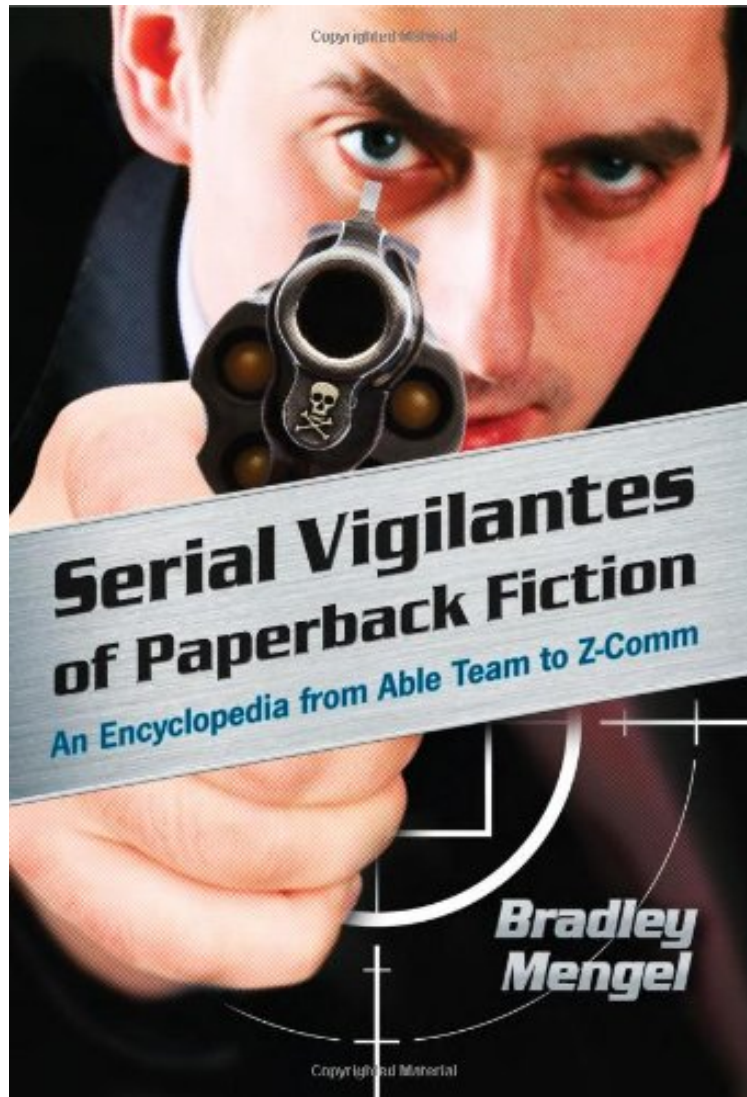


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Serial Vigilantes of Paperback Fiction: An Encyclopedia from Able Team to Z-Comm

Brad Mengel

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Brad Mengel : Serial Vigilantes of Paperback Fiction: An Encyclopedia from Able Team to Z-Comm before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Serial Vigilantes of Paperback Fiction: An Encyclopedia from Able Team to Z-Comm:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. If, like me, you enjoy the "men's adventure" novels, this book is made for you. By Danny E Hartman This is a book many of us have been waiting for; hell, this is a book many of us wanted to write. Mr Mengel takes us thru the history of the "serial vigilante", from Mack Bolan (altho I would argue

that it started with Mike Hammer) all the way thru to the present day. He then gives us a listing of many of the titles, from the well-known (such as Bolan) to the obscure (such as Satan Sleuth). A quick listing of the titles to each book follow, along with a short mini-biography of the authors, including the pseudonyms that were used. Many surprises here, including Martin Cruz Smith writing several books. (By the way, Mengel confirmed what many of us suspected, that the author of "The Executioner #16, Sicilian Slaughter" was in fact William Crawford, writing under "Jim Peterson"). Finally, there was a short chapter on women vigilantes, such as the Sexecutioner novels written by Batman author Gardner Fox (I'm not making this up), as well as "Femme Fatale", a collection of women attached to Bolan's Stony Man operation, which was put out by a sister company to Gold Eagle. There is also a compendium of comic book and tv vigilantes, such as Batman and Knight Rider. This sort of makes sense, since both "The Spider" reprints, as well as the "Mike Ross/Hitman" books featured a masked vigilante. All in all, is this the perfect book? Sadly, no. As was pointed out elsewhere, many of the titles, such as the "Nick Carter/Killmaster", "Death Merchant", and others, don't fall under the serial vigilante genre, whereas titles such as William Crawford's "Stryker", about a cop turned vigilante, does. Perhaps the title should be changed to "Men's Adventure" rather than it's current title. Also, the chapter on crossovers was woefully thin. If I may, I'd like to point out some additional inter-book crossovers, such as the Kill Squad-inspired Phantom Plague showing up in "Eagle Force #5, Flight 666". To be fair, if Mengel had tried to catalogue each one, he'd have had several pages on Joseph Rosenberger (author of the "Death Merchant", "Murder Master", and "C.O.B.R.A." among others) alone. Frankly, I suspect that Rosenberger was hell-bent on teaming Richard Camellion with anybody, considering that in DM #18, he mentioned that Mack Bolan was one of the few who were Camellion's equal, in one of his "Kung-Fu" books, he mentioned both Camellion, as well as Louis Luther King (the Murder Master), and hinted in DM #16 that Mace, his protagonist in "Kung-Fu", was murdered investigating the very group Camellion was captured by. There was also hints of a crossover between the DM and "The Penetrator" which never came to pass. All in all, however, this is a good book which hopefully will see an expanded edition, including Crawford's "Stryker", Christina Faust's Angel Dare, and many others who've come onto the scene since this volume. As I said, this is custom made for the aficionado.

