

# Card Game Books

## BRIDGE, EPHEMERA, OTHER CARD GAMES AND PLAYING CARDS

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### ELIST No. 12 –SYSTEM BOOKS (1)

I've been going through the shelves and turned up enough books about bidding systems to run to two lists. These are not just about the odd conventional bid, but what the author thinks is a worthwhile system to adopt. Some are now mainstream, whilst others were plain bonkers, but well thought out. Many of the 1930s American books were written by leading American players who rebelled against Culbertson's attempts to take over the world. In many ways this was the 'golden age' in the development of bidding systems, both in the UK and USA. These are books which divide readers – you either love 'em or hate 'em!

If any of these items take your fancy, please contact me by email or phone. Payment can be by online banking, PayPal or cheque. Account details are: Card Game Books Sort code 40-25-23, account number 51564587. As my other catalogues say, I pride myself on accurate descriptions and most faults are described; minor flaws are, however, ignored. Books are in very good, or better, condition unless otherwise stated. Prices exclude postage which will be charged at £2.00 for the first item and £1.00 for each subsequent book up to a maximum of £7.00. However, in this catalogue, items 7, 12, 16, 17, 20, 23, 25, 26 and 28 are POST FREE. I am happy to post worldwide, but overseas postage will be charged at cost. I hope to post out within 2-3 days, even during the current lockdown

1. **ALBARRAN, Pierre and Robert de Nexon: NOTRE MÉTHODE DE BRIDGE.** **£12.00**

Paris 1945 10<sup>th</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> 1935). 8vo 229pp Paper covers with protective cover. Printed on poor quality paper. Text in French

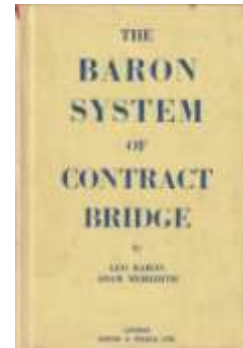
This is a detailed description of their hand evaluation methods, as well as their system which was based on a strong NT and 5 card majors. Responses are well covered and there are examples to illustrate their approach. There is a section relating to play and a short, but very interesting, section on psychic bidding.



2. **BARON, Leo and Adam Meredith:** THE BARON SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BRIDGE. **£8.00**

Leeds 1948 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 12mo 180pp Red cloth dw slightly chipped

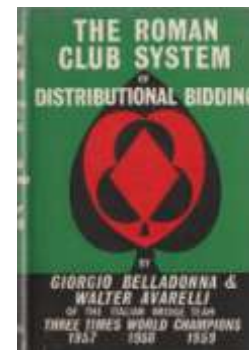
The major work on an obsolete system, but much of it is advocated in modern bidding. It was a precision built system planned round the need to find a fit and had considerable influence on bidding theory in general. An outline of the system was published 2 years earlier, but paper shortages at the time meant it only ran to 30 pages.



3. **BELLADONNA, Giorgio and Walter Avarelli:** THE ROMAN CLUB SYSTEM OF DISTRIBUTIONAL BIDDING. **£20.00**

London 1960 1<sup>st</sup> UK edition (1<sup>st</sup> USA 1959). 8vo 162pp Green cloth dw

Another system which is now obsolete, it was the authors' system which they used when winning the European and World Championships between 1957 and 1969. It is a clearly presented description of one of the most complex systems ever devised, using a multiple choice forcing 1C, a 17-20 NT, specialized twos and two sets of asking bids.



4. **BRIDGE HEADQUARTERS:** THE OFFICIAL SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BRIDGE. **£15.00**

Philadelphia 1932 1<sup>st</sup> edition 2<sup>nd</sup> printing. 8vo 233pp Brown suede cloth dw neatly repaired, but missing parts of the spine

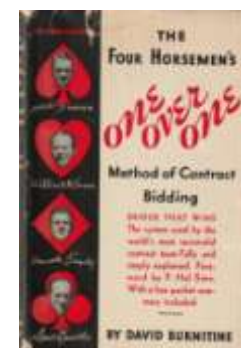
This is an important book, sponsored by Bridge luminaries who opposed Culbertson's attempt to make his system the standard one for Contract. However the 16 luminaries were not agreed. Had they put their money on a two club force and other strong twos, they may have succeeded.



5. **BURNSTINE, David:** THE FOUR HORSEMEN'S ONE-OVER-ONE METHOD OF CONTRACT BIDDING. **£12.00**

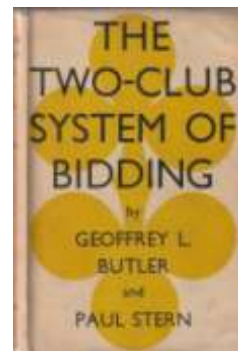
London 1932 1<sup>st</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> USA also 1932). 12mo 118pp Orange cloth dw - a very good copy.

