NIEKAS

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...

SAM MOSKOWITZ

on His Science Fiction Career

NIEKAS PUBLICATIONS • ISBN 0-910619-07-7 • ($7.75 CANADA) • $5.95 U.S.

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AFTER ALL THESE YEARS...SAM MOSKOWITZ ON HIS SCIENCE FICTION CAREER
A Niekas Publications Book
PRINTING HISTORY: Niekas Publications paperback edition/September 1991

For information: Niekas Publications, RFD 2, Box 63, Center Harbor, NH 03226-9729

ISBN 0-910619-07-7 • FCCS PX400.M911L4

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NIEKAS #43a

NIEKAS #43c, a suppliment mailed out with NIEKAS #43A, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS by Sam Moskowitz. Free with #43A or 43B. NIEKAS PUBLICATIONS, RR #2 Box 63, Center Harbor NH 03226-9729.

43B DELAYED

Like NIEKAS #41, #43 was supposed to be made up of two booklets, the Moskowitz and a second volume of 50-word short stories. As I write this in January, 1992, 43A has been ready for 4 months and 43B is still at least two months away from being ready. Rather than delay this further we are mailing it now and will send out XSF #2 when it is ready, probably with #44.

NIEKAS is undergoing one of its periodic production crisises, the last having been in late 1982 right after the appearance of XSF #1. (Maybe these anthologies are jimxed!) My ideal is to publish 3 issues a year. Like in 1982-5 we will probably be down to 1 or 2 a year but will get back up to speed as quickly as possible. We are looking for new people to help with production.

NIEKAS #44 is well along and will be a regular issue. The next few issues have been switched around because of our delays. Our Tolkien issue has been moved up to #45 and is being edited by Anne Braude (6721 E McDowell, #309A, Scottsdale AZ 85257). We had hoped to have it out early this year, in January 1992, to mark Tolkien's 100th birthday. Anne is joking that it is intended to come out on HER 100th birthday! Anyhow, it WILL be out this year and she is still looking for material. If you have any ideas please write her now.

To make room for the Tolkien we have moved the second edition of ONCE AND FUTURE ARTHUR back to #47. It will contain most of the Arthurian material from #38 and 39 plus new material on hand, especially a VERY nice piece from Susan Shwartz. If you have any ideas for additional material please drop me a line.

Joe Christopher is still working on the Dark Fantasy issue though that will probably be #49 now. We want to keep evenly numbered issues as general issues with a variety of material.

In the longer range we are considering special issues, or special sections in a general issue (like we did with Religion in SF, Laws of Magic in Fantasy, Islandia, Dr. Who, and Barbarian Fantasy in past issues). Anne Braude has suggested editing one on talking animal fantasy (from WIND IN THE WILLOWS to DUNCTON WOOD). Eventually there will be another volume on SILVERLOCK and Myers, and perhaps on political SF.

FEELING STUPID!

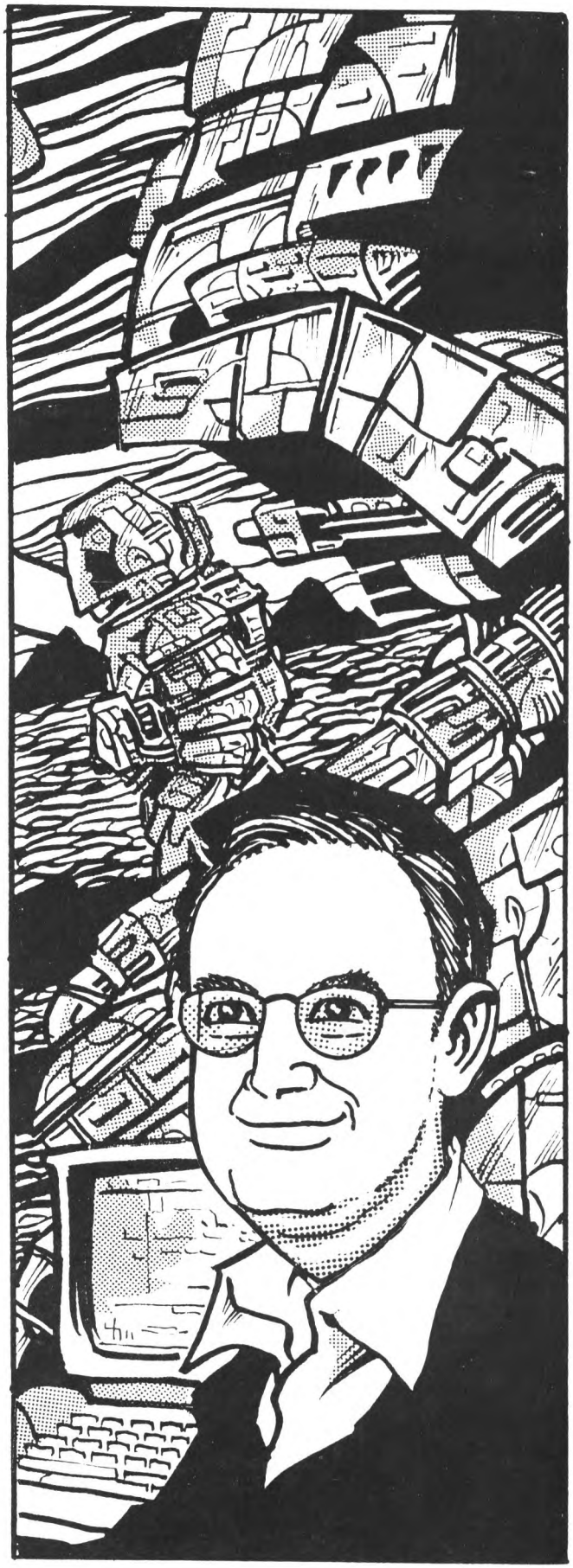
I need help to try to undo three very stupid mistakes I have made in the recent past!

>>Lost Subscriber! If you renewed NIEKAS at Chicon and paid with a check, and the number on your label does not reflect the extension, please write! I intended to take the information from the check and did not make any other note of it, and we forgot and deposited the check before doing so!

>>Lost Author! I copytyped a book review for NIEKAS 44 and forgot to put down the credits as to who wrote the review! The book is NATIVE TONGUE by Suzette Haden Elgin. If you wrote it please let me know!

>>Lost Correspondent! Finally, last April I got a lttter from Grace O'Malley whose address I wrote down as 11215 Vienna, Milwaukee WI 53212. A relative or friend of hers had suffered from a stroke and could not read, and she was looking for a source of fanzines on tape. I do have a circulating library of faanish materials on cassette which she had heard about. Anyhow the letter I wrote came back marked that there is no such number in Milwaukee. I tried directory assistance but they had no O'Malley on Vienna. Can anyone out there help me find her?

Thanks,
Ed Meskys



I: SAM MOSKOWITZ AND SCIENCE FICTION

BY FRED LERNER

There was a time when colleges didn't offer courses in science fiction, when research libraries didn't collect pulp magazines, when scholarly journals weren't interested in Robert Heinlein and Theodore Sturgeon and Philip K. Dick. There was a time when all the science fiction fans in the world could fit comfortably into a small auditorium, when amateur press associations and conventions were new concepts, when one could read all of the science fiction being published in English and still hold down a full-time job in the real world.

Yes, there was once such a time, fifty years ago and more, and one of the reasons we know it is that Sam Moskowitz was there.

Sam wasn't the first science fiction fan; he wasn't the first convention planner or the first fanzine publisher; he wasn't the first fan to sell stories to the science fiction magazines or to act as agent for fellow-writers. But he was the first person to realize that science fiction was a literature distinctive enough to have a history of its own; and that this mini-state of the Republic of Letters had a colorful citizenry whose collective biography was worth remembering and retelling.

The Immortal Storm has struck some critics as a remarkably silly title for a book about a handful of teenagers and their petty feuds. During the years in which New Fandom and the Futurians were struggling for domination of America's science fiction clubs and conventions, the Nazi tyranny was beginning its spread across Europe. While Sykora and Michel, Wollheim and Moskowitz feuded in hektographed fan magazines, the fate of Western civilization awaited the test of arms. But Sam's title for his history of early fandom has a ring of truth to it. Science fiction has evolved into a powerful tool for looking at the world around us. It has won a place in world literature, and has cast an influence on our culture that extends well beyond the reading public. It well may prove to be the most durable artistic phenomenon of the twentieth century. And *The Immortal Storm*, with its realization that science fiction has been from its beginnings as an identifiable literary form the product of a self-aware community of writers and readers, editors and critics, set a pattern that many of its historians have been careful to follow.

Many science fiction readers got their first exposure to the history of the genre from *Explorers of the Infinite* and *Seekers of Tomorrow*. These two collections of essays in literary biography traced science fiction's roots in the nineteenth century and before, and explored the variety with which twentieth-century science fiction was unfolding. Written for readers rather than scholars, these books found their way onto many a public and school library shelf. But they were based on first-person knowledge and extensive literary research; many a scholarly book—my own not least among

them—is indebted to Sam's efforts.

Nowhere is this more so than in the case of *Science Fiction by Gaslight* and *Under the Moons of Mars*. Too much of what passes for science fiction research is based on the drawing of conclusions from whatever stories lie close to hand. But there are a few assiduous scholars who have searched carefully through stacks of dusty books, crumbling pulp magazines, and yellowing newspapers, and by their efforts expanded our knowledge beyond the convenient and the familiar. In these two pioneering books, Sam has documented the pervasiveness of scientific and technological subject-matter in three decades of English and American popular fiction. Without understanding this phenomenon and the economic, social, and technical environment in which it arose, one cannot understand the emergence of the science fiction field as we know it today. No one has contributed more to this understanding than Sam Moskowitz.

I say this as a student of science fiction who knows the debt that SF scholarship owes to Sam Moskowitz. But that is not the only way in which I feel indebted to Sam. As a reader, I remember the anthologies and collections that Sam has put together; I owe my enjoyment of many stories to his editorial efforts. And as a fan who cherishes not only the science fiction literature but also the science fiction community, I am grateful to Sam for his contribution toward creating that community and some of its most enduring institutions, and for his documentation of its evolution.

In the pages that follow, both the long-time science fiction fan and the newcomer to this worldwide literary community can read the story of a remarkable career, told in the first person by one of the Grand Old Men of science fiction.✹

Fred Lerner is a science fiction bibliographer and historian, and one of the founders of the Science Fiction Research Association. He is the author of Modern Science Fiction and the American Literary Community *(Scarecrow Press, 1985), a study of science fiction's changing reputation in America, and editor of* A Silverlock Companion: The Life and Work of John Myers Myers *(Niekas Publications, 1988).*

Q 1: IN THE BEGINNING

***LET'S** begin with some background information. When and where were you born? Where were your parents from? What did they do? Where were you educated? What were some of the early jobs you had? How did you spend your youth?*

I was born June 30, 1920 on Prince Street not far from Spruce Street, Newark, N. J. The house was a three-story wooden tenement next to a synagogue (both no longer exist). The area was then predominantly made up of Russian Jewish immigrants with their own businesses, houses of worship, kosher restaurants, Yiddish-language theatres, and Yiddish motion picture marquees. Starting a half block north of my home, Prince Street was lined with stores for about two thirds of a mile and in front of them, side-by-side, there were pushcarts for the entire distance from which literally anything could be purchased. This unique street was known throughout the state. At the time I was born the first blacks were moving in from the South and a decade later the area, known as the Third Ward, was completely black with many remaining Jewish businesses. The Jewish residents at the time of my birth teetered on the brink of poverty.

My mother and father were both born in Russia within 300 miles of Odessa, and emigrated to this country at the turn of the century. My father arrived at the age of eighteen, and as he was large and strong physically, first worked in a grocery warehouse. Following his marriage he purchased a stand on the lower east side of New York City with a soda fountain, also selling tobacco products and candy. He could read Yiddish and taught himself to read, write, and speak English. My mother spent most of her life on a farm in Russia, until she left for America at the age of sixteen. It was against the Russian law for a Jew to own land in Czarist Russia, with the exception of those honorably discharged from the army. Since the term of service in the army was *life*, this right was rarely exercised.

My maternal grandfather had been snatched from the streets at the age of eight (which was standard practice for Jewish boys under the Czar). When he had been in the army twenty-five years, a son was born to the Czarina and all soldiers with twenty-five years or more of service (as well as all convicted murderers) could reenter civilian life if they wished. With his mustering out pay my grandfather invested in a farm with a mill and also did mason work. My mother could not until later years read or write any language, though she composed folk songs, both music and lyrics, which she sang to her six children.

Until his death in 1960, my father made a precarious living operating very small delicatessens, candy stores, and bakeries, and at the very end a launderette.

These early businesses were in the middle-class Newark suburbs of Montclair and Verona, so I grew up with neighbors and schoolmates that were WASP and Catholic, with myself, brothers, and sisters literally the only Jews in the public schools. There was little problem in the public schools, but at the Our Lady of the Lake Catholic school in Verona, class was let out

fifteen minutes before the public schools. There would be a gang of fifteen to twenty waiting to exterminate the Jewish menace at 3:00 P.M. when the school day ended, and it was my duty to distract them and hold them at bay long enough for my younger brothers to get home. I ingeniously, bloodily, and successfully performed this function for eight years. When we moved back to Newark, my heart sank when I faced the prospect of battling my way through a hundred thousand or more kids, but the city at that period was civilized and tolerant and anti-Semitism was less overt.

In my younger days I was involved in sports as a crack shortstop at baseball, usually organizing my own teams. I was playing soccer regularly fifty years ago, when most Americans had scarcely heard of it. In high school my favorite sport was boxing and it still is. Sports were curtailed for me by the demands of the family that I relieve my father evenings and weekends at whatever business he happened to be operating at the time. This started at the age of eight and continued until World War II. There were two lifelong results of this experience. First, I gained and retained a first-hand knowledge of how business operates, which combined with a business education has provided a strong foundation for my livelihood ever since. Secondly, I was convinced that I never wanted to run my own business and I never have.

The quality of my grade school and high school education was nothing less than superb. Tests given us near graduation from high school showed many of the students, including myself, grading at a general third year college level equivalency. In Newark, a student could voluntarily select in English class the grammar, creative, or oral courses. I took a creative course which involved writing a story, poem, essay, or article *every school day*. The Newark library was then, and still is, the best in the state of New Jersey. I made a heroic attempt to read it all.

A few years after the Wall Street crash my father went broke. We lost our home in Verona and moved into Newark. There was no public welfare then, and with his capital gone, my father, with my help, wheeled a pushcart with a half a ton of fruits and vegetables around the streets of Newark for many years until he recovered enough to buy a small candy store. With the perspective of maturity, as I review my behavior from early childhood into my teens, I was extraordinarily reliable, emotionally stable, conscientious, thrifty, concerned, and almost never in any kind of trouble. I got along extremely well with both youngsters and adults. I had the problem of overt racial prejudice, at fighting which I proved *physically* extremely formidable despite the seemingly unreasonable odds.

Well aware of the difficult times, I day-dreamed incessantly, but never let it interfere with the realities. There is no question but the Great Depression of the thirties influenced my behavior patterns and objectives more than any other single factor. My goals became modest, regular employment overvalued, and I always gave $1.10 for every dollar paid for my labor. A home, good clothing, regular meals still elicit an unvoiced prayer from me to this very day and will to the end of my life.

In high school my primary personal interests were in writing and acting. I had a voice of professional quality and the ability to memorize lines of a play virtually overnight. I had a stage presence and could improvise as I went along. This related to my introduction to poetry in first year high school. I memorized pages of it nightly, and loved it, particularly nineteenth-century American and British poetry. Recently, in organizing my non-fantasy paperback purchases of the last forty years, I found I had more volumes of poetry than any other single category. I also retained my interest in the theatre, primarily twentieth century plays, and there were periods when I attended up to fifty Broadway and off-Broadway plays a year.

