

Keeping a Pulp Hero Alive

Documenting Doc

Collecting Paperback Pulp Reprints

By

Ron Hill

In January, 2022,
I started a film
documentary about
Doc Savage Fandom,
focusing on the
“collectors, creators
and characters”
who are keeping
Doc Savage alive.

A DOCUMENTARY ON FANDOM
WE ARE
DOC SAVAGE



**WHO IS
DOC
SAVAGE?**



Doc Savage Magazine appeared on the newsstands on February 15, 1933.

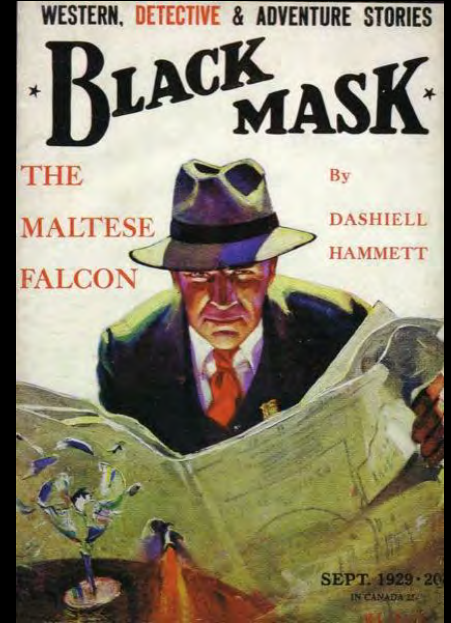
There were 181 issues, through the Fall of 1949. Each magazine published a novel-length Doc Savage adventure, as well as other short stories and articles.



Pulp Magazines were printed in the 20s, 30s and 40s on cheap paper.

They featured fiction of all categories: science fiction, mystery, detective, oriental tales, sports, aviation, war, boxing, and romance... to name a few genres.

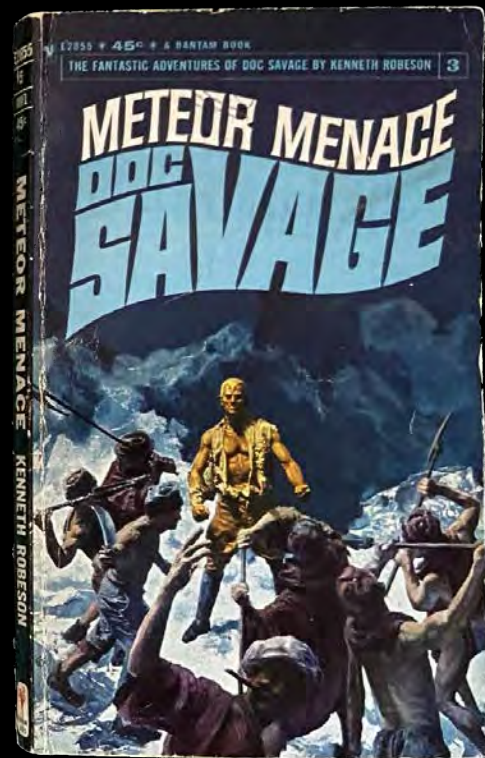
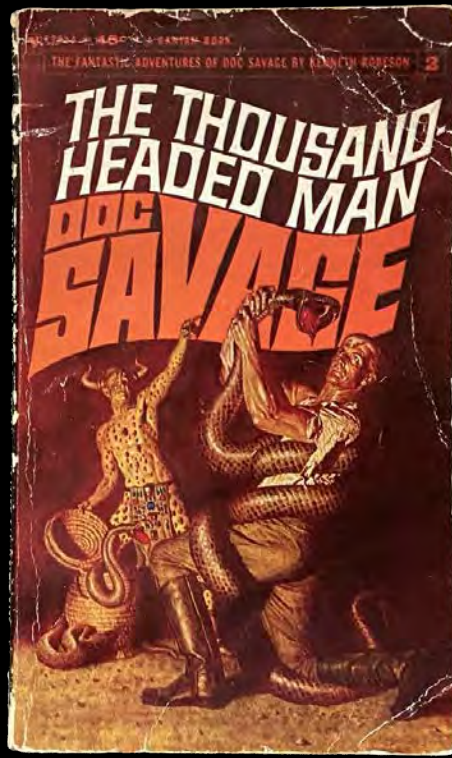
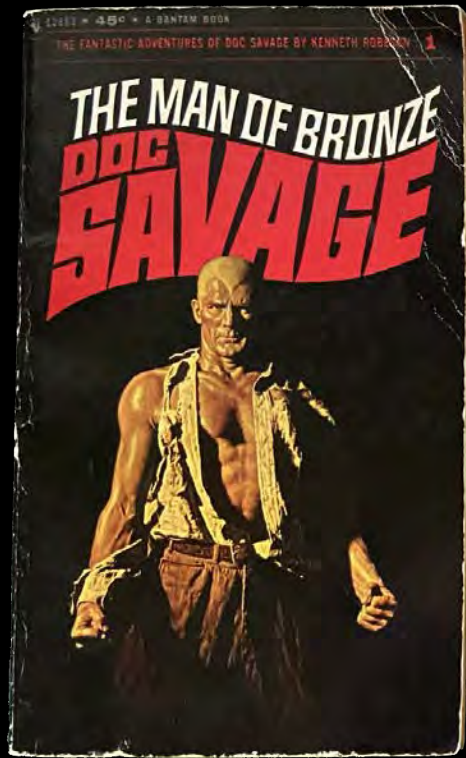




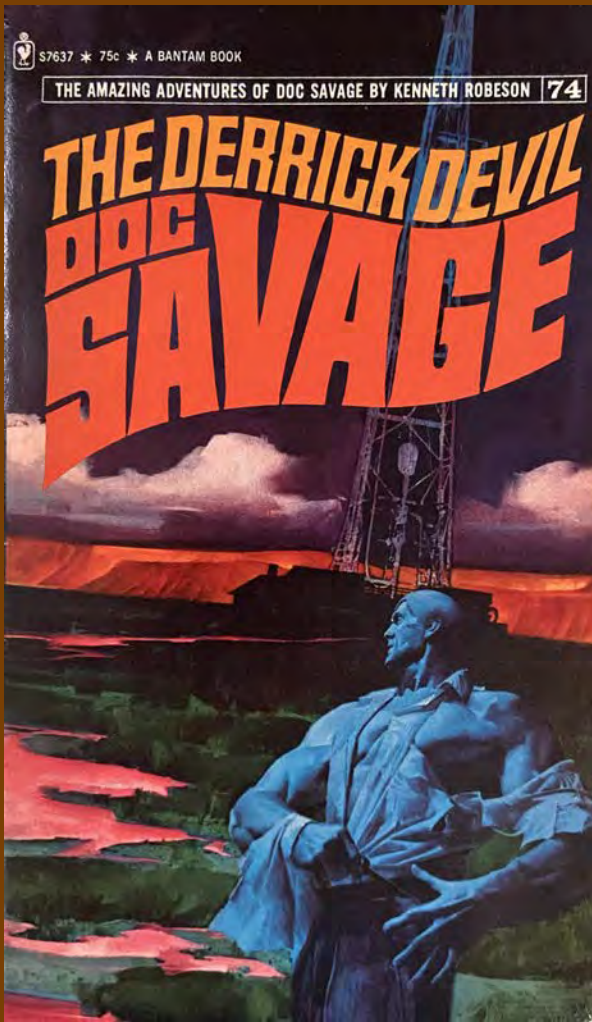
Pulp Magazines are very collectible today. They are fragile, can be expensive and are becoming increasingly hard to find.



Here are three Doc Savage Pulps dated March 1933, July 1934 and March 1934.



In October, 1964, Bantam Books decided to reprint these 1930s potboilers. These are the first three books, versions of the pulps in the previous slide.



I discovered Doc Savage
in May of 1975...

The Derrick Devil was
published in paperback
in July of 1973.

Original pulp publication
was February, 1937.

[We Are Doc Savage](#)
[Teaser](#)

WHO IS

DOC SAVAGE

To the world at large, Doc Savage is a strange, mysterious figure of glistening bronze skin and golden eyes. To his amazing co-adventurers—the five greatest brains ever assembled in one group—he is a man of superhuman strength and protean genius, whose life is dedicated to the destruction of evil-doers. To his fans he is the greatest adventure hero of all time, whose fantastic exploits are unequalled for hair-raising thrills, breathtaking escapes and blood-curdling excitement.

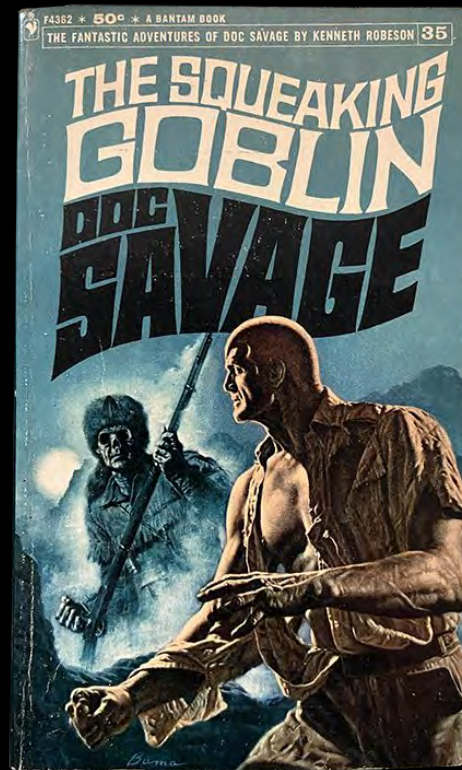
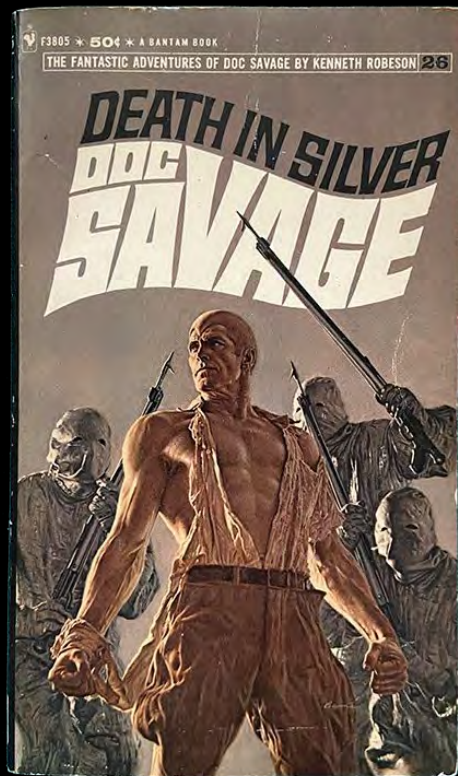
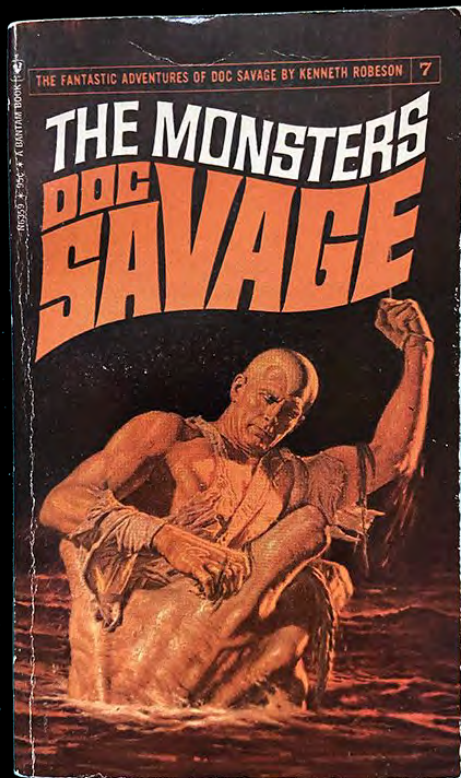
RED MYSTERY

A mysterious jellylike creature is terrorizing the Indian Dome Oil Field! THE MAN OF BRONZE and his five fantastic aides descend upon Oklahoma to do battle with dastardly Tomahawk Tant—and uncover the infernal secret of the weird monster from the depths of the earth.