This is a seminal work for its time, making one-over-one forcing but not two-over-one. It is still a playable system. It had lighter openings in third and fourth seats, weak pre-empts and a defined strength for NT openings.



6. **BUTLER, Geoffrey L. and Paul Stern:** THE TWO-CLUB SYSTEM OF BIDDING. **£8.00**  
London 1940 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 16mo 300pp Black cloth dw

This 2C system utilised the Milton Work count for hand evaluation, a strong NT and natural strong but non-forcing two bids in all suits except clubs. There was a raft of complications which would have confused its intended audience.



7. **COHEN, Ben and Terence Reese:** THE ACOL SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BRIDGE. **£12.00**  
London 1939 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> 1938). 8vo 64pp Dark grey card covers  
The early editions are quite rare.

The first edition was entitled *The Acol Two Club* with subsequent editions being titled as this one. This version has only minor changes from the original with subsequent editions having substantial revisions.



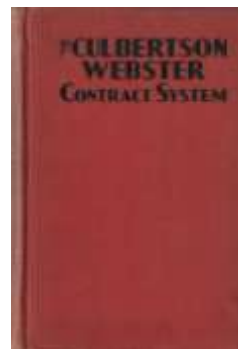
8. **CRANE, Joshua:** THE CRANE SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BIDDING. **£15.00**  
London 1937 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 12mo 118pp + 4 tear out summary pages Blue cloth dw slightly torn. Subtitle indicates *Advanced Method 1937*

This version of his system is closer to Culbertson, tending more towards approach bidding than his earlier book (*Common Sense in Contract Bidding*) There is an optional two club force to game, but still not very good for finding a fit if opener's suit is not supported.



9. **CULBERTSON, Ely:** THE CULBERTSON-WEBSTER CONTRACT SYSTEM. **£20.00**  
New York 1932 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 152pp Red cloth no dw

The hands and anecdotes are complemented by Webster's wonderful cartoons which make the book great fun, even today. Perhaps not quite a 'system' book, but worthy of inclusion.



10. **DOWNEY, Ned and Ellen Pomer: STANDARD BIDDING WITH SAYC.** £8.00

Toronto 2005 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 175pp Dec card covers

A version of SAYC which is popular in online games. However, the author's personal preferences are not always labeled as such.



11. **DRABBLE, Jon R: SIMPLY ONE TWO.** £10.00

Woodforde, South Australia 1975 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 144pp Dec card covers

The author devised a completely new bidding system, now only of interest to a collector. It uses 1C for all 16-19 hands and 1D for 20+ hands, and the resulting strain on the other openings shows. A number of the examples of the system in action seem forced.



12. **EBELING, Frederick J: REVOLUTIONARY FORCING PASS.**

£5.00

Sydney 1984 1<sup>st</sup> thus (1<sup>st</sup> 1958). 8vo 14pp Paper copy

A curiosity of the 1950s which was reprinted because of the interest at the time in forcing pass systems. A pass promises 13-17, one of a suit is natural and promises 8-12, 1NT is either 0-7 or 18-21, while 2 of a suit promised 22+. Interesting, but lacked sophistication, as one might expect in 1958.



13. **FRANSZ, Alex and Ron Klinger: MEDIUM CLUB RELAY.**

£15.00

Jakarta, Indonesia 1988 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 230pp Dec card covers

A system in which 1C covers all hands of 15+ as well as 12-14 hands with clubs; 1NT is 12-14 and 2C/2D openings are three suited hands; 1D promised 4 diamonds, but could include a 5 card club suit; major suit openings are five cards in hands not suitable for a 9-14 two level openings. As the titles suggests, relays are used extensively.



14. **GAROZZO, Benito and Leon Yallouze; adapted by Terence Reese: THE BLUE CLUB.** £10.00

London 1971 3<sup>rd</sup> reprint (1<sup>st</sup> 1969). 8vo 170pp Blue cloth dw

A very influential book in the UK and Australia in the 1970s. The book presents the system well and variants of it are still used by the world's best. 1C openings are 17+ with control responses, some canapé bidding, weak four card majors. Reese said it was an adaptation rather than a translation of a book originally published in French.

