

# BACK NUMBERS CAN BE EASILY PROCURED

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Former PEAPS member Curt Phillips is running for this year's Trans Atlantic Fan Fund. I've included a ballot at the end of this issue. While the other candidates also look strong, Curt has been very supportive of my fan efforts over the years and he's a really good guy who has contributed greatly to pulp and SF fandom, so he's earned my endorsement. Votes are due April 3, so don't dwindle if you want to participate.

Once again, I'm doing this issue at the last minute. I finished issue four of Cosplay just two weeks ago, mostly by not writing up convention reports, so this issue is a bit rushed. I also lost two days of work on mailing comments when I had a computer crash. Plus I haven't been able to get a lot of reading done lately, so a lot of my planned reviews and articles didn't get done. Actually none of my planned reviews and articles got done. I hope to catch up next time. Brian should be happy though, since I'm on vacation the week before the deadline, so I'm actually racing to get this in the mail a week before the deadline instead of a day before the deadline.

I'd like to thank Shane Roth for the in-depth article on "It Had To Be Murder." If it weren't for his contribution this time around, this issue would have been mighty thin.

The drop cap illustrations for Shane's article were originally created by an artist in Reno for a proposed hard-boiled/alternative zine I was thinking of doing. I've been meaning to find a place to use these and finally found a chance. Unfortunately it's been so many years now that I can't remember Gib's last name to give him proper credit for these really cool illustrations.

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# It Had to Be Rear Window

By Shane Roth



I am not a member of the pulp community. I am one of those masses of people who are not steeped in the subculture of pulp collection. I have had several discussions with ranking members of the *Back Numbers* editorial staff about pulps, and I'm still not able to define what pulp is, and what pulp is not even though these staff members have very patiently explained many times over. I do know more now than I knew five years ago. I've had a number of misconceptions and myths dispelled by reading *Back Numbers*. And though I will probably never own a collectible pulp magazine, I have attained a deep appreciation of the indelible imprint that pulps have made on Western culture. As of this writing, I believe that one element that makes pulp fiction particularly "pulpy" is its American-ness. So, naturally, I would like to enforce this theory by writing about a film directed by the most famously British director in the history of cinema: Alfred Hitchcock.

I've seen *Rear Window* a number of times. On television. In the theater. On DVD. And every time I saw this movie the Cornell Woolrich credit meant nothing to me. Knowing what little I know now, the Woolrich credit has taken on tremendous meaning.

Cornell Woolrich is one of the most widely filmed writers that no one knows about. It helps very little that he often wrote under pseudonyms or that he had tremendous personal baggage, even for a writer. Most people, outside the pulp community, might be able to recognize a dozen movies based on his writing and not recognize his name. A complete turn of events from today where people can recognize a dozen best selling authors yet claim no knowledge of their actual writing.

The last time I watched *Rear Window*, I resolved to read the original Woolrich work "It Had to Be Murder". It was first published in *Dime Detective*, February 1942, under the pseud-

onym William Irish. I found the work, re-titled "Rear Window", in *The Best American Mystery Stories of the Century*. In the forward, series editor Otto Penzler mentioned that if there had not been a limitation of one story per author, he would have... well, here he is:

"How many Chandler stories deserved to be included here? A half dozen, maybe, or more? And how many of Woolrich? A full dozen?"

This comment, along with the long list of films based on his work, suggested that those in the know respected this man's craft deeply. The only other thing I knew of Woolrich was that he was compared to F. Scott Fitzgerald based on some work he did during what we now call the Jazz Age. Having actually bothered to read *The Great Gatsby*, outside the context of satisfying a college credit mind you, I had some murky idea what might be waiting for me.

Well, I can say without reservation that Woolrich was no F. Scott Fitzgerald. By that I mean he writes things that one does not have to be forced to read in order to graduate from a university, not even over 60 years after the fact. "It Had to Be Murder" is easy for the 21st century reader to digest. His writing style wasn't hopelessly stuck in the 1940s. You don't need an historical primer of WWII-era America to appreciate everything that "It Had to Be Murder" has to offer. It is, as all fiction, a product of its time. And there are inevitable, regrettable, unintentional elements of the story that remind the 21st Century reader just how much of a product of its time "It Had to Be Murder" is.

Hitchcock is believed to have equated actors with cattle. Some doubt has been cast as to whether or not Hitchcock ever expressed such a sentiment, and his treatment of his actors suggests that he didn't really feel that way. Writers, on the other hand, were another matter. Not that he didn't respect writers or the art of writing, but he treated writers more like beasts of burden than he did his actors. He may have coddled the likes of Cary Grant or Grace Kelly, but with writers he used a more heavy hand. He wasn't intimidated by a big name, either.

