

ScientiFiction

Winter, 1995



The First Fandom Report



Table of Contents

Important News.....	3
Membership News.....	3
Deadlines.....	4
Book Renew by Mark Schulzinger.....	4
Necrology.....	5
Revenge of The Sci-Fan, the editor raves on.....	5
Mythology of the Hugo by Ben Jason.....	7
Dinosaur Droppings, letters from our members.....	16
President's Message.....	19

On the cover: Julie Schwartz (right) accepts the Posthumous Hall of Fame award for Mort Weisinger from Secretary-Treasurer Mark Schulzinger (left) at Archon, 1995.

Photo by Sustaining Patron John L. Coker, III, Orlando, Florida

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LOTSA NEWS

RICHARDSON HONORED

RECEIVES BAPTIST AWARD

On June 28 Dr. Darrell C. Richardson was awarded the Good Shepherd Award of the Southern Baptist Convention in a special program.

Darrell was awarded the honor, which is sponsored by the Baptist Committee on Scouting, for his over 60 years of work for the Boy Scouts of America. He is an Eagle Scout and recipient of the Silver Beaver Award. He led the American deligation to the

PIG KISSING AXED HUMANS GOT GERMS!

The Associated Press reported that the annual kiss-the-pig contest at the Kouts, Indiana Pork Fest was cancelled this year.

The cancellation occurred because the organizers could not find a pig to be osculated. It seems that farmers are worried about their pigs getting sick if kissed by humans since people carry staphylococcus and streptococcus bugs. Young pigs are particularly susceptible to such infections.

There also appears to be a psychological component to the concern; separating the pigs from the herd depresses them.

BUILDING NAMED AFTER WILLIAMSON

UNIVERSITY HONORS HOF WINNER

On Friday, October 6, Eastern New Mexico University in Portales dedicated its liberal arts building to Jack Williamson. Jack, who earned his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the university, is a professor emeritus of English at the institution and still co-teaches classes there on creative writing and science fiction. Jack reports that the honor was a total surprise to him.

NEW MEMBERS

The following associate member has been accepted:

Arlan K. Andrews, Sr.

P.O. Box 13402

Albuquerque, NM 87192

Welcome Dinosaur!

SUSTAINING PATRONS

We have a new sustaining patron, to wit:

Jeff Olson

Welcome aboard!

DUES

Dues in First Fandom remain \$5.00 per year. The number on your mailing label will tell you to the end of which year your dues are paid. Please keep your dues current if you possibly can.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for First Fandom events and *SciFare* are as follows:

First Fandom:

December 31, 1995 -- Last date ballots for HoF voting will be accepted.

May 31, 1996 -- last date for nominations for 1996 Hall of Fame award.

SciFiction:

January 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Spring, 1996 ish.

April 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Summer, 1996 ish.

July 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Autumn, 1996 ish.

October 19, 1996 -- Closing date for Winter, 1996 ish

BOOK RENEW

by Mark Schulzinger

THE DEMOLISHED MAN, by Alfred Bester, Shasta, 1953

In this age of angst-ridden characters with convoluted lives and emotional disabilities so severe as to lead to chronic soliloquizing, it's a pleasure to re-read this economical masterpiece by one of the gr8 writers of science fiction's Ag age.

The pages are filled with marvelous characters, sparsely described, but wonderfully fleshed out by their behaviors: the avaricious and h8-driven Ben Reich, the greedy Gus T8, the warped and tormented Jeremy Church, the sexually starved but sexually fearful Duffy Wyg&, the vampyrically lecherous Maria Beaumont (the Gilt Corpse), the terminally tormented Craye D'Courtney, the f(r)abulous Chooka Froot, and the anguished Lincoln Powell who is compelled to compensate for his soul-destroying work by moving from time to time into a world of outrageous lies.

The basic premise of the story is simple: how does one commit murder in a world where telepaths exist? What a lovely idea, it intrigues the reader from the beginning. Then, to make the concept even more intriguing, that same reader watches Ben Reich lovingly craft the murder, build an esper shield, obtain the murder weapon, and finally carry out the crime, but without any valid motive!

And so the story progresses. Seven pages after the murder, on page 55, Lincoln Powell

"A peeper ¢ by the police to peep @ all the people..."

knows that Ben Reich killed Craye D'Courtney. He can prove it, all the tracks lead inexorably to Reich. But neither he nor we can discern the all-important motive.