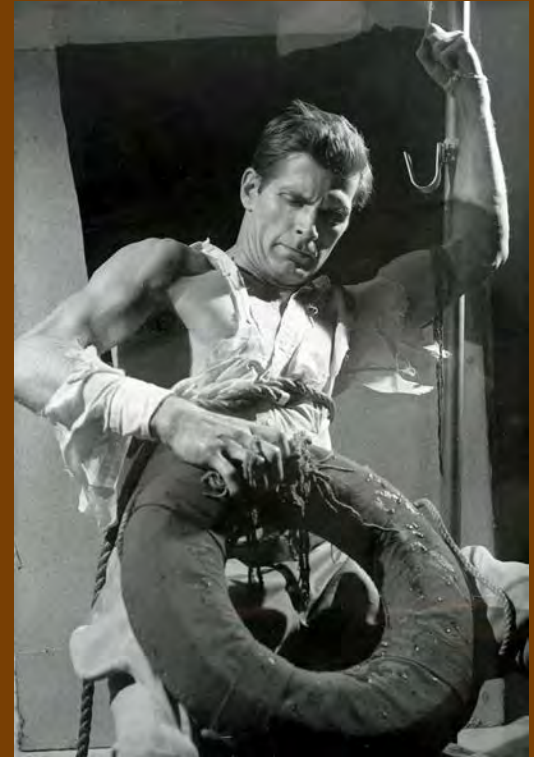
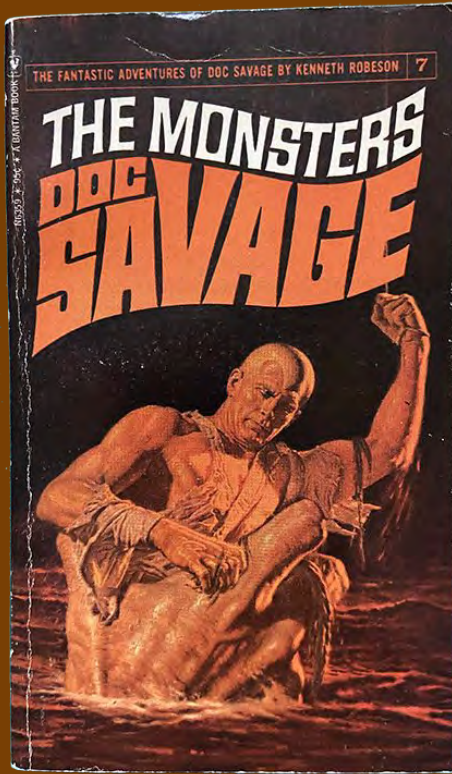
DON'T MISS ANY OF THESE AMAZING DOC SAVAGE NOVELS!

THE MAN OF BRONZE	THE MIDAS MAN	THE GREEN DEATH
THE THOUSAND-HEADED MAN	DEVIL ON THE MOON	MAD MESA
METEOR MENACE	HAUNTED OCEAN	THE FRECKLED SHARK
THE POLAR TREASURE	THE MUNITIONS MASTER	QUEST OF THE SPIDER
BRAND OF THE WEREWOLF	THE YELLOW CLOUD	THE MYSTERY ON THE SNOW
THE LOST OASIS	THE MAJII	SPOOK HOLE
RED SNOW	THE LIVING FIRE MENACE	MURDER MIRAGE
WORLD'S FAIR GOBLIN	THE PIRATE'S GHOST	THE METAL MASTER
THE MAN WHO SHOOK THE EARTH	THE SUBMARINE MYSTERY	THE SEVEN AGATE DEVILS
THE MAN WHO SMILED NO MORE	THE MOTION MENACE	THE DERRICK DEVIL

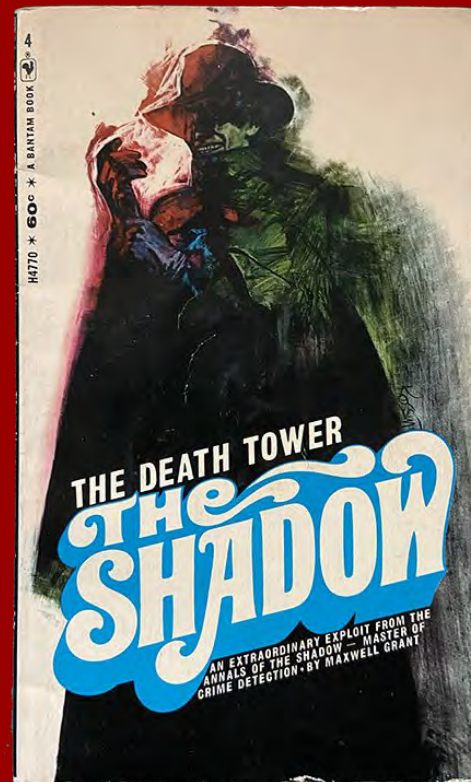
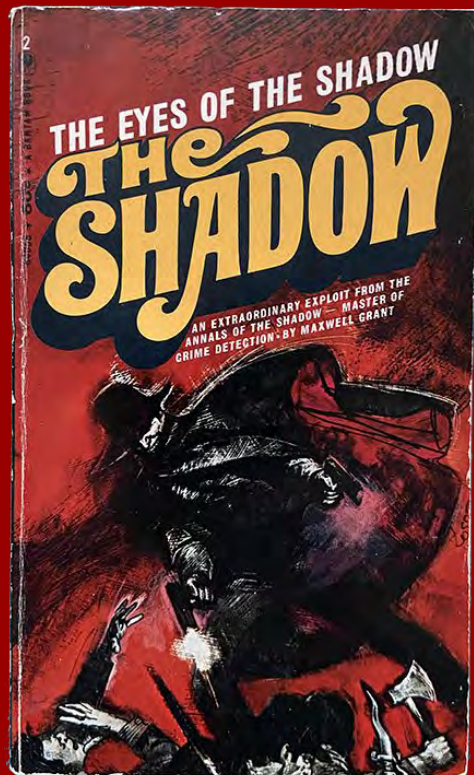
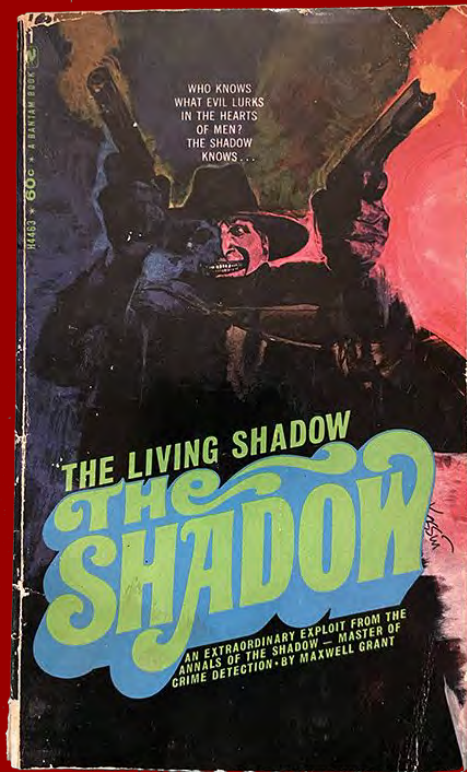
AVAILABLE IN BANTAM EDITIONS WHEREVER PAPERBACKS ARE SOLD



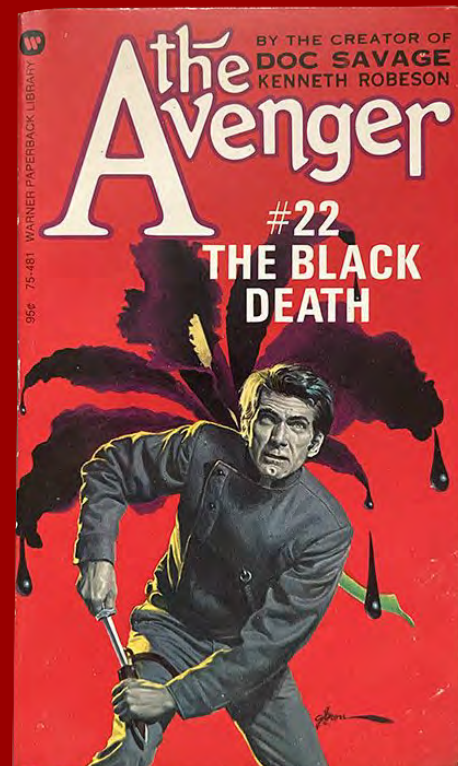
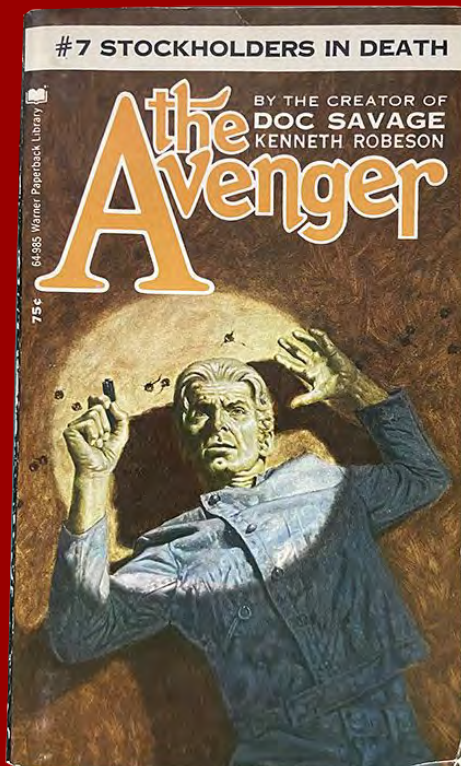
Bantam had a hit with their Doc Savage reprint series. The realistically rendered paintings by James Bama were a big part of that success.



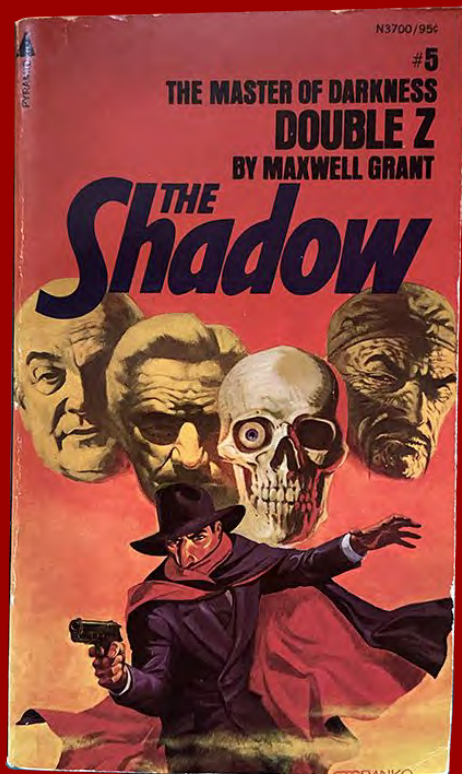
Bama painted 62 of the first 67 paperback reprints. Utilizing actor Steve Holland, Bama established the torn-shirt and tense action pose of the entire series.



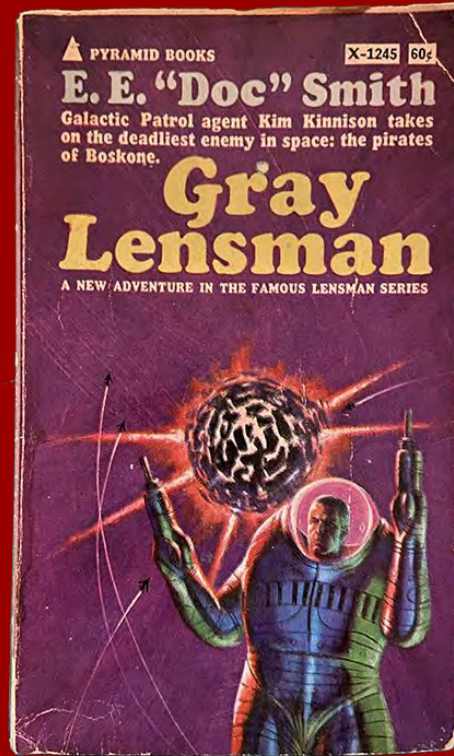
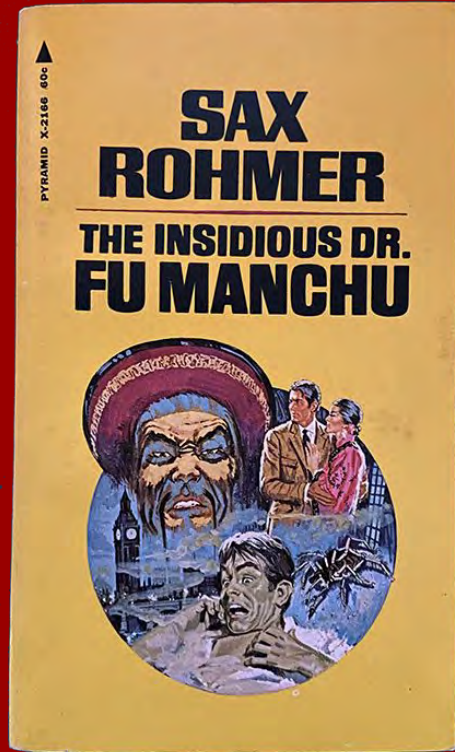
Bantam tried the same marketing with another pulp hero, The Shadow. Unfortunately, they didn't follow their own formula – the series lasted seven books.



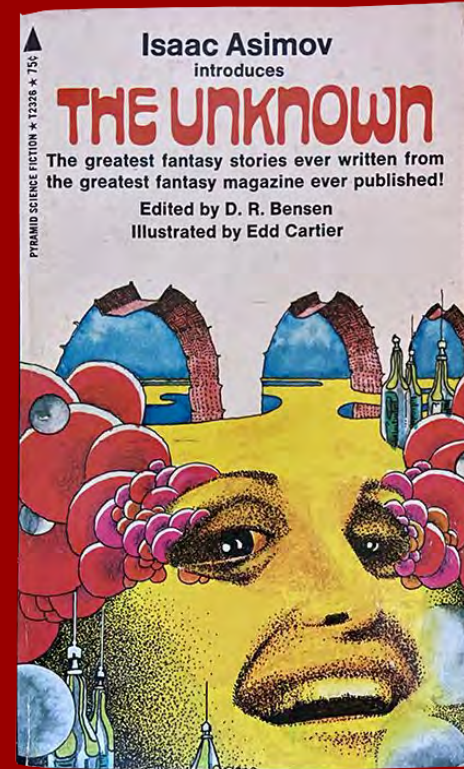
In June, 1972, Warner Books licensed another Street & Smith hero, The Avenger. Big numbers, realistic art and the Doc Savage model resulted in reprinting all 24 novels.