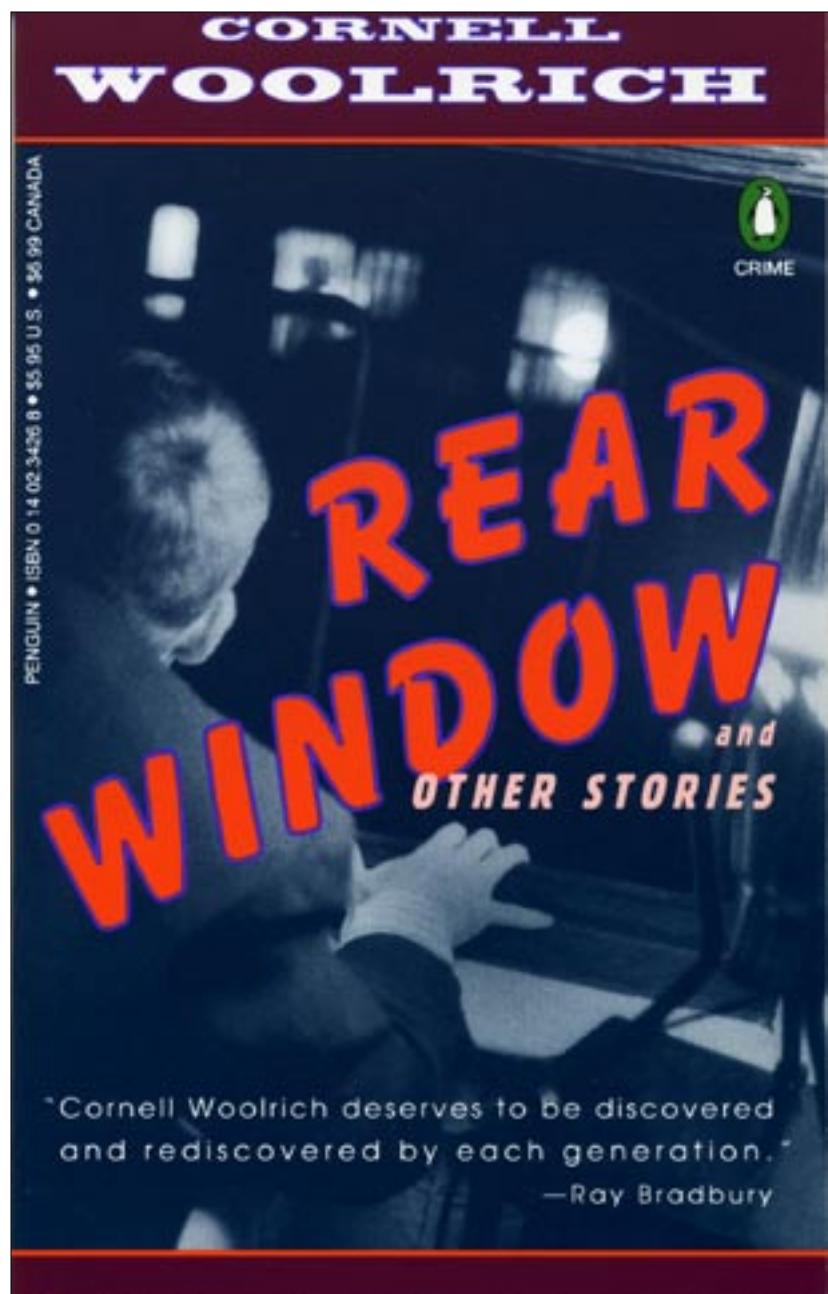
John Steinbeck wrote the short story "Lifeboat" in tandem with Hitchcock's development of the movie. Steinbeck and Hitch didn't get along too well, and not much of Steinbeck's original source material survived. Hitchcock always seems to have known that writing was vital, but he also knew very early that it was translating the writing to the screen that was the trick. His selection of "It Had to Be Murder" for film development can't have just been a stroke of luck. He knew good writing when he saw it, particularly good writing that lent itself to the screen. Be that as it may, he certainly didn't worship writers, particularly those who weren't screenwriters. Cornell Woolrich didn't even get tickets to the premiere of *Rear Window*.

After reading "It Had to Be Murder" and watching *Rear Window*, I have decided to resort to a comic book analogy. In comic book production, the art is done in stages by different parties. First, there is the Penciler. Then, there is the Inker. Then, the Colorist. The Penciler lays down the most elemental images in a comic book. The composition, the shapes, the dynamics. All of it in monochrome. The Inker comes along and solidifies the images. The lines are defined and refined. The ink enhances the illusion of mass,

but it is still in monochrome. The Colorist finishes it all up by providing the color palette that (hopefully) sets up the most appropriate dramatic tone. In this analogy, Woolrich was the Penciler, John Michael Hayes (the screenwriter) was the Inker, and Hitchcock was the Colorist.

"It Had to Be Murder" was lean, economical, and efficient in its construction.

It is precisely this leanness that made the story an excellent candidate for film development. Hitchcock preserved nearly the entire structure of "It Had to Be Murder", making it the foundation of the film. Hitchcock deviated from the plot of "It Had to Be Murder" only enough to account for the significant differences between the medium of print and the medium of film. Woolrich spent almost all of the words in "It Had to Be Murder" on the plot. He spent



very little time in character development. There were only five characters in the story that can be said to be developed. The narrator (who is first identified by name, Hal Jeffries, about a third of the way into the story), his manservant Sam, his friend in the police department Boyne, and the murderer and his victim Mr. and Mrs. Lars

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Thorwald. Mrs. Thorwald is only developed to the degree that her last name is established and that she is ill. Woolrich writes for the page, not the screen. He uses devices that work best for print media. He focuses the readers attention to exactly what information he wants. He does not use unnecessary detail. He uses one word to imply five words, accepting the fact that it is the reader's decision to select exactly which five words. He takes you inside the head of the narrator, knowing that naming the character too soon would interfere with this process. One of the techniques that plays to the strengths of print media and almost impossible to duplicate on film is the use of abstraction.

"For two days a sort of formless uneasiness, a disembodied suspicion, I don't know what to call it, had been flitting and volplaning around in my mind, like an insect looking for a landing place."

How do you film a "formless uneasiness, a disembodied suspicion"? How would an actor, even Jimmy Stewart, convey such a sentiment with a facial expression? I suppose a filmmaker could film an insect flying around Jeffries apartment, and then landing at the precise moment that Jeffries has his moment of clarity. Or there could be a scene where Jeffries speaks this sentiment as a line of dialog. And that's all well and good, but with a single sentence Woolrich places the reader in Jeffries emotional and mental state and it doesn't feel contrived.

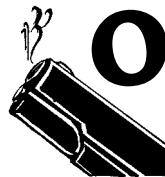
There is a dearth of short stories nowadays. The market for them is not what it once was, so nowadays Hollywood uses novels as source material more so than it uses to. There just aren't enough short stories to option for movie development. This is a problem because short stories adapt more readily to the screen than novels. With a short story, the filmmaker has room to build on the original material, as Hitchcock did with *Rear Window*. With a novel, the filmmaker is forced to chose what to leave out, as Peter Jackson was forced to do with *Lord of the Rings*. Jackson had the extraordinary option to make three three-hour films, an unheard of luxury in Hitchcock's time, and he still had to take a meat-ax to the original material.

