

His second book reflected his interest in both film and radio, *With Fire and Sword* (Scarecrow Press: 1994). Amazon describes it as, “A comprehensive study of the English dubbed Italian spectacles produced in the 1960’s which are often described as ‘beefcake’ or ‘sword and sandal epics.’”

“I wanted to write about something no one else had written about—those crazy Hercules movies,” he said. “Back before the Internet, it was very difficult to find any information on these films which were often just thrown away. I had to prowl through libraries and trade journals.”

He found that many of those films were sold to the US in television packages instead of theatrical releases. That’s where I recall seeing them when I was a kid. The thing I most remember about these films was that the voices of the actors generally didn’t match the look of the actor, and rarely fully synchronized to the movements of their mouths. It was therefore fascinating to learn from Patrick that this was the connection of these films to old-time radio.

“Many of the films were dubbed in Italy into English by American actors living there, but at the same time the American distributors didn’t like the sound, so they would re-dub the films when they came over here. A friend of mine, who was really into radio, sent me an interview with Bret Morrison which was recorded off of a New York based radio station. When the interviewer asked Bret what he was doing just then, he replied he was dubbing some Italian movies. When I heard that a lightning bolt hit me. The voice that introduced the old *The Sons of Hercules* series was Bret Morrison—The Shadow!”

This was an easy connection to make as his interest in radio dates back to listening at night when he was in junior high to *The Shadow* and other radio programs—including *Sherlock Holmes*. I felt a kindred spirit when he told me that for him, Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce were *the* quintessential duo.

He also said he begged and pleaded with his parents to buy a reel-to-reel-tape recorder so he could buy radio shows on tape from a local mail order house. The first collection he had was *The Lone Ranger* and *The Shadow*.

Gary Coville, his co-author for a number of his books, is a lifelong friend who was even more into radio than Patrick. He was a research librarian and had something like 45,000 titles of radio shows. They would trade shows. It was Gary who introduced Patrick to

SPERDVAC in the early 1990s.

They had co-written an article on *Dragnet* for *FilmFax* magazine, and *Dragnet* was going to be featured at an upcoming SPERDVAC convention so they went to it. When someone in SPERDVAC asked if anyone would be interested in editing the club’s newsletter, Patrick sent in his resume, which included work as a newspaper reporter for a Salem daily. This past March was his 21st anniversary as editor.

Now that he is retired he finds himself, as he says, lost. “I spent much of my life inside a classroom and you know what they say? If one can’t do then one teaches, and if one can’t teach then one teaches teachers. That was me, a man who can’t do, so what do I do next?”

But he admits that what he’ll do next is segue into a more active role with Radio Redux, the Eugene, OR repertory company that keeps radio drama, comedy and variety alive by staging old-time radio shows.

“Yes, we’re radio worth watching,” he said. “For the past several years I’ve delivered a 30-minute ‘illustrated lecture’ about the program the audience is about to see and hear—lectures worth watching. Now that I have the time I can do more; I’ll work behind the scenes, work with sound effects, or maybe I can live my fantasy and take the role of radio announcer, be a Don Wilson, a Truman Bradley or a Harry Von Zell. I think Radio Redux is the best. As I’ve said during promotional talks at various organizations, experiencing Radio Redux is experiencing living history; we take audiences back to the era; we’re a sort of Williamsburg of old-time radio.”

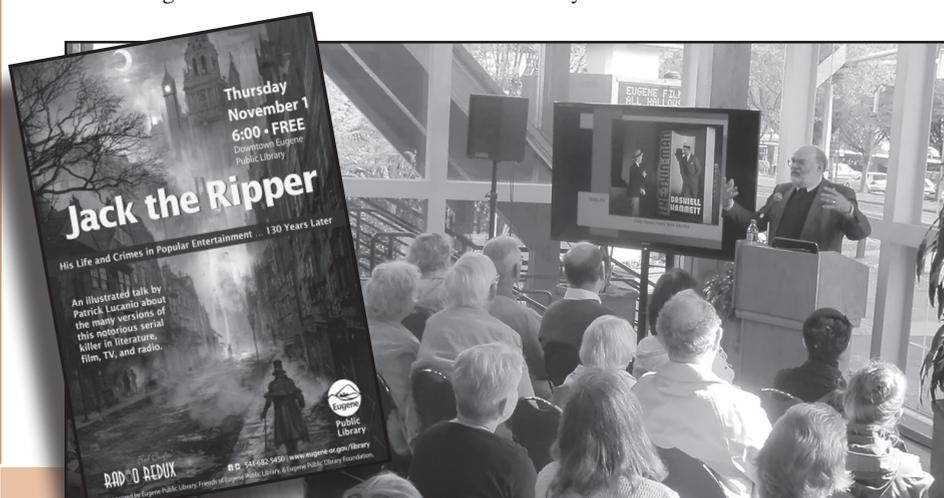
More writing?

“Yes, definitely. With me I just cannot *not* write; I write everything; it’s mostly for my amusement and it’s good therapy for me. I’d like to return to writing radio plays, something I enjoyed doing as a diversion many years ago. I wrote for various shows as if they were still on the air, like *Dragnet*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *The Lone Ranger*, three favorites, and I love writing whodunits. So who knows? If I can find a publisher then I’ll have plenty to do. Retirement for me is just passing from something I had to do to something I want to do—and, of course, there’s still *Radiogram*, a labor of love now for 21 years.”

Patrick also wrote *Smokin’ Rockets: The Romance of Technology in American Film, Radio, and Television, 1945-1962* (McFarland & Company: 2002)—co-written with Gary Coville. Of this book, the magazine *Cult Movies* wrote: “thoroughly researched, thought provoking...every SF fan will want...”

Another book, *American Science Fiction Television Series of the 1950’s: Episode Guide and Cast and Credits for Twenty Shows* (McFarland & Company: 2007), also co-written with Gary Coville. *FilmFax* magazine wrote, “This big, useful reference...will bring back plenty of memories...fascinating...erudite yet unpretentious.”

While we have a very educated man editing the *Radiogram*, we also have that kid who grew up with Bradbury, The Shadow, the science fiction, and monster movies. That unique combination has given us the gift that is Patrick Lucanio. I wish Patrick all the best as he returns behind the curtain to produce the very next issue. 🍷



“The Wizard of Radiogram,” Patrick Lucanio, discusses “radio noir” at a pre-show lecture at a matinee performance of a Radio Redux old-time radio performance in Eugene, OR. INSET is poster for one of the “wizard’s” public lectures, this one based on his book, *Jack the Ripper: His Life and Times in Popular Entertainment*.