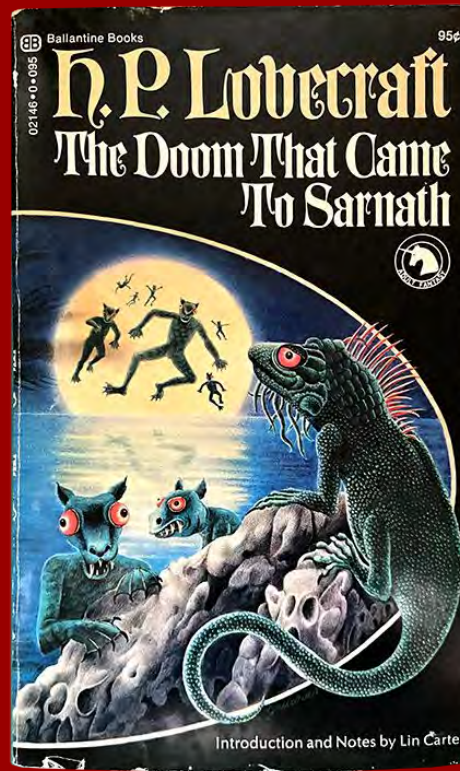
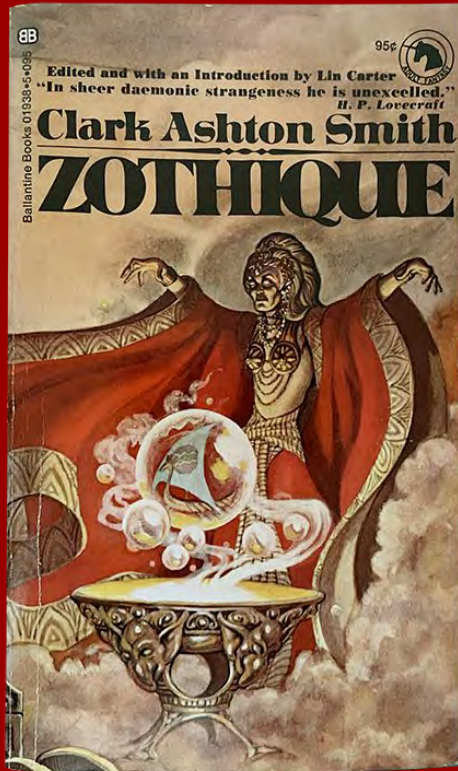
Pyramid Books had more success with the Shadow, starting in October 1974. Big numbers, and acclaimed comic artist James Steranko painted colorful covers.



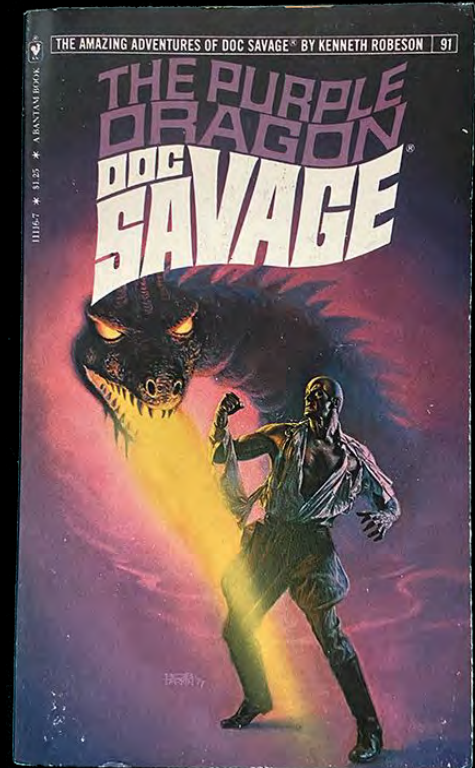
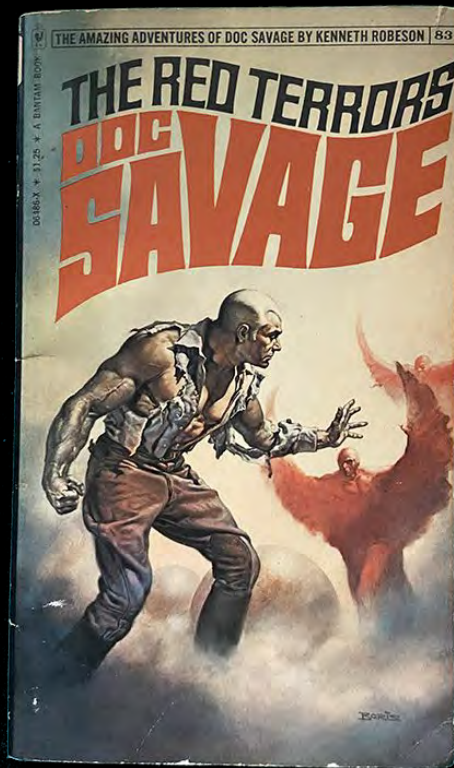
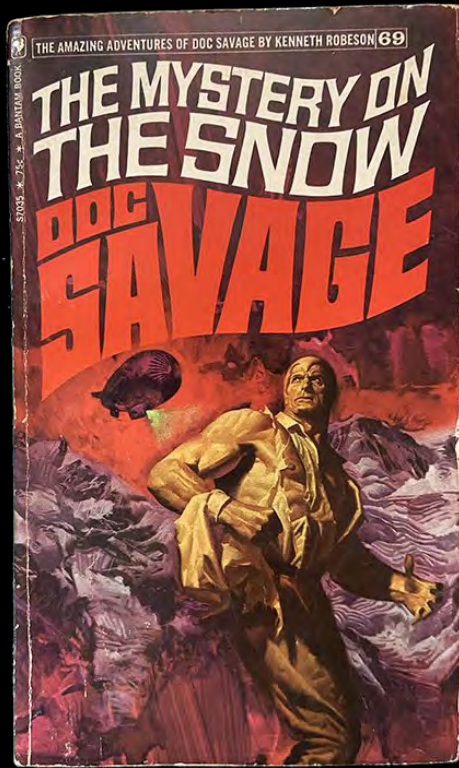
There were a lot of other pulp properties to mine after Bantam Books proved that there was a market for these old tales of adventure and mystery.



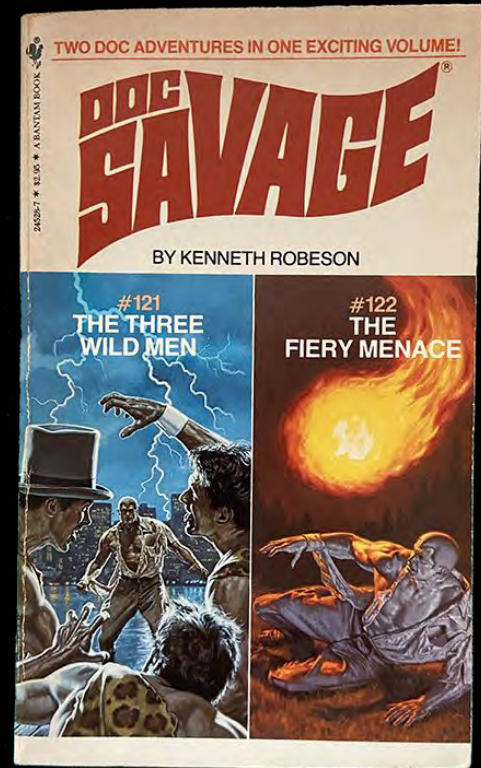
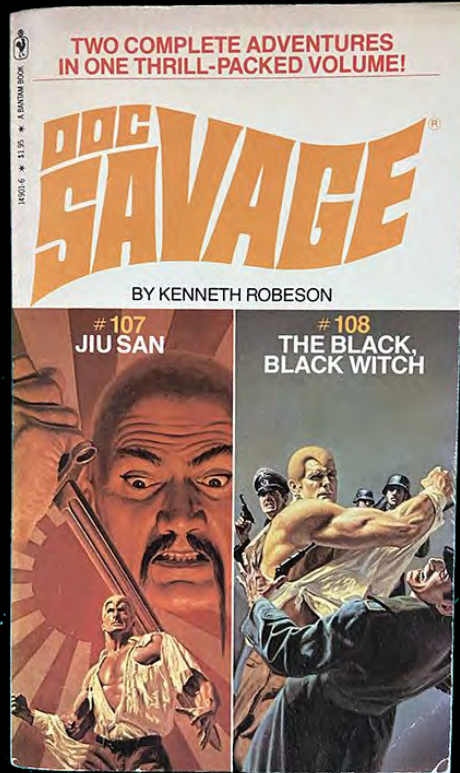
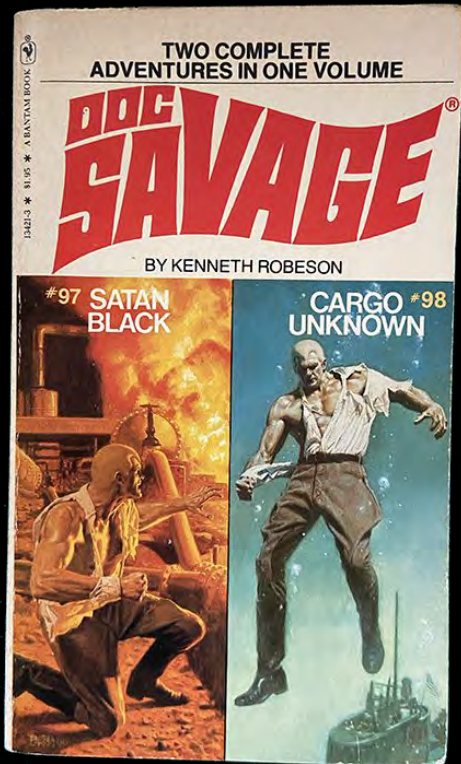
Short story paperback collections from three popular pulp magazines:
Weird Tales, Planet Stories and Unknown.



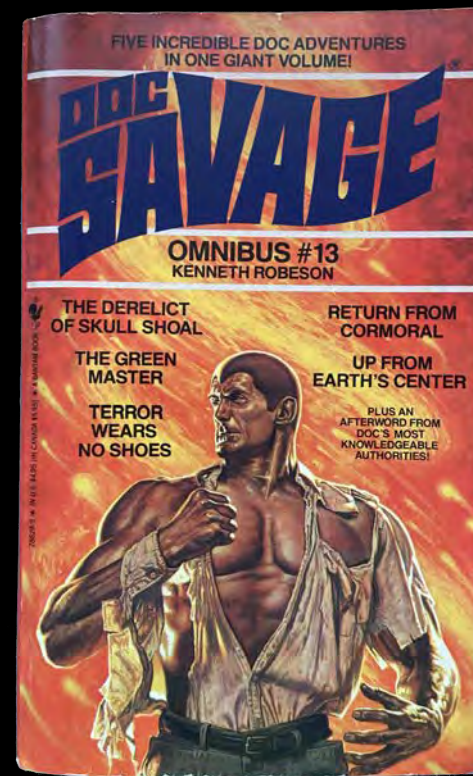
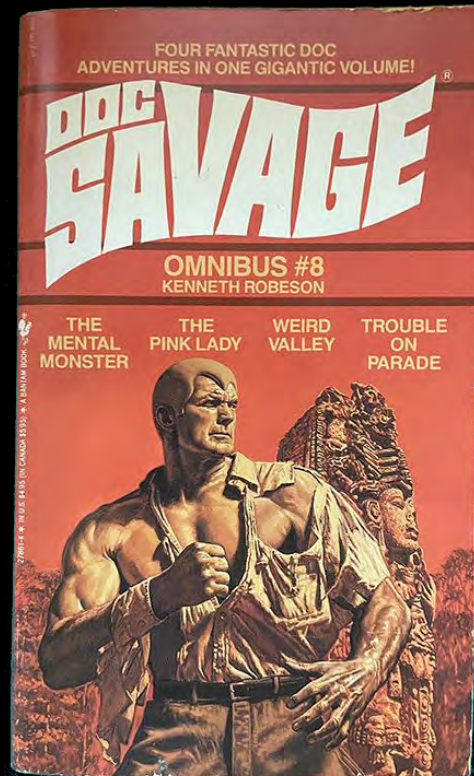
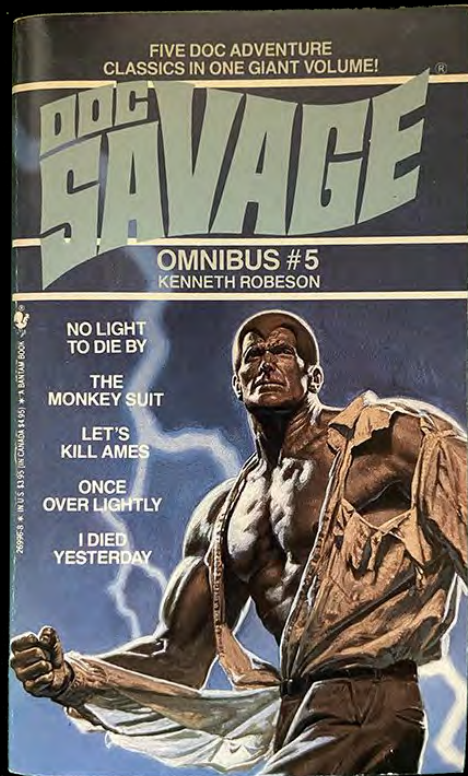
Clark Ashton Smith, Howard Phillips Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard were three popular authors from Weird Tales in the 1930s.



