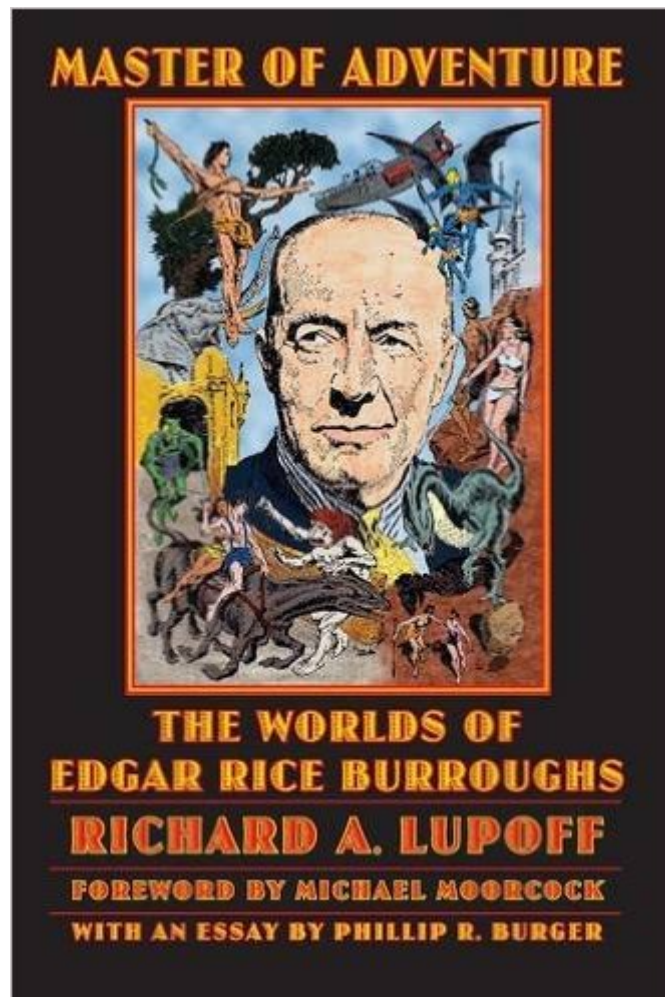


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# Master Of Adventure: The Worlds Of Edgar Rice Burroughs (Bison Frontiers Of Imagination)



## Synopsis

So, just how was Tarzan created? Eager to know the inside story about the legendary John Carter and the amazing cities and peoples of Barsoom? Perhaps your taste is more suited to David Innes and the fantastic lost world at the Earth's core? Or maybe wrong-way Napier and the bizarre civilizations of cloud-enshrouded Venus are more to your liking? These pages contain all that you will ever want to know about the wondrous worlds and unforgettable characters penned by the master storyteller Edgar Rice Burroughs. Richard A. Lupoff, the respected critic and writer who helped spark a Burroughs revival in the 1960s, reveals fascinating details about the stories written by the creator of Tarzan. Featured here are outlines of all of Burroughs's major novels, with descriptions of how they were each written and their respective sources of inspiration. This Bison Books edition includes a new foreword by fantasy writer Michael Moorcock, a new introduction by the author, a final chapter by Phillip R. Burger, as well as corrected text and an updated bibliography.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Edgar Rice Burroughs was mediocre at best in all of his vocations. That is, until he professionally took up the pen and typewriter, after which he speedily became quite remarkable. Nowadays, Burroughs is mostly known for having created Tarzan of the Apes, but, omigosh, the man has accomplished so much more than that. For three decades he penned some of the greatest, most

exhilarating adventures of his time. Correction: of any time. Anyone else remember John Carter of Mars, David Innes of Pellucidar, or Carson Napier of Venus? What about the fantastical continent of Caspak? If you're interested in finding out about the works of - as well as behind-the-scenes stuff about - Edgar Rice Burroughs, then look no further than Lupoff's insightful and definitive book. Back in 1965, Richard A. Lupoff, who himself would later become a sci-fi (and mystery) author, wrote *EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS: MASTER OF ADVENTURE*, which then became the go-to bible for things concerning Burroughs. *MASTER OF ADVENTURE: THE WORLDS OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS* is mostly the same book, only re-titled, revised a tad, and reprinted for 2005, with new forewords by fantasist Michael Moorcock and by Lupoff himself, as well as Phillip R. Burger's essay, which bridges the gap from 1965 to 2005. *MASTER OF ADVENTURE* is a must have, if you're a fan of E.R.B. It's a coherent, informative, and tremendously engrossing read. I thought I'd gone thru most of E.R.B.'s stories and even believed I knew quite a bit about the man, but *MASTER OF ADVENTURE* made me realize that mine was a thimbleful of info compared to Lupoff's double whammy of insider knowledge and meticulous research. Now I don't consider *MASTER OF ADVENTURE* a biography as much as a comprehensive study of Burroughs' written works (although you do learn something of the man from his works, so there's that). Reading these pages, I don't come away feeling that I know E.R.B. that much better as a person. Lupoff doesn't really drop a dime on the guy's personal life. Instead he focuses on in-depth evaluation and even-handed critique of Burroughs' stories. There are great Burroughs novels, there are decent ones, and then there are the flawed stories (not that many, thank goodness). All these - the classics and the warts - are covered to some extent. Even though clearly a great admirer of E.R.B., Lupoff's analysis is still governed by good measures of objectivity and thoughtfulness. There's no doubt Lupoff relishes delving into ERB's most famous works. There are chapters dedicated to Barsoom and its heroic Virginian, and the book's second half is reserved for his most iconic character Tarzan. Here Lupoff dispels much of the world's misconceptions circling the Jungle Lord. For instance, did you know that Tarzan is extremely intelligent and is fluent in English and French? That he's actually a British lord? That "Tarzan" in ape means "White Skin"? And that he dwells in a majestic African estate, and not in a tree house?. No worries, Lupoff goes into all this, and more. I dearly love the Johnny Weissmuller/Maureen O'Sullivan Tarzan flicks, but, damn! Tarzan is so much more than what we see in the movies. One last bit of trivia: Tarzana, California? Yes, it's named after Tarzan. But Lupoff also pays close attention to the more obscure titles (*The Mucker*, *Eternal Lover*, *The Outlaw of Torn*, etc). He goes on to list past authors whose works might have inspired Burroughs' most well known creations (his speculations, well-thought out though they may be, still raises the hackles of E.R.B.

