

STARK HOUSE PRESS

August

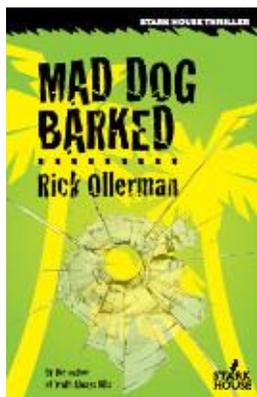
Newsletter, volume 5, issue 6

2016

Have you heard the phrase "Man proposes, God disposes?" We planned our summer publishing schedule so carefully. But the universe laughs at those who plan. We were all set to publish the third thriller by Rick Ollerman in September, but the New Orleans Bouchercon got in the way. Turns out Rick will be the featured guest at Mystery Mike's table in the Dealer's Room on Friday, September 16th between 9:40 and 10 a.m. So we had to rush his book into print this week into order to make the convention deadline.

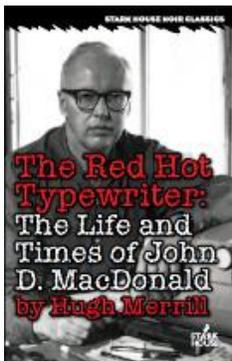
This latest thriller from Ollerman is *Mad Dog Barked* and it is definitely Ollerman's best book yet. Scott Porter is a Florida private detective who owns his own agency. When a potential client shows up with an antique book by Edgar Allan Poe with a cryptic note tucked inside, Porter doesn't even know if there is a case to take on. But when the potential client is murdered, Porter's professional curiosity takes over. Things start to get interesting when he is threatened by a thin, hatchet-faced man, and even more interesting when Porter starts falling for his own married assistant. Porter is pulled every which way, with only his innate stubbornness to keep him going.

Ollerman creates a compelling story as we follow Porter through the emotional ups and downs of the case, which eventually leads him to the Mob and a corrupt FBI agent. We're hoping Ollerman writes about Porter again soon, but in the meantime, *Mad Dog Barked* will be shipping in about three weeks, effectively bumping our scheduled August book back to the first week in September.

**Rick Ollerman****Mad Dog Barked****978-1-944520-09-0****\$17.95**

The slightly-delayed August book is *The Red Hot Typewriter: The Life and Times of John D. MacDonald* by Hugh Merrill. For all those of you who read this book when it first came out in hardback in 2000, we encourage you to consider this new edition. With the help of Crime Club Member Steve Scott, we have completely updated the bibliography, which now includes all the known stories by JDM as well as his novels. Details have been corrected throughout, and Steve has given us his blessing on his own JDM site, *The Trap of Gold*—<http://thetrapofsolidgold.blogspot.com/>. We also have a new afterword by Calvin Branche, former *JDM Bibliophile* editor who has a MacDonald website of his own—<http://jdmhomepage.org/>.

Add to this a reprint of Ed Gorman’s interview with JDM in *Mystery Scene Magazine*, plus Ed’s essay on his ten favorite JDM standalone novels, and we really have a whole new book for you. At the core of the book are all the letters Merrill compiled from The John D MacDonald Collection at The University of Florida. We really get to know JDM from the inside out via his extensive correspondence. Unfortunately, Merrill himself passed away last December. Working with the blessing of his estate, we created an edition that Steve Scott—critical of the original hardback—now calls “an edition that really should be on every MacDonald fan’s bookshelf.”



Hugh Merrill

**Red Hot Typewriter: The Life & Times of John D.
MacDonald**

978-1-944520-03-8

\$17.95

The Ollerman and Merrill books represent the lead titles for August and September. But we also have a new Black Gat book for the month of August, the 8th book in this new mass market series. This time we’re reprinting one of our favorite Orrie Hitt novels, *She Got What She Wanted*. This was Hitt’s third novel, published originally by Beacon Books in 1954. It reads like a character study, the story of a young woman from the hard scrabble hills, Della Banners, who realizes that to get ahead in the business world of the mid-1950s, she has to use the assets that give her control over men. It’s not a pretty story, neither entirely sympathetic to Della’s approach nor the men she so easily cons.