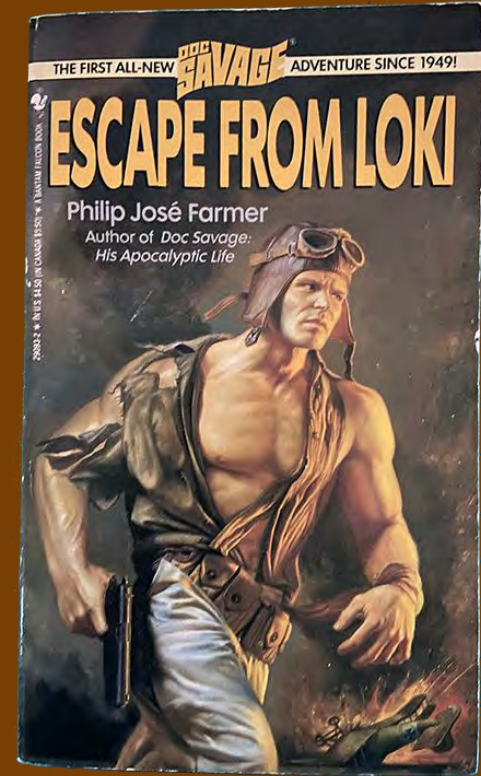
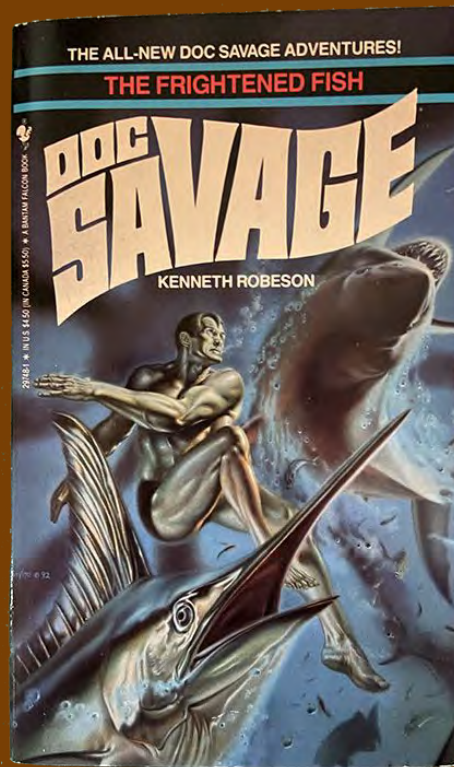
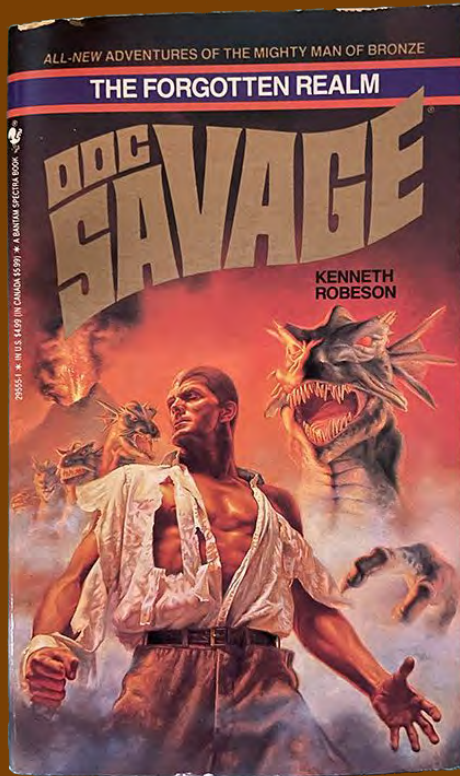
Bantam struggles to keep the series fresh in the late 70s, employing artists Fred Pfeiffer and Boris Vallejo, finally settling on Bob Larkin for the rest of the series.



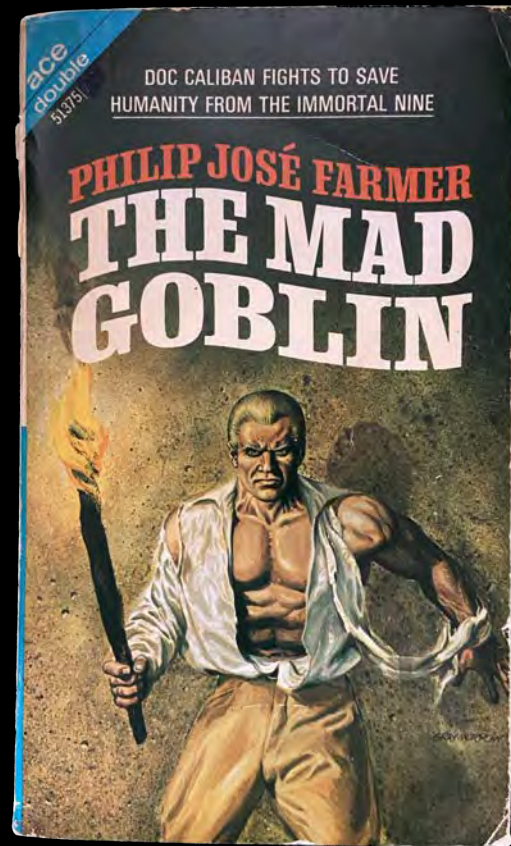
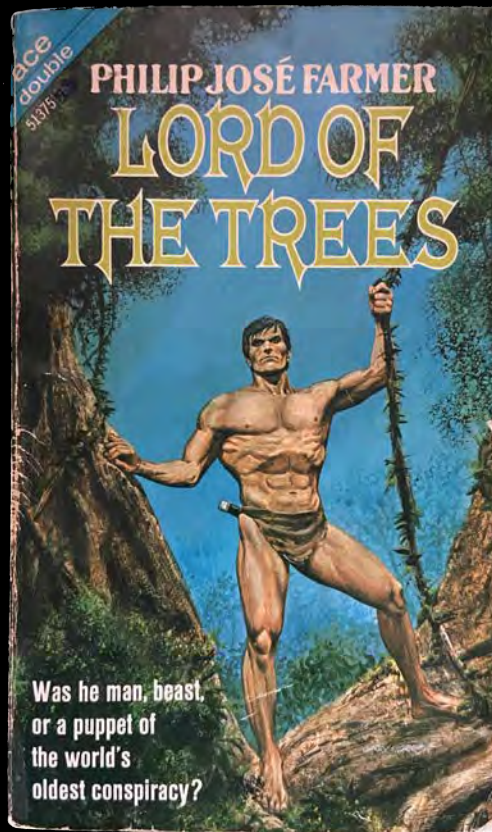
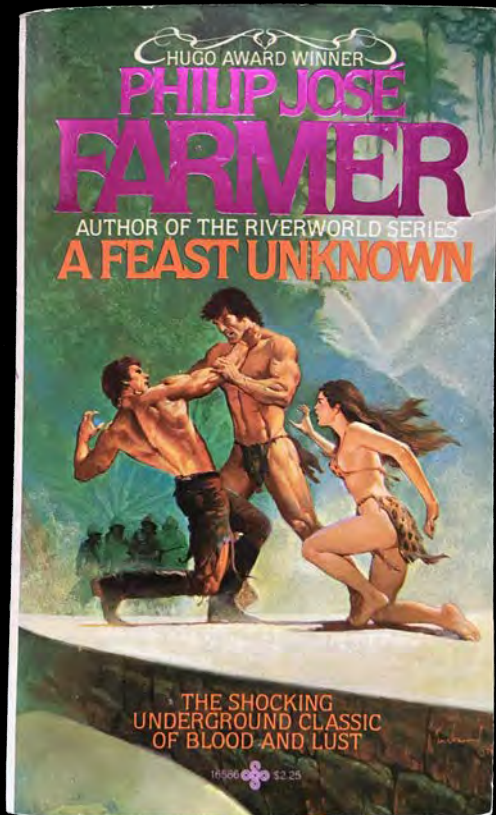
As the stories of the 1940s got shorter, Bantam began printing two to a volume in October of 1980. The Doc Doubles were popular with fans.



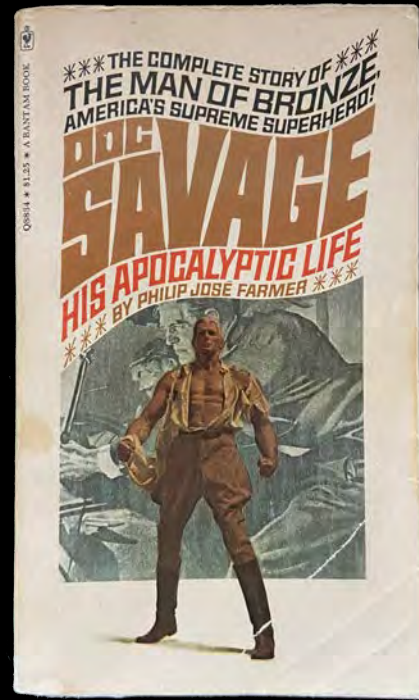
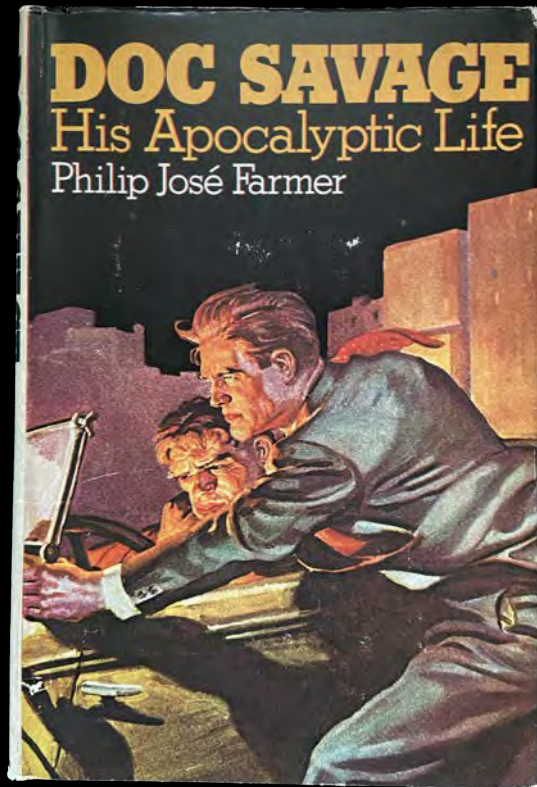
In 1987 Bantam began publishing the Omnibus volumes – four or five novels in each book. In October, 1990, the 181st Doc Savage novel was reprinted in volume 13.



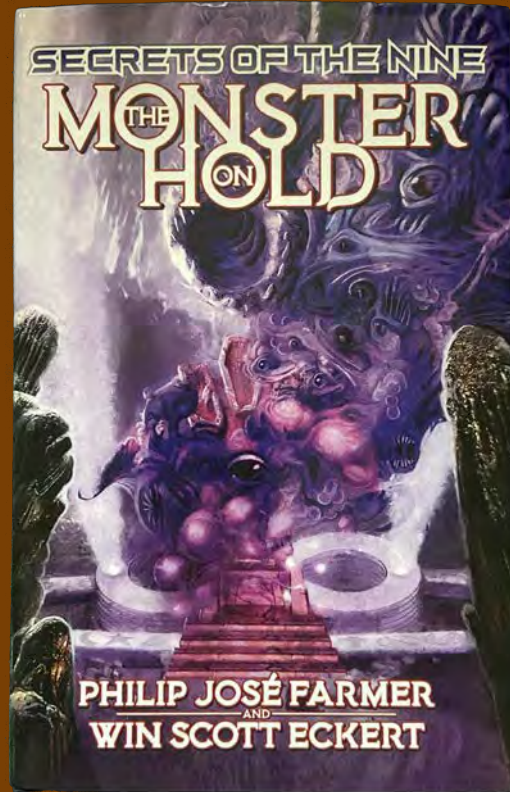
Bantam, however, was determined to keep the series going, with new novels by [Will Murray](#) (as Kenneth Robeson) and science fiction author Philip José Farmer.



In the 1960s, Farmer had written three Doc Caliban novels about a thinly-veiled Doc Savage character.



In 1973 Farmer penned a biography of Doc Savage, under the pretense that Doc was a real person whose adventures were exaggerated for a fiction-audience.



Win Scott Eckert completed an unfinished Farmer novel, published in 2021, bringing the Doc Caliban series to a close... [maybe?](#)

It's All About the Cover...

The following slides present just a few covers by notable illustrators in Ron Hill's paperback collection from the '60s, '70s and '80s.