Since Hitchcock's burden as a director was fundamentally different from Woolrich's

burden as an author, he had to build on the original foundation and translate the information to make sense in the medium of film. In doing so, he transformed a Woolrich mystery into a Hitchcock thriller, without compromising the original foundation. In the short story, Woolrich mentioned other tenants in the building Jeffries was looking at only in passing. Just enough to establish a setting and tone. Hitchcock, and his screenwriter John Michael Hayes, took this undeveloped element of the story and build it up substantially. In the short story, Woolrich swiftly establishes that the Thorwalds are the only parties of interest to him in the building across the quadrangle. In *Rear Window*, Hitchcock makes the Thorwalds a part of a fully developed microcosm. The viewer is allowed to look into the life of a young attractive dancer (Miss Torso), a newlywed couple, a beat era artist, a spinstress (Miss Lonelyheart), a songwriter, a couple who sleep on the fire escape to beat the heat, and an angry man who tends to his ailing wife (the Thorwalds). Hitchcock manages to have the best of both worlds in *Rear Window*, sneaking no less than five little silent films into the story of *Rear Window*. While the vignettes of the lives of the other tenants do have sound and in some cases dialog, for all practical purposes these stories were presented in the style of the silent era of film, when Hitchcock cut his teeth as a filmmaker. The main character, renamed L.B. Jeffries, can only reliably see what is going on across the square. The sound is muted when there is sound at all. The actors who were filling these roles had to do almost all of their acting by way of visual devices, making *Rear Window* arguably the last great film of the silent era and making then unknown Raymond Burr arguably the last great silent film actor.

By allowing the viewer to turn away from the Thorwald story line from time to time, Hitchcock used his medium's strength to reinforce the tension of the main plot and allowed for the audience to get a bit of comic relief. Hitchcock's (and Hayes') comic touches were enough to keep the movie out of the realm of film noir. The humor in the film is nearly completely the invention of Hitchcock, as Woolrich's story contained gallows humor, when there was any to be found at all. Yet the

humorous side plots in *Rear Window* do not clash with the very sober and grim Thorwald story line. In fact, because the comic moments are presented as deftly as they are, showing people being unintentionally funny in candid unguarded moments, they serve to reinforce the tension and integrity of the founding Woolrich plot. The more normal Thorwald's neighbors seemed, the more sinister his behavior seemed. In the short story, the author focuses strictly on how unusual Thorwald's behavior was in and of itself. In the film, Hitchcock allows the viewer to contrast and compare Thorwald's behavior to his neighbors and the audience draws the conclusion on its own.



One of the issues that Hitchcock had to cope with that Woolrich did not was the infamous Hays Code. The pulps, near as I can tell, weren't a laissez-faire environment in which authors were free to explore any idea or use any language they saw fit, but authors did have some freedom. Cinema, by comparison, was an ideological minefield in America under the Hayes Code (1930-1968), the era when Hitchcock made most of his films. Hitchcock tap-danced through this minefield like Fred Astaire, which is one of the reasons he is held in such high esteem among film historians. It is hard to imagine the likes of Stephen Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppella, or Quentin Tarantino operating within the confines of the Hays Code. Hitchcock made it look easy. In the 1950's, when *Rear Window* was made, filmmakers were becoming bold in their challenges to the Code. Hitchcock's signature technique was to technically and strictly follow the letter of the Code but thoroughly and blatantly violate its spirit. While nudity was forbidden, he had Miss Torso change her top in full view of the camera, but with her facing away from the camera. She was undeniably topless for several seconds, but you didn't see anything. The main character, Jeffries, was not punished for his voyeurism in "It Had to Be Murder". In the movie, he was punished for his social 'crime' with a second broken leg. Apparently, being subject to a murder attempt wasn't punishment enough for the enforcers of the Hays code.

Hitchcock also went to the trouble of

casting Jimmy Stewart in the role of Jeffries. It would have played differently if any other actor had been cast as the peeping tom protagonist. Cary Grant, Gregory Peck or Henry Fonda cast as Jeffries and it just wouldn't have worked. Hitchcock needed the Walter Cronkite of actors to portray a character engaging in what boils down to embarrassing and indefensible behavior. Because it was Jimmy Stewart doing the peeping, it seemed somehow less wrong. Just inside of the margin of acceptability. In the Woolrich story, Jeffries only momentarily questions the ethics of his invasion of Thorwald's privacy.

The casting coup of the film wasn't Stewart, however. Nor was it Grace Kelly. Nor even Thelma Ritter in her scene stealing role as Stella. The casting coup was Raymond Burr. As a person who knew Burr's work as an iconic television star, I found it a dissonant experience seeing a man who portrayed some of our culture's most comforting and trustable fictional characters portray such a villain. But there he was. A cursory glance at Burr's history uncovered that early in his career, he was typecast into thug roles. He had a long string of film appearances before *Rear Window*, dating back to the early 1940s, mostly as heavies. Almost 20 years into his acting career and he was still an unknown. His name was crowded in among the other minor actors who played the tenants. At a glance, Burr fit the mold of a stereotypical bad guy. But only at a glance. Incredibly, Raymond Burr infused humanity into a role where there was none before. In the Woolrich story, Lars Thorwald was just a malevolent slab of flesh who would not be taken alive. Burr rendered Thorwald as an agonized man who had committed a horrible crime and was only coming to terms with it slowly. Burr had meaningful dialogue in only one scene in *Rear Window*, and conveyed almost everything in a single line:

"What do you want?"

It was easy to imagine that Thorwald was asking himself, or God, just as much as he might have been asking Jeffries this question. He delivered his dialogue without lapsing into melodrama, which any actor could easily have done. Including, dare I say, Jimmy Stewart. Burr

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didn't try for audience sympathy as Thorwald. Thorwald was a villain who had committed a ghastly murder, and Burr conveyed this unflinchingly and presented Thorwald as a formidable opponent. Somehow, Burr gave three dimensions to a character who was barely given two dimensions in "It Had to Be Murder".

The additions Hitchcock made to the story (the subplots of the other tenants) called for no modifications to the original plot of "It Had to Be Murder", and I believe that these bolted-on subplots actually reinforced the main plot. The biggest actual deviations from "It Had to Be Murder" were in character development.

