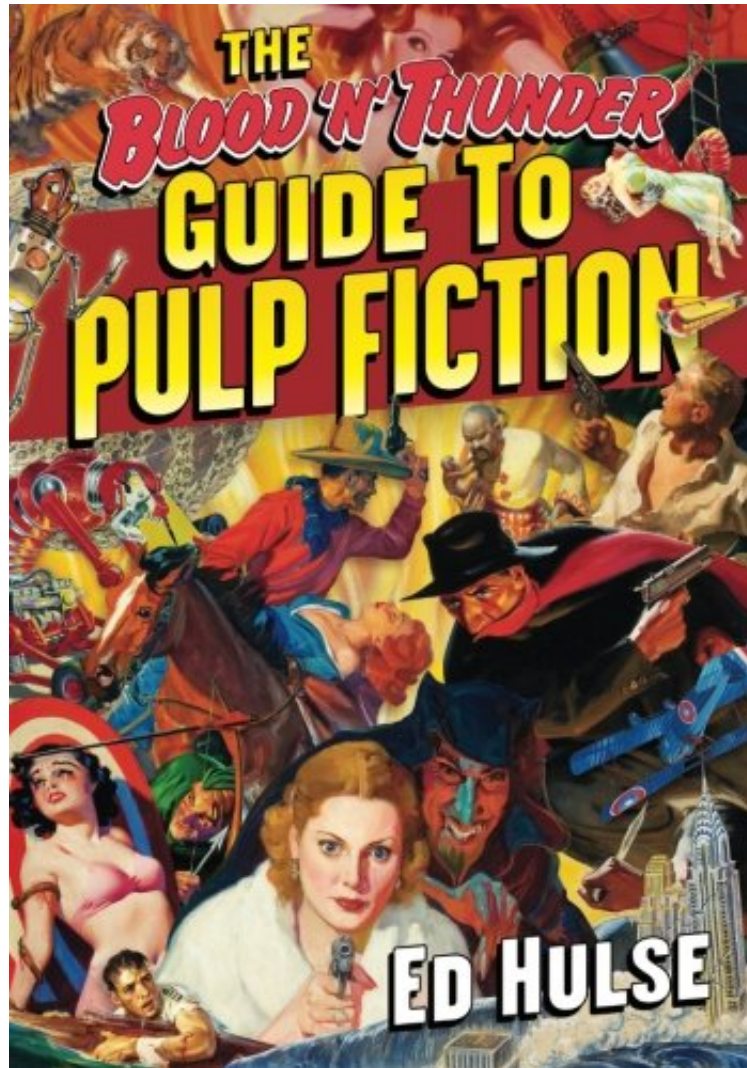


The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Pulp Fiction

Ed Hulse

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Ed Hulse : The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Pulp Fiction before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Pulp Fiction:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Probably best guide to pulp fiction out there nowBy Michael R. BrownAs a long-time science fiction fan, I obtained many reference books on science fiction. Some that I really enjoyed included The Visual Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and the Encyclopedia of Science Fiction. It was thru many of these reference works that I was first introduced to the world of pulp, as I learned of the science fiction pulps, see the wild covers and learned that many of the science fiction authors I read had gotten started in the pulps (and some of the fiction I was reading was reprinted from the pulps).Because of this background, when I got into pulps, I

got reference works on pulps as well as read pulp fiction, because I wanted to better understand the field. Thus I find I have a better background on pulp, its history, and its antecedents than the average pulp fan, especially the casual pulp fans. While many reference works on pulp have been published, many are out of print, and most were from small presses, and thus hard to find. But a recent one that is out and fills a void is *The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Pulp Fiction*. Ed Hulse of Murania Press wrote it and did an excellent job. In many ways, it's the second edition of the prior *The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Collecting Pulps*. The book has several chapters devoted to different pulp magazine genres. Further, the top third of each page is given over to two pulp covers (tho in black and white), so we also get to see a lot of great covers. We first start off with a chapter on Pulp 101. This chapter gives a great overview of pulps. It explains how pulps came about, and how they developed over the years. It also has some basics on collecting pulps. Each subsequent chapter focuses on the different genres, looking at the pulps that fall within that genre. We get a great overview of each of these magazines, pointing out some of the best stories that appeared in them. Further, we learn a little about the publishers as well as the editors and their editorial decisions, which is important in understanding why they published what they did. We have:

- * **The Pulp Pantheon.** The view by many is that the best early pulp fiction appeared in a handful of magazines, and this chapter focuses on them: *Argosy*, *Blue Book*, *Adventure*, *Short Story*, and *The Popular Magazine*, along with several pulps that got merged into them, like *All-Story*. We first start off with *All-Story* (which later merged into *Argosy*) and the works that appeared there such as Edgar Rice Burroughs' early works (ie Tarzan), some of the ERB clones from Stilson and Giesy. Then we learn about western author Max Brand, the appearance of Zorro, and early sf classics from A. Merrit and Ray Cummings. Then with the merger with *Argosy*, we hear about works by Perley Poore Sheehan, H. Bedford-Jones, and others. Popular "Peter the Brazen" appears in *Argosy*. We also hear of further stories by many of the above authors which continued to appear in *Argosy* before moving on to *Adventure*. We hear about the beginning of Talbot Mundy in *Adventure* and the development of this magazine, then move on to *Blue Book*. We learn of the many pulpsters who appeared in *Blue Book*, including ERB, who moved over here from *All-Story*. Next is *Short Story*. Then we finish up with *The Popular Magazine*.
- * **Western Adventure.** Am not a fan of westerns, but this chapter is a good overview of the genre, then moving into adventure, which I think will have a wider appeal. Many good magazines and stories in this area are pointed out.
- * **Crime Mystery.** Probably one of the biggest genres in pulp. We start off looking at Street Smith's long running *Detective Story Magazine*. We learn of Johnston McCulley many early characters (*The Spider*, *Thubway Tam*, *Thunderbolt* and others). We move on to the long-running *Black Mask*. Next up is Flynn's *Weekly* which became *Detective Fiction Weekly*. This magazine published the works of Erle Stanley Gardner, and then the long running *Park Avenue Hunt Club*. Popular Publication's *Dime Detective Magazine* follows. Other detective magazines are next. Several shorter pulp heroes are mentioned in this chapter, such as *Alias Mr. Death*, *Doctor Coffin*, and several of McCulley's later heroes. *Ace Magazine's* long running detective magazines come next, with mentions of *Wade Hammond*, *Dent's Lee Nace*, and *Moon Man*. Street Smith's *Crime Busters* is also examined, with its characters such as *Norgil*, *Click Rush*, *Death Angel*, *Carrie Cashin*, and more. *Dan Turner*, *Hollywood Detective* is next, and the chapter rounds out with a look at the various other publishers and their efforts in the area.
- * **Horror Fantasy.** This chapter starts off looking at magazines like *Weird Tales* and its imitators. A lot of great stories that appeared in *Weird Tales* and others are mentioned. Then it moves into the "weird menace" pulps of Popular Publications, such as *Dime Mystery*, *Terror Tales*, *Horror Stories*, and such. It wraps up looking at the similar magazines from other publishers.
- * **Science Fiction.** This chapter starts off with the first pulp devoted to science fiction, *Hugo Gernsback Amazing Stories*. He lost ownership of this magazine, and so started *Science Wonder Stories* and *Air Wonder Stories*. *Amazing Stories* continued without him, soon owned by Ziff-Davis who put Ray Palmer in charge. He would later start publishing the "Shaver Mystery" stories. While Gernsback did well with his magazine, he eventually had to sell them to Ned Pine's Thrilling line, where they became *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. *Thrilling* soon added *Startling Stories*. We also learn a little about Martin Goodman (owner of *Timely/Marvel Comics*) *Red Circle* line of sf pulps that mixed in spicy and weird menace elements. Other short lived sf pulps from *Munsey*, *Popular*, and *Fiction House* are looked at next. Then the long running *Astounding*, first owned by Clayton then Street Smith, and still lives on today as *Analog*, a digest magazine.
- * **War Aviation.** This chapter first looks at the several war pulps, which I don't find of interest, but would point out that you learn about a long-running character that ran in these named "Terence X. O'Leary". Then we move into the various air/aviation pulps. We also learn about the various serial characters that ran in them. With *Ace's Flying Aces*, we hear about Donald Keyhoe's *Captain Philip Strange*. Another is *Battling Grogan*. *Flying Aces* also had "The Griffon" and *Phineas Pinkham*. But Keyhoe's *Richard Knight* wasn't mentioned. We also learn about Dell turning Terence X. O'Leary into a short-lived sf pulp hero. Then we move to *Popular* and hear about some of their air series, like *The Three Mosquitoes*, *Smoke Wade*, *The Red Falcon*, and *Captain Babyface*.
- * **Pulp Heroes, Part one.** This chapter focuses on the Street Smith pulp characters. We first delve into *The Shadow*, with a lot of info on him, then move into *Doc Savage* with lots of info on him. Then we move into the lesser known SS pulp heroes *Nick Carter*, *Pete Rice*, *Bill Barnes*, *The Whisperer*, *The Skipper*, *Avenger*, and finally the *Wizard*. Some of their pulp characters are actually covered in other chapters. The ones published in *Crime Busters* appear in the *Crime Mystery* chapter, for instance.
- * **Pulp Heroes, Part two.** This chapter looks at the pulp heroes from other publishers. We start off with