It's that overriding "why" that drives this story. Reich is driven to murder. Why? The murder goes horribly awry in a way Reich never imagined. Why? Reich finds himself compelled to continue to murder, to isolate himself more and more from all he has worked and killed for. Why?

While reading this story the reader may see close parallels with "M" in Reich's driven behavior. Some of the images conjured up seem to derive from "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," some

from "*Dr. Mabuse, Der Spieler*." Some just emerge from the f(r)abulous imagination of Alfie Bester. But they're all molded into a vast Freudian canvas that holds one's attention until the chocolate ending with all the ends neatly tied and s@isfied.

To recall that this story was first published in *Galaxy* during its first few years of existence is to remind oneself how Horace Gold remade science fiction in the images of Freud, and Kraft-Ebbing. But he couldn't have done it without those marvelous creations of which this is an outstanding example.

NECROLOGY

J. Ben Stark

REVENGE OF THE SCI-FAN

CONVENTIONS OF DISCONTENT

We keep having difficulties with Worldcon; Glasgow was no exception. Despite every attempt to communicate with the Hugo awards committee and to discuss our own award requirements, we

continue to be ignored until a month or so prior to the con. We continue to be exhorted to "keep it short" and we continue to have difficulty when we find we have to make some last-minute changes.

Ethel Lindsay did a wonderful job of coordinating the presentation despite the fact that she is Andy Porter's British agent and had to spend most of her time manning the *Science Fiction Chronicle* booth. Nonetheless she felt rushed and harried because of the difficulties in communicating with an essentially unsympathetic and disinterested award ceremony committee.

The problem, I fear, is that we are pitting acknowledgement against money, and money will win out every time. The Hugos were set up to serve as a way for fan to acknowledge the best of the past year, but it certainly didn't take long for some of the recipients to translate acknowledgement into a kind of popularity/monetary rating. As a result the Hugo awards ceremony has taken on the aura of the motion picture Academy Awards with the winners often (but not always) seeing their Hugos translated into big bucks with the next contract.

The Hall of Fame award has never become commercialized. First Fandom has kept it a family honor which we wish to share with others, much the same way a pair of proud grandparents share

grandbaby photos. While we do this we also share some background information concerning the recipients and, in the case of the posthumous awards, we attempt to educate the newer fan as to the accomplishments of these deceased giants.

So we lose out to the promoters, the press agents, the marketers, but we still want to keep our little family sharing of honors going.

It turns out that the regional cons *like* our Hall of Fame presentations. We offer them something they would never manage to offer their attendees for a reasonable outlay of money. The more motivated a regional con is to have First Fandom share its awards with others, the more successful the presentations become. I wrote about the ceremony at Archon in the last ish, and those of you who attended know how enjoyable the award ceremony was.

One of the nicest parts about making our presentations at a regional con is that we never have to beg for time, and we are never urged to "keep it short" so the dollar bills can begin their parade. We can take as much time as we wish, and we're usually given a more than adequate venue in which to make the presentations.

By now you know where this editorial is headed; I am more and more in agreement with Sam Mos-

kowitz who wants to start making Hall of Fame award presentations at regional cons. This might not have been a reasonable consideration in the past because we would have had to find some con that would have us, and wind up begging all over again. Now, however, we are the ones who are solicited. We have been guests at three regional cons, and have had two posthumous presentation ceremonies. We will be guests at yet another con in 1996, and the trend appears to be on its way to becoming a habit.

I've discussed the possibility of a change with Ray Beam, and he thinks it's a good idea. Now we want your input. Would you like to see the Hall of Fame awards presented at a regional con where we are appreciated, where we can take some time to honor our recipients, and where we can share our *naches* with others? Let us know.

Strange mail department: We got a brochure from PEN Products about their stackable chairs. Turns out that PEN is the acronym for Prison Enterprises Network, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Indiana Department of Correction. Somehow it strikes us as comforting to know that if we get sent to the slammer in Indiana we won't have to languish on the license plate line; we can always graduate to the office furniture department.

MYTHOLOGY OF THE HUGO

by

Ben Jason

The idea of achievement awards within fandom is definitely not a new one. As far back as the 1930s Ray Palmer proposed the Jules Verne Prize Club, but lack of interest and donations led to its demise. I believe that the Mystery Writers of America came up with the "Edgar" which is still being awarded.