Hitchcock filled in a lot of holes left by Woolrich in "It Had to Be Murder". Woolrich left out lots of information about Jeffries to enhance the dramatic effect. Hitchcock filled in the information for the same reason, demonstrating his understanding of the limits and strengths of both mediums. In the short story, the reader finds out only in the end that Jeffries was stuck in his apartment because he had a broken leg. This would have been difficult, and absurd, to attempt in film. So, Hitchcock made the broken leg the first thing that you learn about Jeffries. In the Woolrich story, the reader is left to guess what Jeffries does for a living. Hitchcock establishes Jeffries' job as a photographer, and that he was working on an assignment when he broke his leg.

Hitchcock took away Jeffries' black manservant, Sam, and replaced him with Lisa Fremont (Grace Kelly) and Stella the plucky insurance company nurse (Thelma Ritter). Someone needed to do the leg work that Jeffries couldn't do himself. Even Jimmy Stewart would seem unsympathetic asking a black man to "step and fetch" for him. The latent racism that tainted "It Had to Be Murder" was removed by Hitchcock. The fact that he removed it by casting the film entirely with white people might rightly be perceived today as the lesser of two bigotries, but the film was made in 1954 and like it or not that is the way it was. The military had only recently been racially integrated (during the Korean War), the Civil Rights Act was ten years in the future, and Hitchcock was already pushing more than his fair share of envelopes at the time.

During the course of "It Had to Be Murder", Jeffries spent the bulk of his time alone. This doesn't work in film anywhere near as well as it works in print. So Hitchcock gave Jeffries someone to confide in. It made sense for Jeffries to confide in his health care provider and in his fiancé. For him to confide in a black manservant, in the pre-rock n' roll 1950's, would have placed a strain on the viewer's willing suspension of belief. It was enough of a strain to believe that a guy like Jimmy Stewart would have a chance in hell of making time with a woman like Grace Kelly. The actors somehow pulled this one off too. As with so many other accomplishments of *Rear Window*, a lesser cast guided by a lesser director could not have pulled it off.

By transforming his companion from a man into two women, it becomes possible and credible to allow Jeffries' companions to scold him for invading the privacy of his unwitting neighbors. A black man reprimanding his white employer about such an ethical lapse might not have played in Peoria in 1954. In the beginning of the movie, both female characters advise Jeffries against his time-killing "hobby", likely serving as proxies for the audience who are made naturally uncomfortable by such behavior. And since these characters like Jeffries and are patient with him and his voyeurism, this allows the audience to forgive his transgression. As the plot thickens, both women get sucked into the very behavior they were criticizing in the first act. The audience finds at this time that they too are willful participants in this violation of the neighbors' privacy.

In the Woolrich story, Jeffries' companion does not participate with him in peeping. He instead is hectored by Jeffries into committing a felony (breaking and entering) in order to gather evidence against Thorwald. From my perch here in the 21st century this particular element of the story put the greatest strain on my willing suspension of belief. A black man, in an all white neighborhood, breaks into an apartment in the 1940s at the request of his white employer. I'm imagining that Jeffries would have to have incriminating photographs of Sam or something like that. In the short story, Sam gets away with this crime undetected. In the film, it is Lisa Fremont who commits the B&E, and Hitchcock

lets Jeffries off the hook by making it Lisa's idea. And he lets Lisa off the hook by removing the element of premeditation. The Hays code would not allow a sympathetic character to get away with a serious crime, so of course Lisa is discovered and arrested. If Hitchcock were to have kept Sam in the story of *Rear Window*, imagine how it would have had to unfold.

First, Sam has to commit the B&E, as the story doesn't advance without it in either the short story or the film. Okay, suppose he does it. Since Sam has to be a sympathetic character to work as Jeffries' companion, particularly if Jeffries is portrayed by Jimmy Stewart, he will have to get caught. By a white man, in a white neighborhood, and be arrested by white police officers.

In the film, Lisa Fremont is arrested and detained, and shortly thereafter bailed out of jail by Jeffries' ally in the police department. This played in Peoria reasonably well. Any such scenario involving a black man just plain couldn't have. Not with the generation of Americans that elected Eisenhower.

At this point it is appropriate to bring up the other developed character in both *Rear Window* and "It Had to Be Murder". The police detective friend of Jeffries. Woolrich named him Boyne, Hitchcock named him Doyle. This role is one of the very few in which Hitchcock makes a policeman a sympathetic character. Hitchcock is reputed to have had a deep seated fear of police and his films tended to reflect this bias. The role of Boyne/Doyle is enlarged in the movie. He is a sterner voice of ethical caution. He is the most reluctant to invade Thorwald's privacy and quick to site the Bill of Rights. He makes the strongest case to Jeffries, and the viewer, that the information available from the *Rear Window* is so subjective that no good can come from it. And he almost convinces Jeffries (and the viewer). Almost.

Looking closely at the main plot of *Rear*

*Window* and "It Had to Be Murder", I detect something of an homage to Arthur Conan Doyle. In *A Scandal in Bohemia*, the plot turns on the protagonist getting the antagonist to let down her guard to reveal a crucial clue. Sherlock Holmes manipulates Irene Adler until her body language and behavior give Holmes the information he seeks. In "It Had to Be Murder", Jeffries manipulates Lars Thorwald until he does pretty much the same. The changes made adapting the story to the screen mute this homage to a degree, but even in *Rear Window* the plot turns on the antagonist betraying himself for no other reason than because he doesn't know he is being watched. It may be that the decision to change Boyne's name to Doyle was a conscious tip of the deerstalker cap to the creator of Sherlock Holmes, an act not entirely out of the realm of possibility for an expatriate Brit like Hitchcock.



Hitchcock was rightly proud of *Rear Window*. The best information I can get my hands on suggests that Hitchcock held *Rear Window* second only to *Shadow of a Doubt*. It was one of three films he made using a single set (*Lifeboat* and *Rope* were the others) and it was by far the best use of this Hitchcock gimmick. It was one of three films in which he cast perhaps his favorite actress, Grace Kelly (*Dial M for Murder* and *To Catch a Thief* were the others). The American Film Institute placed *Rear Window* at #42 in its list of the top 100 films of the 20th century. The total U.S. box office gross for *Rear Window*, including rereleases up to 1983, was about \$27 million. (I don't think these numbers were adjusted for inflation.) Only one other Hitchcock film did better box office: *Psycho*.