During high school, on weekday evenings I sometimes worked in Smalley's Second Hand Magazine and Book Shop in Newark. After graduation from high school the National Youth Administration placed me as an assistant gym and playground aide, which duties included giving boxing instruction to youths whose one short-range ambition in life appeared to be to knock my head off. I spent almost all of the $19.00 a month salary keeping my teeth in shape. Eventually the head of the gym department confided in me that he felt that my students could be taught more about boxing if they assumed a vertical position.✹

Q 2: DISCOVERY

IN one article I read, the writer described you as "a walking encyclopedia of science fiction." When did you first become interested in science fiction? How did that interest develop? How did your parents and friends respond to this new interest?

When the depression forced a family move from a comfortable suburban home to three rooms in back of the store which my father ran as a cut-rate bakery (Kaiser rolls and sugar buns one cent each, milk nine cents a quart), my first glimpse of a science fiction magazine was the February 1932 issue of *Astounding Stories* featuring "The Pygmy Planet" by Jack Williamson, which I saw in a candy story near the corner of 17th Avenue and 18th Street. It was a creation of Wesso, depicting a planet suspended by a ray in a laboratory, with a tiny airplane flying towards it. I scrutinized it with utmost fascination, returning several times to view it through the plate glass window. Purchasing it was out of the question, for in an era when twenty cents could purchase a quart of milk and eleven Kaiser rolls, science fiction magazines were at best a frivolity.

One Sunday afternoon, about a year later, running full tilt down 17th Street near the corner of 15th Avenue, I braked abruptly and backed up to a candy store window, where suspended in all its technicolor splendor was the March 1933 *Wonder Stories*, with Frank R. Paul's intriguing cover of a polished, six-legged, insect-eyed machine with seven metallic tentacles carrying off a wide-eyed young girl in a form-fitting one-piece red suit and green boots with white tufted tops. Two men, one a bald-headed midget in a white tunic and the other a normal-looking individual in tight pants, boots and a fur collar, followed in hot pursuit. It was John Beynon Harris's (John Wyndham) ingenious story *Wanderers of Time*, in which diverse men from different eras travel through time and meet in a future when ants are the dominant species and build elaborate machines. The day of *Homo sapiens* is over.

I had no money to buy these wonderful magazines, all the more tantalizing because they were teaching us astronomy in the eighth grade and the impact of the knowledge that the planets were other worlds set my imagination on fire. I memorized every scrap of information available on the subject, frustrated by the limitations of knowledge. I was nicknamed "Astronomy," but when a classmate, Robert Bahr, wrote in my graduation autograph book; "Life drifts on from star to star/Even through the infinite far," I knew he hadn't made that up, at least not entirely. He must be a reader of those exotic elusive magazines. Sure enough, he was; but more than that, his father had begun reading them along with the early air war pulps in the late twenties, and at home were runs of *Amazing Stories*, *Amazing Stories Quarterly*, *Wonder Stories*, *Science Wonder Stories*, and *Science Wonder Quarterly* and he was perfectly willing to lend them to me providing I took only four issues at a time. I was in for a crash course in science fiction with an entire summer to absorb it.

Then, two blocks from the school, was the grocery store of schoolmate Victor Levin's father, and his

brother bought *Astounding Stories* and *Weird Tales*, neatly piling them alongside the empty soda water cases in the basement when he was finished with them, and saw no sense in keeping them if an acolyte really aspired to their ownership. Literally within three blocks of my home there were two second hand magazine shops and a stationery and candy store that also carried science fiction. Prices ranged from three for five cents to five cents each. The five-cent ones were the thick quarterlies, but if you had a quarter you could get six. One didn't often have a quarter.

I had recognized science fiction as something I wanted at first sight. The study of astronomy had fanned my interest to nova intensity, for the science fiction magazines were the only available means of speculation as to what might inhabit the enigmatic lights that comprised the engulfing canopy of stars overhead.

The family tolerated the monumentally accumulating piles of magazines, with slurs and constant threats to dispose of them as vermin collectors, but I was too strong a personality to intimidate easily. The kids either referred to my aberration as "that Buck Rogers stuff" or nicknamed me "Frankenstein," connecting the movie with science fiction. There was, in their allusions, an element of respect which they only lightly disguised.

Despite my youth, I was poignantly aware of the economic desperation of the times, as well as the seeming hopelessness of any meaningful future for myself. Beyond intellectual curiosity and entertainment, science fiction definitely represented an escape from the cruel realities. The utopian aspects of science fiction, the altered societies of the future, the new societies emerging from planetary catastrophe, the cities of other worlds absorbed me every bit as much as the bizarre explorations and adventure. Scientific and social advances in fictional form helped sustain me. Did I believe in space travel, atomic energy, death rays, television, synthetics, thinking machines, accelerated healing, fabricated foods, and all the other standards of science fiction? I not only believed it, I preached it!✹

Q 3: FANDOM

***EARLY** in life you became involved in science fiction fandom. How did you first become interested in fandom? What was the scope of your involvement? Why did you drop out of fandom? How has fandom changed since you were involved? How do you view fandom today?*

Hugo Gernsback launched The Science Fiction League in the May 1934 issue of *Wonder Stories*. This was intended to enroll thousands into a national organization, which would form a steady base of readership for his magazines and recruit new readers through their activities. Each issue of *Wonder Stories* ran pages in six-point type listing new members, chapters formed by those members, publications issued by those chapters, programs at their meetings, and peripheral activities engaged in. To form a chapter you had to have three members in good standing ask for a charter. I used to hang out and sometimes work in a second-hand magazine shop called Smalley's. To form a chapter I corraled Charles Purcell, an infrequent reader of science fiction, and Robert Bahr (whom I had to make director in order to get him to cooperate). I became member 910 and a charter was issued us by Charles D. Hornig, Assistant Secretary of the League (and editor of *Wonder Stories*) on May 27, 1935. Several impromptu meetings were held, with a William Weiner, an avid reader of considerable rotundity, in attendance.

As a result of the publication in *Wonder Stories* of Robert Bahr's name and address as director of the Newark Science Fiction League Chapter, he was sent copies of *The Fourteen Leaflet*, a science fiction fan magazine published by the Chicago Chapter, and *The Brooklyn Reporter*, issued by The Brooklyn chapter, the first chartered in the league.

With considerable difficulty I was able to disengage Bahr from these—though he spoke disparagingly of them, comparing them unfavorably with the professional magazines. I recognized them instantly for what they were. *The Brooklyn Reporter*, in particular, I practically memorized. It ran biographies of the editors F. Orlin Tremaine, Hugo Gernsback, Charles D. Hornig, T. O'Conor Sloane, C. A. Brandt; autobiographies of widely known and active fans Bob Tucker, Donald A. Wollheim, William L. Crawford, as well as articles by Forrest J. Ackerman; coverage of the activities of other chapters; ratings of the stories in all the newsstand magazines, including semi-pro and fan magazines, which I had never previously heard of; book reviews and columns on collecting science fiction, bibliographies, film reviews, a reader's question and answer column on science fiction, late-breaking news, and fan controversies.

The Fourteen Leaflet was more of a traditional club organ, but it carried much information by and about well-known author Otto Binder (half of Eando Binder), as well as by Jack Darrow, equally as famed as Forrest Ackerman as a demon letter writer in that early period. Every word in the magazine was on science fiction.

How I envied these fans who were "in the know," who met for interminable gab sessions. I wanted to enter the ensorcelled circle (as A. Merritt would have

put it) and be one of them. The break came when *Fantasy Magazine*, a fan magazine edited by Julius Schwartz, later the editor of *Superman* and *Batman* comics, sent a sample copy of their September 1936 fifth anniversary issue to all 2,000 members of the Science Fiction League. *Fantasy Magazine* was unquestionably the greatest fan magazine ever published, and the particular issue they mailed could have been an incomparable tool employed by Satan to entice fans to barter their souls in exchange. It led off with a story written in collaboration by Eando Binder, Jack Williamson, Edmond Hamilton, Raymond Z. Gallun, and John Russell Fearn. It had an article by H.G. Wells on why he wrote *Things to Come*. A previously unpublished short-short by Stanley G. Weinbaum. Memorials to Robert E. Howard by H.P. Lovecraft, Otis Adelbert Kline, and E. Hoffman Price. A review of his science fiction writing career by George Allan England, author of the great trilogy *Darkness and Dawn*. An autobiography by Eando Binder. A pictorial page of leading authors, including Robert E. Howard, and an incredible amount of news, book, and movie reviews. And they wanted ten cents a copy to add you to their subscription list.

I got Willy Weiner to go fifty-fifty with me on condition that though he was to read the magazine first, I got to keep it! The advertisements indicated it was possible to get the Stanley G. Weinbaum memorial volume *The Dawn of Flame and Other Stories* from Raymond A. Palmer for $2.50 or *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* by H. P. Lovecraft from Bill Crawford (who was also ready to place his semi-pro magazine *Marvel Tales* on the newsstands) for $1.00. More important than that were the ads for *Fanciful Tales*, whose first issue would feature H. P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, David H. Keller, M.D. and August W. Derleth; the *Science-Fantasy Correspondent* in a digest-sized printed format from Willis Conover; *The Science Fiction Fan* from Olon F. Wiggins; *The Science Fiction Collector* from Morris S. Dollens; The Science Fiction Advancement Association, with dues of ten cents a year which included their bulletin as well as *La Guerre du Lierre*, a volume collecting three of David H. Keller's short stories from the science fiction magazines. Of course they were printed in French, but what did that matter! It was a fairy-land of fantasy, and somehow, in one way or another, over a period of time I got them all.

Several months went by and no more *Fantasy Magazines* arrived. I wrote the editor Julius Schwartz, and his postcard apologizing for lateness was probably the first fan correspondence I received. One by one single copies of the fan magazines began to trickle in, including *The Science Fiction Fan*, Donald Wollheim's *The Phantagraph*, the Philadelphia group's *Fantasy Fiction Telegram*, and, most important for me, *The Science Fiction Collector*. The publisher of the *Collector*, Morris Scott Dollens of North St. Paul, Minnesota, did not own a typewriter, mimeograph, or printing press, but he did own a hektograph. He lettered all his stories, articles, and bibliographies word-by-word by hand, illustrated them in full color, and turned out his little magazine every three weeks. Among his features was a comic strip which, like everything else, he wrote and illustrated himself.

This looked like opportunity to me. Obviously the man needed help and, just as obviously, he would not object to handwritten manuscripts. I owned no typewriter at the time. I dashed off for him short stories, articles, and bibliographies. The first thing I ever had published in the fan press was "A Complete List of All the Serials Ever Printed in *Air Wonder*, *Science Wonder*, and *Wonder Stories*," in the February 14, 1937 issue of *The Science Fiction Collector*. That early, my collection of all the primary American magazines except *Weird Tales* was nearly complete, with every word in them carefully read. It is interesting to note that the very first article I ever wrote for the fan press, not including fiction or bibliographies, was called "Case History," and centered on the special science fiction issue (August 1923) of Hugo Gernsback's *Science and Invention*. It was not published until the July-August-September 1939 issue of Robert A. Madle's *Fantascience Digest*, because Dollen's magazine had been taken over by Philadelphia fan John V. Baltadonis and the manuscript sidetracked. Yet, on rereading the piece, I find that it contains information that has never been published elsewhere and still has reference value fifty years later. It was published across-the-page from an early Ray Bradbury attempt at humor, "Why Ghouls Leave Home."

There were a lot of fan magazine *titles*, but few were published frequently. The big thing was personal correspondence. Everyone had pen pals, and traded news and opinions about the fantasy field with them. By 1937 I was corresponding regularly with John V. Baltadonis, Robert A. Madle, Donald A. Wollheim, Julius Schwartz, Morris Dollens, Claire P. Beck, and even fans in Australia like Marshall McClennan. It used to take letters three months to get to Australia and three months for a reply, but we were young and immortal and had all the time in the world.

Through correspondence I found that fans like Bill Miller and Jim Blish lived only about three miles from me, and both of them published fan magazines, *Phantastique* and *The Planeteer* respectively. By June 1937, I had my own fan magazine out. *Helios*, a Greek word for the sun, was hand-set in type one slug at a time by Richard Wilson. It sported a woodcut cover by Dollens, and included Wollheim and Blish among the contributors. After two issues I switched to the hektograph and presented a much more elaborate publication, illustrated in full color, including profes-

sional material by Clark Ashton Smith, David H. Keller, and John Russell Fearn, as well as a lengthy scoop on a mass of Lovecraft material scheduled for *Weird Tales* by its editor, Farnsworth Wright.

The fan magazines were another dream world. We published our own magazines, wrote material which was often featured on the cover, received letters of comment from readers across the country, and had the thrill of laying out the material and making up our own contents page. On the other hand, it had its practical side. We were getting trial-and-error experience at editing, writing, illustrating, and production that was going to be worth something someday to many of us. Eventually our publications were reviewed by the professional magazines.

The extent of my involvement in science fiction fandom from 1937 on was intensive and all-embracing. I wrote hundreds of articles—most of them serious—as well as fiction, columns, reviews, news features and poetry (under the pen name of Robert Sanders Shaw). I published many fan magazines of my own. I operated a manuscript clearing house supplying other fan magazines with material. I ran local clubs, regional conventions, and national conventions. I conducted elaborate correspondence and became an avid collector of professional magazines, fan magazines, related periodicals, and ephemera (the overwhelming majority of which I retained). I was best known and most influential for my articles.

I never dropped out of fandom at any time since 1936. I receive about 50 different fan magazines on a regular basis currently. I was director of the Eastern Science Fiction Association which I founded in 1946, and an active member until it was disbanded in May 1988. I was a charter member of The Fantasy Amateur Press Association in 1937 and am still an active member today. I attend several major national and regional conventions a year, and I still write extensively for a few fan magazines. Despite heavy pressures on my time, I can prove beyond any refutation that I have been more active than many of the youngsters who consider themselves on the go, and in every year without exception from the time I entered. There have been no hiatuses. I *never* gafiated.

Fandom has changed primarily in magnitude since I entered it. At the time I was heating up, there were, estimating generously, one hundred active fans in the entire world. There are today thousands. At that time I knew, personally or by reputation, every living active fan. Today, I know only a fraction of them: not because I am negligent, but because there are just too many. The fans are immensely more affluent today. The magazines that scores of them publish would have been totally beyond the resources of my contemporaries. For example, fifty copies of a 32-page issue of my fan magazine *Helios* ran about $1.70 for everything, including paper, inks, deterioration of hektograph gelatine, staples, and postage—and that was a strain on my resources. Some fans today publish fan magazines that cost them $3000 to $5000 per issue. The education level is much higher today. College is today the norm; with us it was the exception. We rarely traveled; a personal visit warranted a special write-up. We fought frightfully, unreasonably, unnecessarily, with stupid power plays in a microcosm. After a while too many fans (not myself) became inbred, magnifying their importance and becoming so inward-looking that they even ignored the professional science fiction world. They became fandom fans, which was a meaningless dead end. The main thing we had in common, which was probably greater than anything the fans possess today, was a sense of being special: of closeness, of evangelizing, of pioneering. Everything we did was new, and spreading the gospel of science fiction was an end in itself. We expected no reward and were grateful for the tiniest successes. The early days of fandom for me, like first love for many, was filled with a thousand thrills of a special kind. But taken as an overall pattern, the fans of today have more of everything and often better. For me, the areas of fandom I enjoy most are being infringed by the academics. That includes research, collecting, talks with the more serious delvers into those areas.✹

Q 4: PRODOM

***HAVING** written primarily for the fan magazines, how did you make the jump to the professional magazines? Was it difficult to make the transition? What was your first sale to a professional magazine? How much were you paid for the piece? What were your reactions when it was published? How was it received by others?*

I had decided, even while in high school, that writing science fiction was a hopelessly difficult way of making a living, and I had no intention of giving such an effort any priority. When I graduated high school in June 1938, the problem of obtaining work did not bother me too greatly because by the end of the summer I was engrossed in the task of preparing the first World Science Fiction Convention, planned for the July 4th weekend in 1939. With that behind me, job hunting became more intensive and ever more elusive. I had taken a business course in high school, which qualified me for clerical jobs including typing, filing, bookkeeping, business machine operation, and related work, none of which proved to be available. I applied for factory work, laborer, retail store clerk, warehouseman, to be constantly rebuffed. The closest I had to work was the National Youth Administration job previously mentioned. It was a sobering and scarring period that left its mark on my entire generation.

