

AoSHQ Sunday Morning Book Thread Q&A - 032722

QUESTION 1

Writing is often a solitary profession, but effective writing duos are definitely a thing. Who are some of your favorite writing duos? What strengths does each author bring to the story? How do they complement each other to create a better story?

RESPONSES:

Niven & Pournelle.

– InspiredHistoryMike

Preston and Child pop into mind first. I think [one] handles more of the science/history and the other handles more of the mystery.

– JerseyDevilRider

Ellery Queen

Niven & Pournelle

Cant remember the other, but wrote mystery horror w/singular "detective"

What strengths? How do they complement?

I can't tell really; I suppose I don't read closely enough of their separate writings to tell. Except Pournelle who left so many possibilities in Janissaries.

– yara

My favorite writing duo was (they've parted ways) Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning, who wrote two top-notch comics series: Resurrection Man for DC and Guardians of the Galaxy for Marvel.

– Weak Geek

"Ellery Queen," Fred Dannay & Manfred B. Lee. Dannay was the puzzle master, Lee the more literary writer.

Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle: Niven the soaring imagination man, Pournelle the more grounded; both conservatives, I've found out.

Henry Kuttner & C.L. Moore: humor and adventure.

Poul Anderson & Gordon R. Dickson: great comedy in their Hoka series. Each is a solid SF author in his own right, though.

– Wolfus Aurelius

At this time, I have no "writing duos" among the writers I favor. The last pair I found moderately acceptable was the husband-and-wife team of David and Leigh Eddings. Nor could I say what their respective contributions were.

– Francis W. Porretto

Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett wrote "Good Omens" together and each tempered the flaws in the other to produce a comic masterpiece. Each author is an excellent writer in their own right, but the combination was truly superb.

– Sabrina Chase, the Oxford Comma Avenger

A guilty pleasure is nearly everything by Ilona Andrews, husband and wife writing due. I don't know, but I think Ilona brings more technical fighting research and Gordon an authentic POV of leading male characters. They seem to plot together.

– sinmi

Tough to answer. Weiss and Hickman (Dragonlance series back in the 80s I believe) are far enough back in my reading history that I cannot adequately tell you on that one. Ringo and Correia were a good combination.

For the latter, as I understand it John Ringo just started posting fanfiction one day when he'd read Monster Hunter International. He and Larry Correia are both authors for the Baen publishing house. Larry found out about it, thought it was awesome, and those stories eventually became a trilogy.

John Ringo has a unique style that doesn't really work for anyone else that I've seen. Both he and Larry have well established fans that will read just about anything they write.

Larry provided the setting and editing support while John provided the story. This was less of a true collaboration than letting John play around in Larry's universe, but it turned out well.

If you are familiar with Baen books, they publish mostly science fiction with a little fantasy. There is a tradition at Baen of allowing new authors to team up with older, more experienced authors for a collaboration. Sometimes it is awesome. Others it is merely okay. But for this reader, it is never boring crap.

The 1632 series has many collaborations between Eric Flint and other, newer authors. I am not aware of the specifics of how the collaboration is carried out. But some of them are quite good.

At the risk of treading close to the line of politics, those who are aware of the current bugscuffle over publishing houses injecting politics where it most certainly does not belong (that place being the pure enjoyment that comes from books) will be pleased to note that Baen seems to be backing away from its earlier dip into the sewage pool that is politics. There have been no instances of such on their main page for some time now. May such a thing spread far and wide! Fiction books are for reading and enjoying, not preaching and indoctrinating.

– unwenchable

Strunk and White

– vivi

I don't have a fav writing duo. I like the Talisman with Straub and King, but I am guessing there were some serious narcotics involved. I drink when I write. I write along.

– beckydotdata

Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle

A vivid & detailed imagination from the former, a mastery of plot & pacing from the latter.

– aelfheld

I can think of only two duos. Dave Barry* wrote his Peter Pan books with another author (don't remember who), and Jerry Pournelle wrote science fiction novels with another author (don't remember who). Oh yes, Tim LaHaye wrote a massive best-selling Christian apocalyptic near-future series with another author (don't remember who). I have read none of any of these books. Of course, C.S.Lewis had a large influence on his friend's creation of the LOTR, and those are some of the greatest books ever written.

