

Introduction

As initially posted The Digest Index was technically a checklist, since it gave no details on the contents of any of the books. Although the vast majority of the books covered in the Digest Index are novels, there are still a sizable number of collections and anthologies, many of whose contents have never been documented. The expansion of The Digest Index to include a contents index seemed an obvious next step.

I was fortunate in being able locate a source for the contents of each of the 55 anthologies and the 100 collections presently covered by the Index. I have examined personally all but 11 of the anthologies and about half of the collections. I tried to find multiple sources for books not examined personally, but that was not always possible. Even photocopied contents pages (referred to as ToCs throughout) are not completely reliable--the reader will note that I have identified several pieces that were not listed on their books' contents pages.

The sources of the data are given in the headnotes to each book's individual listing. As before, I am greatly beholden to Bruce Black for digging deep into his collection to provide me with data. I have identified all the individuals who provided photocopied ToCs, as well as the secondary sources consulted. I have abbreviated the latter citations. These sources are cited in full in the Bibliography; the abbreviations used include:

Contento – *Index to Crime and Mystery Anthologies*.

Cook – *Monthly Murders*, an index to digest sized mystery magazines (used with much reluctance, as it is notoriously unreliable).

Fictionmags – website maintained by Bill Contento.

Hubin – the CD-Rom of *Crime Fiction IV*.

Mercury 233 – *A Man named Thin* by Dashiell Hammett, whose introduction contains a detailed bibliography of Hammett's books, including the contents of all the previous Mercury Press collections.

Nevins – *First you Dream, Then you Die*, a biography of Cornell Woolrich with a detailed bibliography.

World Catalog – website of international library holdings, sometimes annotated with the contents of collections.

I regret that I am not able to identify all of the libraries that responded to my Inter-library Loan requests. Unfortunately the vagaries of the Inter-Library Loan process are such that in some instances, by the time the photocopies reached my hands, all references to the library that supplied them had disappeared.

In addition to the sources already cited, Victor Berch, Jerry Boyajian and Robert E. Briney allowed me to examine copies of their books. Their generous help is greatly appreciated.

In several instances, where the digest edition was not available to me, I accessed other editions to verify the spelling and punctuation of individual story titles, as a double-check on the accuracy of my data.

The contents Index is given in three parts, a listing by book, an author index and a title index.

The book-by-book contents listings are further divided into two sections, one for the anthologies and one for the collections, each of which has some extra listings at the end.

In the Index by Collection, the books are alphabetized by author, then by book title.

In the Index by Anthology the books are alphabetized by book title, regardless of the editors, many of whom are not credited on the books in any case.

Otherwise the two lists are similarly presented. Each book cites the digest editions covered, and discusses prior editions and later paperback editions from the same publisher, describing the differences, if any, between the editions. For books that were “original” publications, there may be a discussion of later reprint editions, again detailing any variances from the first edition. The chief difference in format is that the detailed listings for the anthologies also give the authors’ names, justified to the right side of the page, whereas repeating the authors’ names on each line would be superfluous for the single-author collections.

The author index follows the format of the author index for the books themselves, particularly with respect to the parsing of the authors’ names. It was necessary to research another 400 authors who appear only in anthologies. Many of them are obscure enough that much more research will be needed to find personal data for them.

I have not attempted to indicate the sources, either immediate or original, for any of the individual pieces listed. As far as I know no story is indexed herein under more than one title.

Most of these stories appear here under the titles they are usually known by, even though the titles on their first publications may have been quite different. I’ve noted only a few such original titles, mostly for the ludicrously retitled stories in the *Avon Fantasy Readers*, some of which have had subsequent reprintings under their original titles.

The various citations of H. P. Lovecraft as a parenthetical collaborator follow S. T. Joshi’s research into Lovecraft’s “ghost writing” clients and vary depending on whether his client had produced a draft of the story him/herself or only a plot idea.

In several instances, a set of stories appear in a group, with an overall title as well as individual titles. I have alphabetized all the stories individually but annotated them with group titles to indicate their status.

For those who are weary of seeing the *Avon Fantasy (and Science Fiction) Readers* indexed yet again, I can only crave your indulgence; my insistence on categorizing them as books and including them in the basic index necessitated their inclusion here. The discerning user will note that these listings vary little from the ones that appear in *The Science Fiction Magazine Index* (Miller & Contento), varying mostly by being slightly less detailed. I proofread these titles for that index and the current list is based on copies of the annotated proofreading sheets still in my possession.

A small number of items appear not have been published anywhere before their appearance in the books indexed here. I have inserted the annotation [new] in all known instances.

Unless otherwise noted, all items may be assumed to be shorter than novel-length fiction. Identified exceptions are annotated with one of these codes:

ES - essay, opinion pieces

GP – individual stories published together as a group. The individual items are alphabetized separately and annotated with a group designation, as noted

HU – humor, possibly quasi-factual, but not to be taken literally

EX – excerpt, from a longer work of the same title unless otherwise noted

IN – introduction

MS – miscellaneous pieces, usually too short to categorize

NF – non-fiction, factual articles

NV – novel

PL – play, in most instances herein, scripts for radio dramas

V – verse. Only a couple of very long pieces have been indexed; a lot of minor pieces have been omitted.

Citations are by book title and date. There were two anthologies in the Avon SSM series entitled *Twelve Great Stories*, both published in 1946. I have added their book numbers to the citations to avoid ambiguity.

Title Index – like the Title Index for the books, this is a simple cross-reference from title to byline with no publication details.

Again, if anyone spots errors in these listings I would appreciate hearing about them.