A Peacock Press/Bantam Book

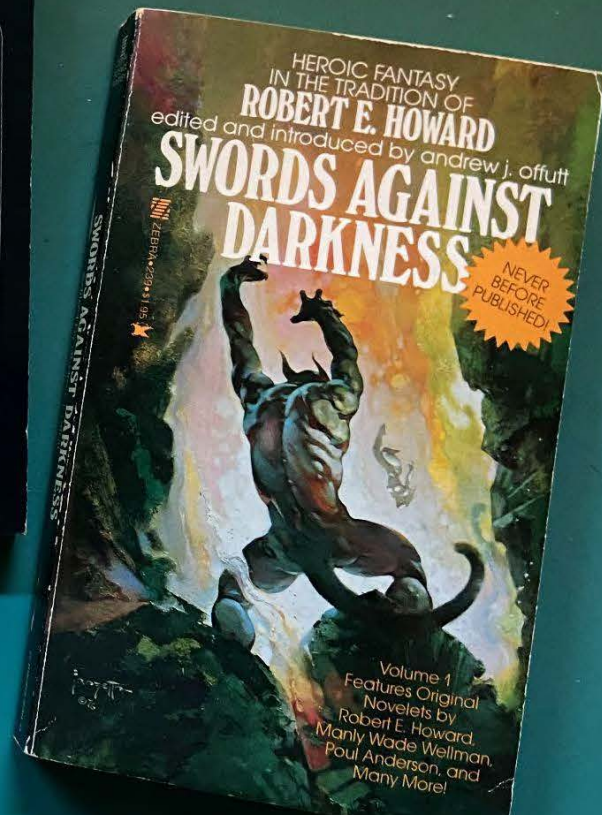
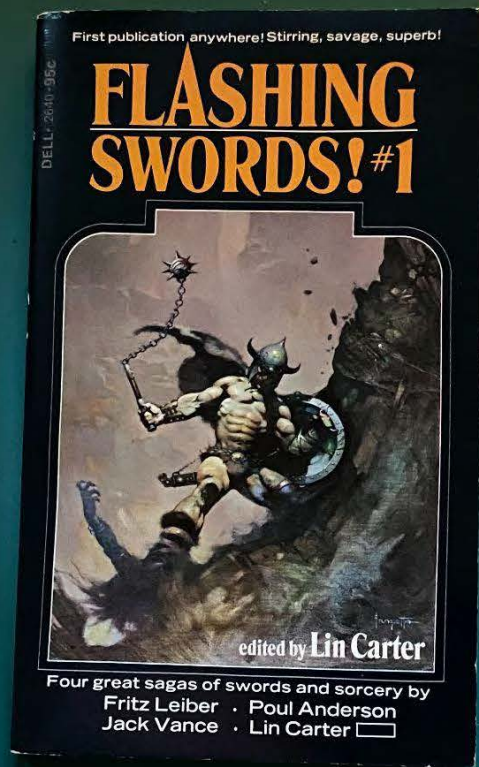
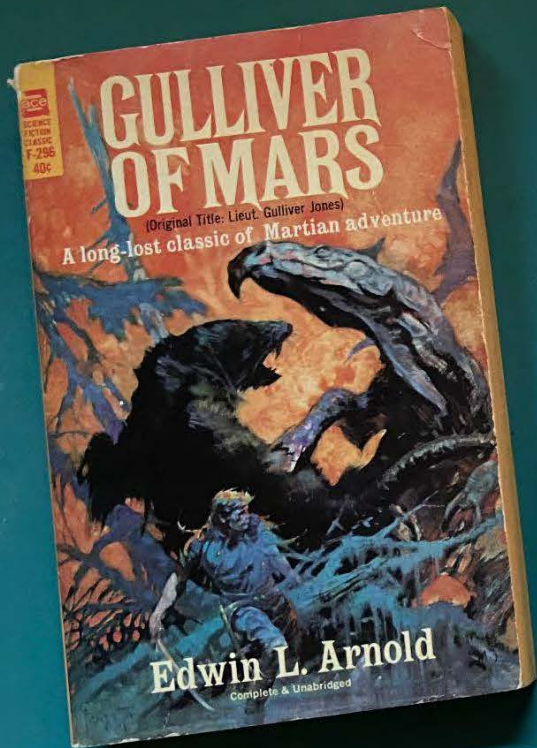
M1057-3/\$7.95

FRANK FRAZETTA

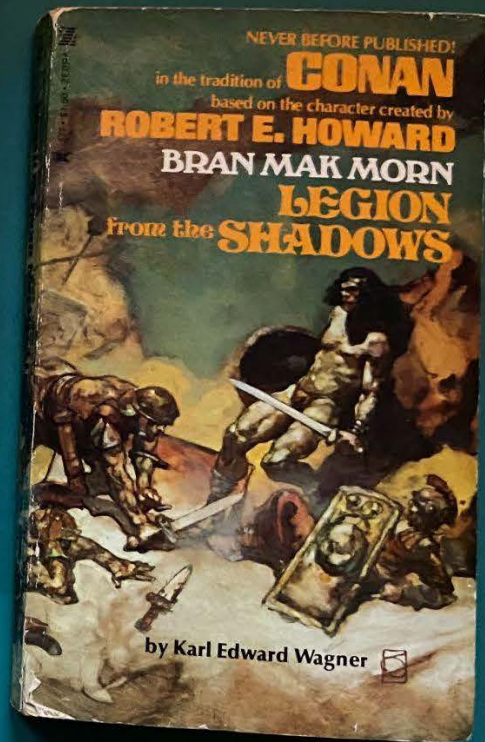
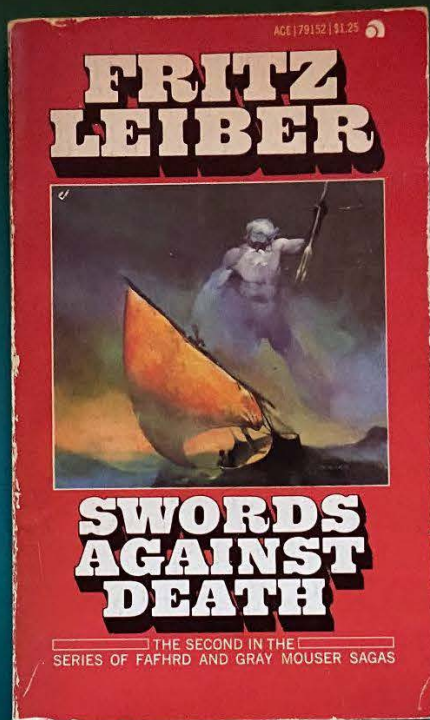
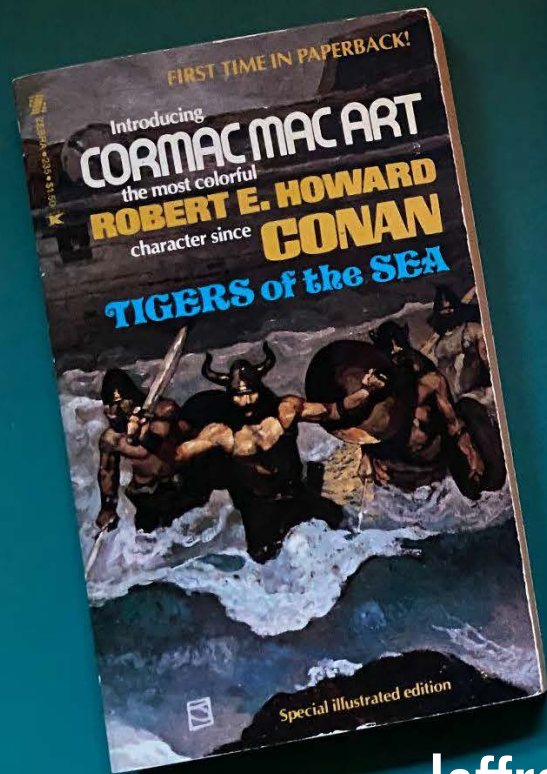
BOOK TWO



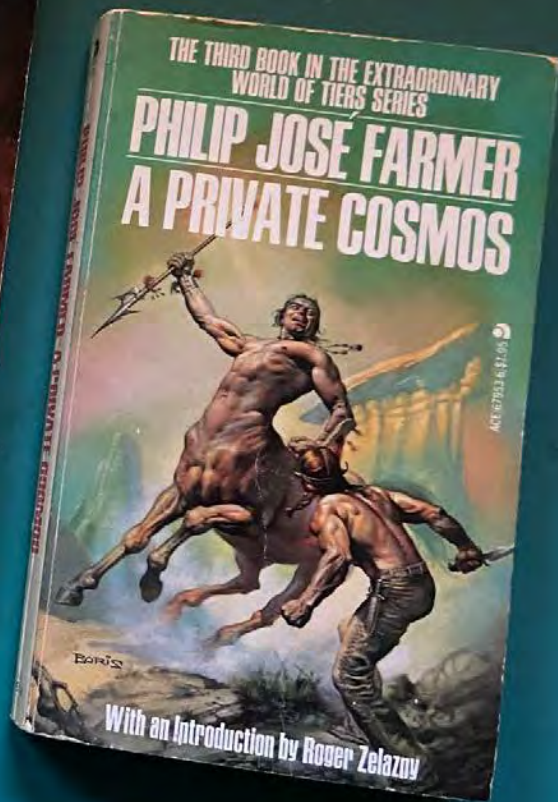
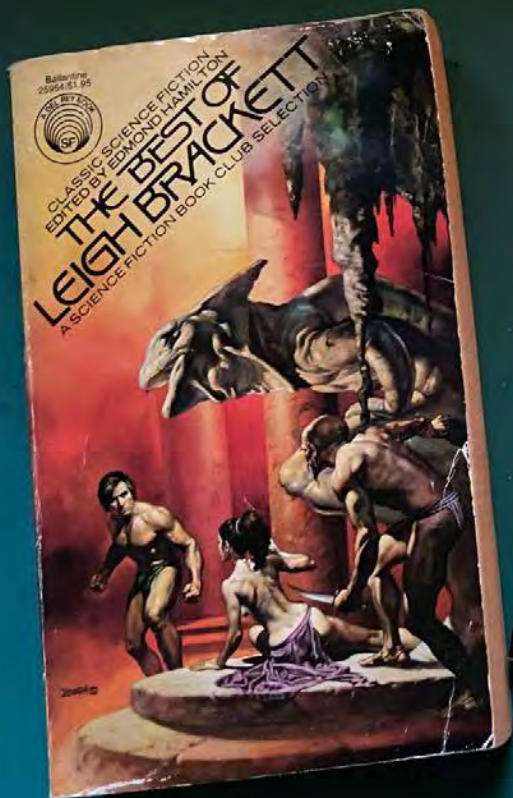
Edited by Betty Ballantine



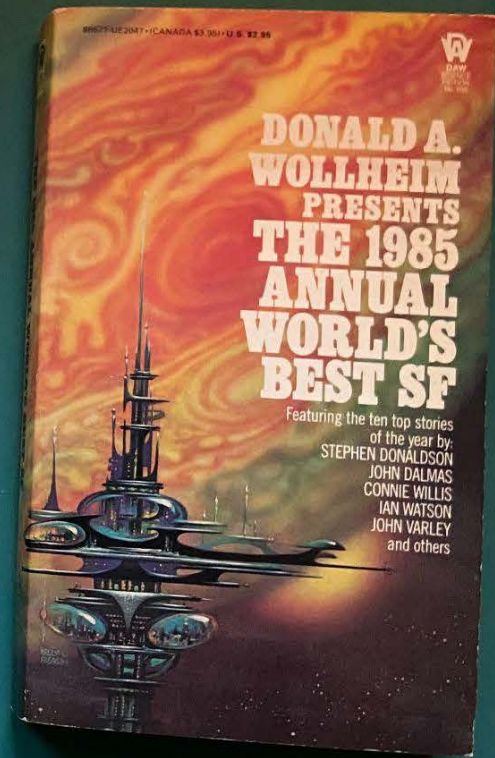
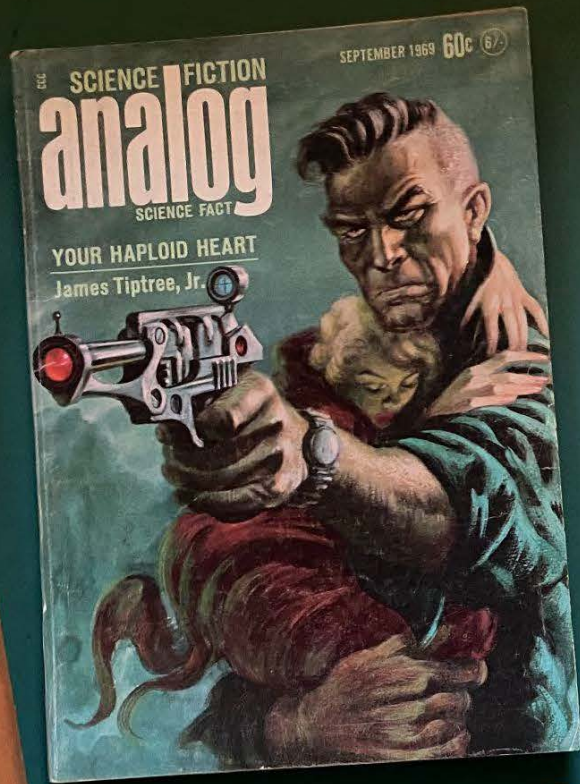
Frank Frazetta