And none of this would have been possible without Cornell Woolrich.



# Mailing Comments, Issue 69

## Sulph

### Norm Metcalf

Like many of the other members of the group, I too missed catching the Greystoke connection in The Outlaw of Torn. I flipped through a few pages of my copy and didn't spot the reference. Just where is Greystoke mentioned?

## Flakes From The Ragged Edges Press

### Victor A. Berch

I see our pulp vocabulary word "grampus" shows up in your listing of H. Bedford-Jones titles with "The Mysterious Disappearance of the Schooner Grampus".

Thanks for your work in indexing stories by Bedford-Jones and Hugh B. Cave from The Boston Sunday Globe Fiction Magazine

## From the Pulp Vault

### Doug Ellis

"Fighting Romances", well, yes, I've had a relationship or two that would fit that title. Thanks for the indexing work.

That boxer from the cover on your back page looks to me like he's so punch drunk, or just drunk period, that I'm surprised he could keep his feet.

## Sons of the Blue Wolf

### Kevin L. Cook

I'm noodling around for a name for a new zine. To fit in with you and The Happiest Blue Elephant's Kurt Shoemaker, how's Tales from the Blue Grampus sound? We could get a theme going here.

I see you picked up The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen Volume 2. I bought these as they came out in comic book form. I too liked the first issue, set on Mars. However I thought the series after that point was nigh unreadable. There was too much unnecessary gore and sex. I didn't care for the plot, and I thought the "heroes" were ineffective and unnecessary to the resolution of the story. Other than the Mars sequence, I thought that the changes Alan Moore made to the source material were poor choices. I am interested in seeing what Jess Nevins has to say about this, I see that his guide to volume two is out, perhaps I'll pick that up. (I'm not certain what to make of a comic book that needs a two-volume set of scholarly supplemental books to fully understand.)

## Not Worth 1/4 Cent A Word

### Richard Paul Hall

One of these days you're going to convince me to

read a Halfaday story. One of these days.

You ask: "do Oriental females have a penchant for anime dress-up, or do you have a penchant for photographing attractive Oriental ladies." Well, as I've mentioned before, somehow I tend to get more photos of attractive women than otherwise. It just seems to turn out that way. I didn't really notice that there were a lot of Asians in my photos as opposed to other ethnic groups. I suppose it is because I live in the San Francisco Bay Area which has a large Asian population. We have two Chinatowns, Oakland and San Francisco, and two Japantowns, San Francisco and San Jose, as well as a large population from other Asian counties. Also, since anime is Asian, it tends to attract a large Asian fan base. But I can think of a number of attractive ladies whose photos I took that were not Asian.

If you are interested in more photos of cosplayers, I have another four issues up at [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com). I'm probably not going to be doing any more issues, but if they do, I've found a new home for them over at [www.californiacosplaytimes.com](http://www.californiacosplaytimes.com). I felt they didn't really fit in at efanzines and many of the people who would be interested in it aren't really efanzines people. One cosplayer told me she looked at my zines, but they all seemed to be, you know, words and stuff.

## Ramblings of a Perambulating Pulp Fan

### Albert Tonik

I hope your recovery is going well.

I still think Don Foster's methods need to be put to a scientifically rigorous double blind test. I suppose this is the difference between the hard sciences and the humanities.

Thanks for your discussion of issues of Young's and Breezy Stories.

## Some Short-Lived Frank A. Munsey Magazines

### Darrell C. Richardson

Thank you for the indexes for Famous Spy Stories, Cavalier Classics, Foreign Legion Adventures and Sea Novel Magazine.

## El Dorado

### John DeWalt

I don't know who would need an index to Back Numbers, but I do need a list of which Men Who Make The Argosy I've run so I don't accidentally repeat any.

I don't know of any other books or articles about methods for identifying unknown authors.

While I didn't like Whodunit?, I think most of the

errors were in the way of poor proofing and a different view of the mystery field than I have, rather than ignorance or misinformation.

I didn't manage to read all of the pulp stories that were posted last year, despite a noble effort. I have made a dent in my backlog from previous years, so perhaps this year I'll get caught up. And yes, I do print them out, double sided, and punch them and put them in three ring binders by author. I don't factor them into my books read/books owned percentage any more than I do so with magazines or comics. They're a different animal and can't be compared like for like.

Fantasy Literature is that terrible book I mentioned to you in a phone conversation a while back. I still haven't gotten the stomach to finish reading it for a slam in a Reading and Rot column. But I will. The world must be warned.

The Fred MacIsaac feature I ran was from the letters column and wasn't his actually Men Who Make The Argosy feature. I don't have a copy of that or I would have run it as well. I presume a photo or drawing of him would accompany it.

I don't know where Munn's The Banner of Joan is from, but I know where the book is going: out the door. I looked at this and it's the worst piece of doggerel nonsense I've seen in a long time. I don't think this is a reprint from anywhere. I'm amazed it got printed once, I doubt it could be printed twice.

The secret to being a book scout is that I'm going to go to library book sales anyway for myself, and I'm going to go around to lots of bookstores anyway, so why not spend a little more effort and save on the cost of books? If I was trying to do this for money, it wouldn't be worth it.

Yes, I'm already making plans for Fanime again this year. It's close enough that I can afford to go and I now have quite a few friends in the local anime community to see there.

John: you know better than to get me started on my evil corporate masters. I'm shocked that Ray found a Kinko's where any of the coworkers gave a damn. Nobody at a corporate level has any interest in making copies. Shipping them perhaps, but not making them.

Re: DVDs of old television shows. I just watched the first of several discs collecting the first season of Have Gun, Will Travel. I see pulp author Steve Fisher has a screenplay credit on one of the episodes. Interesting, and I think I would have been a fan had I encountered this at the right age, but I think I'll stick to watching anime for now. I'm very far behind.