Thrilling, first looking at The Phantom Detective. Then move on to The Lone Eagle, Dan Fowler, The Black Bat, Captain Future, and then on to their less heroes the Green Ghost and Masked Detective. Then Thrilling's western hero pulps Texas Rangers, Masked Rider, and Hopalong Cassidy are examined. Next we move to Popular Publications and their heroes The Spider, G-8, Operator #5, and then a look at some of their short-lived characters Secret Six, Dusty Ayres, Captain Satan and their villain pulps. Brief mention is made of Captain Combat and Captain Zero, the last original pulp hero. Then we move to Ace and their heroes Secret Agent X, and brief mention of Wade Hammond and Captain Hazzard. Fiction House and their jungle heroes like Ki-Gor and Sheena wrap up the chapter.* Those Spicy Girls. Obviously this chapter is on the whole "spicy/saucy" genre of pulps. Useful also is to learn about the publishers of these magazines, such as Harry Donenfeld and Frank Armer, who published many of these under a variety of company names such as Trojan, Culture, and Speed. They published Jim Anthony, Super-Detective, but no mention of him here. This chapter touches also on Hugh Cave's The Eel, and pulp heroine Domino Lady.* Sports Love. This chapter is on the various sports oriented pulps, including the fight ones, as well as romance. Again, not an area I am interested in, but it does include info on characters such as Robert E. Howard's Sailor Steve Costigan. Then we have 4 appendixes. First off is a great list of notable reference books on pulp. Those I have will be the subject of future posts. Next is a recommendation on building a pulp magazine collection. Then we get a list of publishers focused on pulp reprints. While a great list, its notable for leaving out some major publishers such as Altus Press (one of the top ones, in my opinion), as well as others such as Pulpsville and BEB. Finally, we have a list of must-have pulp fiction anthologies, for those wanting to read classic pulp fiction. Missing is an index, which I think is needed if one is looking for information on a particular author, title, or character. Maybe someone could work up one on-line. In reading the book, I found a few mistakes. But that's to be expected in a major work like this. This is, I think, a must have book for any serious pulp fan. If you want to have a better understanding of pulp, even if your interest is in just a few genres, you should get this book. One thing I find a little annoying is how many "pulp fans" just don't have a basic level of knowledge under their belts. They really need to take the time to delve into works like this to get a better understanding and appreciation of the width and depth of pulp. Heck, reading just the first chapter of this book would give them a better level of knowledge. Check it out. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Easily the Greatest Book About Pulps I've Ever Read By Christopher S. I'd already read several books about the pulps, and each of them intrigued me enough to explore further. But those books really only discussed one narrow area of the field: "weird menace," for example, or the most familiar hero pulps. Those books were fine, but they left the impression that THE SPIDER and DIME MYSTERY were pretty much the whole ballgame, and I knew that couldn't be the case. I could never find what I most wanted: a knowledgeable overview of the entire subject, rather than just an author's pet favorite. Finally! Here it is! Everything you ever wanted to know about the pulps, without getting swamped with extraneous details. All of the legendary titles are discussed, along with a great many I was unfamiliar with... and not just in the area of the hero pulps, but virtually *everything*--- westerns, science fiction, romance, sports and more. Intrigued by the many reprints of SPICY DETECTIVE and SPICY ADVENTURE available today? There's an entire chapter devoted to that genre too. There are a couple of things I was especially pleased with. For one, the author has a good sense of knowing how much detail you want, without burying you in it. You won't be left wondering how much the best authors were paid, or why the pulps began fading away in the 1940s, or even how they were physically produced on printing presses. But you're never led down an endless rabbit hole of tedious trivia. (For that matter, you don't have to plow through long recitations of a particular novel's plot points, either.) The other thing I really appreciated was the readability of this book. It wasn't written for the experts; it was written for guys like me, who've been attracted to those glorious covers, and to a few exciting reprints, and have been curious about what we've been missing. Wondering what the best issues of THE SHADOW are? Wondering which of Robert E. Howard's stories hold up the best? The author tells you, making a persuasive case. Best of all, (like the better pulps themselves) this is a real page-turner. I found myself reading sixty or eighty pages at a stretch, setting the book down only reluctantly. Then, after having devoured the book in basically a weekend, I was sorry that my tour through pulpdom had come to an end. Except that it hasn't, really... next up is GHOST STORIES! And THE MYSTERIOUS WU FANG! And THRILLING DETECTIVE! And... 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Best Place to Start for an Overview of the Pulps By Benjamin Thomas For a long time now I've wanted to learn a bit more about the pulp industry, its history, its various manifestations, and about the key people behind the industry in the early to mid-20th century. I doubt I could have found a better place to start than with this book. The book is organized nicely, divided mostly into topical chapters such as Adventure pulps, Science Fiction pulps, Detective and Crime pulps, etc. Each chapter traces the history of the genre and the competing magazines within it. Space is appropriately proportioned more to the big genres and magazines than the lesser ones and there is a lot of good history on each of the major pulp magazines and publishers. I expected, and received some good information on many of the big name pulp authors such as Robert E. Howard, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Max Brand, HP Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, etc. although this is not the focus of the book. We are also introduced to a lot of the lesser known authors who cranked out multitudes of stories under a variety of pen names. Each page displays black and white cover art at the top depicting examples of what the text of the chapter is covering below, which made each page a delightful combination. What I liked most about the book, other