In 1940, desperate and humiliated by the job-hunting experience, I decided to take a crack at writing, on the long-shot that I might have selling capability. Together with a schoolmate of mine named Eugene Kovacs (who had introduced me to Thomas Wolfe, James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, and William Faulkner, all high school underground reading in the thirties), I enrolled in an adult extension course in creative writing at Weequahic High School in Newark, to fine-hone my latent talents, if any.

The course cost four dollars for ten evening sessions, and the instructor was a man in his early forties whose publishing credentials appeared to be a few items in the little magazines. After each lecture he gave us a writing assignment and returned the one previously given with hand-written comments. These comments were unflaggingly complimentary, which gradually infuriated me, for I wanted to be whipped into shape, not buttered up. Finally, when he returned my short story "Venusians Are Human" with the penciled comments: "Good melodrama—effective combination of humanly recognizable and fantastic elements. I think you have the right mixture. Why not try to sell it?" I left the course after only six classes and never came back. If I met him now, I would apologize.

I decided to submit several stories anyway. This decision was given further spur by several events. First, *Thrilling Wonder Stories* in its October 1938 issue had announced a contest for amateur writers, with the best stories to be published and paid for at going rates. The first two announced winners were Alfred Bester and Graph Waldeyer, and there were a group of honorable mentions. This was an ongoing contest, with new winners selected periodically.

The second was the arrival in Newark, with residence at the local YMCA, of John Victor Peterson,

who had sold three stories to *Astounding Science-Fiction* in 1938 and 1939 and one to *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. I invited him home to dinner, serving him beef stew, which he seemed grateful for. He had some unsold stories. This gave me an idea. Since Newark is only ten miles from New York, it was just as easy for me to carry in several stories as one. I offered to peddle his stories around for a 10% agent's fee on any I sold, and he agreed. I also got well-known authors Harry Walton; Thomas S. Gardner, who had previously sold to *Wonder Stories*; W. Lawrence Hamling, who had clicked at *Amazing Stories*; Abner J. Gelula, who had made several sales to *Amazing*; and a number of other aspirants.

In April 1940 I became a part-time literary agent. James V. Taurasi, former publisher of *Fantasy News*, soon joined me in the Taurasi-Moskowitz Literary Agency, specializing in science fiction. Every second Tuesday I made the rounds of *Astounding Science-Fiction*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Astonishing Stories*, *Planet Stories*, *Comet*, *Weird Tales*, and other publications that came and went, and dropped off manuscripts, picking up previous ones that had been rejected. Strangely enough, our big problem was getting enough manuscripts to sell.

One of the best companies to sell to was Standard Magazines Inc., publishers of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Startling Stories*, *Captain Future*, and *Strange Tales*. They were presided over by Leo Margulies, "The Little Giant of the Pulps," who was reputed to make the staggering sum of $25,000 annually. Working for him was Mort Weisinger, later to become editor of *Superman* comics, and on the staff were Oscar J. Friend, H. L. Gold, Jerome Bixby, Sam Merwin, and other names familiar to the science fiction world. They paid one cent a word upon acceptance, which was then a top pulp rate. I had submitted a short story titled "World of Mockery," which received an honorable mention in their amateur story contest. Margulies had sent my partner Taurasi a letter which stated: "Sam Moskowitz's yarn 'World of Mockery' is a nicely written yarn—one of the smoothest stories yet submitted for our amateur story contest...I'd like to see Moskowitz try us again. He has something on the ball."

While I used to drop off stories at Margulies, he rarely waited for me to pick them up, but always mailed them back. In May 1940, I received a letter which stated: "There's nothing wrong with 'The Man Who Lost a World,' and I hate like hell to inform you that, ordinarily, it would have won an acceptance from *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. The sad truth, however, is that Sam Merwin's story, 'Exiled from Earth,' recently purchased, and announced in the current issue of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, carries the identical theme....By all means, keep slanting material at us. These least few yarns show that you can make the grade. I'd be gratified to include you on our table-of-contents one of these days."

In truth, those letters were as discouraging to me as they were encouraging. In the highly competitive writer's market, with all the then-current big names competing, a new writer's story quality wasn't enough. Established writers' names offered a sales edge, even if their stories were slightly below par. To my sales credit, I suggested the valid argument that I was so well known in science fiction, and had received so much publicity as the chairman of the first World Science Fiction Convention in 1939, that my name on the cover had more sales value than many of the mediocrities that did little more than fill space.

The big break came when F. Orlin Tremaine, who had been editor of *Astounding Stories* from 1933 to 1938 and had proven to possess a remarkable story sense, catapulting that magazine to leadership in quality and circulation within a few months, returned to the field to edit *Comet*. Though Tremaine paid one cent a word, there were so many magazines that he had great difficulty getting first look at the name authors. He was forced to examine the work of new authors more carefully than he ordinarily might have. I sold him a novelette by John Victor Peterson, "The Lightning's Course," which he made the lead story of the January 1941 issue, and then I sold him "Lie on the Beam" by the same author and "Cosmic Tragedy" by Thomas S. Gardner. Speaking to me, he bemoaned the fact that he couldn't seem to get anything that was fresh and a little different. I figured "What the hell!," the man was buying, why not try something of my own. I had written a 6,000-worder titled "The Way Back" about a physical brute of a man, who didn't fit in with society, who searched the starways with a space ship provided for him to locate a radioactive metal called Roxite, vital as a prime energy source. He explores a world inhabited by a highly civilized race and finds that specialized bits of knowledge coupled with his great strength make him a valuable asset to this culture.

Tremaine liked the story, but asserted it was more of an outline than a story. If I would double the length, filling in the culture of this planet, he would guarantee acceptance because he liked my writing style. I lengthened the story and he kept his word, including it in the January 1941 issue with Peterson's. He also included a short-short by Robert W. Lowndes, that well-known editor/author's first sale, in the same number.

Tremaine tentatively accepted two more stories of mine, "Man of the Stars" and "The First Mutant." However, he needed a major novelette for a forthcoming issue as a cover story and sat down with me and kicked around the plot of a story about a man who travels faster than light for the first time, lands on an inhabited advanced world around another star, and discovers that in exceeding light both his vessel and

himself have become invisible. The adventures of an invisible man in an earthlike civilization made up "Outcast of Light." I had to rewrite it three times to suit his very specific requirements, because he wanted to reintroduce stories along the line of Warner Van Lorne's "Strange City" and "World of Purple Light."

The final 15,000-word version was accepted—I still remember after all these years—on February 10, 1941. It seemed that I was in a position where Tremaine was going to develop me. He had three of my stories in backlog. Then, disappointing sales results began to come in on his first two issues. So disappointing, in fact, that he felt he was on an issue-to-issue basis. He suggested that I take back "Man of the Stars," which had not been written to his order and therefore had general appeal, and see if I could sell it elsewhere.

"World of Mockery," which had received honorable mention in *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, had been submitted to Malcolm Reiss at *Planet Stories* and rejected. When "The Way Back" appeared in *Comet*, Reiss contacted me and asked to look at the story again. On rereading it, he said that if I would remove a short segment he would buy it. I complied and that story of a man who has crash-landed on a moon of Jupiter, driven mad by a planet of grotesque humanoid creatures so impressionable to his thought waves that they imitate every word, action, and desire that enters his mind, appeared in the Summer 1941 issue.

I then submitted "Man of the Stars," an 11,000-worder, and Reiss ran it in the Winter 1941–42 issue. It was by far the most popular story in the issue, beaten out only by Frederic Brown's "The Star Mouse" as the most popular of the year. The roster of authors competing for reader attention that year included Nelson S. Bond, Isaac Asimov, Leigh Brackett, Henry Kuttner, Raymond Z. Gallun, Manly Wade Wellman, Ross Rocklynne, Frank Belknap Long; and the only relatively new authors fitting into the contents pages besides myself were Bob Tucker and Raymond Van Houten (who was one of our clients and whose story had been originally scheduled for *Comet*).

Tremaine's *Comet* did not survive past its fifth issue. He made a few abortive attempts to get new financing for it. My remaining stories, written to suit Tremaine's tastes, proved unsaleable elsewhere.

Julius Unger, a prominent science fiction book and magazine dealer of the period, had been up to see Lowndes, who was editing *Science Fiction Quarterly*, a magazine featuring complete novels. Lowndes, who was forced to pay very low rates, had no novel for the next issue and Unger told him he knew a skilled woman writer who was part way through one. At his rates, she would have to publish under a pen name. Lowndes was most anxious to get the novel.

I was the skilled woman writer part way through a science fiction novel. I had never attempted a novel before, so I decided to string together the plots of four stories I had in mind in order to make the 60,000 words needed. I began to write the novel, which was supposed to be finished in two weeks in order to make Lowndes's deadline. I suffered from eyestrain at the time, and retyping 60,000 words from my rough draft to rush order was a bit too much for me. My sister Pearl was a typist at the Army Signal Corps in Red Bank, so I gave her the novel and in between other work she began retyping it for me. Lowndes was only offering $200 for the novel, but it would have been a great psychological coup to place it. About one third of the way through the retyping job, Taurasi, who was acting as a go-between, reported to me that Lowndes had made an arrangement to reprint some of Ray Cummings's old novels at $100 apiece, and would no longer require the work of the brilliant but anonymous woman writer.

The novel, "Guardian of the Universe," still sits in my files, one-third retyped, the paper yellowing with age, and obviously has never been submitted anywhere. I doubt that it ever will be.

The life of a freelance writer became very clear to me then. I was still selling stories through the agency, but not enough to make it worthwhile. The war in Europe had eased things economically in the United States, and jobs began to open up. I secured a position through the summer of 1942 with the post office, then another driving a delivery truck for United Parcel in the fall. For the first time I had a steady income, and even started a savings account. Writing began to lose some of its appeal for me. Periodic calls from the draft board after Pearl Harbor made it appear that the armed forces would soon provide my next regular position.✹

Q 5: NEW FANDOM

YOU were quite active in New Fandom, the association which sponsored the first science fiction convention in New York in 1939. How did the group come about? What was your role? What did it accomplish? How would you describe its significance?

The International Scientific Association, a group composed of science hobbyists and scientifictionists, had sponsored the first formal science fiction convention in the United States in February 1937. Held in Astoria, New York, it drew about forty attendees, including well-known authors Otis Adelbert Kline and Otto Binder; editors Mort Weisinger and Charles D. Hornig; artist Charles Schneeman; and many prominent fans. At that convention a committee was appointed to investigate the practicality of holding a World Science Fiction Convention in conjunction with the World's Fair to be held in New York City in 1939. Chairman of that committee was Donald A. Wollheim and supporting members were Robert A. Madle, Willis Conover, Jr., and John J. Weir.

Unfortunately, the ISA had an internal schism and was dissolved within months of this event, so the committee was also dissolved. President of the association before its dissolution was William S. Sykora. He was at bitter odds with Wollheim. I was, at the time, an incredible sixteen-year-old whirlwind of activity, writing scores of articles and hundreds of letters, publishing my own fan magazine, joining clubs. When I first met Sykora at the Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference in late 1937, I mentioned that it would be wonderful if I could run a similar affair in Newark where I lived. He wanted to know why I couldn't. "Money!" was my answer. "How much?," he asked. "Fifteen dollars," I replied. "I'll bankroll you," he said.

It was incredible. Several direct mail circulars were sent out to some hundreds of fans and professionals. A poster was printed to be placed in libraries, public buildings, and other places where people might see it. A hall adequate to seat 125 was rented for three dollars and a buffet luncheon for an anticipated fifty attendees was set up for ten. No admission was charged, but fourteen one-shot fan magazines were solicited and sold to pay expenses. The first auction ever at a science fiction convention was held. Some 125 people showed up. Feature speakers were John W. Campbell and Mort Weisinger; three moving pictures were shown; and a vote was taken to set up a convention committee for an affair in New York City, to be held in 1939 to supersede the one planned by the defunct ISA.

Donald A. Wollheim, who had been head of the disbanded convention committee, was also a key figure in the Committee for the Political Advancement of Science Fiction (CPASF), a leftist group within fandom. At a luncheon with John Campbell and Leo Margulies at which William Sykora was present, he made a bid for the support of those pivotal editors, asserting that he had, in his Committee, an organization which could put on the convention, whereas Sykora and I did not. The ball was back in our court. Either we produced a viable sponsoring organization, or these two

major professional figures would not support us.

A young, self-confident eighteen-year-old by that time, I envisaged no problem in creating a major sponsoring body within a few weeks. A friend of mine, Raymond Van Houten, had taken over the Science Fiction Advancement Association, a body with national membership originally founded in 1936. He was currently publishing a club organ, *Tesseract*, but the Association was fundless and he was trying to get some responsible group to assume its financial obligations. This I legally and formally did, but absorbed his association into a newly-created one which I called New Fandom. Into this I incorporated the official organ of the SFAA, my former magazine *Helios*, a minor publication called *Fantasy Review*, and a manuscript bureau for the placement of articles, fiction, and poetry in fan magazines. An official organ, also called *New Fandom*, was turned out, well mimeographed with colorful silk-screen covers, and membership was set at one dollar, including the magazine and admission to the convention

The result was positive both from critical and financial aspects. It so happened that two members of the opposition, Donald A. Wollheim and Richard Wilson, had also been members of the Science Fiction Advancement Association. By this slight-of-hand magic, they were now full-fledged members of New Fandom.

I then took all of this to John W. Campbell and Leo Margulies, showing them an effective organization and a *united front* since members of the Committee for the Political Advancement of Science Fiction were also members of New Fandom. Now there was only a *single* group seeking to put on the convention. I received instant approval. The roadblocks had been broken for the presentation of the First World Science Fiction Convention.✹

Q 6: QUEENS SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE

YOU were a charter member of The Queens Science Fiction League, historically one of the most important clubs of the '30s. How did the group get started? Who was involved in its founding? What made it so important?

James V. Taurasi had received a charter for the formation of the Queens Chapter of the Science Fiction League in October 1937, holding meetings in the cellar of his home in Flushing. Donald Wollheim, aided by Frederik Pohl, used to make a sport of infiltrating and then, through technicalities, breaking up science fiction clubs formed in New York City. A motion made by Pohl that the club send a delegate to the American Youth Congress, a leftwing organization of the time, and that each of the members contribute ten cents to support it, received opposition from Director Taurasi, and he was threatened with impeachment. When I applied for membership with a friend Alex Osherof, I was rejected because it was known that I would support Taurasi, who shortly resigned. The name of the group had by that time been changed to the Greater New York Science Fiction League Chapter.

Those of us who were "reactionaries," anti-communists, formed a new club with the name of the Queens Science Fiction League and obtained an official charter. The Wollheim-Pohl group gleefully disbanded the Greater New York chapter, as planned. The heart of the new Queens chapter was Taurasi, Sykora (who had also been dropped from the rolls of the old group for non-attendance), Mario Racic, Jr., a fantasy movie buff, myself, and a powerfully-built young man named Hyman Tiger, who was a close friend of Scott Meredith, the well-known New York literary agent who was also a member.

The success of the club was due to its carefully arranged formal programs, to which Julius Schwartz, who was to become the editor of *Superman* comics, contributed a great deal because of his widespread professional contacts in the field. Average attendance at the meetings of the group, held in the Bohemian Hall in Astoria, site of the science fiction convention of 1937, was thirty, which led us to adopt the slogan "A small convention at every meeting." Through the years there was a parade of famous names appearing and speaking at our meetings, including John W. Campbell, Willy Ley, Eric Frank Russell, Frank R. Paul, Farnsworth Wright, Mort Weisinger, Leo Margulies, L. Sprague de Camp, Jack Williamson, Eando Binder, and others of lesser durability, as well as the cream of the fans of the greater New York area.

An integral component of the success of the Queens SFL and later the First World Science Fiction Convention was the weekly newspaper *Fantasy News* published and edited by James V. Taurasi. Though the writing and mimeographed reproduction were crude, the news reporting was first-rate, and a file of this newsweekly is jammed with basic data unavailable elsewhere to researchers. The pages of this magazine promoted the Queens chapter, with elaborate write-ups on the talks of the featured guests. It promoted New Fandom and the First World Science Fiction Conven-

tion, and it was a source of publicity for the professionals in the field. They scratched our backs and we scratched theirs.