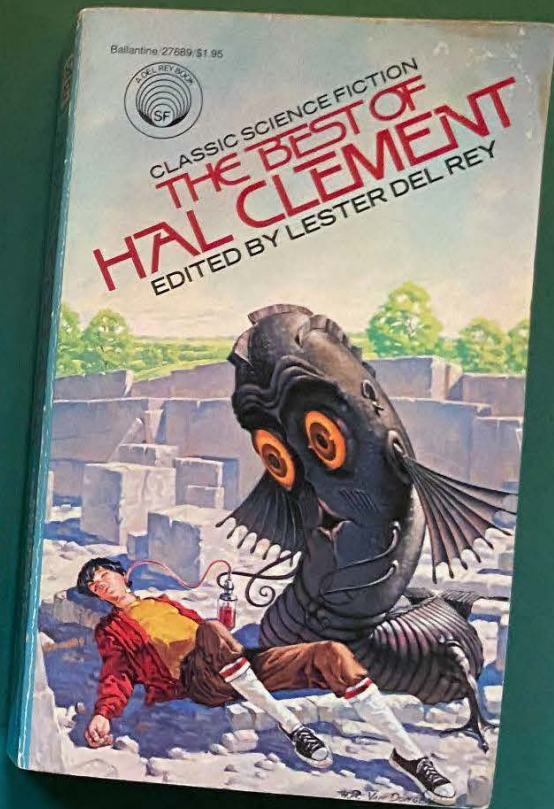
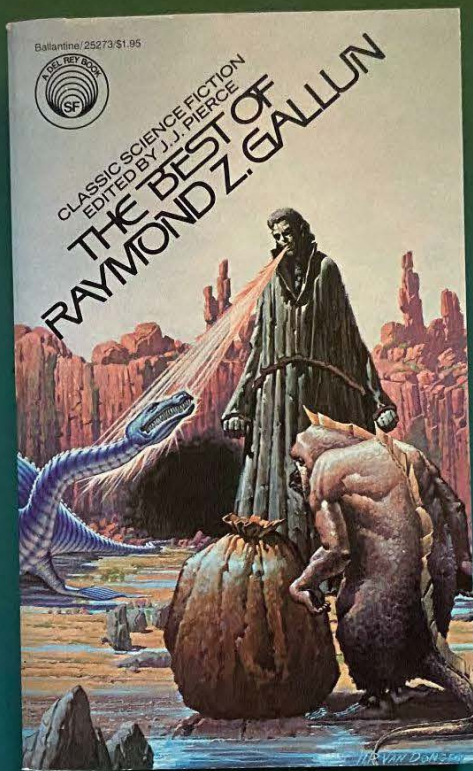
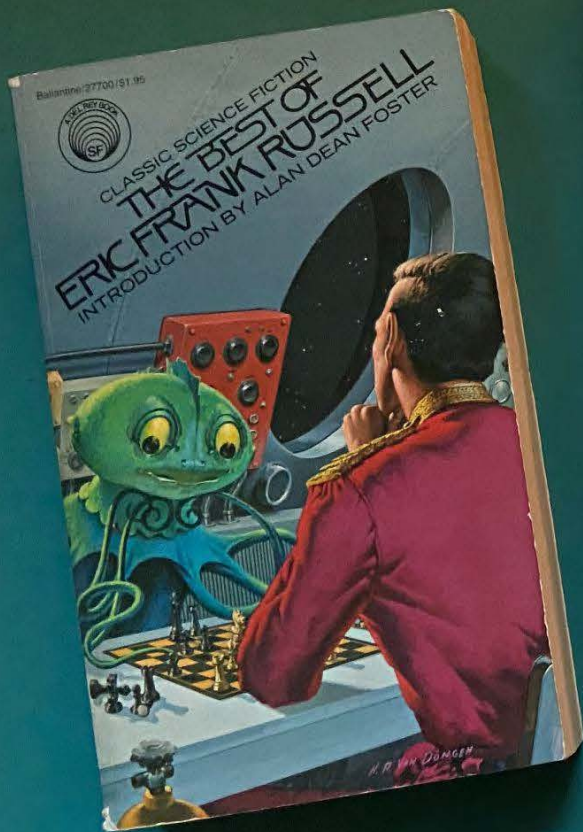
Jeffrey Catherine Jones



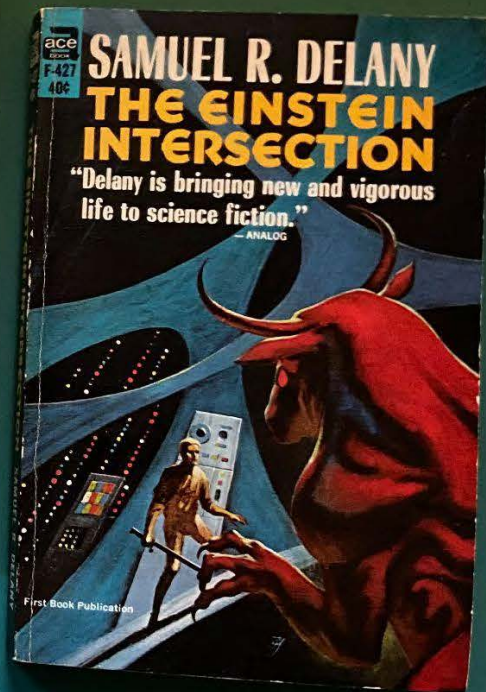
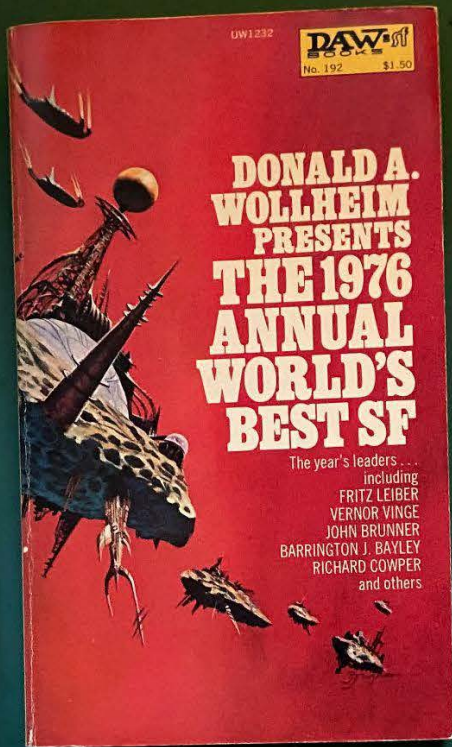
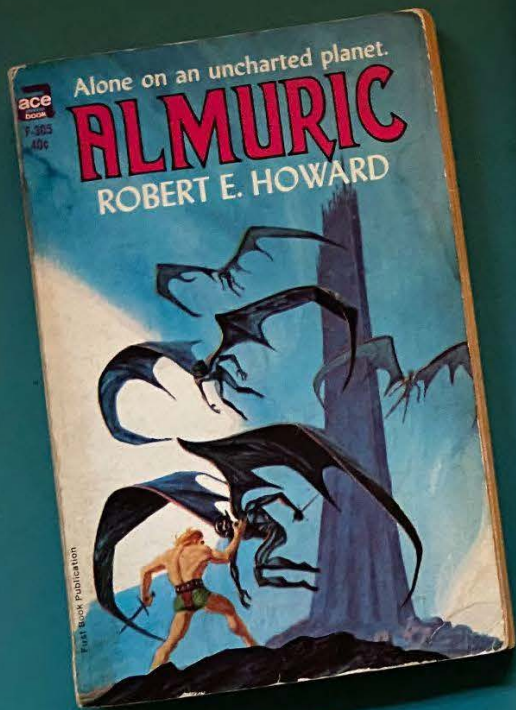
Boris Vallejo



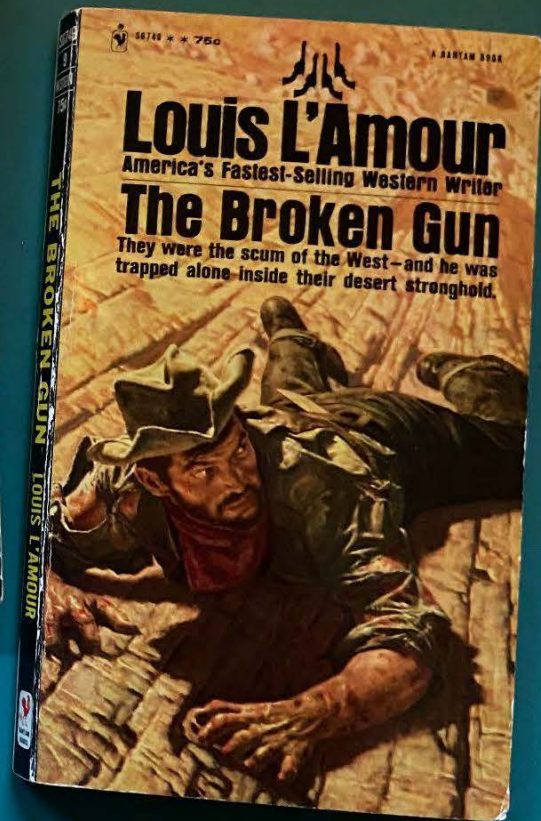
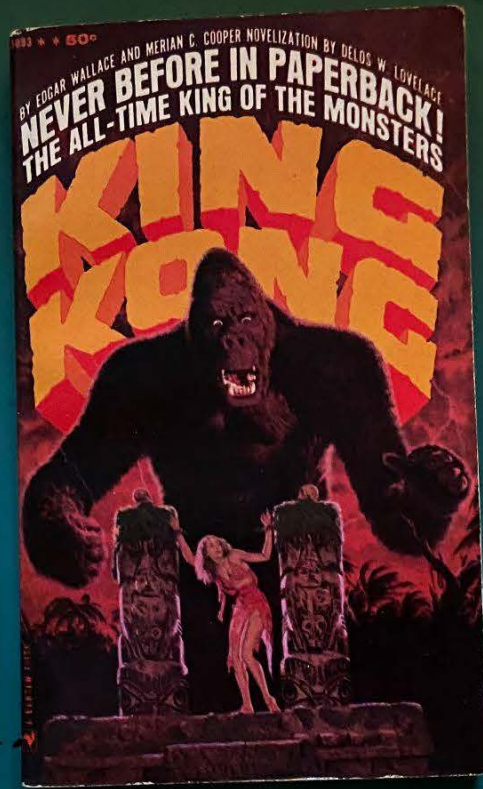
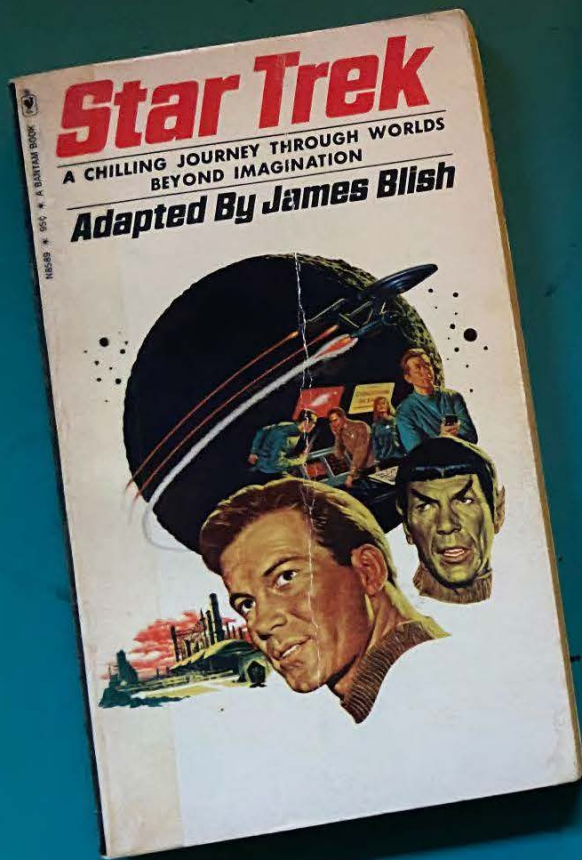
Frank Kelly Freas