than its wealth of information, was the style of the prose. Each topic and era covered was presented factually and avoided the elitist approach that such books often present but at the same time isn't gushing all over the page about how great they all are. It doesn't hurt that the author, Ed Hulse, is among the most knowledgeable and well recognized pulp historians today. The book definitely served its purpose and now I find myself even more intrigued by the subject of pulp magazines, writer, publishers, and artists.

During the 20th century's first half, millions of Americans flocked to newsstands every month in search of thrills provided by all-fiction magazines printed on cheap pulp paper. These periodicals introduced and popularized such famous characters as Tarzan, Zorro, Sam Spade, Buck Rogers, Doc Savage, Hopalong Cassidy, and Conan the Barbarian, to name just a few. The producers of pulp fiction churned out their vigorous and occasionally outré stories at a feverish pace, generally for a mere penny per word. Some eventually graduated from the pulps to become world-famous, best-selling authors among them Edgar Rice Burroughs, Max Brand, Erle Stanley Gardner, Ray Bradbury, Louis L'Amour, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler. Often derided in their own time, the rough paper magazines had an incalculable effect on American pop culture. They gave birth to modern science fiction and the hardboiled detective story, but also to plot devices, character types, and storytelling innovations that live on in today's most popular novels, movies, and TV shows. Illustrated with more than 600 magazine covers and original paintings, *THE BLOOD 'N' THUNDER GUIDE TO PULP FICTION* presents a complete and lively history of this unique literary form, covering genres individually and identifying key titles, authors, and stories. It also offers advice on collecting the vintage magazines and directs readers to recently published reprints of classic pulp.