The Queens SFL provided the basic volunteer corps for the First World Science Fiction Convention. There was no shortage of dedicated workers.

For a period of about one year, New Fandom, the Queens SFL, and *Fantasy News* were the most powerful triad in the amateur science fiction movement, and I was involved up to my armpits in all three.✹

Q 7: FIRST WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

YOU were also involved in helping to plan and organize the First World Science Fiction Convention in New York in 1939. Can you describe the first convention? How large was the attendance? Who were some of the writers who were present? What were some of the issues that were discussed? What are some of your most lasting memories of the event? How did the convention differ from today's conventions?

To place that first world convention into perspective, it must be understood that everything was *first*. Outside of the Newark affair, which had been presented as a test, there was no model. I was the chairman and the key factor in the event, and when I began work on it I was eighteen years old; I had just turned nineteen a week before the convention was held. Fundamentally it was the work of four people: William S. Sykora, James V. Taurasi, Mario Racic, Jr...and myself.

The Guest of Honor was Frank R. Paul, Gernsback's original illustrator on *Amazing Stories*. Feature speakers were John W. Campbell and Mort Weisinger, as well as Paul. The film *Metropolis* was shown and on the first of three days (July 2, 1939) it was estimated that 200 were in attendance, many of them wives, girlfriends, and sisters of the prominent professionals and fans. Notables in attendance included Ray Cummings, Otis Adelbert Kline, Harl Vincent, Nelson S. Bond, Jack Williamson, Eando Binder, Ross Rocklynne, Manly Wade Wellman, Edmond Hamilton, Isaac Asimov, Leo Margulies, Malcolm Jameson, L. Sprague de Camp, Robert A. Young, Norman L. Knight, Ray Bradbury, Scott Meredith, Julius Schwartz, Harry Harrison, and Richard Wilson

What I remember particularly of the convention was that when I arrived, one member of the convention committee, James V. Taurasi, had refused entrance to Donald A. Wollheim, Frederik Pohl, Cyril Kornbluth, Robert W. Lowndes, and Jack Gillespie, all members of the Futurian Society of New York, which had been working vigorously and dedicatedly to destroy the convention. They had, with their other sympathizers, with published letters and personal visits urged the professional editors to withdraw all support from the convention. When the moving picture *Metropolis* was announced, they asserted that we had obtained it from Nazi sources and therefore all science fiction people should boycott the convention. (It had been obtained from a New York City rental company.) Before the formation of New Fandom they had tried to take the convention away from us. They had announced in print that they didn't think there should be any convention at all. In the past, Wollheim had prevailed upon Olon F. Wiggins, publisher of *The Science Fiction Fan*, to ban all material by myself or my friends from its pages and take an anti-convention position. Frederik Pohl had previously prevented me from joining a New York science fiction club. They had published statements asserting that they would not attend the convention and urged all others to follow suit. Lowndes, in one of a number of anticonvention articles, stated that New Fandom was "an open, reactionary axis designed to represent stf. (through the medium of the World's Fair convention) as a meaningless mass of juvenile escapism," and that it was the duty of his group "to expose the

crooked workings of New Fandom."

A Futurian Federation of the World had been formed which could be considered an alternative to New Fandom. At the convention they were passing out a yellow printed brochure titled "A Warning," which among other things stated: "The World's Science Fiction Convention of 1939 in the hands of such ruthless scoundrels is a loaded weapon in the hands of such men." All the foregoing was a small part of our growing suspicion that this group boded us no good.

When they refused to promise not to cause a disturbance in the hall and when I further discovered six other pro-leftist booklets stashed under a radiator for distribution, I called the police and asked them to keep them out. There is not a modicum of doubt in my mind, after fifty years, that they intended to break up the convention. They nearly succeeded.

To add to it all, I had an unbearable toothache through the entire three days, which took considerably off the edge. Because of the foregoing problem the convention was late in opening, but few things gave me a greater thrill, then to watch somewhere in the area of 200 people: editors, professionals, artists, fans from all areas of the nation take their seats for the opening of the convention. This was a precedent that would be repeated in U. S. and abroad many times up to the present day and I am sure will persist long after everyone who reads this statement has gone on to his or her great reward beyond social security.

Called upon to speak at that first convention were John W. Campbell, who stressed the greater sophistication he was giving to his literary product in *Astounding Science-Fiction*; Mortimer Weisinger, then involved in the editing of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Startling Stories*, and *Strange Stories*; Leo Margulies, editorial director of those publications who "didn't know you fans could be so sincere" and sat down in back of the hall with Weisinger and planned a new magazine, *Captain Future*; Kenneth Sterling announcing, for the first time, the publication of *The Outsider* by H.P. Lovecraft from Arkham House, a company founded by August W. Derleth; as well as Guest of Honor Frank R. Paul, the first science fiction magazine cover artist, who as part of his speech ridiculed 1923 Nobel Prize winner Robert Millikan (first to isolate the electron) who had written that "we should stop dreaming about atomic power and solar energy." Paul's reply was: "What seems utterly impossible today may be commonplace tomorrow." History has shown Paul 100% right and Millikan 100% wrong.

I auctioned off donated material for two days and remember it well. There were original manuscripts by Stanley G. Weinbaum (the complete version of *The Black Flame*, bought by Forrest J. Ackerman and subsequently stolen from him by a visitor), as well as other manuscripts by Weinbaum, Robert E. Howard, Clark Ashton Smith, David H. Keller, August W. Derleth, Manly Wade Wellman, Ralph Milne Farley, and Harl Vincent, in addition to the complete manuscript of *Cosmos*, a novel published in eighteen installments by *Fantasy Magazine* and written by seventeen authors including A. Merritt, John W. Campbell, E.E. Smith, Otis Adelbert Kline, Edmond Hamilton, and a selection of then popular science fiction authors. I sold covers by Frank R. Paul and H.W. Wesso (some never published), as well as a large selection of black-and-whites by them and by Edd Cartier and Virgil Finlay; the first years of *Amazing Stories*, and their quarterlies; the British magazines *Scoops*, *Fantasy*, and *Modern Wonder*; and runs of the early fan magazines *The Time Traveler* and *Science Fiction Digest*; to enumerate some highlights. The highest price anything brought was three dollars for a Paul cover from Charles D. Hornig's *Science Fiction*. Some of the original illustrations had to be sold in groups of six and eight for as little as fifty cents for the lot.

The most enjoyable highlight of the convention was the banquet—the first ever in science fiction fandom—with Frank R. Paul as the honored guest. There were thirty-five people present at the Wyndham, then and now a first-rate restaurant and catering hall across from the Plaza Hotel. To me, its splendor—its forty-yard-long, plush-carpeted, wide interior walkway to the dining hall entrance; its gilded doors and major domo bowing low—added up to "the wrong place," and I almost started to walk away until assured that it was no error.

On that evening of July 3, 1939 the hall was all ours. The main course was lamb chops and the dessert was orange sherbert; time has erased the memory of the side dishes, appetizers, and salad. No liquor was served, because so many of the attendees were under the legal drinking age of twenty-one. The price was one dollar each, and from the perspective of today, I wonder how they covered the cost of keeping the place open with at least one cook and one assistant, a major domo, and a waiter for a gross take of thirty-five dollars plus a four-dollar tip. Willy Ley was the after-dinner speaker—his first talk at any science fiction gathering—extemporaneously delivering a talk that seemed to us youngsters very urbane, sophisticated, and continental. We lounged around the luxurious surroundings until 1:00 A.M., when they practically forced us out.

A softball game on July 4th, played in a Flushing ball park opposite Jimmy Taurasi's home, remains fresh and nostalgic after the passage of fifty years. I was captain of the Queens Cometeers; we played the Philadelphia Panthers, captained by John V. Baltadonis. Most of the players were well-known fans at the time, but today of my team probably A. Langley Searles, currently editor of *Fantasy Commentator*; the late artist

John Giunta; James Taurasi; and the late book dealer Julius Unger would be the only ones remembered. On the Cometeers, still known are Robert Madle, president of First Fandom, and the late Oswald Train, specialty book publisher. Even today I can still feel the impact of the line drive in my mitt as I leaped high at shortstop and whipped the ball to first base for one of three double plays we scored, and the utter exhaustion after nine innings that caused us to refuse to make it a double-header after we had won 23 to 11.

A continuity was established at that first convention which its sponsors did not anticipate. We had intended the convention as a one-shot deal. Sure, there might *someday* be other conventions when some enterprising group decided to tackle one. At our banquet, Mark Reinsberg and Erle Korshak, Chicago fans present, decided to try the idea of a convention for their city. They were both in their teens, even younger than I was. They asked for the endorsement of New Fandom.

"What do you need our endorsement for?" I replied. "We have no patent on science fiction conventions. If you want to hold one, go ahead and hold one. Who can stop you?"

They formed a sponsoring body, just as we had done, called the Illini Fantasy Fictioneers, recruiting well-known Wilson (Bob) Tucker to their committee, and did successfully present a convention, starting a voting system at theirs for the location of the one to follow, which was to be in Denver. They and succeeding conventions incorporated many of the best things we had done, changing and improving upon them through the years until the format utilized today was evolved.

An amusing aside was some of the references to our convention made by Bob Tucker in his fan magazine *Le Zombie*. I had taken bookkeeping (among other business courses) in high school, and when the convention was over published a balance sheet of income and expenditures of the convention committee. Tucker implied that something was amiss in our finances, because the balance sheet *balanced*. He felt that such a coincidence was improbable. As circumstantial evidence of hanky-panky he cited the three dollars for carfares for an entire year paid to Mario Racic, Jr. He found it hard to believe that at five cents a ride, anyone could have used up that much subway fare! The entire listed expenses of the convention totaled $269.94.✹

Q 8: EASTERN SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION

AMONG your activities you were also instrumental in founding and running the Eastern Science Fiction Association, a science fiction club in Newark. How did the club originate? Who was involved in the group? What role did you play in the club? What did the club accomplish? What is the significance of the club in the history of science fiction?

During World War II, science fiction fandom virtually ground to a halt as fans were drafted, paper quotas cut down the available science fiction magazines, and there was full employment of those who had not been inducted into the armed forces. There had not been a large conference or meeting of any type since 1941. Informal get-togethers were sometimes held at homes of individuals and it was there I met many young fans, under the draft age, who had no common group to rally under. Originally my intent was to form a social club meeting at individual members' residences, but when ten showed up at my home in Newark on January 1, 1946 I realized the woods were full of wild fans flitting about. I therefore decided on our tiny club sponsoring the First Post War Science Fiction Convention to be held in Newark on March 3, 1946, counting on my in-depth experience with previous conventions to successfully pull it off.

My intention was to draw fans and professionals returning from the armed services and revive fan activities on the East Coast. It could scarcely have been more successful.

We rented the Slovak Sokol Hall where the First National Science Fiction Convention was held in 1938 for three dollars, offering the topic "Is Science Overtaking Science Fiction?" with A. Langley Searles; L. Sprague de Camp on Atlantis; F. Orlin Tremaine, former editor of *Astounding Stories* and *Comet*; Manly Wade Wellman; Robert Arthur, Jr.; Sam Merwin, Jr. (then editor of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*); C.A. Brandt, Literary Editor for Hugo Gernsback in 1926 on *Amazing Stories*; and Donald A. Wollheim, who had not gotten into the New York World convention, but was welcomed here. No admission was charged, the entire expense of the convention being footed by an auction of donated materials from professionals and fans. The fifty-dollar profit was used as the financial foundation of the Eastern Science Fiction Association, and the club was never in financial trouble since.

The convention convinced the Philadelphia group to start up their annual Philadelphia Science Fiction Conferences again, which they did later that year. The news of the success of our affair proved nationally stimulating and clubs began to revive across the country.

As for the ESFA, the monthly meetings which followed were unusually successful, with attendance rarely below thirty. I decided on a formal meeting, well programmed, where the guest was taken to dinner afterward and members of the club could join us if they wished. The fine treatment we gave our guests became a byword. A recapitulation would require a book, but among our regulars—men who were down once a year or more—were John W. Campbell, Willy Ley, L. Sprague de Camp, George O. Smith, Theodore Sturgeon, Isaac Asimov, and Lester Del Rey; and among

our coups were David H. Keller, Hugo Gernsback, August W. Derleth, Arthur C. Clarke, Virgil Finlay, Frank R. Paul, Murray Leinster, Edd Cartier, and L. Ron Hubbard, to name but a few. Each year we put on an expanded meeting, like a one-day convention, and this practice eventually broadened until dozens of regional science fiction conventions were being held all over the United States.

As the club grew older, we gradually settled into a group of old friends and collectors, but our 35th Anniversary Meeting on March 1, 1981, which featured Isaac Asimov; his wife, Janet O. Jeppson; Stanley Schmidt, editor of *Analog*; Lester Del Rey; Donald and Elsie Wollheim; Stephen Fabian the artist; and the only filmed interview ever made with Hugo Gernsback created a temporary new interest in the group but not an expanding membership.

It was my intention to form a long-lived club through the adoption of a suitable constitution for democratic elections coupled with serious science-fiction-oriented programs, and it succeeded. The influence of the club's success in getting others to simulate its procedures, together with the business arrangements and friendships it facilitated, have proven immense. For me personally, my entry into the professional editing world was the result of inviting Hugo Gernsback to a meeting, and it was at a later meeting that I met my wife, Christine E. Haycock, M.D. Career and personal results have been achieved for many other members and attendees.✹

Q 9: FANTASY TIMES

***TOGETHER** with James Taurasi, you edited the first photo-offset magazine in the history of science fiction,* Fantasy Times, *beginning with the second (November 1941) issue, and maintained an editorial and reportorial connection with that publication (which won two Hugos) for twenty-five years. Can you discuss* Fantasy Times*? How did the publication originate? What was the magazine like? What did you publish? Which well-known writers appeared in the magazine? How was the publication received?*

James Taurasi had begun a science fiction news weekly titled *Fantasy News* in 1938, which was a key factor in putting across the 1939 World Convention. This became the most outstanding news publication of its immediate period, as a combination newspaper and newsletter with emphasis on the professional science fiction world. In late 1939, Taurasi turned this paper over to William Sykora who would continue it into 1941 when it began to falter and then went into a hiatus. Taurasi helped Julius Unger launch a competing weekly, *Fantasy Fiction Field*, beginning with the October 26, 1940 issue, and that publication under a variety of editors would remain a leader through the war years.

In 1940, Taurasi and I had formed the Taurasi-Moskowitz Literary Agency to facilitate selling our works and those of our clients to the pulps. We had also formed The Cometeers, a self-help group with member "professionals" patterned after The Futurians' theory that an association of those with like business interests could be a help to all. Among our members were F. Orlin Tremaine, Elliot Dold, John Giunta, John Victor Peterson, Harry Walton, Thomas S. Gardner, and a few others. Taurasi noted that on our visits to editors we were picking up a great deal of news that did not appear in the existing weeklies; and we could also use an organ to further the progress of The Cometeers. The first three monthly issues of *Fantasy Times*, beginning with the September 1941 issue, were mimeographed, and they were jammed full of professional news. Our first issue revealed that Tremaine had quit as editor of *Comet*; Alden H. Norton was new editor of *Astonishing* and *Super Science Stories*, replacing Fred Pohl; the two magazines *Science Fiction* and *Future Fiction* had combined with their October 1941 issue; and *Stirring Science Stories* and *Cosmic Stories* had suspended publication.

My brother Maurice had secured Taurasi a job in Newark, working in a screw machine plant. A few blocks away there was a company specializing in the then still novel photo-offset printing. Discussions with them indicated that we could produce a two-paged letter-sized newspaper for from ten to fifteen dollars for 300 copies if we prepared the camera-ready copy ourselves. I typed out the first issue, three columns to a page, justifying the margins myself at home. For a news item about Eando Binder and Manly Wade Wellman moving into comic strip continuities we pasted in their photos as previously published in our convention program. We did the same for myself and Taurasi and also ran logos of *Astonishing*, *Super Science* and the Science Fiction League. The appearance was excellent.

