

deadline for submissions:

November 30, 2023

full name / name of organization:

Popular Culture Association PCA

contact email:

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The Pulp Studies area of the Popular Culture Association invites papers on Pulp Studies, broadly defined. Topics include, but are not limited to, the magazines, editors/owners, authors, characters, influences of and influences on the pulps, artists, film/tv/other media, periods, and themes/styles.

Interested individuals are asked to submit an abstract of no more than 250 words (including presentation title); 100-word mini-biography, complete contact information (name, institutional affiliation, mail and e-mail addresses, and contact telephone number).

Undergraduate submissions are encouraged. Submissions will only be accepted through PCA website.

Please send all inquiries to: Pulp Area co-Chairs Jason Ray Carney (jason.carney@cnu.edu) and Daniel M. Look (dlook@stlawu.edu).

More information on the Pulps can be found here: <https://pulpstudies.weebly.com/cfps.html>

Submission Guidelines: <https://pcaaca.org/page/submissionguidelines>

Pulps Studies

Pulp magazines were a series of mostly English-language, predominantly American, magazines printed on rough pulp paper. They were often illustrated with highly stylized, full-page cover art and numerous line art illustrations of the fictional content. They were sold at a price the working classes could afford, though they were popular with all classes. The earlier magazines, such as All-Story, were general fiction magazines, though later they diversified and helped solidify many of the genres we are familiar with today, including western, detective, science fiction, fantasy, horror, romance, and sports fiction. The first pulp, Argosy, began life as the children's magazine, The Golden Argosy, dated December 2nd, 1882 and the last of the "original" pulps was Ranch Romances and Adventures, November of 1971. Despite the limited historical range of the pulpwood magazine form, the "pulp aesthetic" continues to influence popular culture today. With this in mind, we are calling for presentations for the National PCA Conference that discuss the pulps and their legacy.

Magazines: Weird Tales, Amazing Stories, Wonder Stories, Fight Stories, All-Story, Argosy,

Thrilling Wonder Stories, Spicy Detective, Ranch Romances and Adventures, Oriental Stories/Magic Carpet Magazine, Love Story, Flying Aces, Black Mask, and Unknown, to name a few.

Editors and Owners: Street and Smith (Argosy), Farnsworth Wright (Weird Tales), Hugo Gernsback (Amazing Stories), Mencken and Nathan (Black Mask), John Campbell (Astounding).

Influential Writers (the "Pulp Canon"): H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, A. E. Merritt, C. L. Moore, Fritz Leiber, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Donald Wandrei, and Henry Kuttner. Proposals about contemporary writers in the pulp tradition are also encouraged.

Influences on Pulp Writers: Robert Bloch, H. Rider Haggard, Arthur Conan Doyle, Jack London, and Edgar Rice Burroughs were all influences, along with literary and philosophical figures such as Bram Stoker, Mary Shelley, Friedrich Nietzsche, Edgar Allen Poe, and Herbert Spencer.

Popular Characters: Tarzan; Conan of Cimmeria; Doc Savage; Buck Rogers; Northwest Smith; The Domino Lady; Zorro; El Borak; The Shadow; The Spider; Nick Carter; The Avenger; and Captain Future, among others.

Artists: Popular cover artists including Margaret Brundage (Weird Tales), Frank R. Paul (Amazing Stories), Virgil Finlay (Weird Tales), and Edd Cartier (The Shadow, Astounding). Also later artists who popularized the pulps in paperback reprints, such as Frank Frazetta.

Periods: The dime novels; Argosy and the early pulps; Weird Tales, Amazing Stories, and the heyday of the pulps; the decline of the pulps in the 50s and 60s; the evolution of comics; pulp-aesthetic comics (Athena Voltaire; "sword and sorcery" boom of the 1960s).

Theme and Styles: Eugenics, gender, race, femme fatale, "yellow peril," "sword and sorcery," etc.

Film, Television, and Other Media: Pulps in film, television, comics, graphic novels and other forms are especially encouraged. Possible topics could include film interpretations such as Conan the Barbarian, The Shadow, Doc Savage, reinventions of the pulps such as Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow.

The Pulps in Contemporary Culture: How has the "pulp aesthetic" endured in popular culture through comics, television, film, RPGs, and more? How should pulp scholarship address sexism, racism, and classism in the pulps? Why have the enduring archetypes of the pulps (masked man of mystery, the noble savage, the working-class detective, the heroic aviator, etc.) endured and been reinvented by contemporary popular culture? What are the defining features of the "pulp aesthetic," and what does it owe to the gothic and dime novels for its origin?

Questions? Contact Pulp Studies Area co-Chairs Jason Ray Carney (jason.carney@cnu.edu) and Daniel M. Look (dlook@stlawu.edu).