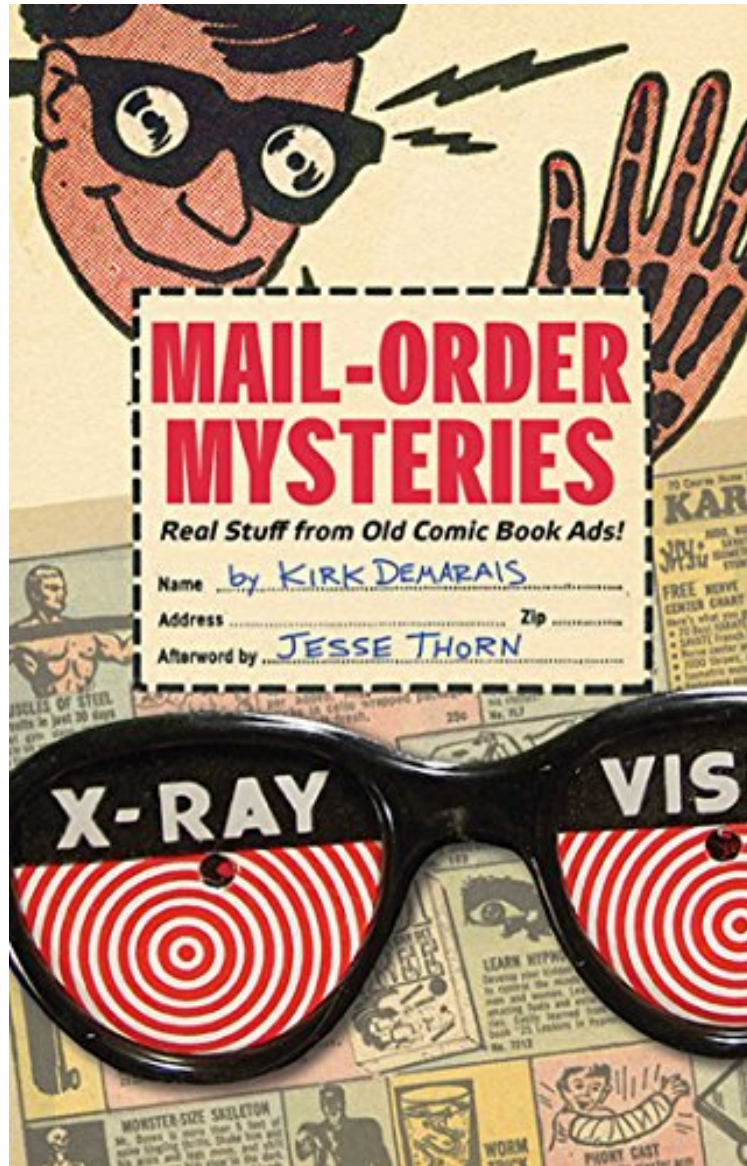


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## Mail-Order Mysteries: Real Stuff from Old Comic Book Ads

*Kirk Demarais*

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#57497 in Books Insight Editions 2011-10-11 2011-10-11 Original language: English PDF # 1 10.00 x .80 x 6.50l, 2.00 #File Name: 160887026X156 pages | File size: 51.Mb

**Kirk Demarais : Mail-Order Mysteries: Real Stuff from Old Comic Book Ads** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mail-Order Mysteries: Real Stuff from Old Comic Book Ads:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Many Long Standing Questions Finally Answered!By TheoThis book is organized much like an encyclopedia, with a large number of relatively small entries. Each entry describes a single "Mail Order Mystery". There's one entry for the X-Ray Specs, one for the Sea Monkeys, and so on. The entries