One issue was produced in two colors, red and black. I was editor of the magazine during its four offset issues. Then Taurasi was inducted into the armed services and the magazine was suspended. I followed

him later that year, winding up in the 610th Tank Destroyer Battalion at Camp Hood, Texas, where I received special training in operating a half-track with a 75 mm. gun and preliminary commando training. I was released from the service for an Army-related physical disability—collapsed arches—and when I returned resumed *Fantasy Times* in April 1944 as a journal of opinion and analysis. Taurasi was shipped overseas and edited twelve issues from his station in Le Havre, France (utilizing Army equipment) during 1945. I took it back for my credit in The Fantasy Amateur Press Association (December 1945). In 1946 Taurasi started the *Cosmic News Letter* for five weekly issues and then received back from me *Fantasy Times* with its issue of August 18, 1946 and he published it on a regular basis (weekly and semi-monthly for most of the period) through to January 1967 when it was turned over to James Ashe of Freeville, N.Y. Through almost all of Taurasi's period I was connected with and contributed to the magazine in some manner.

Fantasy Times won the Hugo as the best fan magazine twice, the first time at the Cleveland convention in 1955 and the second time at the London convention in 1957. Its popularity was due to ongoing reporting of the professional science fiction scene, with the emphasis on the magazines. Its specialty was the "follow-up." The magazine was not satisfied to gain a scoop and forget it, but would keep the reader informed of ongoing developments concerning the subject of the scoop. For the years 1946 to 1966 inclusive, *Fantasy Times* is, without doubt, the most valuable and comprehensive source of information about the science fiction field that exists. All the thousands of stories and news items it published should be indexed and utilized as a prime reference.

During its lifetime, the publication was a fine record of news about foreign science fiction, and ran columns on current books, films, comics, radio, and science fiction in the non-science-fiction magazines. Taurasi ran supplements about fantasy comics and Edgar Rice Burroughs (*Barsoomian Times*), took personal mail surveys of reader opinions, and frequently ran debates among prominent figures in the field in his letter columns. He covered comprehensively major conventions, during a period when there were not so many. His anniversary issues usually sported a retinue of big-name contributors. Several times, for stretches of six months, he resumed offset publication, but always found doing the dummy more work than turning a mimeograph crank. He published Yearbooks in 1957 and 1958 of considerable interest, the one for 1956 including my detailed analysis of the science fiction market as determined from a survey taken at the World Science Fiction Convention in New York that year. An unusual thing the magazine did was to buy the title *Original Science Fiction Stories* from Columbia Publications on September 28, 1961, and publish two issues as a proving ground for new authors in 1962 and 1963. Taurasi just wanted to have a fan buy out a professional magazine.✹

Q 10: LIFE EVERLASTING

YOU are credited with having published the first formal collection of the works of David H. Keller, M.D in hard cover. It appeared in 1947 under the title of Life Everlasting and Other Tales of Science, Fantasy and Horror. *How did that book come about? How was the idea received? Did the book do well? What did it mean to you personally?*

As a young reader I had always admired the works of David H. Keller, M.D., and had written pieces praising his stories. When the vogue for specialty book publishing of science fiction and fantasy began in the forties, following in Arkham House's footsteps with New Collector's Group, Prime Press, Hadley Publishing Company, Fantasy Press, and Shasta Publishers, it was the dream of every fan to have his favorite author published between hard covers (something uncommon for pulp magazine writers up to that time). Will Sykora, a fan whom I had been friendly with ever since the First National Science Fiction Convention in Newark in 1938, worked in a printing school in Manhattan which closed down in the summer months. His employer told him that he could use the school equipment at a nominal wear-and-tear cost during those months if he cared to print something himself.

I was to secure the manuscript, do the editorial work, and handle the financing, and he would get us the printing done at a very nominal rate. I secured permission from Keller at literally no advance; in fact, he agreed to buy several hundred copies of the book and prepay the cost. The story is told in greater detail in *Over My Shoulder* by Lloyd A. Eshbach, formerly owner and editor of Fantasy Press. We did turn out a handsomely bound volume (after the manner of Arkham House) containing some of Keller's best stories. Keller's real payment in the publication of this book was to build a new groundswell of interest in his works. As recently as 1934 he had been voted the most popular science fiction author in the United States in a survey run by *Wonder Stories* magazine. At the time the book appeared, he was remembered only by a hard core of old readers and his reputation had faded.

In combination with personal appearances at conventions, material in fan magazines, and extensive correspondence, enough interest in Keller was aroused to eventually result in books of his stories from New Era, The National Fantasy Fan Federation, Prime Press, and Arkham House, for a total of eight hardcover books. In addition, requests were received for paperback and magazine publication. Keller's ego proved so uncontrollable that he soon was shipwrecked on the shoals of his insatiable need for adulation, and friends like myself took to the lifeboats.

With the advantage of hindsight, I would say that our marketing of the book was limited by inexperience, but my ability to *carefully* handle finances can scarcely be faulted. In fact, my elaborate accounting when the partnership and The Avalon Company, as we called ourselves, broke up, elicited unsolicited compliments from the lawyers. Under extremely difficult conditions, I had put the company in the black before it was dissolved, and not only did no one lose, but there was a small profit.

I gained valuable experience in book publishing that held me in good stead, since I became publisher of several magazines and a directory. Writing the long critical biography of Keller for the book established a rough format for the series that would eventually result in my books *Explorers of the Infinite* and *Seekers of Tomorrow*. It destroyed my friendship with Will Sykora. It convinced me that book publishing is a difficult way to make a living.✹

Q 11: ANTHOLOGIES

***OVER** the years, you have published a number of well-received anthologies, among them* Masterpieces of Science Fiction, Science Fiction by Gaslight, The Man Who Called Himself Poe, Horrors Unknown, *and various others. What is the secret of putting together a good anthology? What role do you play as editor? How long does it take to put together such a book? What is the appeal of an anthology? What is the best anthology you've published?*

I have my personal criteria for putting together an anthology that will not necessarily work for someone else without the same resources. In other words, I can tell you what I do and how I do it, but you will not always be able to duplicate it. First, in compiling an anthology I strive to include as many stories as possible that have never been either anthologized or collected before. This goes for every anthology I do, whether general or thematic. Secondly, those selections should be of high quality. Including a story no one has collected before is no great achievement if it is abysmally poor, with the exception of an inferior story that is of scholarly or historical interest. For example, should I find a dull, poorly-handled story published in 1750 that details with inspired precognition the building and use of an atomic bomb, that story is worth printing for that reason alone. Should I find a previously unknown Charles Dickens *interplanetary* of questionable quality, the fact that Dickens wrote it alone justifies its publication.

Discovery of top quality fiction by an otherwise unknown writer is always a challenge. My books *The Crystal Man* and *Into The Sun* are entire volumes of short stories by authors literally unknown, even anonymous, who are obviously major shapers of science fiction. These are not anthologies, but collections, but in such anthologies as *Science Fiction by Gaslight*, *The Man Who Called Himself Poe*, *Ghostly by Gaslight*, and *Great Untold Stories of Fantasy and Horror* (not my title), there are superb stories included whose authors are unknown to modern readers .

It is for this reason that I have popularized the use of the long analytical and biographical introduction in my stories and books. The device has been picked up by many since I made it part of the format in *Editor's Choice of Science Fiction* (1954). It serves a variety of purposes. It acts as an appetizer to ease the reader into the main course. It directs the reader's attention to the points of value to look for. An example is "The Friend of Death" by Pedro Antonio de Alarcon from *Ghostly by Gaslight*: "The story begins in the early part of the eighteenth century and ends in the year 2316, yet it is not a work of science fiction!" In the introduction to "The Atlantis" by Peter Prospero in *The Man Who Called Himself Poe* (Doubleday,1969) I say: "Scholars concede that there may very well exist a number of Edgar Allan Poe items published anonymously or under a pseudonym...Among the most interesting of the possibilities that scholars have roped off for perusal is a seventy-thousand word Utopia titled 'Atlantis.'" I then offer the first four chapters, undeniably science fiction, and the views of the greatest Poe scholars on the subject (one who feels it is Poe and the other who does not). The introduction may be more intriguing than the story. It presents an unknown work in the form of a provocative literary puzzle. The reader will enjoy the selection

much more than if the story had been printed without comment. When the reader has picked up a number of my anthologies and finds they can be counted upon to be informative, entertaining, and non-duplicating, I gain a following who will buy a book with my name on it, even if they never heard of the stories in it, because they know they can count on something different.

Obviously, I cannot farm out my anthologies and let someone else do them for me. Their contents are based on my owning one of the world's major science fiction and fantasy research collections and having read it. It also rests on my research techniques which extract and place into perspective fascinating information on the subject I happen to be writing about. The actual time of compiling an anthology is only a matter of weeks, but that is because everything is at hand and has been mentally under consideration for many years. It is hard to pick a "best" anthology for a variety of reasons. *Science Fiction by Gaslight* (World, 1968) has been the most popular because it opened up twenty-odd years of science fiction history (1891 to 1912) previously unrecorded anywhere in any form and "illustrated" the period with stories, most of which the most die-hard collectors had never heard of. But some respect must be accorded *Masterpieces of Science Fiction* (World, 1966). At the time of its appearance, of the eighteen selections, only one had ever appeared in a science fiction anthology before, and there were such tidbits as "The Country of the Blind" by H.G. Wells, with 3,000 words added and an introductory explanation of why he changed it by the author; the complete printing of "The Brick Moon" by Edward Everett Hale, not available since 1899; the first Edgar Rice Burroughs story ever in a science fiction anthology; Jules Verne's last novella, included in hard covers in the U.S. for the first time; a Frank Reade dime novel about an earth satellite first published in 1895; a science fiction short story by Karel Capek, never previously available in English, translated for this anthology; an unknown short story by Hugo Gernsback of good quality; a Philip Wylie short never reprinted from its original magazine publication; and so on. ✹

Q 12: GHOST EDITING

IN addition to the anthologies published under your own name, you've also ghost-edited a number of anthologies. Why did you agree to be a ghost editor? What anthologies have you ghost-edited? What is the appeal of ghost work? Would you do such work again? How do you feel about the lack of public recognition?

I have ghost edited for Leo Margulies: *Three Times Infinity* (1958); *3 in 1* (1963); *Weird Tales* (1964); and *Worlds of Weird* (1965). For Roger Elwood: *Alien Worlds* (1964) and *Invasion of the Robots* (1965). For Alden H. Norton: *Award Science Fiction Reader* (1966); *Terror Times Ten* (1967); *Masters of Horror* (1968); and *Hauntings and Horrors* (1969).

In all cases, the individuals I ghost-edited for already had a signed contract and in most were offering a 50-50 split of the proceeds. In the case of Margulies, he was an old friend and was currently buying from me. The situation with Norton was similar; he had bought from me and been very cooperative back in the early forties. Roger Elwood was a good salesman, but was then incapable of completing the job and begged me to help him get started. The actual personal work on each anthology rarely took more than two weekends, because it was a matter of selecting stories I had read, getting copies of them, and writing introductions. Clearing rights sometimes dragged out a bit longer

In ghost-editing for these men, I was often able to put back into print masterpieces that had been neglected for up to a half century or more. In terms of work hours versus pay, the amounts were generous. Someone else would have found it unprofitable. I doubt if I would do it again, except for some special circumstances. I did others as *collaborations* with these men after those cited.✹

Q 13: HUGO GERNSBACK

AS a result of your early publishing efforts, Hugo Gernsback, the founder of science fiction magazines, offered you the editorship of Science-Fiction Plus, *a slick science fiction publication he wanted to launch. How did you meet Gernsback? What was he like on a personal level? How would you rate his publishing acumen? Why has he come in for criticism in recent years? What do you see as his legacy?*

Hugo Gernsback had never attended a science fiction meeting of any sort. As director of the Eastern Science Fiction Association, it would be a tremendous coup if I could get him there, but though he had a good ego, he was understandably cautious of participating in any event where he might be embarrassed or mix in an unrefined setting. I did not think he would respond to a blind letter. His manners were out of the old Victorian era, so I thought we would stand a better chance of acceptance if a woman asked him to speak to us. Among our early members was Frances Forman, a small woman who could clothe a sharp and agile mind beneath saccharine tones, if she worked at it. She was part of the inner circle of our group and I rehearsed her for hours on how to speak to Gernsback and then gave her his home telephone number, which appeared in the Manhattan book.

She returned from the drug store where she had made the call with a disappointed expression. "He said write me a letter, telling me what it is all about," she pouted. I hugged her, while she looked puzzled.

"That means yes!" I shouted, and dashed to the typewriter to send him a letter. I knew just what I wanted to say. Ours was an *adult* club. All of us were familiar with his reputation and wanted to meet him. Several of our members, among them Thomas S. Gardner and David M. Speaker, had sold stories to his *Amazing Stories* and *Wonder Stories* and they were both *scientists* (which they were in spades). Only the most prominent people spoke at our club. We would have a chauffeured limousine pick him up and bring him to the club. After the meeting he would be our guest for dinner at the Hickory Grill, one of the city's leading restaurants. Our limousine would bring him back to the city, in time for any further Sunday engagement he might have.

He agreed to speak in a letter of February 15, 1950 and we sent out full-page circulars announcing the event and booked as supporting speakers Willy Ley, Sam Merwin, Jr., and L. Jerome Stanton. Sam Bowne, Jr., our secretary, who lived in Scarsdale, came from a well-to-do family and owned an impressive limousine with which he picked Gernsback up. There were one hundred people in attendance who were nothing if not friendly and cordial to him. About forty of them went to the restaurant with us and he was seated at the head of a table that seemed to stretch into infinity.

Following the meeting I sent him newspaper write-ups of the affair, and fan magazine references about him, as well as books I thought would be of interest. On his part he forwarded books that he received for review. We periodically asked small informational favors for his friends. (One I remember was preparing a complete list of all the stories his magazines had translated from the German for the benefit of a college instructor who taught German.)

What I didn't know was that his magazines *Radio Electronics* and *Sexology* were growing increasingly profitable, as was his technical book publishing adjunct. He wanted to go ahead with a new magazine to be called *Popular Atomics*, and the painting of the Buck Rogers-like character on the cover of the first (March 1953) issue of *Science-Fiction Plus* was intended to be the cover of that magazine. His son, Harvey Gernsback, who worked with him, tried desperately to talk him out of it, feeling (quite correctly) that the entire idea was premature. The best he could do was detour him to considering another science fiction magazine instead. (There were scores of them at the time.) Gernsback wanted a slick-paper quality magazine printing a more scientifically-based fiction, preferably written by scientists if he could get them. He was impressed by my background knowledge of science fiction and asked me to have lunch with him.

"I can get dozens of experienced editors, but I can't get anyone with your knowledge of the field. That's why I would like to hire you, for what you know," he told me repeatedly.

Needless to say, he would not always listen to what I knew; but the story of *Science-Fiction Plus* is also a story in itself.

On a personal level, Gernsback was very demanding and impatient, a difficult man to work with. He was far out of touch with the requirements of the market, and the big problem was that he found it hard to believe that the man he hired because of his knowledge of the field actually knew more about the market than he did. He would not bend or alter his course until he was in deep trouble in a declining market for what he was selling.

He gave me all the tools I required to give him a successful magazine, but dictated how they were to be used. A big redeeming feature of his was his sense of humor. It could be as quick or sharp as a rapier on occasion and he could *take it* as well as dish it out.

He was *well liked* by almost all of his employees, who regarded him as one-of-a-kind, a sort of a minor genius. They were all aware of his achievements and his failings. He was willing to gamble on people, giving a substantial number of his employees a career break they would not have gotten as easily elsewhere.

We had a few arguments (I don't have many, so the provocation had to be great), but we got to like each other well enough so that I think the term "friends" would be an accurate one for our relationship. Once a week he would take me to lunch at Miller's Restaurant in the basement of the old Woolworth Building and he always carried a monocle with him, with which he read the menu. Here we would discuss business and make small talk. Harvey Gernsback frequently accompanied us. Harvey was a moderating influence on him, restraining him from launching the more extreme ideas.

