

# Brand, Max (1892-1944) Encyclopedia Article

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## Brand, Max (1892-1944)

Pulp novelist Max Brand earned millions of dollars from his writing. Like many pulp writers, however, he did not feel that his work was worth very much. Brand wrote over 300 novels in genres such as detective fiction, spy stories, medicine, and fantasy. But he is primarily known for westerns such as *The Bells of San Carlos*, *The Bells of San Filipo*, *Bull Hunter*, and *Donnegan*. Clearly able to diversify his talents, Brand also achieved great fame and fortune through his Hollywood film writing. His *Destry Rides Again* inspired numerous imitators, including television's *Maverick*.

Brand, born Frederick Faust, was orphaned at an early age and raised in poverty, but grew up with high literary ambitions. Despite being known as a great western writer, Brand preferred to live in an Italian villa. He spent his time there writing pulp fiction in the morning and serious poetry in the afternoon. He was well read in the classics and often used themes from them in his western tales, for example he used the Iliad in *Hired Gun*. Without question the King of the Pulps, Brand averaged about one million words a year. Outside of his westerns, Dr. Kildare was his most famous creation. His readers were intensely loyal and reached into the millions. Although he preferred that his personal life remain mysterious, he did occasionally offer fans glimpses of himself in autobiographical short stories. In *A Special Occasion*, for example, one of the main characters shares many similarities with Brand—his marriage is on the rocks, he has a mistress who is a clinging vine, he longs for a better profession, and sometimes drinks to excess.

### Further Reading:

"The Ghost Wagon and Other Great Western Adventures." *Publishers Weekly*. February 12, 1996, 60.

Lukowsky, Wes. "The Collected Stories of Max Brand." *Booklist*. August 1994, 2020-2021.

Nolan, William F., editor. *Western Giant: The Life and Times of Frederick Schiller Faust*. 1985.