Now, when we come to science fiction awards, we have a totally different picture. In 1951 our British cousins beat us to the punch. Four fans, Leslie Flood, John Benyon Harris (John Wyndham), G. Ken Chapman, and Frank Cooper, formed the International Fantasy Award which lasted until 1957. The trophy was a metal spaceship and cigarette lighter (?) mounted on a base. In retrospect I still wish that this award would have continued; it looked attractive and I never heard any complaints about its manufacture. It would have saved a lot of headaches for Jack McKnight and myself.

First let us go back to 1953 to Philadelphia and Milton A. Rothman's version of how the first Hugo was made. What follows are

direct quotes for the sake of accuracy. Rothman's quote is from the "Noreascon Program Book," and the second quote is from correspondence between Hal Lynch and myself.

Rothman: "There was a banquet with Isaac Asimov as toastmaster, giving his usual rouser of a speech. At the banquet we presented the Hugo awards for the first time. Earlier in the year we had created the space-rocket design (copied from Willy Ley) for the award statuette. We had assigned the task of producing the statuettes to one of our committee members. Comes the end of summer and we find that the person in charge of the awards was away and unreachable, and apparently had never even started the process of getting them made. And we had less than a week to go. It was Jack McKnight who came to the rescue. An expert machinist, he turned the little rockets out of stainless steel in his own shop, learning to his dismay that soldering stainless steel fins was a new art. While doing this poor Jack missed the whole convention, but turned up just in time for the banquet and the presentation."

Hal Lynch's version: March 12, 1955 in a letter to Ben Jason (after skipping over some chit-chat). "One thing we didn't think we'd have trouble with, and that was the trophies themselves. Since one of our members was a silversmith by profession, we were

told he would make some brass or "trophy metal" ships and silverplate them. *Simple!!!* So several months went by -- early spring to early summer. Then pow! right in the kisser! he told us that after trying many methods he was unable, using his equipment, to mold anything large enough to be seen from six feet away (his line is silver rings, earrings, and bracelets).

"So I went to the trophy houses. Let me advise you -- DON'T waste time on the trophy houses. They were *so* eager to help -- showed me all kinds of track-and-field medals, little gold baseballs, footballs, basketballs, big silver baseball players, football players, and basketball players. Lots of loving cups -- only forty to sixty bucks per. And while they didn't have any spaceships or rocketships of anything like that in stock if I'd just let them send an inquiry back to their factory in Michigan or Oregon or somewhere, they'd find out just what was available. Poor sucker that I was, I waited, while several more precious weeks went by, while these birds played games. At the end of it -- we were back where we started, with the Convention almost on top of us.

"About this time I learned that the business where I worked wanted me to go to the mid-West the week before Labor Day, and a friend of the family introduced me to another friend in the silver-

smithing business. This guy in turn took me to some attic where they had some slave at a work bench who got all excited about my idea of little space ships. He'd turn the things on a lathe, see, cut 'em out of brass, and then put the fins on and silverplate the whole thing. How long? Oh, maybe a week. I forget what the charge was, but we figured it was high, but not too high, and after all, what else could we do? So the attic genius was left with our problem as I departed for the West on my business trip.

"I flew back, arriving in Philly at four the morning our convention opened. Several characters looked at me as if I had the Black Plague. What happened?? *Three days* before somebody had checked our boy in the attic. He hadn't done a thing -- we had *nothing*. Not one trophy to award to anybody. Something was wrong with his lathe. With a hearty curse on the name of Lynch, the other Philly crew members set up a death Watch in Jack McKnight's workshop and put some trophies together, working all night the night before the convention, all night the first night of the convention (Saturday). We were putting on the convention and a whole squad of our guys missed about half of it on account of these awards. So you see, although I began this awards business, I wasn't in on the finish of it, and probably wouldn't be alive now if I