Where Gernsback was exceptional was on the technical aspects of producing a magazine. Impatient because of age, he nonetheless took the time to teach me how to size cuts, lay out a publication, select type, dummy the magazine, quality points of production, and a variety of other factors. When I left him and went to work for another publication, I found that my training with Gernsback made me a far superior editor from a technical standpoint than almost anyone I have since come in contact with.

When things were going badly, it was his idea to switch to the heavy book stock to thicken the magazine and to make other changes which unquestionably resulted in assisting the sharp climb in circulation we achieved before he dropped the magazine.

Criticism of him seems comparable to a child's complaint against its parents. He created our modern field, but not to the satisfaction of many in it. Many of their criticisms display historical ignorance. They challenge the term "Father of Science Fiction," as though it is something that someone invented five years ago. If they followed the field and the reader's departments, they would know that readers were calling Gernsback that as early as the late twenties. What was meant by it was that he popularized the genre and gave it parameters that made it recognizable. Talking of Gernsback putting science fiction into a ghetto is absurd. What about detective stories, westerns, love, flying, railroad, sea, sports stories, ad infinitum? They were all in specialized magazines long before and usually much more numerous than science fiction magazines. How come they could be found in the big general magazines and science fiction could not? The truth is that he *created* a market for science fiction writers when it was almost impossible to get it published except in *Weird Tales*, and every now and then in *Argosy*. He rescued the field from oblivion; he did *not* ghettoize it.✷

Q 14: DAVID H. KELLER

***YOU** published a book by David H. Keller which finally was distributed in 1948. What sparked your interest in Keller? Did you know him well? What was he like? How would you rate his work? What was his contribution?*

I had enjoyed a tentative relationship with David H. Keller, M.D., since 1937 when I solicited and he sent me several stories, one of which I ran in my fan magazine *Helios* ("Lilith's Left Hand," October-November-December 1937 issue). In the thirties, Keller was one of the great writing figures to the magazine science fiction readers, easily the equivalent in serious attention of Heinlein today. The focus of his writing was different. In Edgar Rice Burroughs and A. Merritt there were lost worlds, strange creatures, high adventure, and local color; Garrett P. Serviss gave us interplanetary travel and world catastrophe through drowning; Bob Olsen produced a series of humorous paradoxes on the nature of the fourth dimension; Murray Leinster told of a topsy turvy world, where the insects were gigantic and man was tiny; H.P. Lovecraft pioneered the dangers (and horrors) of radioactivity; Francis Flagg anticipated a world ruled by machines; but the arrival of David H. Keller with "Revolt of the Pedestrians" in the February 1928 *Amazing Stories* shifted the emphasis to the impact of technology on human beings. In that story, Keller asked what would happen if a civilization became so accustomed to mechanical transportation that their legs atrophied. Suppose there were two social classes, one rich and powerful with almost useless extremities and the other poor but physically complete. Other stories followed on strange themes like the psychological effect on a child raised by a robot; genetic breeding of humans to make outstanding stenographers; a future world where all children are incubated and none are born naturally; the plight of the white-collar worker in the world of the future; a ribbon clerk who invents anti-gravity so he can escape from the hopelessness of his married life and the strange and human manner in which his plan is thwarted. All of this written in a somewhat deceptively simple, laconic style.

Keller had risen to the rank of colonel during World War II, treating the shell-shocked (as he had during World War I) and was retired, living on his pension. In the interim nothing by him had appeared and he was no longer a popular or even a well-known figure in the field. I wrote an article for *Fantasy Times* titled "By the Waters of Lethe," extolling his virtues, and we became friends. This led to his "Coming Out" party when I had him as a major speaker at the Eastern Science Fiction Association and my later arrangement to publish a book of his stories.

The man was a highly individualistic character. He had a large nineteenth-century house perched on a high hill overlooking the resort town of Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, which he called "Underwood." Every inch of his house and the irregularly-shaped yard had at one time or another been worked into his fiction. There he invited "worshippers" for a day or a weekend, in which the primary topic of discussion, and sometimes

the sole topic of discussion, would be his life, his philosophy, and his writings. Bald, potbellied, autocratic, he would choreograph these sessions, with effective prompting, timely clues as to the proper interpretation of his writings, appreciative little noises if he liked what he heard, and a stern contraction of his bushy white eyebrows if he did not. His enthusiastic aide in all this was his third wife Celia (Keller claimed to hate women), then about sixty, powerfully built with a quick explosive temper, a redeeming sense of humor and, even more ingratiatingly, a mastery of the culinary art. In the early days there was the excessively friendly Pekingese dog, Yum-Yum.

To me, and doubtless other aspirants, he offered free room and board and time to write in exchange for household chores and endless adulation. No one, to my knowledge, ever took him up on it, though he was sincere.

It is rather amazing to me that this era of young readers fails to recognize in his work the psychiatric insights, the social understandings and concerns, the political satire, the story values, and the amazingly effective understatement that are all components of his method. They regard him as a crude and simplistic writer, when actually the shoe is on the other foot.✹

Q 15: AUGUST DERLETH

***YOUR** relationship with Keller led to your visiting August Derleth in 1948, at which time a loan of $2,500 was negotiated which saved Arkham House from bankruptcy. What were the circumstances surrounding the meeting? How did Derleth impress you? How would you describe him? Did you know him well? Did you like him? What do you see as his legacy?*

My visit to Derleth in company with the Kellers is outlined in considerable detail in my memoir "I Remember Derleth," published in the Spring 1981 issue of *Starship*. Briefly, following the close of the Sixth World Science Fiction Convention in Toronto (July 3rd to 5th, 1948), I motored west with the Kellers and their dog to Sauk City, Wisconsin, home of August W. Derleth and Arkham House. Keller's motive was to get a collection of his stories published by Derleth. He discovered that Derleth teetered on the brink of bankruptcy and without a quick infusion of cash was in no position to publish anyone. Keller was ready to advance a loan of $2,500 on Derleth's note. The only obstacles were myself and Celia Keller. I had some misunderstandings in the past with Derleth, and if I backed Celia—who was worried about the dissipation of Keller's reserves to egotistical whims—it could have stopped the deal or delayed it long enough to have done Derleth in. By making no issue of it, I implicitly approved it and Derleth got his check, which saved Arkham House from bankruptcy. After considerable delay, Keller got his book, his money back, and royalties, so it all worked out.

There was every indication that this was the moment of truth for Derleth. He had been personally very successful, placing mainstream novels, books of short stories, poetry, and even diaries with mainstream publishers. In Arkham House he had set an example which spawned a dozen imitators and encouraged general publishers to enter the science fiction field. With Arkham House he had overextended himself, printing excessive numbers of copies of British authors in little demand, as much out of snobbery as out of good business sense. These now filled every vacant space in his house and commanded the building of a warehouse, and froze his capital for the next ten years. Scribners lost interest in his work when sales remained very small. He had invested $25,000 in one of the most remarkable houses in his part of the state, made of local limestone, completely paneled (floor, walls, and ceilings) in knotty pine, with a roof of imported Spanish straw. To add to this, excessive weight (fifty to seventy-five pounds above norm) and ceaseless personal drive had skyrocketed his blood pressure, threatening his health. That was the situation in 1948, and it would take until 1960 before he worked himself back into a liquid cash position again.

Derleth was egotistical to the extreme, arrogant, a bully, overbearing, and stubborn. He had above-average writing talent and an unusual degree of sensitivity to the human condition but he confused a high rate of production with achievement and had dissipated his potential by the time he was forty. His personal self-discipline, intelligence, and drive gained ground for him, but his inflexibility once his mind was set, and his desire to link his name and his company with what he considered

literary "royalty," proved self-imposed hurdles that almost finished him.

That having been said, I liked him a great deal. If you faced him down, behind that assurance and brashness the truth of vulnerability emerged, expressed in tone and attitude if not in words. There was kindness in that huge bulk, and he would do you a favor if it was within his capability. Spending his life in a town of no more than 1500, he could have been excused conservatism, but to the contrary he leaned towards the liberal side and detested and openly fought hypocrisy in those around him.

In Arkham House itself he laid the basis for critical evaluation and continuing popularity of such authors as H.P. Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Robert E. Howard, William Hope Hodgson, and other masters. There is no assurance that if he had not initially promoted them, they would have achieved their current acceptance. He recognized talent before others did in publishing the early books of Ray Bradbury, Fritz Leiber, A.E. van Vogt, Robert Bloch, and a variety of others. Because of his example most other authors of value in the field saw book publication through the specialty houses, and eventually through the general publishers. His non-fantasy books are of interest more for what they tell about him than in competition to other regional works, for as a person he was bigger than life, a giant and unique personality✹

Q 16: COLLECTOR AND RESEARCHER

***ASKED** about your science fiction work, you once said: "I am at heart a collector and researcher." What is the satisfaction of each of these endeavors? What is the challenge of such work? What do you see as your main accomplishments in each area?*

The science fiction and fantasy world has an unusually large percentage of collectors. This seems to be as valid a statement today as when I first began collecting in 1933. Then, the magazines were still relatively new, fascinatingly imaginative, and different. The amount of science fiction available was finite and we collected as much to read as with any other motive in mind. But there are more collectors today than ever, even when the quantity of science fiction available appears infinite and it has become quite impossible to read it all, even if one abandoned everything else.

During World War II, when science fiction activity on both the professional and fan level had slowed to a trickle, a small collectors' group was formed in the Greater New York Area, which met informally every two weeks at the home of the dealer Julius Unger in Brooklyn. It included myself; A. Langley Searles, later to publish the greatest collector's fan journal of them all, *Fantasy Commentator*; John Nitka, one of the earliest to sell his massive collection for what then seemed a princely sum to a university; Richard Witter, before he became the world's largest specialist dealer in science fiction; and whoever else happened to be around. Mostly we talked books and collecting, our finds and their fine points, and it was for us all a great pleasure. The only thing more enjoyable than collecting books is discussing the acquisitions with someone who is doing the same. It is a delight that remains constant through aging, illness, and personal tragedy, and which can be renewed and revisited on one's shelves through the years.

The research aspect of science fiction is understandably related to my writing of history about the field. Everyone thinks they know the general picture of science fiction, until they sit down to put concrete facts and chronology on white paper. Then you learn that you don't know names, dates, motives, sequence of events, origins, linkage, relationships, biographical background of concerned parties, and the thousand and one things required to make a coherent and sensible picture. How can one ever collect without researching the field of interest? Research results are often a great thrill: to take a small clue, as I did in the case of Edward Page Mitchell, whose science fiction and fantasy I collected in *The Crystal Man* (Doubleday, 1971). As the search widened, I confirmed that a group of anonymous stories of considerable brilliance was written by a single man. That man was Edward Page Mitchell, who worked for the New York *Sun*, the world's leading paper for fifty years, rising to the position of top editor. These stories, written and published during the years 1874 to 1884, deal with such themes as faster-than-light travel, a time machine, matter transmission, suspended animation through refrigeration, invisibility, electronic brains, mutants, aliens—and all before H.G. Wells. I dug a

little more and discovered that his son Dana Mitchell, 94 years old (named after Charles Dana, famed publisher of the *Sun*) lived four miles away in Montclair, so I went up and interviewed him. Before it was over I not only had a book; I had rewritten the history of American science fiction.

Probably my greatest accomplishment in science fiction research is that I have given the field a historical format that has been followed in nearly every other history written. In other words, I set up the superstructure on which everything else rests. This was essentially done in *Explorers of the Infinite* and *Seekers of Tomorrow*, but then I moved ahead to fill in giant gaps in the field. In *Science Fiction by Gaslight*, I discovered and detailed the period when science fiction moved into the popular magazines in England and to a lesser degree in the United States. This also broadened the entire field of H.G. Wells studies, because he was the primary factor in the popularity of science fiction in those outlets. Those publications that couldn't afford Wells made do with other science fiction writers. As an adjunct, I did the life of George Griffith and in so doing covered the future war story movement popularized by the Pearson publications in Great Britain, which included such authors as M.P. Shiel, Louis Tracy, Fred T. Jane, and eventually H.G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. This was published as part of "George Griffith: Warrior of If" in *The Raid Of 'Le Vengeur'* (Ferret Fantasy, 1974). My book *Under the Moons of Mars: A History and Anthology of the Scientific Romance in the Munsey Magazines, 1912 to 1920*, is not only a definitive 70,000-word history of the era opened by Edgar Rice Burroughs, but also the only history of the development of the pulp magazines (of all types) from the beginnings up to 1920.

Similarly, in developing the life of William Hope Hodgson from records and papers supplied by his estate, in addition to previously unknown information (including interviews with his only surviving brother, now deceased) I incorporated the history of the British pulp magazines from their beginnings until Hodgson's death. All this was in *Out of the Storm* (Don Grant, 1975).

More recently, in the first two volumes of *Science Fiction in Old San Francisco* (Don Grant, 1980), I reported my discovery of an entire school of science fiction writers between the period 1880 and 1900 in the San Francisco area. Most of them were previously unknown. The leader of the movement, Robert Duncan Milne, wrote sixty bona-fide science fiction yarns and could be claimed to be the closest thing to the first full-time American science fiction writer. Despite good quality and imaginative work, he was completely forgotten because his material had been published in regional magazines and newspapers which had never been researched. I have completed work on two further volumes which I hope to put into shape within the next year.

Obscured by the mass of works about science fiction that have appeared in the past fifteen years is my book *Strange Horizons* (Scribner's, 1976), the first to explore *social attitudes* in science fiction on religion, anti-Semitism, civil rights, women's liberation, birth control, psychiatry, crime, teenagers, war, etc. This book is jammed with research data which appears in print nowhere else. It offers in the context of its subjects the history of the authors and publisher of the "Tom Swift" series, the works of science fiction that influenced Charles Fort, and the first important evaluation of the works of S. Fowler Wright, among other things. The book gives a historical review of science fiction on these subjects, and does not confine itself to contemporary material.

The foregoing is but a selection of material I am particularly proud of. What I find saddening is that "comprehensive" histories of the field are written which leave out entire segments because their authors didn't happen to know that I had done a book on the subject. To me, one of the cardinal sins of research is to be unaware of references in hard covers from major publishers (sometimes still in print) without which your work may be rendered inadequate. Even more frequent are those books that quote a source that has obtained the material from one of my works, with the author not even aware that the material is second-, third-, or fourth-hand.✹

Q 17: THE COLLECTION

***YOUR** personal collection of science fiction is one of the most extensive research libraries of its type in existence. How large is your collection? What types of publications do you collect? When did you start your collection? Is it a balanced collection? Are there any gaps in it? What is your single most prized item? Are there any other collections which rival yours in quality?*

My collection was covered in considerable detail in an article in the Fall/Winter 1982 issue of the library journal *Special Collections*, (Volume 2, Numbers 1/2, edited by Hal Hall; also issued in book form by Haworth Press in 1983 under the title *Science Fiction Collections: Fantasy, Supernatural & Weird Tales*) which was devoted to public and private science fiction collections. It is a *major* collection and has certain aspects uncommon in other large accumulations. There are many important private collections, some of which are as large or larger in total volume than mine. Two of these would be the collections of Forrest J. Ackerman and Gerry de la Ree. While there are points where they overlap, there are aspects in which each of these collections is unique. Ackerman's is unchallengeably supreme in fantasy movie materials of every type, but would be one of the world's greatest collections without them. De la Ree's is the best-showcased major collection I have ever seen. The house was built around the library and has a second level with a metal winding staircase to reach it. It also displays one of the largest quality collections of fantasy art work by outstanding magazine and book illustrators that exists. Mine is a *research* collection.

I have a complete set of every science fiction magazine published in English, with no exceptions. There are only a very few things lacking to complete the fantasy and supernatural magazines, and they are of an inconsequential nature. I have most of the associational magazines like *Magic Carpet*, *Golden Fleece*, *Pioneer Tales*, *Thrill Book* (incomplete). Complete runs of such super-hero magazines as *Operator #5*, *Dusty Ayres*, *Terence X. O'Leary*, *Doctor Death*, *Wu Fang*, and strong representations not only in many of the other super-hero magazines (almost a complete set of *Spider* in mint condition), but also *Horror Stories*, *Terror Tales*, *Dime Mystery*, and so on.