– bradc

* J.M. Barry wrote the Peter Pan books. Dave Barry's adaptation/interpretation of Peter Pan would be hilarious, though. – "Perfessor" Squirrel

It's hard to beat Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle as one of the best writing duo's. I struggle to think of a duo who has put together a better body of work.

– Mud Engineering

Worst fictional writing duo: Bill Ayers and Barry Soetoro, "Dreams from My Father"

– cool breeze

My favorite writing duo would have to be Kuttner and Moore. They were very prolific separately and together, and used several pseudonyms that make identifying what was a collaboration and what was a solo effort difficult.

Probably their most famous collaboration is as Lewis Padgett on Mimsy Were the Borogoves. While I am a fan of Lewis Carroll's writing (also a pseudonym) it was the Padgett story that inspired my blog name.

And, more recently, I went to that well again for the Padgett Sunday Supper Club site. I was originally going to call it the Padgett County Supper Club, but discovered that Padgett is also a nearly completely invisible ghost town here in Texas, which appealed to me as a title.

– Stephen Price Blair

Pournelle/Niven, natch.

– All Hail Eris, She-Wolf of the 'Ettes 'Ettes

I don't know that I have any books by a duo except for a few by Victoria Mather (words) and Sue Macartney-Snape (art). They are collections from the Daily Telegraph's "Social Stereotypes" column, and limn such characters as "The Christmas Guest," "The Girls' Lunch," "The Divorce Lawyer" and so on.

Amazon reviews are generally hateful for the series, since Mather is considered to be 'racist.' Why? She dared to call out Prince Harry's sidepiece for the social-climbing trailer trash that she is.

<https://tinyurl.com/2n68txy2>

– Mary Poppins' Practically Perfect Piercing

Poul Anderson and Gordon R. Dickson collaborated on a series of shorts about the alien race known as the Hoka: intelligent teddy bears who are ferociously imitative, like the people in the Trek episode "A Piece of the Action." And they love to copy human cultures and customs. The first story, "The Sheriff of Canyon Gulch," is one of the funniest pieces in literary history.

– Wolfus Aurelius

Favorite writing duos:

- The Ellery Queen cousins
- Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy, authors of The Destroyer paperback series of the '70s and '80s
- Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning, who produced two great comics series: Resurrection Man and Guardians of the Galaxy. They didn't create GotG, but without their work, there would have been no movies.

– Weak Geek at March

Favorite writing duos:

- Preston and Child who do the Pendergast series.
- Aimee and David Thurlo, a husband and wife team who write mysteries in the southwest areas and Navajo reservations.
- The cousins who wrote the Ellery Queen mysteries.

– JTB

An unknown writing duo would be Manning Coles, which was Cyril Henry Coles and Adelaide Francis Oke Manning, who wrote the Tommy Hambledon spy novels together.

– Kindltot

Kuttner & Moore, Ellery Queen, Pohl & Kornbluth, Niven & Pournelle. Sure. Absolutely. But I'd throw in Bill Pronzini & Barry Malzberg too -- several novels and a bunch of short stories, and if you've not read it before take a look at THE RUNNING OF BEASTS, which is a nifty thriller.

– Just Some Guy

Neil Gaiman and Terry Prachett

– weft-cut loop

Have not read a lot of duet authors, but I love what Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana did when they wrote "Zeke and Ned." A historical fiction account of Cherokees Zeke Proctor and Ned Christie who basically fought the last good fight.

McMurtry is one of my favorite authors, and Ossana's contribution only added to that, not diminish. Wonderful read.

– Pug Mahon, Gen X Ne'er-Do-Well

Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman are an amazing duo of writers. They first collaborated on the *Dragonlance Chronicles* and continued through numerous other series. They have also done solo projects, so that makes it relatively easy to understand their individual strengths and weaknesses as authors.

Weis is clearly better at character development and dialogue. Hickman is a creative dynamo when it comes to world-building. Together, they really complement each other to produce just excellent stories. I think their high point is the *Death Gate Cycle*.

– “Perfessor” Squirrel