So you nominate me to check out the cover to the Lancer Conan the Usurper do you? OK, the signature isn't where Ray thought it might be, it's in the upper left hand corner, above some shadowy figures in the background. It's light brown on a dark brown background so it's hard to see. The Prestige Books edition enlarges it

somewhat and this causes part of the signature to be cut off. I don't have an early Ace "white spine" copy in my collection, but these are usually identical to the Prestige Books copies. The later, black spine, Ace Books enlarges the image area further, to a full bleed, and the entire signature is cut off.

RE: more on grampus. You say it's a fat fish, and by extension a "corpulent person." A noisy dolphin. The only modern usage I've run across is as the name of a class of one-man attack subs in the anime Blue Submarine #6. Wait, it seems that there's a Japanese soccer team called the Grampus 8. Their mascot is a killer whale. And there's an unrelated Japanese anime model that mentions grampus. Seems that grampus is more in common usage in Japan than here.

### **Fillyloo**

#### **Graham Stone**

You mention that Dumas's The Three Musketeers didn't grab you. I've had the same trouble. I just can't get through the first chapter. However, I recently picked up a copy of Tiffany Thayer's Tiffany Thayer's Three Musketeers. (The guy did know how to promote himself.) I have some hopes for this one. It starts out with Milady DeWinter as the focus. There's no forward here describing why Thayer decided the story needed to be retold, something I think should have been obvious to include. I'll report back if I ever get around to reading it. Thayer is also of interest because he was published in 10 Story Book and was an early mover and shaker in the Fortean Society, which popularized the work of Charles Fort.

### **Raycentric Universe**

#### **Ray Skirsky**

What format is that 1980 edition of Six Deadly Dames? I didn't know it had been reprinted. I'll have to keep my eye out for it. Thanks for the review.

### **The Happiest Blue Elephant**

#### **Kurt B. Shoemaker**

Thanks for the report on Pulpcon. Wish I could have been there.

### **Sulph**

#### **Norm Metcalf**

Talbot Mundy's "The Iblis at Ludd" along with "The Seventeen Thieves of El-Kalil" were recently (1999) reprinted in an illustrated edition by Insight Studios. The planned reprinting of the rest of Mundy's work appears to now be cancelled.

My edition of Edgar Wallace's "The Nine Bears" is a very strange paperback. It's somewhat like a digest. It is British with no indication of when this edition was published. I paid extra for it at a library book sale because somebody thought the cover looked "1930's".

## Back Numbers

Thanks for telling me Daniel Nathan was the half of “Ellery Queen” I was talking about. I never could keep them straight. No real reason to, I suppose.

### Thin Air Wonder Stories

#### Joseph Sokola

Thanks for the information on the Unknown annual (and the other Street and Smith annuals). I am probably the only SF pulp fan who has never heard of this item. I thought I'd managed to collect all of the various Unknown anthologies.

### P.I.I.P.

#### Randy Vanderbeek

I must confess I've never read any Kenneth Perkins, and didn't consider him to be a significant writer. Yet you reveal that he's consistently producing cover-art worthy stories. The statistics can't lie. So my Men Who Make The Argosy this time will feature Mr. Perkins.

### Blodgett

#### Scott Cranford

I'll keep your list of references to Sky Captain handy for when I get around to watching it on DVD.

### Rough Edges Revisited

#### James Reasoner

Please accept my sympathies for your recent loss.

I just special ordered Texas Wind and I'm looking forward to finally being able to read it. I see that Mike Chomko is also carrying the title.

### T'rilling Action

#### Duane Spurlock

I've read most of the Hornblower books and I've enjoyed most of them. I haven't read, yet, Mr. Midshipman Hornblower, but I very much liked the next one on the list, Lt. Hornblower. I have to say that I read Patrick O'Brien's Blue at the Mizzen and found it to be one of the worst reading experiences of my life. I kept waiting for the characters to do something and all they did was eat “spotted dog”. Every time they had a chance to do something exciting, they decided not to. Finally at the end of the book an interesting character showed up. We almost had a thrilling sea battle, but the interesting character's seconds in command turned on him and surrendered the ship. Woo hoo! Our heroes win by forfeit! I have less than no desire to read any more O'Brien, but I guess we'll have to agree to disagree.

### Yesteryear

#### Glenn Lord

I have heard of Wolfsdung, but my understanding is that it is a parody and does not actually have a significant amount of Howard content. (Of course you can say that

about a lot of “Howard” books.)

In answer to your earlier query, I'm the one who is, occasionally, working on an index of 10-Story Book.

### The Pulp Hound

#### Will Murray

Thanks for your continuing items on Lester Dent.

### Hidalgo

#### Brian Earl Brown

Although I haven't seen it, I think perhaps your photo of Raquel Welch is from The Magic Christian, a movie where she played “The Priestess of the Whip”.

You comment on the shelves after shelves of manga you see at bookstores sells. Actually it sells very well. Better than American comic books. Two manga volumes recently cracked the USA today top 150 bestseller list, something no American comic volume ever has. The reason Barnes and Noble and Borders and such have so much is that it really does sell. One popular quote, it's even on t-shirts and bags, is “Anime: crack would be cheaper”.

As you say, sometimes it is a little hard to tell which titles one might be interested in. One trick is there is a different style used for manga aimed at males from that used for manga aimed at females, although this distinction is not always valid. I can look at the art of say, Banana Fish, and tell it isn't for me. Word of mouth and reviews are important. The major publishers put out free sampler volumes that get distributed at cons and club showings. There are phone-book-sized compilations that serialize different series. A title that has been adapted into a popular anime will have strong sales. Part of the trouble, as Scott McCloud points out in his Understanding Comics, is that Japanese comics have a long cultural history based on traditional Japanese art and have developed in relative cultural isolation. Just as there is a “language” to film—in how scenes are presented and how camera and editing tricks are used to tell the story—there's also a “language” to sequential art. The Japanese use a slightly different language to communicate. In American comics a bloody nose means you just got punched, in Manga, it means you're horny. Once you learn to “read” this language it's not very different from American comics. The young kids reading manga are picking this up the way we picked up the distinct language of Jack Kirby or Will Eisner or Charles Shultz. McCloud also has some interesting things to say about something you noticed, the intercutting between a cartoon and a realistic style.