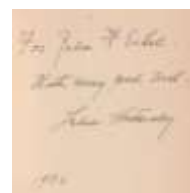


15. **HATTERSLEY, Lelia: HOW TO PLAY THE CULBERTSON SYSTEM.** £15.00

New York 1931 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 200pp Green cloth, gilt dec to front cover

**There is a signed dedication by the author.**

There is a foreword by Culbertson and it is described it as 'a pleasing presentation of Culbertson.' Do I need to describe Culbertson? I think not.



16. **HERON, Charles B: THE HERON SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BRIDGE.** £50.00

Dublin 1947 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 12mo 86pp Light brown dec thin card covers

A short club system under which a jump-shift response is required on 13 HCP so that other responses are non-forcing. Leslie Parris had not seen a copy, so I imagine there was a limited printing; a very rare item.

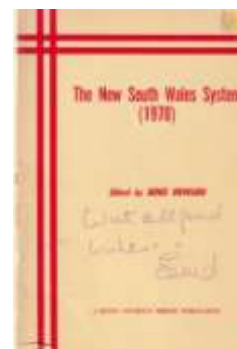


17. **HOWARD, Denis: THE NEW SOUTH WALES SYSTEM (1970).**

£15.00

Reldt, New South Wales 1970 1<sup>st</sup> edition thus. 8vo 70pp Dec card covers. There is an inscription to the front cover

The book shows that this version of the system was primarily written by Ron Klinger. An important book, even though the system was obsolete by 1977.

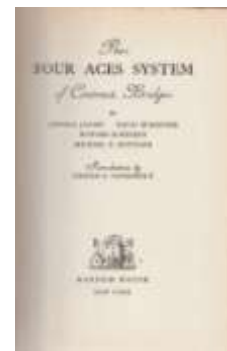




18. **JACOBY, Oswald, Howard Schenken, Michael Gottlieb and David Burnstine: THE FOUR ACES SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BRIDGE.** **£12.00**

New York 1935 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 302pp Dark red cloth, slight dulling to spine, gold dec to spine, no dw

An important book in the history of Standard American bidding and a better system than that of their rival, Culbertson, but it did not sell. According to legend, Burnstine lost £1,000 when he bet Culbertson that the book would sell 10,000 copies. The system is quite like the Goren Standard American of the 1950s except that a 3-2-1 honour count was used and there was no distributional point count.



19. **JASSEM, Krzysztof: POLISH CLUB INTERNATIONAL.**

**£10.00**

Baltycka 2014 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 188pp Dec card covers. As new. English translation

There are three options for both 1C and 1D openings; 1H/1S are 12-17 with a 5 card suit; 1NT is 15-17 possibly with a 5 card major; 2C is as in Precision, 2D is Multi; 2H/2S are two suited hands; 2NT is 6-10 with both minors. Strong hands are one of the 1C options.

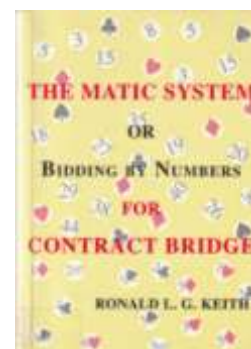


20. **KEITH, Ronald Leonard Gordon: THE MATIC SYSTEM OR BIDDING BY NUMBERS FOR CONTRACT BRIDGE.** **£5.00**

Reading 1996 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 88pp Dec stiff card

Ex-library book with reference no. on spine and mark to title page where library slip removed. A reading copy only, but very clean.

For 'opener' read 'informer' and for 'responder' read 'director'. The system was licensed by the EBU in 1982, but was not extended 3 years later. The author's hope was that this book would lead to the reinstatement of a licence. A version was published in 1974 under a different title. It is described as 'simple to learn' but a flick through it failed to convince me.



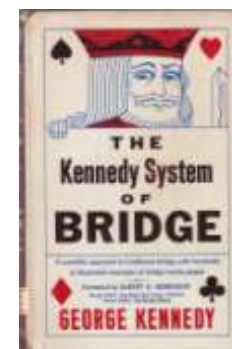
21. **KENNEDY, George: THE KENNEDY SYSTEM OF BRIDGE.**

**£10.00**

New York 1965 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 284pp Black cloth dw

**Signed dedication by the author**

A short club version (2+) of Standard American. There is very detailed coverage of how the bidding proceeds after each opening, using a system which the author mentions was devised in 1932. This is his only published work about his system.



22. **LEDERER, Richard:** LEDERER BIDS TWO CLUBS.     **£20.00**  
London 1934 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 220pp Blue cloth dw

In some ways this system was one of the precursors of Acol. It features light openings, weak no trump, 2C as forcing (not necessarily to game), other two bids are strong. All bids require fewer points than is usually considered sound. Well written.



