Mendacities.net – the one-time home of George Berger, talentless purveyor of bad, bad fiction

Between 2010 and 2014 George Berger wrote and published around two-dozen books in various genres. Many are now out of print, most are somewhat bad, and all are fairly obscure. For the two or three people in the world who might care, this is an annotated bibliography.

Mendacities: July 2010

A quite awful young-adult novel, and George's debut book, written for the worst possible reason. Having read some popular YA novel, George sneered and said "Even I can write a better book than that!" Ha ha ha ha, nope. Exists as both a paperback and e-book, in slightly different formats. (Though if you have a very early e-book copy, it'll match the paperback.) Some chapters from the paperback (the "canonical" order) were re-ordered for the e-book, so the book began somewhere "more interesting", for the 2011 ABNA contest.

There are (or should be, assuming Amazon/Createspace are being honest) no more than twenty-five copies of the paperback in existence, making this George's most-common paperback.

There are (or were) also three proof copies produced prior to publication by a different printer. Some of these were sent to reviewers. These proofs had a smaller trim size and blue spines.

Well Met by Gaslight: April 2011

This and its sequel (below) were part of a year-long experiment, and were intentionally written to be just about unreadable. One of George's most obscure books, Well Met by Gaslight was some sort of Victorian melodrama novella, written in very florid purple prose. Only existed as an e-book.

Never According to Plan: July 2011

The sequel to Well Met by Gaslight, and the other half of the year-long experiment. Like the prequel, a Victorian melodrama of some sort, in florid purple prose, that only existed as an e-book.

What was the experiment? Well, back in 2011, Amazon still had something called "tags", which were a valuable way of gaining exposure, particularly for e-books. Get a couple friends to upvote the tags you wanted to be competitive on for your book, and riches were soon to be yours, supposedly. Didn't really work that way in practice, of course. Anyway, the experiment was to see whether subject — or at least tagging — triumphed style (and writing quality). WMBG was tagged with certain "edgy" tags, and was otherwise not promoted in any way shape or form.

Between July 2011 and July 2012, WMBG outsold Mendacities on the American Amazon site. NAP did not sell a single copy there. Very strangely, NAP sold a dozen copies in the UK in that time period, even though the prequel never sold a single copy there. The only significant takeaway from this experiment was that George's books didn't sell well, anywhere.

Stanley and his Sword: July 2011

George's first foray into things-that-genre-labels-cannot-define. A love story, sort of maybe kind of, with a chupacabra and an invisible ninja assassin. Also George's first fateful foray into wackiness. An e-book only.

Grease is the Word, September 2011

The shortest standalone story George published, a mere 2,500 words long. A wacky zany adventure story that nobody anywhere enjoyed. In its defense, it was written for a contest, where writers were given a bunch of prompts and forty-eight hours to write a story. It was free for most of its time on the market.

Without A Spark: October 2011

A thriller novel, in which George unsuccessfully tried to sell out and write "commercial" fiction. Was ahead of its time, in some ways – had gratuitous BDSM scenes long before Fifty Shades of Gray was popular, for example. Unfortunately it was written by George Berger, which means it wasn't very good, nor popular.

Existed as an e-book in various formats, and a paperback, of which no more than eleven copies should exist.

Nothing Like Love: February 2012

Two-and-a-half years later, George can't even remember what this was about, which should tell you everything you need to know about this short story e-book.

Okay, that's not entirely true. It was supposed to be the first of three stories that would have made up the "Like Love" series, because everyone said series were what readers wanted. Nothing Like Love was to have been followed by Something Like Love and the darker and edgier Too Much Like Love, but none of these ever got written, which is probably for the best.

The Crimson Scars: February 2012

George wanted to win an argument on a writing forum, so he wrote The Crimson Scars. It's a modern re-telling of an ancient Henry Sydnor Harrison short story called The White Mole. Much like Harrison's original, it's not very good, but is technically interesting in some very boring ways, if you're a writing snob. George can't remember what the argument he was trying to win was about, nor even who it was with; basically everything about this short e-book is best left forgotten, probably.

All the Wrong Reasons: April 2012

This was a dumb attempt at a YA romantic comedy novella. Most notable for containing a goat.

Midnight's Tale: May 2012

After two years of mediocre sales and unfavorable reviews, George planned to quit writing fiction. As his swan song, of sorts, he wrote a scathing parody of contemporary fine literature, about a goat. Nobody got the joke. Nobody got any of the jokes within it, as a matter of fact. Amazon accepted it as a Kindle Single, perhaps proving his point; a bunch of other writers who probably weren't in on the joke also promoted the heck out of it, and it became far and away George's best-selling book, selling a couple thousand copies, all as e-books, all on Amazon. Later made into an audiobook and translated into German (as Die Leiden des Jungen Ziegenbocks), both at Amazon's expense.

Unfortunately, George, in a moment of weakness, succumbed to the encouragement of so-called friends, and didn't actually retire as a writer at this point. Which is a shame, because everything that came after pretty much sucked sweaty donkey balls, if we're honest.