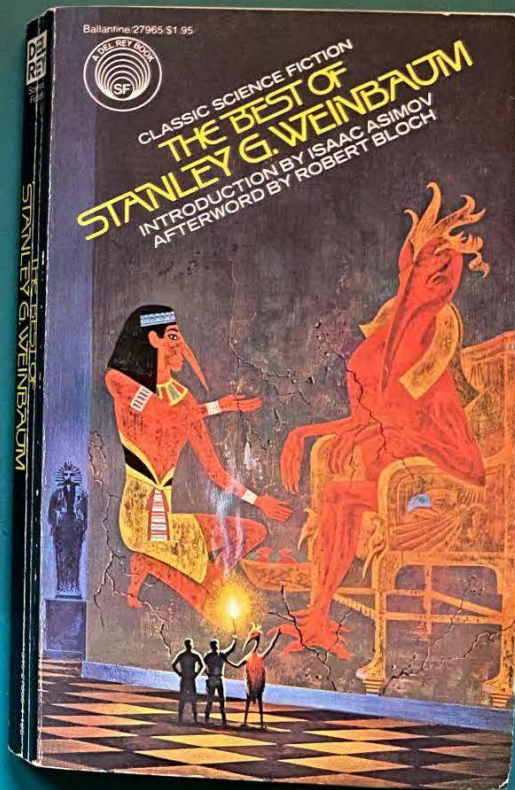
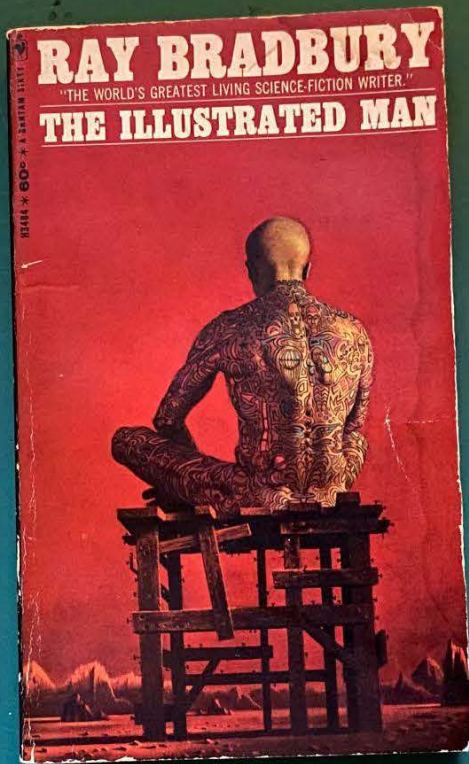
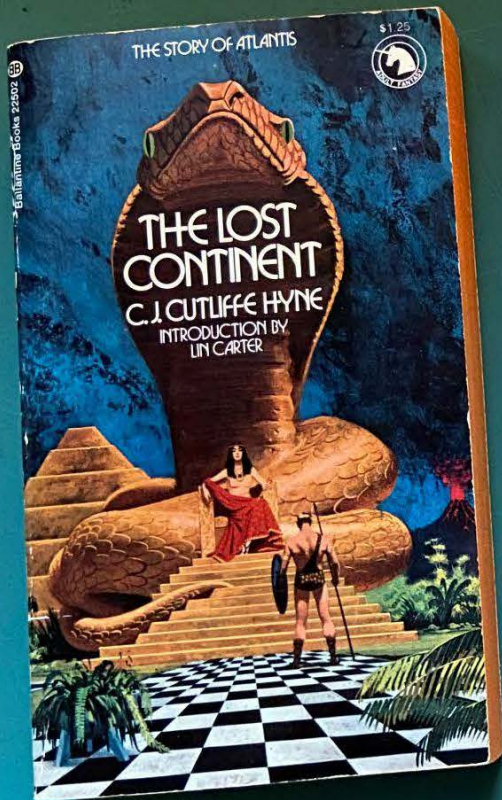
H. R. Van Dongen



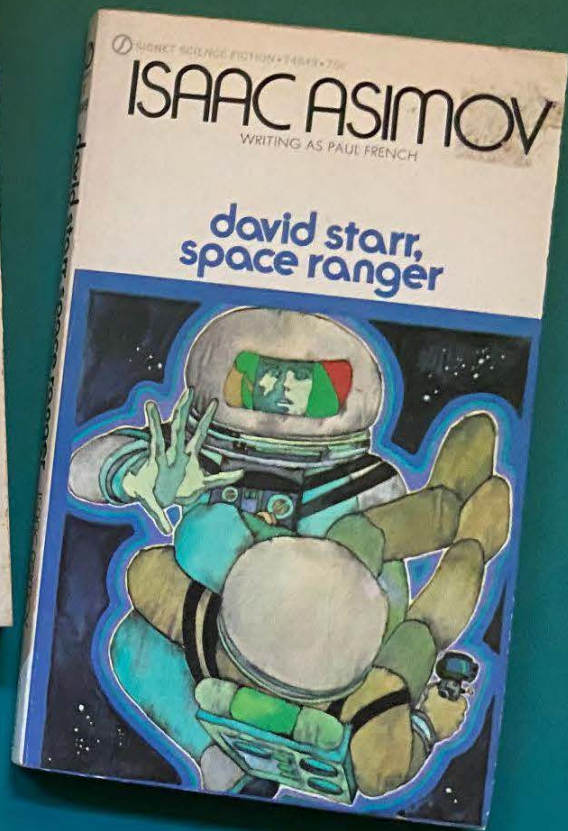
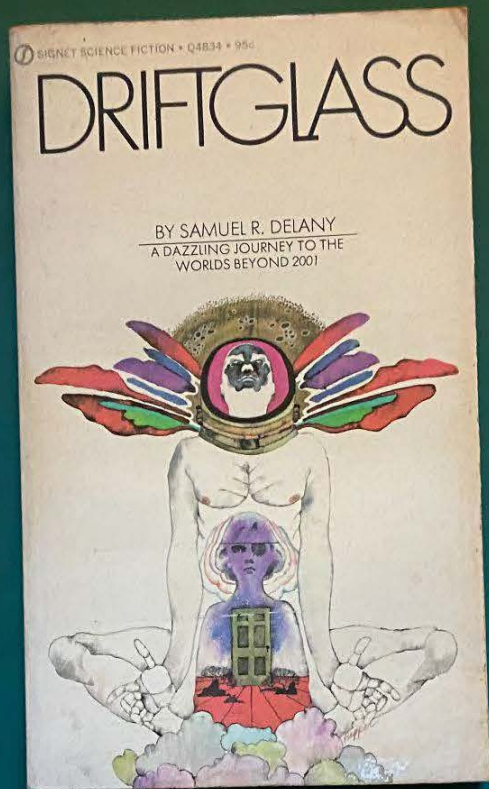
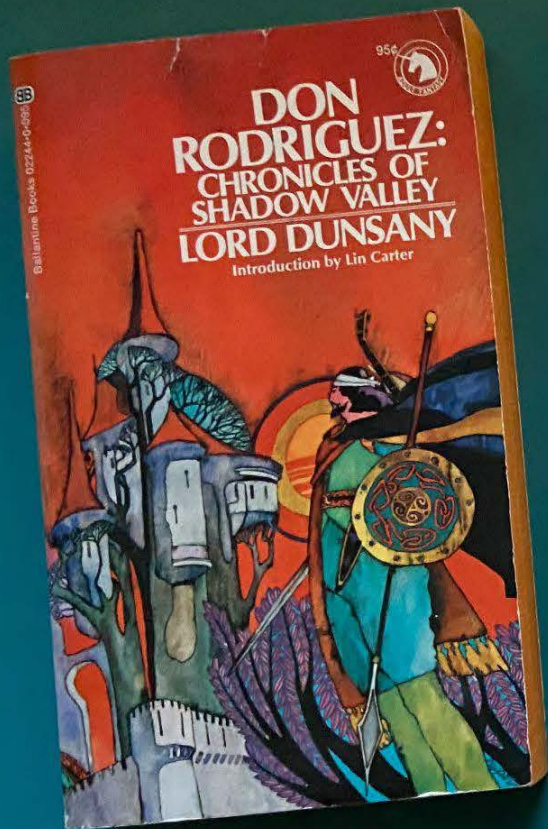
Jack Gaughan



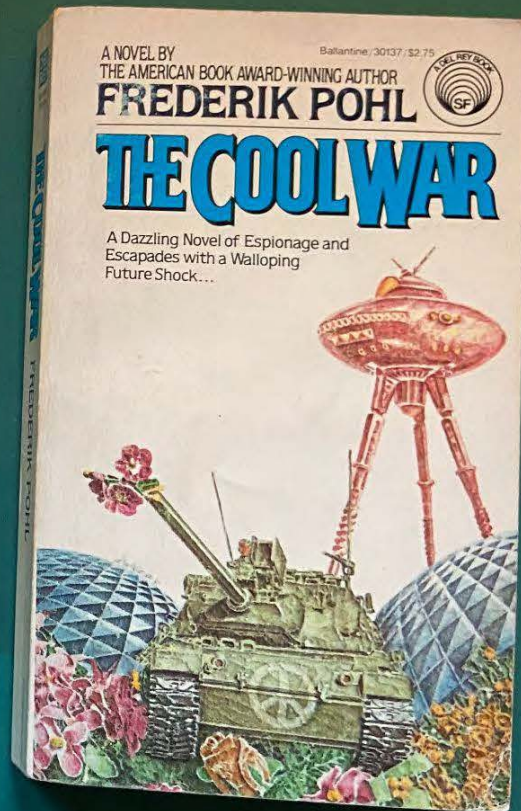
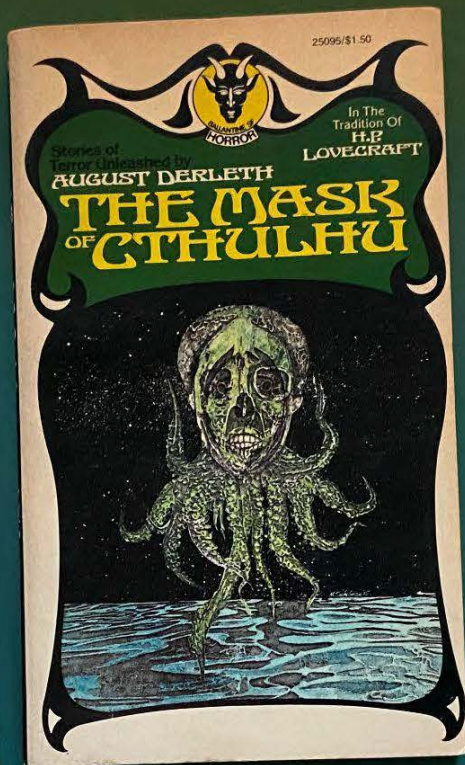
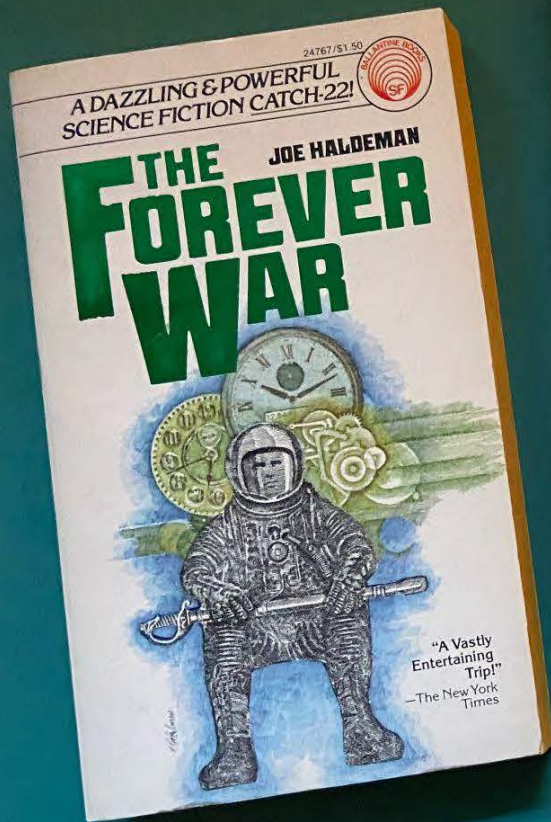
James Bama



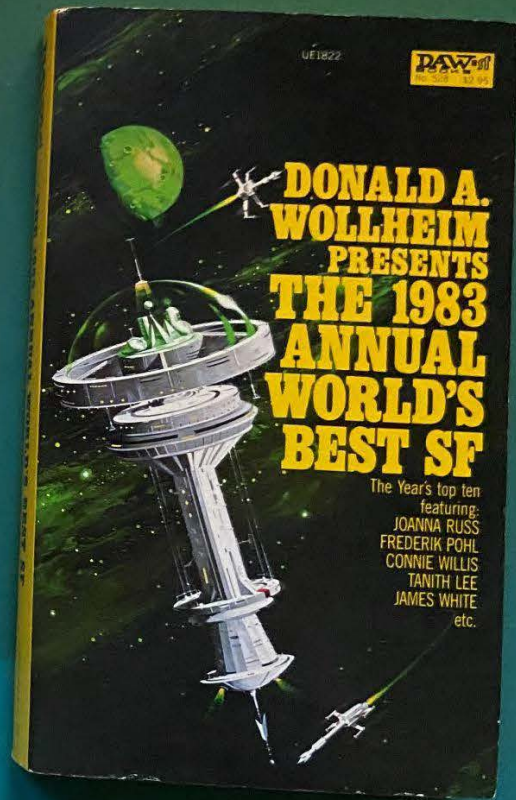
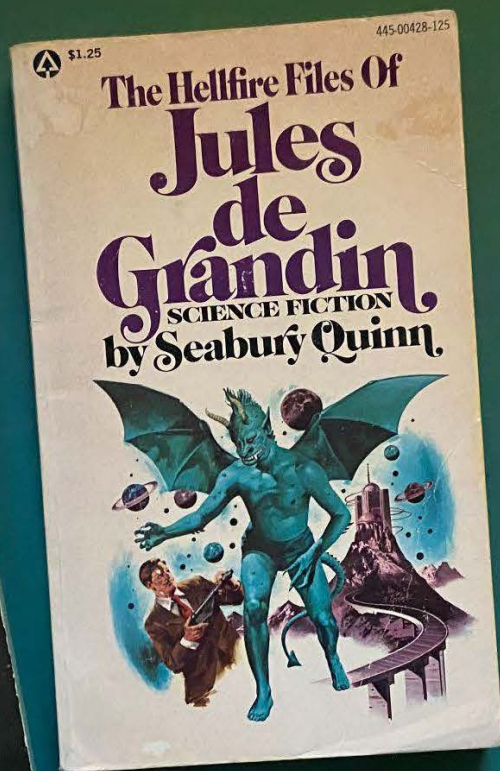
Dean Ellis