I have a thousand or more foreign-language science fiction magazines including a nearly complete set of *Jules Verne Magsinet* from Sweden (between 300 and 400 issues), a complete set of *Der Orchideengarten*, a German supernatural horror magazine published from 1919 to 1921, and strong German, French, Mexican, Argentine, and Italian representations as well as magazines from other nations.

I have a major collection of non-science-fiction pulp magazines that contain science fiction or fantasy: *Argosy* from 1894 to 1943; very comprehensive collections of *All-Story*, *Cavalier*, *The Scrap Book*, *Ocean*, *Live Wire*, *People's*, *Top Notch*, *Blue Book*, *Adventure*, *Short Stories*; and scores of others, most with fantasy.

I have great strength in detective pulps, particularly those related to companies that published science fiction, such as *Mystery Magazine* (an almost complete set from 1917 to 1930), which was edited by Lu

Senarens, the author of the "Frank Reade" series, and included fantasy as a matter of policy; *Detective Fiction Weekly* from its first issue and a strong unbroken run through 1950; *Real Detective Mysteries* (a companion to *Weird Tales*); runs of *Black Mask*, *Detective Story*, *Underworld*, *Detective Dragnet*, *Clues*, *Detective Classics*, and recent digest-sized magazines.

I have an almost complete bound run of *Black Cat* magazine from the first issue (1895) through 1917, and a very strong quantity of its imitators (*The Grey Goose*, *The Owl*, *The White Elephant*, etc.), all with substantial fantasy content.

Massive runs of the British turn-of-the-century popular magazines are in my library—thousands of them, most in bound volumes—like *Strand*, *Pearson's*, *Windsor's*, *London*, *Royal*, *Ludgate*; as well as the British pulps—*The Red Magazine*, *Blue Magazine*, *Yellow Magazine*, *Storyteller*, *Hutchinson's Adventure*, *Premier*—most with fantasy content; bound runs of hundreds of British boy's weeklies containing science fiction; and massive runs of the British weeklies *The Thriller* (1928-1941) and the *Detective Fiction Weekly*.

I have approximately 1,200 dime novels which broadly can be classified as science fiction, lost race, or fantasy, dating from 1878 to 1923, including sets of the *Frank Reade Weekly* (both the *Weekly* and the *Frank Reade Library*) as well as hundreds of British reprints of *Frank Reade*. This includes every known dime novel reference work and fan magazine.

I have, for research and reference, representative samples of all types of pulp magazines. Virtually everything in Anthony Goodstone's book *The Pulps* was photographed from my collection.

I have roughly 6,000 *hardcover* books, very strong on early interplanetaries and complete sets of almost every author that would be regarded as important in either science fiction or fantasy, including *contemporary authors* such as Ursula Le Guin, Joan Vinge, and John Varley. Given an author assignment at random, it is highly unlikely that I would have to procure any of his or her works, whether it be Jules Verne (I have several science fiction works by him that are not recorded in any reference book), Victor Rousseau, Algernon Blackwood, George Griffith, Gordon Dickson, Anne McCaffrey, George R.R. Martin, or—you name it. I have every "New Wave" entry ever issued. I am also very strong on associational books: all the nonfiction of Olaf Stapledon, George Allan England, E.R. Eddison; and I have every foreign work translated into English. My section of Russian science fiction has become substantial. I have one of the world's most complete collections of books *about* science fiction, fantasy, or reasonably related subjects. Not included in my total is a reference section of 1,000 books on literature in general, biographies, autobiographies, and histories of publishing houses, magazines, newspapers, and literary movements.

I have had for many years a standing order for every *original* fantasy title that appears in paperback, buying nothing that duplicates what is already in my collection. I started buying paperbacks in 1939, and my latest shipment arrived as I was typing this. I can say quite truthfully that I have everything of importance in paperback since 1939, and far too much of no importance.

My fan magazine collection has to be one of the world's outstanding assemblages. I have probably 95% of *everything* published between 1930 and 1950, and a selection consisting of virtually everything of importance since. I still subscribe directly to about fifty such publications. My set of mailings of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, of which I became a charter member in 1937 and remain an active member, is obviously a very good one.

I have an excerpt file of fantasy from non-fantasy magazines going back one hundred years; most of these I do not have in complete magazine form.

What is unusual is that I have the equivalent of fifty four-drawer filing cabinets with overflow from fan magazines as well as clippings, tear sheets, and notes relating to science fiction, assembled across nearly half a century.

I have kept every letter, circular, bill, and notice sent to me since 1936, most of it about science fiction. I have a separate file for every postcard I ever received and have kept every membership card to organizations or conventions I have attended, as well as business cards from people within this field. This file includes communications from most authors, editors, artists, and fans of note, as well as letters I secured from others. I have also kept every catalog ever sent me by a science fiction dealer and have complete sets of their annotated listings extending back continuously over forty years.

Through the years I have accumulated perhaps 1,500 photos of people in the field, which are filed by name or category. In artwork, though I have made no special effort, inadvertently I have secured about six hundred originals. My collection is particularly strong in Frank R. Paul, with about twenty of his full-color cover paintings and several hundred in black and white. I also have about twenty-five Finlays, including about five covers, and a selection of Lawrence, Emsh, Morey, and lesser-known illustrators.

My original manuscript collection is small but includes some very famous names, as well as unpublished novels by Hugo Gernsback and David H. Keller, as well as many original William Hope Hodgson manuscripts.

Several authors or authors' estates have let me have some of their papers, and I have very large quantities regarding William Hope Hodgson, Hugo Gernsback, David H. Keller, and Eando Binder.

My collection is set up as a research collection. There are more filing cabinets than bookcases, and it occupies four rooms in my house. Material is literally added on a daily basis, and in books, magazines, pocket books, fan magazines, and dealers' offerings of old material the collection is kept *up to date*. It is not a collection covering a specific period, but ranges over the entire history of science fiction. The collection is weak in comic books, not because I did not consider them important, but because the line had to be drawn somewhere. Not mentioned are thousands of American magazines I own, non-fantasy in content, but which provide me with background material on the development of periodical literature, on which subject I have considerable expertise. These magazines range back 150 years.

I have so many items of special delight that it would be impossible to single out my favorite. There is particular joy in securing, for example, a run of the almost legendary *Thrill Book*, but there is almost a greater thrill in obtaining the original author prospectus and flyer that *announced* the publication of *Thrill Book*. There is the surprise and fascination of discovering that Germany had a magazine of supernatural fiction, *Der Orchideengarten*, published four years before America's *Weird Tales*, but one should feel more exultant at completing a set of the latter than in securing a set of the former. What is best is when you can do both, as I have. I really got juiced up when I obtained the two-volume first edition of *Peter Wilkins* published in 1750, but that was scholarly excitement because I knew how important a novel it was historically. I own a first edition of *The Consolidator*, the Moon voyage story written by Daniel Defoe, autographed, but I am sure most collectors would prefer *The Outsider* by H.P. Lovecraft, unautographed. I can quite easily and honestly say that I have a thousand loving favorites, if not ten thousand.✹

Q 18: PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

***YOU'VE** been dubbed, by several observers, "The world's foremost authority on science fiction." All modesty aside, would you agree with that statement? What factors have contributed to your success in this field? Why haven't you received greater recognition from today's writers and historians?*

No one can know everything, even about a circumscribed field. There are specialists in every area. How can I know more about French science fiction than Pierre Versins, when I don't even read French? How can I know more about comics than Steranko, who has worked in the field and studied it all his life? But conceding these and other obvious areas of intense specialization, I entered the field when it was still possible to embrace it all. Instead of lowering my expectations, I broadened my horizons and continued a broad spectrum of interests. There are many specialists in the field who know that whether they are masters of pulp magazines, Edgar Rice Burroughs, supernatural fiction, M.P. Shiel, hero pulps, Robert E. Howard, fan magazines, Robert A. Heinlein, *Weird Tales*, H.G. Wells, dime novels, Edgar Allan Poe, the general history of publishing, I carry enough knowledge in *each* of these categories that I must be respected. In other words, I am capable of contributing something *new* to all of these and a hundred other areas of interest. I am a multi-faceted specialist with a comprehensive grasp of the total picture. Encyclopedias are now appearing that are pieced together by diverse hands. Had I the desire and will, I could put together a good science fiction encyclopedia with no help, solely from my own resources.

With the foregoing disclaimers, I probably am the world's leading generalist on science fiction and fantasy, because what I do not know I know how to obtain. In addition to my collection, I have entry to other large collections. I know hundreds of people who would assist me with special information. I am a professional editor, reporter, and business analyst by vocation, and have been for almost forty years. I know how to obtain information, organize it, interpret it, and professionally write it. I have been integrally involved with most aspects of the science fiction world. I am not an observer looking in; I am a participant looking out.

I remember a discussion I was having with a prominent scientifictionist at the Cleveland convention back in the sixties. He said to me deprecatingly, "Look, you self-appointed historian."

"Oh," I replied. "Who appointed the others?"

Frustrated he retorted, "Someday, some bright young fellow is going to come along and replace you as the big expert in this field, and then you won't be so sure of yourself. What do you say to that?"

"To that statement I am in full agreement, with a single qualification."

"What is that?"

"He won't be *young*!"

What I was trying to say was that even if I gave some scholar my entire collection as a gift, he would still be left with the job of reading and mentally digesting its content. If he were willing to dedicate himself to the task, how long would it take him?

The phenomenon of gratuitous criticism, even from those who are lifting my researches wholesale and using them in their own works, involves a complex set of factors.

First, I have received notable recognition for my work in general. I am now and have for some years been listed in both *Who's Who in the World* and *Who's Who in America*, as well as the *International Authors and Writers' Who's Who*, *Contemporary Authors*, *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*, and *Contemporary Literary Criticism*. I was voted into Science Fiction's Hall of Fame, along with Hugo Gernsback, E.E Smith., David H. Keller, John W. Campbell, and other giants by First Fandom. I am a charter member of New Jersey's Literary Hall of Fame, in which all the works of the selected author are retained at the Van Houten Library of the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and I was Mystery Guest of Honor at the Cleveland World Science Fiction Convention in 1955 for my pioneering work on science fiction conventions and the publication of *The Immortal Storm*. In 1982, the Science Fiction Research Association gave me the Pilgrim Award for lifetime research in science fiction at their Denver convention.

To put matters into context, it must be understood that, counting collaborations and ghosted books, I have published sixty hardcover and paperback books since 1947. This is more than some authors and anthologists manage in a lifetime devoting full time to their profession. Many of these books have been published by respected names in the field including the old World Publishing Company; Doubleday; Holt, Rinehart & Winston; Scribners; Ballantine; Fawcett; Pyramid; Collier's; Berkley; and various others. Additionally, I edited two series of reprints for Hyperion Press in both hard and quality soft covers, totaling forty-two titles in all, six of them my own. The series were immensely successful and sparked a parade of imitators. There is scarcely a library in any town in the country with a population of 10,000 or over that does not have some of my titles in its catalogue. I had also taught the first ever college level science fiction classes, at the City College of New York during the years 1953 to 1955 inclusive.

Old memories die hard. Many of the writers, fans, and academics in science fiction remember me as an enthusiastic active fan in the thirties and early forties. They found it difficult to accept that the teenager they knew was capable of critical prestige performance. To make it worse, when my stint with Hugo Gernsback ended, instead of flunking out of the publishing field and going back to selling wholesale groceries I moved into business publications, became expert in the frozen food, soft drink, and private label business, both nationally and internationally, and was appointed to publisher/editor jobs that were relatively well paying. I acted as a paid consultant to such firms as General Mills, McCormick Spices, and Campbell Soups, and to regional industrial planning boards and even the Swedish government. I was working hard, but I was not suffering the economic pangs that were the lot of most full-time professionals as they pursue their trade.

Those writers whom I treated in lengthy critical biographies benefited with credentials and publicity that made their sales easier and ensured that future references would always include them because of the widespread availability of my books. Those that I never got around to writing about, or concerning whom I happened to say something that they didn't like, had in a few cases resented the omission or the criticism and resorted to printed attacks, gratuitous slurs, innuendo by word of mouth as well as print. It is human nature never to be completely satisfied with what one has. Apparently, a number of reasonably successful science fiction writers, despite dozens of hard- and softcover books, scores of magazine stories, and considerable reader reverence, really wanted to write *about* science fiction and get it published. Book review columns had given them a sort of catharsis where they could vent their spleen on a hapless victim or parade their erudition. When written by a professional fiction writer, these columns carried the connotation that a writer of fiction was obviously more talented and intellectual than a writer of non-fiction. In me they viewed a fan who hadn't written any fiction in a long time who was placing books *about* science fiction with mainline hardcover publishers, many of whom wouldn't take quality science fiction, let alone books about science fiction. My books would be reviewed in the *New York Times*, *Herald Tribune*, *Saturday Review*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Library Journal*, and even their local paper, and that was what they craved.

To make it worse, these books were admittedly of a scholarly cast yet they enjoyed readership. Academics, who were taking to science fiction, watched a man without academic degrees placing books that would have done very nicely to aid them in their university status, at a time when they were having problems interesting a college press. To add salt to the wound, this man had introduced science fiction courses at college level when it was believed to be impossible, and to make the matter worse, had produced two series of books to be used for college study of science fiction, and they were eagerly accepted by university libraries.

That his only motive for doing it was scholarly interest made it all the worse. He didn't need the credits for advancement, he didn't need the money to live on (he spent more than he made on books and research), he did it without grants or subsidies and without stepping on anyone, because the markets for his products did not exist before he introduced them.

The excuse for initial attacks came when the ordinarily objective P. Schuyler Miller in a 1963 review

in *Analog* pointed out what he thought were errors in the Wells chapter of *Explorers of the Infinite*. One of the dangers of research is that the presentation of new information "looks wrong" when read by someone with preconceived notions. My reply to Miller did not appear for many months and he conceded his error with the justification that I was making other scholars stumble by *withholding* too much of the information I had.

This review was the springboard for future criticism. Right up until the present day it is used as an excuse to claim that my works cannot be trusted because there are "errors" in them. When I write to ask for the errors so that I can correct them in a future edition, I am repeatedly told that the critics do not know of any errors of their own knowledge, but I am eventually referred back to Miller. Sadly, one writer who criticized the book primarily because of my ethnic background was James Blish. Blish was a Nazi and Fascist sympathizer during World War II (see *The Futurians* by Damon Knight) and this admiration extended to anti-Semitism. Printed evidence of this is presented in his book *The Issue at Hand* (1964), where he is unable to find the slightest thing wrong with depriving the Jews of the vote, all their property, and the right to attend schools, and then driving them out of the country, in M.P. Shiel's *The Lord of the Sea* (1901).

It was Blish, in *More Issues at Hand* (1970), who propounded the absurdity that I never read anything but science fiction, and that therefore my judgements are not trustworthy since I cannot relate science fiction to what is happening in the rest of the world. He states that the research cannot be trusted because there are errors present and refers one to Miller for evidence, unable to produce any himself. We find these same views being repeated in recent encyclopedias. Yet these books have no compunction about utilizing extensive material from my researches, apparently not worried about it introducing errors into their books.

We have here the case that when you run too far ahead of the field in research few are able or qualified to check the accuracy of what you have presented. Therefore, the opinion of critics whose only qualifications are that they were or are fiction writers is accepted as the more responsible. Again we find repeated parroting that though I have more material on the subject than anyone else, my judgements cannot be trusted. It follows logically that the less knowledge a critic has, the more reliable are his conclusions.✹

B: BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE books of Sam Moskowitz chronologically arranged, with annotations.

SCIENCE FICTION BOOKS WRITTEN OR EDITED BY SAM MOSKOWITZ

Life Everlasting and Other Tales of Science, Fantasy and Horror, by David H. Keller, M.D. (Avalon, 1947). Lengthy critical biography, selection of best stories, and inset bibliography.