This is not to say that I think all manga are good. Sturgeon's Law does apply. But the 10 percent that is not crap is worth searching out. Although I didn't really get it when I first tried to read it a number of years ago, I'm really enjoying the new set of Lone Wolf and Cub. In between I've learned the “language”. But I still can't

follow the action in "Real Bout High School", a title that I think is not very good at all.

Frankly I feel the same way about Harry Potter as you do about anime.

# The Men Who Make The Argosy



PERKINS, KENNETH

Author of "*The Mark of the Moccasin*," "*The Gun Crusade*," "*Voodoo'd*," etc.

KENNETH PERKINS was born in British India of American parents. He went to school in a hill station in Ootacamund; the Madras Presidency. When of high school age he went to San Francisco to live with his grandfather, who was one of the Argonauts of the California gold rush. It was from him that Perkins gathered much of the material for his book "Gold" which appeared in Argosy and which has just been published by Stokes in book form. His grandmother came across the Isthmus to join her husband, to whom she had been married in Maine on the day of his departure for the gold rush. In crossing the Isthmus he horse ran away and she arrived at the western seaport—a locality teeming with gold hunters and adventurers of every nationality—all alone, creating much furor. In his grandfather's San Francisco house Perkins lived during high school days, being a habitual frequenter of the water front, visiting his grandfather's ships—of which he had some dozen—and meeting their captains and crews.

A few years later he shipped in the glory-hole of a steamer sailing the Pacific—Japan, Guam, the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands. Since those days his favorite hobby has been sailing. He has sailed catboats, sloops, yawls, down on the Cape, Buzzards Bay, Barnegat Bay, New York Lower Bay, as well as

the Pacific Coast.

Having a commission in the army during the war, his duty was to teach recruits the fine points of equitation, otherwise known as horseback riding. He had ridden horses since a boy on ranches in the West. Practically every year he visits the West, where his people and his wife's people reside. He also spends much time in Louisiana, which is his favorite locale for fiction writing. The sea, India, Central America—which he also knows through his travels—the romantic "West" of to-day which, aside from the fences and garages, retains much of its old time picturesqueness—these are the places that offer material for his writing.

Since living in New York he has become interested in the stage—more or less as a hobby—as he believes this makes his fiction more dramatic, more tense, and more concerned with the actions and speech and personalities of human people. He is a member of the Dramatists' Guild of the Authors' League, as well as of the League.

He has one daughter, aged three, Charlotte Joan.

His wife, née Grace Bemis, was a student at Pomona College, where he taught English for two years before turning to writing.

During the part of the year that he is not traveling, he resides at Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, which is his present home.

*The Men Who Make The Argosy, May 10, 1930*



# The Men Who Make The Argosy



MacCREAGH, GORDON

Author of "Reptile Man," etc.

I can't lie about my age because it's in Who's Who and it's older than I like to believe because I aim to go world tramping as soon as I can get money enough to leave my wife at home—if she'll let me. for the old days are gone—the days when I was able to just up and go—and wonder whether there might be eats and a camp cot wherever it might be that I would arrive.



That was the way I began. I was getting an education in a German university when I seconded a sap in a duel, and it turned out more serious than we had thought; so everybody concerned laid low for a while. Me, I had been writing to a man in Calcutta—where one shook the rupee trees and gathered wealth and glamour at the same time. This kind gentleman

promised me a salary of 200 rupees per month if I would take a job in his barge business.

Well, barges were as good as anything else in the romantic East. I worked out as an under steward; and the kind gentleman gave me the job. But at the end of the month when I asked him for some rupees, he said, Oh, yes, he'd give me 200 of them per month—as soon as I had learned the barge business and was of some use to him.

So I had a fight with his son-in-law and got fired, and I took a train and went as far as it went. That was Darjeeling. I became a tea coolie driver and collected those marvelous Himalayan beetles and butterflies for a museum collector. And from that I graduated to collecting on my own. I got into bigger stuff. Live animals from Jamrach, then the big Liverpool dealer. I understand

during the war they ate them all up. I moved into the Malay islands and sent in various leopards and tigers and things. But my specialty was big snakes and orangutans.

The war came along. I came home and lost a lot of time in a Navy training station. In the Navy I met a god called Discipline.

A couple of years sped. I sold my outstanding worth to a scientific expedition that proposed to find a new and uncharted way across South America, over ghastly Andean passes and through the whole length of the Amazon valley, which is quite a large and wet place.

Then a spell of writing it all up. Then a quite crazy dash to Abyssinia—because nobody seemed to know anything much about it.

But my fate had been descended upon me by this time; and she was crazy, too, and came along—and suffered for her temerity.

Thin tent walls out in the open bush and lion noises outside rasped her nerves all up. And drove her crazier; so she came again the next time.

That time took us further into the interior of things. British East Africa and Uganda borders. And we brought some mules that had been scientifically inoculated against tsetse fly so that we wouldn't have to bother with the hideous porter safari problem. And the tsetse flies killed off half the mules anyhow, and we struggled on into bad country, and lions ate up the rest. So we had our safari after all. And the safari was tsetse speckled and ran away in heaps. And we lost baggage and were sick and the rainy season came along and caught us out in the woods; and a good time was had by all. So we came home.

Third class on a French boat to Japan—and don't you ever try that—and on to Seattle. Then we bought a used—very used—flivver and came across continent via the auto camp routes. And we took in Columbia River Highway and Yellowstone Park and Jackson's Hole and Shoshone Canyon and Deadwood and Cody and Custer and all the places where we found all the names of our youthful reading to be honest to God true places—Dead Man's Gulch and Two Mile Bend and Snake River and Massacre Rocks and Poison Springs. And we got an awful kick out of it all.