are well organized, and there are lots of photos to show us exactly what we missed out on. Well, so much for the "objective" portion of this review. Now for the real scoop. Speaking for myself, I think I'm \_just\_ old enough to have grown up with the comic book mail order advertising described in this book. I say that because even during my own childhood, I saw comic book advertising move on to other things. Saturday morning cartoons... junk food... That kind of stuff. Arguably more reputable, but infinitely less intriguing than the mail-order mysteries this book concerns itself with. Like so many kids, I was always convinced by my parents not to send off what little money I had in response to these ads. That's partly because my parents were quite sure that none of the stuff would actually work: particularly the products with the more extravagant claims like the X-Ray Specs. But also because we lived in Australia. I was patiently informed that the sums requested would never cover international shipping. And so, like so many children, I was won over by reason. And yet, left forever wondering... Well, I wonder no more, because now, without even having to suffer the ignominy of being fleeced, I know exactly what was sent out to those who responded to the ads! Or at least (if my parents were right) to those within U.S. borders. I wouldn't exactly say that this book contains many surprises. But it does contain many wonders. Only a tiny handful, like the Charles Atlas program, truly deliver on what they promise. But that's not the point. It's in finally revealing exactly \_how\_ you would've been conned that this book truly satisfies. It's like a bar-room bet that you know you're going to lose, but go along with anyway just for the fun of finding out exactly how the game plays out. Except of course that we few, we happy few, don't have to play the game to see how it ends. We only have to buy this book! Theo. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. If you grew up fascinated by stuff offered in and on the back page of comics growing up you will simply \*love\* this book! By K. Yancy As a kid, I ordered plenty of this stuff. My older Brother was a comic book fan, and when I got my hands on his comics these pages were the first place I would go. This book hits all the popular offerings. If you were from that era you will immediately recognize the ads. For each item the author documents what the typical expectations were for the buyer and contrasts them with what they actually ended up sending you. Some hits and some misses. For some of the items you may have ordered as a child, you may or may not agree with the author's assessment. For example, for me I \*Loved\* the 'Monster Ghost' and yes, even though just a Spooky looking balloon, glowing eye decals, big sheet of plastic, and some fishing twine, I had great fun with it in our dark basement and actually ordered it 3 times during my young life. It was great for me to see what I would have actually gotten for items I recall reading about, and in some cases, desperately wanted but never were able to get. The 'Submarine big enough for two with a missile launcher and periscope' was one such item for me. If you ever dreamed of ordering from these pages or actually did, this book will bring back some great memories and it is well worth the purchase price. They also did an extremely creative thing with the outside cover that I only discovered by accident after dosing the lights after a night's reading. Just another bonus from an extremely enjoyable book! 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. My parents were right! By C. Watson As a kid from the 70's I remember all too well all of the ads in comic books that advertised everything from Sea Monkeys to X-ray glasses. I remember "needing" ventriloquist dummies, hovercrafts and hypno coins to be complete and I remember the parents always nixing the very idea of buying any of it. Years later I found most of the cheap trash featured in this book at a local dollar store and realized that my parents were right in their cynicism. Mail-Order Mysteries is a great trip down memory lane. Everything you thought you wanted in those ads is laid bare here. I'm really thankful to my parents for sparing me the humiliation of waiting 6-8 weeks for guaranteed disappointment. Still it's great to see all these "gems" again and you'll have to fight the desire to pour a glass of Tang and watch some 70's cartoons while reading:-) The author of this book should really consider putting out a dvd so that we can see these gadgets in motion. In short.....BUY THIS BOOK!

Rediscover your sense of wonder! Generations of comic book readers remember the tantalizing promises of vintage novelty advertisements that offered authentic laser-gun plans, x-ray specs, and even 7-foot-tall monsters (with glow-in-the-dark eyes!). But what would you really get if you entrusted your hard-earned \$1.69 to the post office? Mail-Order Mysteries answers this question, revealing the amazing truths (and agonizing exaggerations) about the actual products marketed to kids in the '60s, '70s, and '80s. Pop-culture historian Kirk Demarais shares his astonishing collection, including: 100 Toy Soldiers in a Footlocker Count Dante's World's Deadliest Fighting Secrets GRIT Hercules Wrist Band Hypno-Coin Life-Size Monsters Mystic Smoke Sea Monkeys Soil From Dracula's Castle U-Control Ghost Ventrilo Voice Thrower ...and many, many more! With more than 150 extraordinary, peculiar, and downright fraudulent collectibles, Mail-Order Mysteries is a must-have book comic book fans everywhere. Trust us.

"If childhood disappointment could ever be considered an art form, then Mail-Order Mysteries is a masterpiece. Really. The metaphors for life itself are inescapable, the disillusion heartbreakingly laid bare, the tackiness a drug you just can't quit."--Chip Kidd, graphic designer and author of "Bat-Manga!" "Mail-Order Mysteries reveals the secrets behind those too-good-to-be-true gizmos advertised in the comic books of my youth. What a mind-blower!"--Mark Frauenfelder, cofounder of Boing Boing "If I could put one thing in a time machine to send back to my eight-year-old self, it would be Mail-Order Mysteries. This book would have saved me dozens of allowances and hundreds of glacial hours spent standing on the porch waiting for the mailman to arrive. I always knew there was something fishy about

those 'Gigantic Dinosaurs!'--Mark Waid, writer of "Kingdom Come and Irredeemable" About the Author Kirk Demarais is a freelance creator and author of *Life of the Party*, a visual history of the S.S. Adams Prank and Magic Company. He wrote and directed *Flip*, an awardwinning short film inspired by mail-order novelties, and he codirected *Foot*, an animated film distributed by bobblehead maker FunKo. In addition to neglecting his retro culture website, SecretFunSpot, Kirk's pop-surrealist artwork is regularly shown at L.A.'s Gallery 1988. Kirk enjoys life in the hills of Arkansas with his wife and son and a ghost. Jesse Thorn is the host and creator of *The Sound of Young America* radio show on Public Radio International, where he has interviewed such guests as Mark Evanier, Weird Al Yankovic, and Judd Apatow. He is also the founder of production organization Maximum Fun, as well as the host of *The Grid*, a cultural recommendation program on the Independent Film Channel (IFC). He lives in Los Angeles with his wife Theresa.