supporters). Then, turn about being fair play, Lupoff explores Burroughs' influence on writers who followed him (Moorcock, R.E. Howard, Fritz Leiber, Leigh Brackett, Lin Carter, etc). Bomba the Jungle Boy? Robert Moore Williams' Jongor? Marvel Comics' Ka-Zar of the Savage Land? Moorcock's Kane of Old Mars? They're all pretty much blatant ripoffs of Tarzan and John Carter. Lupoff even offers his short list of suggested Burroughs reading (curiously, *War Chief* and *The Mucker* are respectively #3 & #4). He discloses his personal vote for E.R.B.'s two best works of science-fiction. Surprisingly, these selections aren't found in the Barsoom or Pellucidar series. You'll find out why the names of fellow authors Edwin Lester Arnold, Otis Adelbert Kline, and Lupoff himself are such controversial triggers for Burroughs fans. There's also wistful mention of Burroughs' prospective next great hero and next adventure series before World War 2 altered his plans and made him a war correspondent. As an added bonus, there are 11 black & white illustrations here, 3 by Al Williamson and 6 by Frank Frazetta. What else can I say about the Master of Adventure? E. R. Burroughs was a great influence in my formative years, with plenty of my childhood spent reading his flights of fancies. And even though Richard Lupoff is rightly critical of the master at times and risks the wrath of many a Burroughs advocate, he still rises to the challenge. You don't have to agree with Lupoff to enjoy these pages. I wouldn't lie, I wasn't too enamoured of his assertions that Burroughs lifted John Carter from a Victorian writer, but I still wasn't about to put this book down. **MASTER OF ADVENTURE: THE WORLDS OF EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS** is a fascinating and extensive breakdown of E.R.B.'s oeuvre, and one I should've read a long time ago. I didn't need convincing, mind you, but Lupoff proves that, after all these years, my man Edgar Rice Burroughs is still relevant. With Tarzan still very much an icon, and with even talk of a John Carter film floating around, it seems to me that Burroughs has passed the test of longevity. Which makes this particular book even more indispensable. Highly recommended.

Since this book came out in 1965, Richard Lupoff has become known as one of the most important ERB scholars there are. Here, he provides good detail about the Master of Adventure's many stories and some excellent critical analysis and synopsis. Unfortunately, despite Lupoff's enthusiasm for Burroughs, the occasional error creeps in and he advocates too much for Edwin Arnold's *Gullivar of Mars* having inspired Barsoom. Philip Burger's essay at the end is phenomenal, and the rest of the book's production value is commendable. Recommended for anyone wanting to get a good grasp of the Master's writing.

In answer to Jean Claude Suares, I think that when this book first came out, there was very little

perception of Burroughs as anything other than a pulp writer whose work inspired all those trashy movies. So it brought something new to the table, in your phrase, all those years ago. I think it stands up well on its own terms. I think you're asking for a different book - one I'd like to see - along the lines of 'The Burroughs Vault', 'The Ultimate Guide to Burroughs' or some such. Someone did, or was going to do (might even have been Lupoff) a companion to a volume called 'The Fantastic Worlds of Robert E Howard' with similar essays about ERB's writing. I have two disagreements with Lupoff - one frivolous, one slightly less so. I read 'Synthetic Men of Mars' (which he calls 'a thoroughly bad book') when I was a teenager, and, yes, it's kind of trashy, but I loved it. I also have to disagree with him when he says that out of Superman, Sherlock Holmes and Tarzan, the latter has the best chance of lasting forever. Superman, he says, is irredeemably branded as 'kids' stuff' and therefore won't last. Superman is now read mainly by adults, while it seems to me that if anything, it's Tarzan that's now considered kids' stuff, thanks to Walt Disney. Similarly, he says that Holmes is irretrievably connected to the Victorian era and will eventually become dated. The roaring international success of the BBC Sherlock belies that; in fact it's Tarzan who seems to resist modernization. Attempts have been made, Robin Maxwell's 'Jane' for example, but they haven't been successful enough to alter public perception of the character. But by and large this is well written and perceptive and should be read by ERB fans, and by anyone interested in the history of SF or adventure fiction.

Couldn't put it down. Loved his assessment of ERB. I agree with his critical review of Burroughs works except in one place. I don't know why he doesn't like Synthetic Men of Mars. I thought it was just as good (actually one of my personal favorites) as the rest of the series. Lupoff says there's little to recommend it. I disagree. Other than that an outstanding effort.

Thoroughly enjoying rereading this book, with its updates from the edition I originally read.

A wonderful descriptive book about all of ERB's works. Strongly recommend Mr. Lupoff's book for anyone who is familiar with his works and for those who are not.

Although factual and fairly well researched, the book brings little to the party. There's a bare minimum of graphics which is too bad when you think of the enormous output from movies to syndicated comic strips, let alone the books about Tarzan.

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