—The Men Who Make The Argosy, February 18, 1933

# 2005 TAFF Ballot — North America to Europe

**What is TAFF?** The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund was created in 1953 for the purpose of providing funds to bring well-known and popular fans familiar to those on both sides of the ocean across the Atlantic. Since that time TAFF has regularly brought North American fans to European conventions and European fans to North American conventions. TAFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted on by interested fans all over the world, and each vote is accompanied by a donation of not less than \$3 or £2 or €3. These votes, and the continued generosity of fandom, are what make TAFF possible.

**Who may vote?** Voting in the 2005 race is open to anyone who was active in fandom prior to April 2003, and who contributes at least \$3 or £2 or €3 to the Fund. Larger contributions will be gratefully accepted. Voting is by secret ballot: only one vote per person, and you must sign your ballot. You may change your vote any time prior to the deadline.

**Deadline:** Votes in this race must reach the administrators by **midnight, 3 April 2005**.

**Voting details:** TAFF uses a preferential ballot system which guarantees automatic runoffs until a majority is obtained. You rank the candidates in the exact order of your preference for them. If the leading first-place candidate does not get a majority, the first-place votes for the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped, and the second-place votes on those ballots are counted as first-place votes. This process repeats itself until one candidate has a majority. Your votes for second and third place are important, but you may give your candidate only one ranking on your ballot. In order to win, a candidate must receive at least 20% of the first-ballot first-place votes on both sides of the Atlantic, separately. Any candidate failing to receive this minimum percentage on either side will be dropped, and the second-place votes on their ballots counted as first-place votes in the next ballot count. Thus candidates and their supporters will need to canvass fans on both sides of the pond. You may send your ballot to either administrator, but it will be tabulated with the other votes from the side of the Atlantic on which you reside. Votes from fans not resident in either Europe or North America will not count towards either 20% minimum, but are important to the outcome of the race.

**Hold Over Funds:** This choice, like "No Award" in Hugo balloting, gives you the chance to vote for no TAFF trip this year, if the candidates do not appeal. Hold Over Funds may be voted for in any position, and is exempt from the 20% requirement; thus, if it receives a majority of the votes on the final ballot, no TAFF trip will be held this year regardless of how many votes Hold Over Funds received on the first ballot.

**No Preference:** For voters who prefer not to choose between candidates, but don't want the trip held over.

**Donations:** TAFF gratefully accepts your freely given money and material for auction; such generosity has sustained the Fund for over 50 years. TAFF is fandom's oldest travel fund, and one of its worthiest causes — give early and often! Please contact your nearest administrator for details.

**Candidates:** Each candidate has posted a bond, promising — barring Acts of God — to travel, if elected, to:

Interaction, the 63rd World Science Fiction Convention, in Glasgow, Scotland, August 4th to 8th 2005, and has provided signed nominations and a platform (overleaf).

*Please read both sides of this ballot before voting. Send entire sheet as your vote.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number or e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(we do not list or exchange this information)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \_\_\_\_\_ as a contribution to TAFF. Please make checks/cheques etc. payable to "Randy Byers" or "James Bacon", not to "TAFF", and in the currency of the administrator's country. (James Bacon can accept cheques in dollars, pounds sterling, or euros.) If you think your name may not be known to the administrators, then in order to qualify your vote, please give, in the space below, the name and address of an active fan (not a fan group, a candidate, or their nominator) who is known to them and to whom you are known:

Active fan known to the administrator: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2005 TAFF Ballot — North America to Europe

### Chaz Boston Baden

I'm a lapsed apahack, intermittent loccer, newszine fanned, litfan, con fan, party fan, conventioneer, blogger, Margarita Jell-O mixologist, a custodian of the Worldcon Fan Gallery exhibit, and proprietor of [www.boston-baden.com](http://www.boston-baden.com) where several thousand fannish pictures may be found. I've met many charming Britfans and European fen. I'd love to meet the rest of them. As TAFF winner, I'd cover all the fannish territory I can fit into three or four weeks, and photograph every fan I meet to share your faces with the rest of fandom; and publish a trip report illustrated with photos and fan art when I return home.

Nominators: Rose-Marie and Guy Lillian, Rich Lynch, Len and June Moffatt, Mike Scott, Jan van't Ent

### Curt Phillips

I'm a traditional "books and writers" kind of fan. To me the heart of fandom is described in the writings of fans like Willis, Berry, Tucker, and White, and though changed, our foundation is still there and I stand upon it with you. I believe in a fandom united not by ideas themselves but by the expression of ideas and the joy we find in the well written word. I've never been to Europe but I want to meet the fans there and come home to write about them. Trip report? Count on it! Visit my TAFF website at <<http://www.freewebs.com/absarka/>>.

Nominators: Ulrika O'Brien, Bob Tucker, Peter Weston, Ted White, Pete Young

### Suzanne Tompkins (Suzle)

Suzanne Tompkins (Suzle) was born to be a fan, living above her parents' A.B. Dick distributorship, learning to apply corflu and crank it out. After she and Linda Bushyager re-invented Pittsburgh fandom and coedited the early issues of '70s fanzine *Granfalloon*, she moved to New York. There she and Jerry Kaufman pubbed the Hugo-nominated *Spanish Inquisition*, and after moving to Seattle, *Mainstream*. Suzle is Seattle's goto girl for hotel/convention advice, having worked on cons from Worldcon committees to Corflus/Potlatches. She co-publishes *Littlebrook*, which can be found at [eFanzines.com](http://eFanzines.com), and would love to meet or again see her fannish friends next August.

Nominators: Lilian Edwards, Brad Foster, Lucy Huntzinger, Mary Kay Kare, Dave Langford

Please read and fill out both sides of this sheet. Send in entire sheet as your vote. Do not detach this portion!  
I vote for (rank 1, 2, 3 etc.):

- Chaz Boston Baden
- Curt Phillips
- Suzanne Tompkins (Suzle)
- Hold Over Funds
- No Preference

*Send ballot & donation to:*

Randy Byers, 1013 North 36th St., Seattle, WA 98103, USA

James Bacon, 211 Black Horse Ave, Dublin 7, Ireland

Reproduction of this form is encouraged. It is the official voting vehicle and must be reproduced verbatim.  
Anyone doing so should substitute their name here: Warren Harris