Hamaika: September 2012

Okay, so you've accidentally written bestselling literary fiction about a goat. What do you follow that up with? If you're George Berger, you write a deeply philosophical contemporary urban fantasy full of absolutely atrocious puns, obscure references, and zombie jokes. Then you give it a title that's a trilingual pun. (This was George's eleventh book. In Basque, the word for "eleven" - and "infinity", because the Basque are a bit peculiar – is "Hamaika". In German, however, the word for "eleven" is "elf", which means something a bit different in English. Oh my god what a pretentious twat, right?) Didn't sell a dozen copies, as an e-book. Yeah. Can't imagine why.

Unmarketable Dross: November 2012

A paperback-only anthology that collected most of George's previously-published short e-books. Likely only bought by people wanting Midnight's Tale in print, which seems to have been almost nobody.

An Accidental Fastball to the Heart: November 2012

Using his first and middle initials as a pen name (G.S. Berger), George wrote and published a contemporary lesbian young adult romance novel. George isn't a fan of alpha males, and heard that nobody likes romance novels with beta males in them, so he sensibly went and wrote a romance without any males at all. Well, none with names, anyway. Sold fairly well, despite pretty lackluster reviews. An e-book and also a paperback, of which at least a dozen copies exist.

Breakfast for the Sun God: February 2013

An intentionally-bad erotica novella. In George's defense, it was written for an anthology of cheesy food-related erotica that was to have been called The Horny Games. Unlike most of the stories George wrote for anthologies, BFTSG wasn't rejected. No, the editor died in Hurricane Sandy, as far as anyone can determine. With the anthology equally dead, George released his novella as a stand-alone e-book. It seemed like a good idea at the time, apparently. The most notable things about the story are that despite being erotica it contains nothing Bill Clinton would recognize as a sex act, and contains no "dirty" words – yes, it's hardcore PG-13 smut.

Methilgar's Ring: August 2013

"Write what you love" is shitty advice, unless you love, oh, formulaic sex-filled books about emo werewolves. This short e-book was George's loving homage to everything that makes old adventure stories great. It's epistolary historical low fantasy, set in eastern Europe in the summer of 1914. And it features an unreliable narrator. Occasionally referred to as The Least Marketable Book in the World, for obvious reasons.

Gorp: A Love Story: December 2013

George blames Twitter for this novel. Not the company, but some of the people he followed, when he was still active there. Why aren't there any new-adult books that aren't filled with sex, they said. Why doesn't anyone ever write a book with a short original easy-to-remember title, they said. Gorp was the result – a new adult romance that contains no sex. Not even kissing. It kind of harkens back to the gothic romance era, in some ways.. if gothic romances had been written by talentless hacks. As is typical for a George Berger book, next-to-nobody read it. Not even the selfish, hypocritical jerks on Twitter who inspired him to write the thrice-bedamned thing in the first place. Exists as an e-book and a paperback, of which around eight copies were printed. (It sold one paperback and three e-books. No, really. The rest of the paperbacks were wasted on completely useless giveaway promotions.)

Angles & Curves: May 2014

George's last novel, a young adult coming-of-age story, with an asexual transgender protagonist. And, uh, elves. And stuff. Released by Queerteen Press of Virginia to absolutely mediocre sales and even worse reviews, with the American Library Association in particular finding absolutely *no redeeming features* in it at all. Released as an e-book and paperback, it's one of George's worst-selling books. There are unlikely to ever exist more than a handful of paperbacks.

It's a moot point now, but George didn't pitch the book as a transgender novel; the original submission to the publisher called it an asexual novel, with the protagonist's complicated gender identity left as a surprise for readers. It was believed calling it a transgender novel would make it more marketable. If that turned out to be true, George shudders to think how badly it'd have sold had it been published as asexual fiction...

Forthcoming in 2014 or 2015:

A thousand-word drabble titled "Hudson and Hailey" in some anthology somewhere. Not very good.

<u>Unfinished and abandoned and lost forever:</u>

Another G.S. Berger YA romance novel, tentatively to have been titled <u>Strawberry x Banana</u>. Existed as some notes and outlines and a couple of partial drafts, the longest perhaps one-third done.

What would have been a non-YA G.S. Berger romance novel, that never had a working title. Outlines and notes might survive somewhere, but the first draft was only ever perhaps half done.

Both of these unfinished manuscripts were lost when George's computer died in October 2014. Data recovery would cost about eight years' writing royalties, which it should be clear is not a terribly attractive prospect.

Unfinished and abandoned:

In 2014, before the failure of Angles & Curves brought about an abrupt end to his fiction-writing career, George began to produce a kinetic visual novel / linear novel app of <u>Stanley and his Sword</u>, using the Ren'py engine. All sprite and background art assets had been purchased, and an estimated 70% of the script and coding markup was believed to have done. With the end of his writing efforts George has no further plans to develop this project, though. Copies of all the art assets survive; the incomplete script and coding are lost.

Finished and unpublished:

A short story titled <u>The Lonely Goatherd</u>, written for and rejected by an anthology, too short (and too awful) to be published on its own.

Not included in this bibliography:

Several pseudonymous erotica e-book titles, all boringly heteronormative, a couple involving obscure fetishes George thought were amusing. None ever sold well, unsurprisingly.

If for some reason you'd like to try to contact George, you may try e-mailing "mendacities" at Google's well-known five-letter e-mail domain. Don't hold your breath waiting for a response.