen that line before, but Caidin's technical descriptive skill and flair for story telling makes this more than just another super-doooper brain story. Want a pretty good idea of how an artificial intelligence might be produced today? A rating.

Target Terra, Ace Books double, 60¢, Lawrence M. Janifer & S. J. Treibich.

Once in my life I had nothing good to say about a book (After The Rains Came). I will begin by saying this is a little better.

At first I had hopes. An orbital station with its computer

brain gone crazy, - then I found that the crew members had all been nuts to begin with. BLUG!! Who puts crazy people in orbit? Class F. A glowing pinpoint of hope still glimmered in my churning abdomen, for the flop side was by John Rackham who has done some fair things.

The Proxima Project, by John Rackham, other half of above named double.

Horace McCool, a moneyed power figure, presented as intelligent, falls in love with a teeny bop singers image on a tape. Can you beat that? Then as the plot thickens we find that the teeny bop group are all super intellects and our hero acts like a twelve year old kid all through the book.

Its a cryin' shame that a pretty good story line can be butchered so badly by seven or eight passages. I nominate this book (both sides) for the Zinc Garbage Can Lid Award of the past decade.

A Fine And Private Place, Ballantine Books, 95¢, Peter S. Beagle.

A lonely, defeated recluse, a mausoleum, a talking raven and a drunken graveyard guard. Humorous and leisurely, it makes the belly quiver and chuckles rise. A good book for a bad mood. Class A.

The Moon Of Gomrath, Ace Books, 50¢, Alan Garner.

A Tolkien type. Dwarves and Elves and Witches and Magic set in old England. Swordsplay and Action combined with some true events of the past in a fantasy mood, weave a web of wonder seldom found. I found it delightful, don't miss it. Very double A.

Isle of the Dead, Ace Books, 60¢, Roger Zelazny.

Francis Sandow, the oldest living man and one of the few men in the galaxy so rich he can almost buy and sell souls is lured off his personal planet by the events of his considerable past to answer the challenge of a man he has never really wronged.

The story of the forces that move men, quenched in action and realism, woven by an excellent writer. Class A to AA.

The Demon Breed, Ace Books, 60¢, James H. Schmitz.

Parahuans, an alien race, descend on Nandy-Cline to test their latest weapons against the Terran forces of the Hub. If they succeed, they will throw the inhabited worlds into interplanetary war. Dr. Ticos Cay, an aging biologist looking for a longevity treatment is captured at the initial landing point and tortured for information. He is able to withstand unknown amounts of pain inducement without apparent effect, due to beginning longevity treatments.

In order to gain time for the hub forces, Cay introduces the Tuvula theory. He maintains that he is in training to become a member of a group of super beings that are able to destroy the Parahuans at any time. Though false, he hopes that he can convince them that they should give up their aims of conquest. Schmitz combines the use of a well built alien social concept with some real action. The human characters are alive and operate in a believable scope. Nile, a tender young woman thing, her trained intelligent otters and wily old Dr. Cay team up to pull a dandy snow job. Class A book.

The Left Hand of Darkness, Ace Special, 95¢, Ursula K. Le Guin.

The story of an envoy's attempt to bring a backward planet of uni-bisexual beings into a galactic federation by choice.

Politics on any planet is a demanding profession, but mix them with the complicated moral codes, courtesy forms, honorifics and emotions of a society made up of people who are all the same sex, that is to say that they can be the real father or mother of any children resulting from a love affair, and you really have an interesting format. It makes an interesting maze of events, and is well written. A class A book.

Gary Zachrich

Argassing (continued from page 13)

Quite alot of other goodies there too. I could have spent a fortune if I would have had it.

There were a couple of other smaller machines that I would have liked that were made in Germany. One sold at \$400.00, the other at \$350.00. With them you can make a negative and plate but can get no reduction or enlargement, however they seem to do a real fine job at 100% size. Maybe if I save my money -----

E. H. Mundell of Portage, Indiana has published a booklet 'Detective Pulp' a preliminary list. While it is a very neat publication, at the present time it is not a great help to the pulp collector as his information as to publishers, etc. was on the skimpy side. However, I would like to see more of this type of thing published, but would like to see them better researched first. I'm sure there are a number of collectors that would have been happy to furnish information for this booklet if they had been contacted prior to its printing. I could have helped on numerous items in it myself. As a format, I would like to see something like this done in ALL categories of the pulp field.

I am still working on indexing all pulp titles that I can find and sometime this summer will print up a list to send to all the collectors that I know. I would then like them to go through it and add any titles that they know of that I might have missed plus any information on these titles. I will also mention after each title how far I have gone on information or what information I still need. Some of it is almost impossible for me to find.

Next issue will be published in late June.

Lynn Hickman

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: All issues of The Shadow, Doc Savage, Black Mask, Weird Tales, and The Spider pulp magazines. Would prefer them with cover and pages intact, but will buy coverless issues for a reasonable price. Send title, number, date, condition, and asking price to: Darrell Stephens, 1136 Crowley, Wichita, Kansas, 67216. Will also buy issues of The Pulp Era before #68.

FOR SALE: 300 pulp short story mags. 1920s (65), 1930s (200), 1940s (30), 1950s (15). Including Argosy, Shadow, Astounding, All Story, Love Story, Western Story, Wonder Stories, Doc Savage, Best Detective, Detective Fiction Weekly, Sport Story, Happy Mag, Sweetheart, Clues, Strange Stories, Weird Tales, Science Wonder Stories, Cupids, Love Magazine, Illustrated Detective, and many more. Also 184 Popular Science, 71 Science and Mechanics, 227 Popular Mechanics, mostly 1935-55, 202 Mechanics Illustrated, 148 Meccano Magazine almost complete 1927-39, 200 British Bullseye Pioneer Schoolgirl Gem (1930s). Satevepost and Colliers complete Aug 41 to Dec 45. Others. Send for list. Best offers for whole or part by June 31st. Cote, 748 Rockland, Outremont, Montreal, Canada. Excellent condition. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Still a few copies of The Best Artwork from JD-A-The Pulp Era left at \$1.00 per copy. The Pulp Era, 413 Ottokee Street, Wauseon, Ohio 43567.

Wanted: The Lone Eagle, Skyfighters, Flying Aces, Sky Birds, G-8 and his Battle Aces, Speakeasy Stories, Black Mask, Double Detective, and Black Book Detective.
Lynn Hickman, 413 Ottokee St., Wauseon, Ohio