The Immortal Storm: A History of Science Fiction Fandom. (ASFO, 1954; reprinted by and available from Hyperion Press). Detailed account of science fiction fandom from its beginnings until 1939, including accounts of all fan magazines and publishing projects of that period.

Editor's Choice in Science Fiction. (McBride, 1954). Selections by twelve editors of the best previously unanthologized stories from their magazines, with their introductions to the background of the stories.

A Martian Odyssey and Other Stories, by Stanley G. Weinbaum. (Lancer, 1962). Outstanding stories with introduction.

Explorers of the Infinite: Shapers of Science Fiction. (World, 1963). Science fiction's pioneers, from Cyrano de Bergerac to Stanley G. Weinbaum.

The Coming of the Robots. (Collier, 1963). The first anthology of robot stories, some nowhere else reprinted, with introduction and notes.

Exploring Other Worlds. (Collier, 1963). Anthology of adventures on other planets, some nowhere else reprinted, with introduction and notes.

Strange Signposts: An Anthology of the Fantastic [with Roger Elwood]. (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966). Contains many stories not anthologized elsewhere, with notes.

Seekers of Tomorrow: Masters of Modern Science Fiction. (World, 1966). History of modern science fiction from Edward E. Smith to Philip Jose Farmer, including critical biographies of 22 outstanding writers.

Modern Masterpieces of Science Fiction. (World, 1966). Contains 22 stories, one by each of the writers profiled in *Seekers of Tomorrow*, with a history of the period.

Masterpieces of Science Fiction. (World, 1967). Contains a story by each of the writers profiled in *Explorers of the Infinite*, with a history of early science fiction.

The Human Zero and Other Science Fiction Masterpieces [with Roger Elwood]. (Tower, 1967). Includes stories nowhere else reprinted, by Ray Bradbury, Eric Frank Russell, A.E. van Vogt, Robert Bloch, and others.

Three Stories by Murray Leinster, Jack Williamson and John Wyndham. (Doubleday, 1967). Three novellas: Leinster's "The Mole Pirate," Williamson's "The Moon Era," and Wyndham's "A Sense of Wonder." A lengthy introduction argues that the "sense of wonder" lies in the story rather than in the reader.

Doorway into Time. (Macfadden, 1967). Reprints one

third of *Modern Masterpieces of Science Fiction.*

The Time Curve [with Roger Elwood]. (Tower, 1968). Includes stories not collected elsewhere, by Andre Norton, A.E. van Vogt, Clifford D. Simak, and others.

Science Fiction by Gaslight: A History and Anthology of Science Fiction in the Popular Magazines, 1891–1911. (World, 1968). A lengthy history of magazine publishing during the gaslight era; most of the stories included have been nowhere else reprinted.

Microcosmic God. (Macfadden, 1968). More stories from *Modern Masterpieces of Science Fiction.*

The Vortex Blasters. (Macfadden, 1968). Still more stories from *Modern Masterpieces of Science Fiction.*

The Man Who Called Himself Poe. (Doubleday, 1969). A selection of stories in which Edgar Allen Poe is the leading character, together with an extensive introduction and notes.

Other Worlds, Other Times [with Roger Elwood]. (Macfadden-Bartell, 1969). Contains some stories not elsewhere reprinted, including material by Eric Frank Russell, Theodore Sturgeon, and Robert Bloch.

Alien Earth and Other Stories [with Roger Elwood]. (Macfadden-Bartell, 1969). Many previously unanthologized stories by Andre Norton, Ray Bradbury, A.E. van Vogt, Clifford D. Simak, Arthur C. Clarke, and others.

Great Untold Stories of Fantasy and Horror [with Alden H. Norton]. (Pyramid, 1969). Stories largely taken from obscure 19th-century sources, with extensive notes of historical value.

Under the Moons of Mars: A History and Anthology of "The Scientific Romance" in the Munsey Magazines, 1912–1920. (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970). A full-length history of science fiction in these early pulp magazines; most of the stories are unobtainable elsewhere.

The Citadel of Fear, by Francis Stevens. (Paperback Library, 1970). Classic fantasy novel from the 1918 Munsey magazines, with introductory material.

Futures to Infinity. (Pyramid, 1970). A collection of previously unanthologized stories by Ray Bradbury, Robert A. Heinlein, L. Ron Hubbard, Alfred Bester, Isaac Asimov, L. Sprague de Camp, Clifford D. Simak, Henry Kuttner, A.E. van Vogt, and other great names in science fiction.

Ghostly by Gaslight [with Alden H. Norton]. (Pyramid, 1971). An entire volume of previously unanthologized stories from the 19th century, with comprehensive notes on each.

The Space Magicians [with Alden H. Norton]. (Pyramid, 1971). Previously unanthologized stories by great names in science fiction including John Wyndham, Henry Kuttner, Clifford D. Simak, Eric Frank Russell, and others.

The Ultimate World, by Hugo Gernsback. (Walker, 1971). First publication of Gernsback's novel with an introduction containing material previously unpublished.

Horrors Unknown. (Walker, 1971). Fantasy and horror tales by great names in the field, never previously anthologized; includes "The Challenge from Beyond," a round-robin collaboration by C.L. Moore, A. Merritt, H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, and Frank Belknap Long.

When Women Rule. (Walker, 1972). A collection of tales of women dominant, most of them rare and previously unanthologized; with a long introduction on the prevalence of the theme in science fiction.

Horrors in Hiding [with Alden H. Norton]. (Berkley, 1973). Ten previously uncollected horror stories by Ray Bradbury, Seabury Quinn, Henry Kuttner, Robert Bloch, August W. Derleth, and other writers.

The Crystal Man: Stories by Edward Page Mitchell. (Doubleday, 1973). A collection of thirty fantasies by a previously anonymous master of 19th-century science fiction, with a 25,000-word biographical perspective of the man and how he may have influenced the field.

Out of the Storm, by William Hope Hodgson. (Donald Grant, 1975). Uncollected fantasies of Hodgson, with a 25,000-word critical biography based on his papers and records.

Strange Horizons: The Spectrum of Science Fiction. (Scribner's, 1976). The first critical account of social problems in science fiction, covering religion, anti-Semitism, civil rights, women's liberation, birth control, psychiatry, crime, teenagers, war, unexplained phenomena, and art.

A Dream of X, by William Hope Hodgson. (Donald Grant, 1977). A condensed version of *The Nightland* written for copyright purposes, with an introduction giving the background.

Far Future Calling, by Olaf Stapledon. (Oswald Train, 1979). The first collection of Stapledon's fantasy short stories, with a lengthy authorized biography and other relevant material.

Science Fiction in Old San Francisco: History of the Movement from 1854 to 1890 and *Science Fiction in Old San Francisco: Into the Sun and Other Stories by Robert Duncan Milne.* (Donald Grant, 1980). Two volumes of previously-unknown stories by a leading California writer, demonstrating that there was a flourishing science fiction movement in 19th-century San Francisco.

Howard Phillips Lovecraft and Nils Helmer Frome, A Recollection of One of Canada's Earliest Science Fiction Fans. (Moshassuck Press, 1989). Frome was the first active Canadian fan and publisher of the first Canadian fan magazine. This book covers his life, fiction, artwork, and correspondence, with lengthy introductory and interpolative material.

A. Merritt: Reflections in the Moon Pool. (Oswald Train,

1985). Contains a book-length biography together with unpublished fictional fragments, photographs, letters, essays, and poems by Merritt and appreciations by others.

The Haunted Pompero and Other Uncollected Fantasies, by William Hope Hodgson. (Donald Grant, scheduled for 1991). Ten uncollected fantasies and 25,000 words of biographical information taken from Hodgson's own papers.

SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGIES GHOST EDITED BY SAM MOSKOWITZ FOR LEO MARGULIES

Three Times Infinity. (Gold Medal, 1958). Includes "Lorelei of the Red Mist" by Ray Bradbury and Leigh Brackett, "The Golden Helix" by Theodore Sturgeon, and "Destination Moon" by Robert A. Heinlein.

3 in 1. (Pyramid, 1963). "There Is No Defense" by Theodore Sturgeon, "Galactic Chest" by Clifford D. Simak, and "West Wind" by Murray Leinster, all with notes.

Weird Tales. (Pyramid, 1964). Previously unanthologized stories by writers such as H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, Nictzin Dyalhis, Robert Bloch, Fritz Leiber, and Edmond Hamilton, with an introduction and story notes.

Worlds of Weird. (Pyramid, 1965). Predominantly unanthologized material from *Weird Tales*, including stories by Robert E. Howard, Nictzin Dyalhis, Seabury Quinn, Edmond Hamilton, David H. Keller, and others, with introductory material and notes.

FOR ROGER ELWOOD

Alien Worlds. (Paperback Library, 1964). Previously unanthologized stories by Eric Frank Russell, Philip K. Dick, John W. Campbell, Clifford D. Simak, John Wyndham, Robert Bloch, and others.

Invasion of the Robots. (Paperback Library, 1965). Previously unanthologized stories by Isaac Asimov, Henry Kuttner, Jack Williamson, Richard Matheson, Philip K. Dick, and others.

FOR ALDEN H. NORTON

Award Science Fiction Reader. (Award, 1966). Previously unanthologized stories by Theodore Sturgeon, Arthur C. Clarke, John W. Campbell, A.E. van Vogt, Clifford D. Simak, and others, with introduction and notes.

Horror Times Ten. (Berkley, 1967). Previously unanthologized stories by Ray Bradbury, Robert E. Howard, August W. Derleth, Max Brand, Arthur Conan Doyle, and others, with introduction and notes.

Masters of Horror. (Berkley, 1968). Previously unanthologized stories by A. Merritt, Ray Bradbury, Henry Kuttner, Bram Stoker, Robert W. Chambers, Clemence Housman, and others, with introduction and notes.

Hauntings and Horrors. (Berkley, 1969). Previously unanthologized stories by William Hope Hodgson, Ray Bradbury, Clark Ashton Smith, H.P. Lovecraft, Robert Bloch, and others, with introduction and notes.

NON-FANTASY BOOKS EDITED BY SAM MOSKOWITZ

Great Railroad Stories of the World. (McBride, 1954). Classics in the genre by Charles Dickens, Gerhart Hauptmann, Marquis James, T.E. Lawrence, William Saroyan, Thomas Wolfe, Frank L. Packard, Octavus Roy Cohen, and others, with introductory material and notes.

Great Spy Novels and Stories [with Roger Elwood]. (Pyramid, 1965). Stories by Erle Stanley Gardner, Edgar Wallace, Manning Coles, John D. MacDonald, Geoffrey Household, O. Henry, and others.

PROFESSIONALLY PUBLISHED SCIENCE FICTION STORIES

"The Way Back," *Comet*, January 1941.

"World of Mockery," *Planet Stories*, Summer 1941.

"Man of the Stars," *Planet Stories*, Winter 1941.

"The Lost Chord," *Science and Sorcery*, ed. Garret Ford. (Fantasy Publishing Company, Inc., 1953).

"Death of an Asteroid," *Info*, March 15, 1956.

"Death of a Dinosaur," *Amazing Stories*, August 1956.

"Sitting Duck," *Amazing Stories*, October 1956.

"The Golden Pyramid," *Fantastic Universe*. November 1956.

UNCOLLECTED ARTICLES FROM THE PROFESSIONAL MAGAZINES

"Did Science Fiction Predict Atomic Energy?" [with Robert A. Madle], *Science Fiction Quarterly*, November 1952. A review of stories that predicted the atomic bomb.

"This Is the Eastern Science Fiction Association," *Science Fiction Adventures*, September 1953. History of the ESFA through 1953.

"What Can Man Imagine?" *Amazing Stories*, April 1956. Outstanding predictions made in *Amazing Stories* fiction that came true.

"Tennessee Williams: Boy Wonder," *Satellite Science Fiction*, October 1957. The first revelation that Tennessee Williams's first fiction sale was to *Weird Tales*.

"How Superman Was Born," *Future Science Fiction*, June 1958. Background and development of the comic book character.

"Two Thousand Years of Space Travel," *Fantastic Universe*, October 1959. Illustrated feature on the development of the space travel theme in fiction.

"To Mars and Venus in the Gay Nineties," *Fantastic*

Universe, February 1960. Illustrated feature on interplanetary novels of the late 1800s.

SELECTED RESEARCH

After Ten Years: A Tribute to Stanley G. Weinbaum, 1902-1935 [with Gerry de la Ree]. (De la Ree, 1945). Appreciations by Weinbaum's wife and sister, and by Ralph Milne Farley, Raymond A. Palmer, and Julius Schwartz, with letters from Weinbaum, an autobiographical sketch, and a poem.

Peace and Olaf Stapledon. (Gafia Press, 1950). A reportorial on-the-scene account of Olaf Stapledon's visit to the communist-inspired Peace Conference in New York in 1949, including a letter from Stapledon and a telephone conversation with him.

Hugo Gernsback: Father of Science Fiction. (Criterion, 1959). An illustrated biography of Gernsback.

A Canticle for P. Schuyler Miller. (Fantasy Amateur Press Association, 1974). A complete critical biography of Miller, including information from his sister and his employer.

"George Griffith: The Warrior of If," in *The Raid of "Le Vengeur"* by George Griffith. (Ferrett Fantasy, 1974). A 25,000-word critical biography of George Griffith, bestselling science fiction writer of the 1890s and a contemporary of H.G. Wells.

Charles Fort: A Radical Corpuscle. (Fantasy Amateur Press Association, 1976). The only review of Fort's short stories ever published, together with a reprinting of his fantasy, "A Radical Corpuscle," and reproductions of Krazy Kat creator George Heriman's illustrations for some of the stories.

"Anatomy of a Collection: The Sam Moskowitz Collection," in *Science/Fiction Collections: Fantasy, Supernatural & Weird Tales*, ed. Hal Hall. (Haworth Press, 1983). A description of the Moskowitz collection.

For a more complete listing of uncollected research, consult Hal W. Hall's *Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Index 1878–1985* (Gale, 1987).

CONSULTING PROJECTS

Participating consultant on *The Complete Book of Space Travel*, by Albro Gaul (World, 1956); *Contact*, edited by Noel Keyes (Paperback Library, 1963); *The Pulps*, by Tony Goodstone (Chelsea House, 1970); and *The Science Fiction Calendar* (Scribner's, 1976 and 1977).

Editor of *Classics of Science Fiction* (First Series, Hyperion Press, 1974; Second Series, Hyperion Press, 1976). These two series brought back into print some of the most important early science fiction and fantasy stories, with extensive introductory material.✹

ALSO BY FRED LERNER

Modern Science Fiction and the American Literary Community, Fred Lerner. (The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1985). A historical inquiry into the reception of a new literary medium by several classes of American readers. 325 pp., 5.5 x 8.75 hardback, $26.00.

OTHER NIEKAS PUBLICATIONS

Attack of the Fifty Extremely SF Stories,* Michael Bastraw (ed.), intro by Robert Bloch. 50 more stories by pro/am writers, all 50 words or less. From hard SF to high fantasy. Each story illustrated. 56 pp., 4.25 x 11 paperback, $3.95.

The Illustrated Bradbury, James Anderson, art by Larry Dickison. A structural review of *The Illustrated Man* by Ray Bradbury. 56 pp., 4.25 x 11 paperback, $5.95.

Obsessions, Anthony S. Magistrale, art by Robert H. Knox. Prose of preoccupations; disturbing pictures. 40 pp., 4.25 x 11 paperback, $3.95.

Andre Norton: Fables and Futures, Anne Braude (ed.). An affectionate tribute and critical look—or maybe vice versa. 52 pp., 8.5 x 11 paperback, $5.95.

The Once and Future Arthur, Edmund R. Meskys (ed.). Assembled 'twixt these covers be juicy gobbets about the Life and Times of King Arthur. 72 pp., 8.5 x 11 paperback, $5.95.

A Silverlock Companion—The Life and Works of John Myers Myers, Fred Lerner (ed.). Includes a reader's guide to the Commonwealth, bibliography, his western and historical works, unpublished prose and poetry, a history of Silverlock fandom...and more. 52 pp., 8.5 x 11 paperback, $5.95.

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