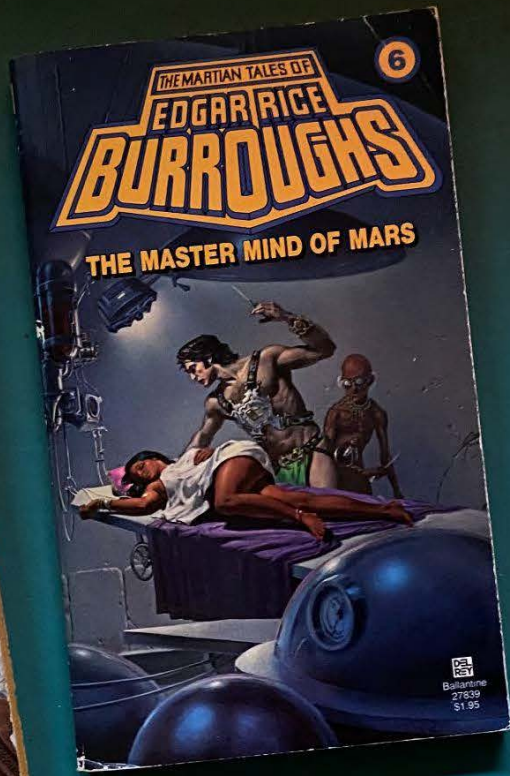
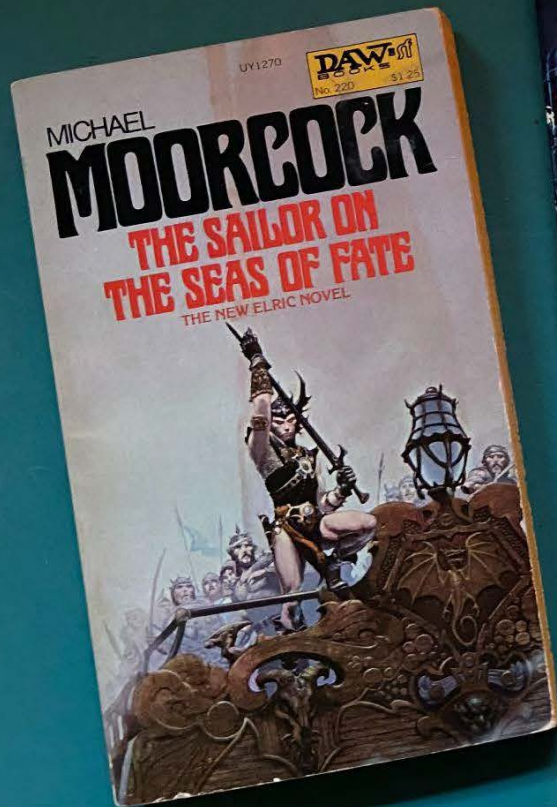
Bob Pepper



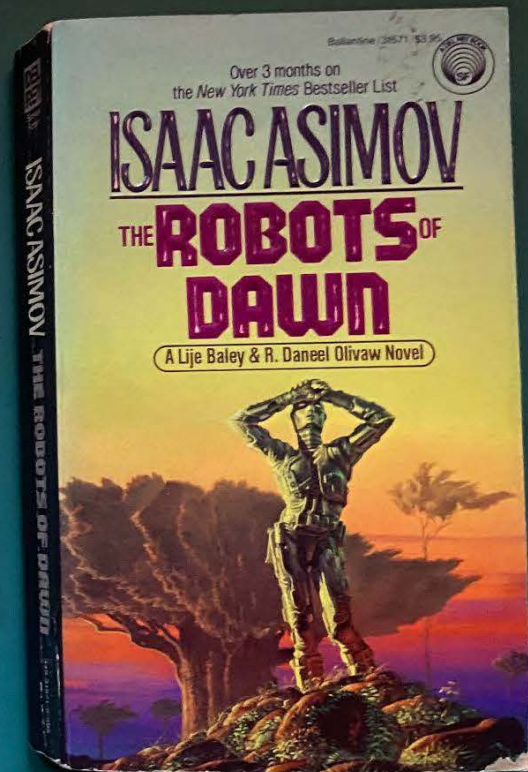
Murray Tinkelman

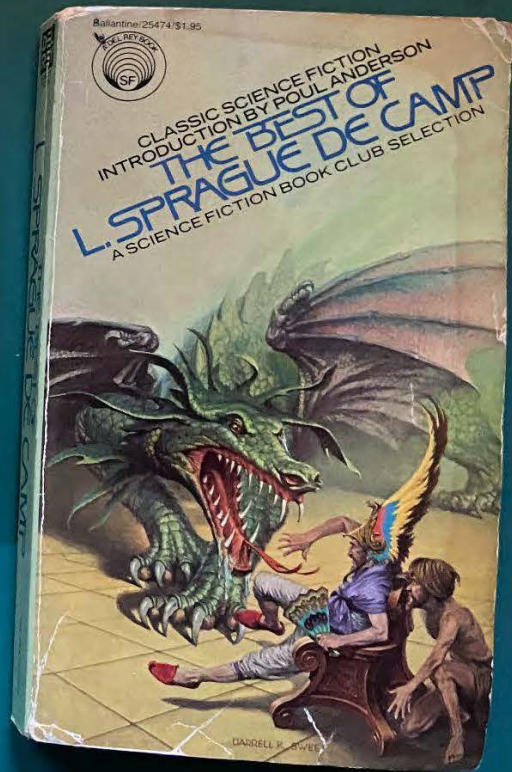
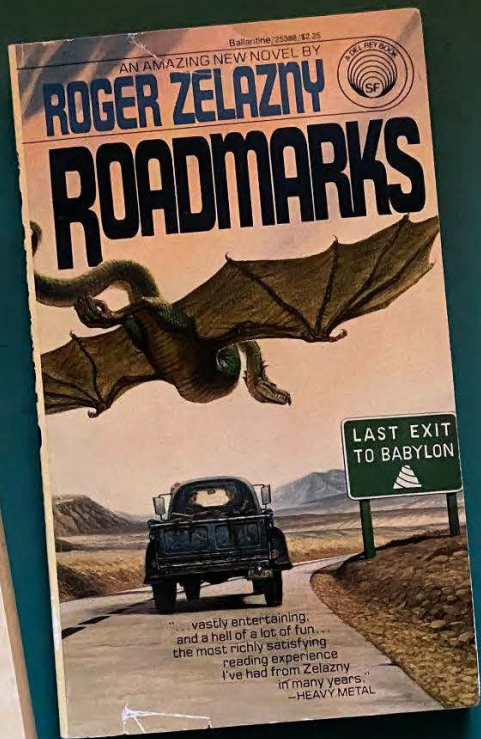
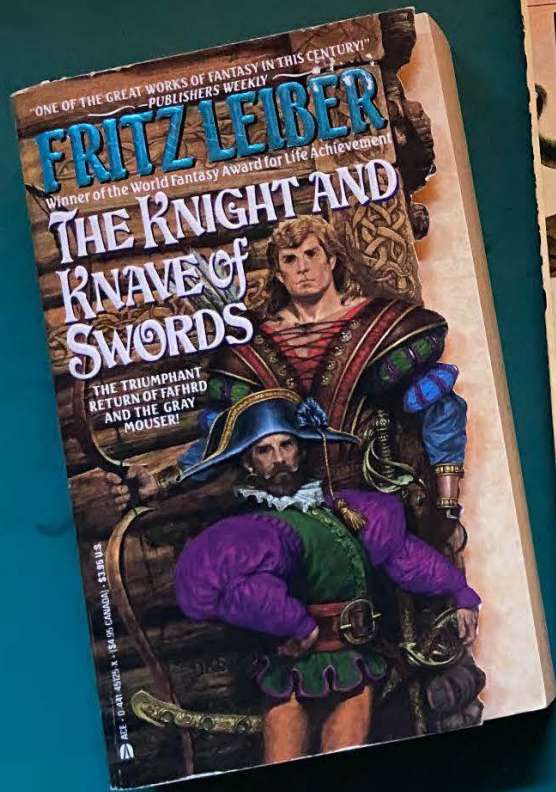


Vincent DiFate

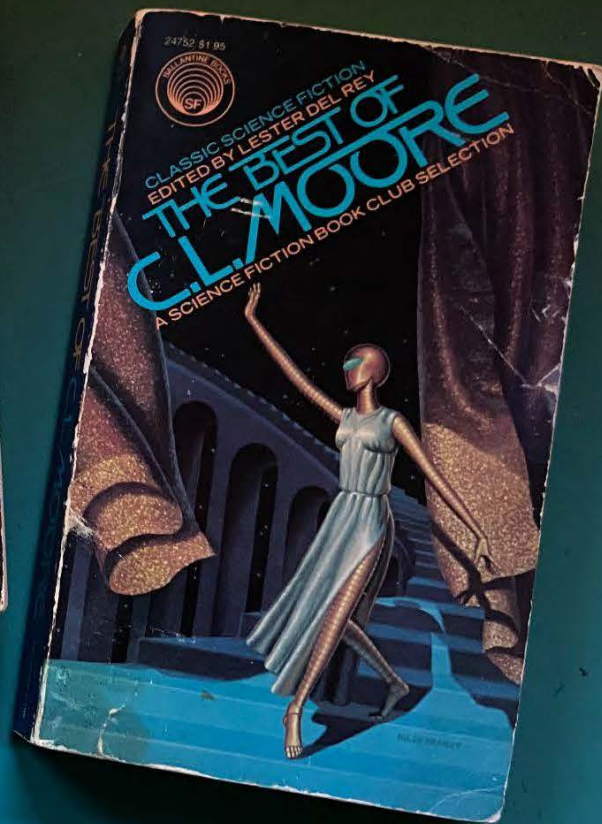
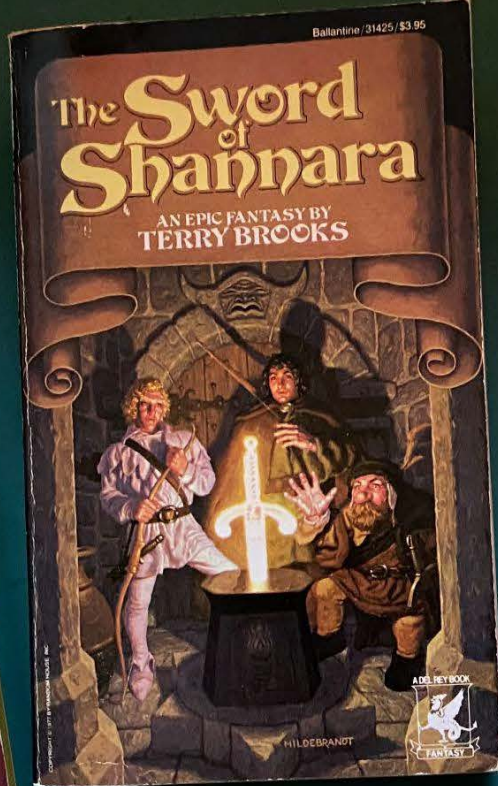
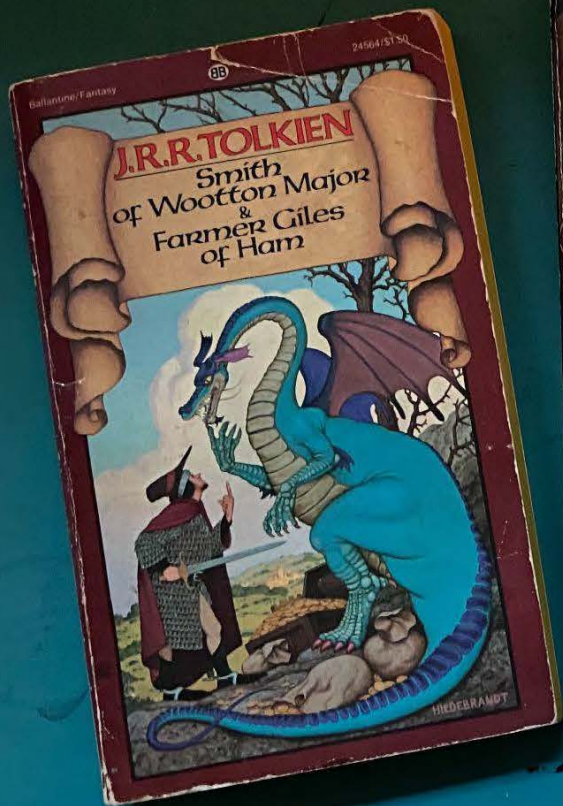


Michael Whelan





Darrell K. Sweet



The Brothers
Hildebrandt