



# 1960s Gay Pulp Fiction: The Misplaced Heritage (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book)

*From University of Massachusetts Press*

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## 1960s Gay Pulp Fiction: The Misplaced Heritage (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book) From University of Massachusetts Press

As a result of a series of court cases, by the mid-1960s the U.S. post office could no longer interdict books that contained homosexuality. Gay writers were eager to take advantage of this new freedom, but the only houses poised to capitalize on the outpouring of manuscripts were "adult" paperback publishers who marketed their products with salacious covers. Gay critics, unlike their lesbian counterparts, have for the most part declined to take these works seriously, even though they cover an enormous range of genres: adventures, blue-collar and gray-flannel novels, coming-out stories, detective fiction, gothic novels, historical romances, military stories, political novels, prison fiction, romances, satires, sports stories, and spy thrillers?with far more short story collections than is generally realized. Twelve scholars have now banded together to begin a recovery of this largely forgotten explosion of gay writing that occurred in the 1960s.

Descriptions of these pulps have often been inadequate and misinforming, the result of misleading covers, unrepresentative sampling of texts, and a political blindness that refuses to grant worth to pre-Stonewall writing. This volume charts the broader implications of this state of affairs before examining some of the more significant pulp writers from the period. It brings together a diverse range of scholars, methodologies, and reading strategies. The evidence that these essays amass clearly demonstrates the significance of gay pulps for gay literary history, queer cultural studies, and book history.

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### **Review**

"These essays *in toto* are exciting, informative, comprehensive, and sexy in their thinking, moving beyond standard paratextual analysis of paperback covers and into the nitty-gritty of the pulp texts and the queer worlds that they imagined on the page and off."?Scott Herring, author of *Queering the Underworld: Slumming, Literature, and the Undoing of Lesbian and Gay History*

"Gunn and Harker start with a thoughtful, detailed introduction that makes a case for the literary value of 'trashy' paperbacks by authors who have never received the critical attention they deserve. . . . The contributors show that these books revealed gay identity, society, and selfhood at a time when coming out was not an option. All further discussion of gay paperback fiction will be indebted to this groundbreaking book. Includes detailed end notes and an appendix on authors of the period. Highly recommended."?Choice

"1960s Gay Pulp Fiction will be of interest to both academic scholars and general gay readers and should be read in tandem with coeditor Drewey Wayne Gunn's fully illustrated 2009 compilation *The Golden Age of Gay Fiction*."?Gay & Lesbian Review

"1960s Gay Pulp Fiction is a collection of twelve essays edited by Drewey Wayne Gunn and Jamie Harker, and its best essays go a long way toward rescuing gay pulp from historical 'shadows.' . . . It's a book that'll make you want to buy more books."?Lambda Literary

### **About the Author**

Drewey Wayne Gunn is professor emeritus of English at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and author of *The Gay Male Sleuth in Print and Film*.

Jaime Harker is associate professor of English at the University of Mississippi. She is author of *Middlebrow Queer: Christopher Isherwood in America* and *America the Middlebrow: Women's Novels, Progressivism, and Middlebrow Authorship between the Wars* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007).

In addition to the editors, contributors include Beth M. Bouloukos, Philip Clark, Jeremy Fisher, James J. Gifford, Nicholas Alexander Hayes, Randall Ivey, Reed Massengill, Ann Marie Schott, Whitney Strub, and Pamela Robertson Wojcik.

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