And there's a price to be paid that might remind some of the climax of a Jim Thompson novel.

The late Michael Hemmingson, who wrote a blog called *Those Sexy Vintage Sleaze Books*, called *She Got What She Wanted* "a fine novel, sleaze paperback or literary." We will let Crime Club members decide whether they want to receive this one or not. But like we say, we think it's one of Orrie Hitt's best.



Orrie Hitt

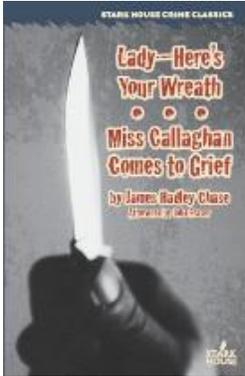
She Got What She Wanted

978-1-944520-04-5

\$9.99

The last book we have to offer in the next two months is another James Hadley Chase two-fer: *Lady—Here's Your Wreath* / *Miss Callaghan Comes to Grief*. If you were ever curious what it took for the British government to sue a publisher and an author for pornographic violence, *Miss Callaghan* is that book. Chase lost the case, and began to soften some of the violence in his subsequent novels. He even went back and re-wrote parts of his early novels like *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* and *The Dead Stay Dumb*.

But for the real deal, make no mistake, these are two very grim gangster books. *Lady—Here's Your Wreath* is the story of a newspaperman who is paid to exonerate a gang boss who is set up on a murder charge, and *Miss Callaghan Comes to Grief* deals with the subject of prostitution and white slavery. Big city corruption is rampant and it's hard to know who's worse: the cops or the criminals. Very few characters make it to the end of the two books. Not for everyone's taste, we agree, so once again we will check in with Crime Club members before shipping this one.



James Hadley Chase

Lady—Here's Your Wreath / Miss Callaghan Comes to Grief

978-1-944520-08-3

\$19.95

As always, we encourage your feedback. We're being offered a lot more new books lately, so it's getting harder to know what the perfect balance is between the good old stuff and the good new stuff. Do our readers prefer we stick with just the 1950s and 60s reprints, or do these new authors like Rick Ollerman find an equal favor? We hope everyone is looking forward to a new novel by Doug Allyn next February, because that's coming up. We also have a great new thriller by Crime Club member Timothy J. Lockhart scheduled for next June called *Smith* which we're excited about.

And there's always more. We're going to add a collection of westerns in November, classic Old West noir from Harry Whittington. And more from A. S. Fleischman, John Flagg and, yes, James Hadley Chase.

No sale books this month. We're going to donate the shelf-worn copies to Bouchercon in New Orleans and the Creatures, Crimes & Creativity Con in Columbia, Maryland this summer. Those of you on the East Coast have a plethora of conventions to go to, and we support each and every one, at least in spirit. Mike Chomko was kind enough to give us a place on his dealer's table at PulpFest in Columbus, Ohio this past month. Sounded like a great con, with a very lively dealer's room, where pulp rules supreme. And NoirCon is coming up in late October in Philadelphia, PA, where all things David Goodis is celebrated.

We can only hope that a mystery book convention comes back to San Francisco some time. We'll be there.

In the meantime, here are a few choice quotes from the critics on some of our recent books:

Kill Joy / The Virgin Huntress by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding

📖 “Holding obviously knew that the way to capture and keep her reader’s interest was by creating credible and intriguing central characters.”—Alan Cranis, *Bookgasm*

Hero’s Lust / The Man I Killed / House of Evil by Jaediker, Walker & Lipman

📖 “*Hero’s Lust* is really a punch in the gut!”—James Reasoner, *Rough Edges*

📖 “A real ten-knuckle page-turner.”—Kristofer Upjohn, *Noir Journal*

Ancient Egyptian Supernatural Tales edited by Jonathan E. Lewis

📖 “A superb collection of stories in which ancient Egyptian mysticism, mummies, and other supernatural occurrences play a significant role.”—James Reasoner, *Rough Edges*

📖 “A satisfying mix of well known and less familiar works.”—*Publishers Weekly*

Until next time....

—Greg Shepard, publisher
Stark House Press

Bring back the mystery!