23. **LENZ, Sidney:** MY SYSTEM OF CONTRACT BIDDING.     **£18.00**  
New York 1930 2<sup>nd</sup> printing (1<sup>st</sup> 1930). 16mo 85pp Dark red cloth

An early attempt to formulate a system of bidding for Contract and demonstrates the difficulties the authorities on Auction Bridge had in developing a bidding system for the new game.



24. **LINDELOF, E T:** THE COMPUTER-DESIGNED BIDDING SYSTEM COBRA.     **£18.00**  
London 1983 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 280pp Blue cloth dw

It is described thus by Tim Bourke and John Sugden: “A lemon that tries hard, but just does not work. Almost unreadable.” COBRA stands for Computer Oriented Bridge Analysis. However, Hugh Kelsey is much more enthusiastic in his Foreword.



25. **“LUCIAN”:** THE STRAIGHT BID.     **£55.00**  
Subtitled *or Standard Hand Bidding*.  
London 1936 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 12mo 64pp Black cloth dw, some marks to fep and title page

In addition to some press cuttings by Kenneth Konstam, there are further cuttings about the publication of the book with the titles of the papers from which they come. This suggests that this copy may have been the author’s own copy. “Lucian” was the pseudonym of Climenson Yelverton Charles DAWBARN (1859-1951), a well known Liverpool bridge player, who was possibly a lawyer as he also wrote a few legal books.



An aggressive system in which 1C is 18+ and suit openings of 1D through to 2C are 12-14 with five cards; 3C shows 15-17 with 5 clubs; 1NT is 12-14; 2NT 15-17 but can be 4441 (no 5 card suit).

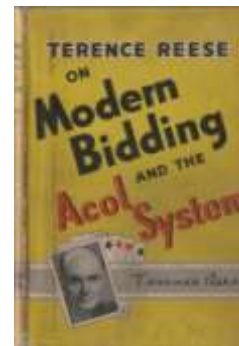
26. **LYNCH, Edgar:** BRIDGE THE DIAMOND SYSTEM. **£18.00**  
Littlebury, Worcester 1948 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 57pp Orange cloth dw

1C shows 10-11 and 1D 12-13 with no 5 card major; 1H/1S are 5 card suits with 12-14; 2C is an artificial game force; other 2 bids are 15-19 with 5 cards; 1NT appears to be 15-19. Leslie Parris described it as “possibly not very practical but probably not as perilous as it seems at first”.



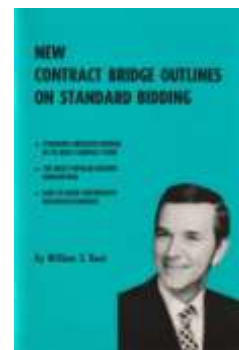
27. **REESE, Terence:** MODERN BIDDING AND THE ACOL SYSTEM. **£12.00**  
London 1952 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 12mo 128pp Green cloth dw

This is Reese’s only solo effort on the Acol system and was successfully intended for the established player. There is still a dependence on honour tricks and the 1NT is variable – 13-15 and 14-16, which shows how much the Acol-based systems of today vary from the earlier versions.



28. **ROOT, William S:** NEW CONTRACT BRIDGE OUTLINES ON STANDARD BIDDING. **£4.00**  
New York 1978 10<sup>th</sup> printing (1<sup>st</sup> 1971). 8vo 65pp Dec card covers  
*BBinE* does not record this title.

I confess to a lack of detailed knowledge of Standard American, but this looks like a comprehensive summary of it – 1NT is 16-18; 5 card majors; changes of suit at the 2 level require 11+.



29. **ROTH, Alvin and Jeff Rubens:** MODERN BRIDGE BIDDING COMPLETE. **£12.00**  
Subtitled *Introducing the Roth Point Count*  
New York 1968 1<sup>st</sup> edition. 8vo 512pp Black cloth dw

This presents a standard system using the Roth point count and also includes details of Roth’s methods plus his latest ideas on bidding.





30. **WEI, C.C:** PRECISION BIDDING IN BRIDGE. **£10.00**  
Port Chester, New York 1971 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1<sup>st</sup> 1969). 8vo 116pp Dec card covers

Those of us who have dabbled, or played, Precision are aware of Goren's version and the C C Wei version, Having played the latter, I'm not sure about the variations. This one has 1C of 16+ with a 1D response showing less than 8. Any positive response leads to game. 1NT is 13-15; 1H/1S show 5 cards whereas 1D can be made on 3 cards. There are no distributional points.



I am indebted to Tim Bourke and John Sugden for letting me use some descriptions of the content of books. Some others come from earlier works by Leslie Parris and Bill Sachen.