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Book Made For Me By Lee Goldberg I'm a sucker for unusual reference works about the media, whether its books, movies or TV shows (and you gotta love McFarland for publishing so many of them). This one was aimed right at my sweet spot. I've always loved pulp novels like "The Executioner," "The Penetrator," "The Death Merchant," and "The Destroyer." In fact, I did a scholarly, unpublished examination of the vigilante genre myself many years ago...and as research for writing my first novel, .357 Vigilante, under the pseudonym "Ian Ludlow" (yes, it's covered in this book, and accurately, too). For me, the best part of Mengel's book is discovering who actually wrote the novels written under "house" names...and learning the inside story on the development of so many obscure pulp series. This book is clearly a labor of love, but it leans more towards scholarly analysis than fannish drool. It's a great book for fans of pulps, rich with details and background information, and offers a historical overview of a genre, and a class of mass market paperbacks, that are all but dead today (except for Gold Eagle's "Executioner" books). Many of these books, and their authors, would have been forgotten if not for this one-of-a-kind reference work, which also offers a glimpse at the influence and workings of book packages/"creators" in the 60s, 70s 80s. The only drawback of this book is the steep cover price. To save a few bucks, I bought the Kindle edition, which was also inexcusably pricey at \$16, especially since the book doesn't really lend itself to easy reading on an e-reader.

8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Beggars Can't Be Choosers By Traven This is the only book of its type that I know of, and as someone who was looking for an overview of this genre, I'm not sorry I bought it, even at the somewhat high price. However, calling it an "encyclopedia" is somewhere between wishful thinking and false advertising. The book is very short, and a huge percentage of it is just lists of titles. In one of the more egregious examples, 13 pages are given just to a list of the title, author, date, and page count of each book in the "Executioner" series. Most sorely missed is any kind of editorializing. Which of these books is worth reading? Which of these authors, even? The book has plot summaries (of each series, not of each book), and a "behind the scenes" section that usually contains only information or speculation about who wrote the series and under what pseudonyms. It has a useful introduction by the author about defining the genre. It has no illustrations. (If you're thinking of getting the e-book version, you won't lose anything.) Essentially this book reads like the outline of the much more personal and involved work that I hope the author will some day produce -- something along the lines of Lee Server's history of the pulps or something. Like I say, I'm glad to have it, but it definitely leaves you wanting more.

Rough justice has often been served in the pages of serial novels, notably beginning with Don Pendleton's *The Executioner* in 1969. This is the first overview of the serial vigilante genre, which featured such hard-boiled protagonists as Nick Carter, Mark Stone, Jake Brand and Able Team among the 130 series that followed Pendleton's novel. Serial vigilantes repeatedly take the law into their own hands, establishing and imposing their own moral standards, usually by force. The book examines the connections between the serial vigilante and the pulp hero that preceded him and how the serial vigilante has influenced a variety of tough guys, private eyes, spies and cops in different media. A complete bibliography for each series is featured.

"this book is going to be my go-to reference guide for years to come...make the investment. You won't regret it."--
www.bookgasm.com; "this thorough, easy-to-use study should be a welcome addition to libraries with interests in the
ever-growing field of popular culture."--ARBA; "this book is clearly a labor of love, but it leans more towards
scholarly analysis than fannish drool. It's a great book for fans of pulps, rich with details and background
information...many of these books, and their authors, would have been forgotten if not for this one-of-a-kind reference
work"--A Book Made For Me-A Writer's Life>About the AuthorBradley Mengel works in Australia's Office of the
Director of Public Prosecutions. He's contributed critical analysis to Myths for the Modern Age: Philip Jose Farmer's
Wold Newton Universe and short fiction to Tales of the Shadowmen Vol. 3.