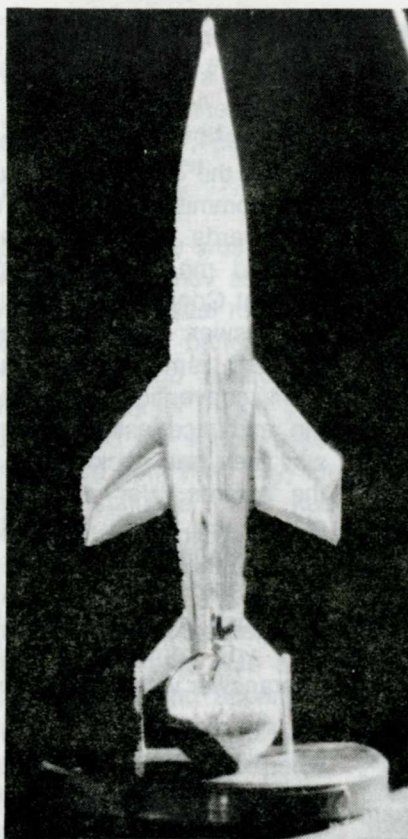
had been."

At this point we leave these trail-blazers and move on to the year 1954, with San Francisco hosting the convention. Strangely, their committee chose not to use the awards. For many years this troubled me, and it wasn't until 1993 at Confrancisco that I found the answer. During a panel discussion reminiscing about the 1954 convention someone from the audience asked Esther Cole why they had decided not to use the awards. Her reply was (as closely as I can remember it): "We thought it would be a one time presentation." Another question from the audience followed: "Did you regret that decision?" The answer was in the affirmative.

Now we move on to 1955 when Cleveland was hosting the convention and we pick up right after Hal Lynch's reply to me.

Repeated letters to Jack McKnight brought no replies (I assumed he would make them). I discussed the matter with my Chairmen, Nick and Noreen Falasca, and I believe it was Nick who suggested using the hood ornament of an Oldsmobile 88.

First we had to find one to see if it would serve our purpose. This was easier said than done. We prowled the streets looking for Olds 88 automobiles. We finally found one in a large parking lot surrounded by numerous apartments. While we were examining



(BRITISH)

INTERNATIONAL FANTASY AWARD 1951 TO 1957

First known SF award (see page 7 for details)

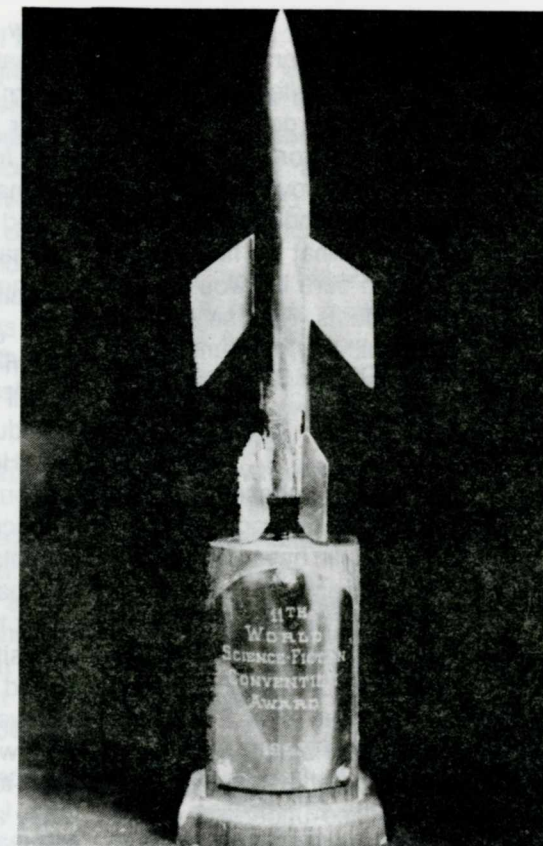
Production capabilities unknown.



Modeled by Noreen Falasca (now Shaw)

(AMERICAN)
1955 TO PRESENT

Second version -- produced 1955 from pattern and mold. Production capabilities unlimited. Designed and produced by Ben Jason of Cleveland, Ohio.

(AMERICAN)
1953

First known American SF award. A one time only production -- never repeated. Designed by Willy Ley -- produced by Jack McKnight and Manny Staub. Production capabilities -- very limited (machined out of stainless steel with silver-soldered fins).

NOTE: as to what was the first known SF award, either British or American, is debatable. I give credit in these pages as I see it. A very reliable informant says that the Jules Verne Award never got off the ground. Twenty-five cents was collected to finance a trophy which was to have been awarded to Edmond Hamilton. Hamilton claims to never have received it.

one of the Olds ornaments a window opened, and a woman leaned out and yelled, "What the hell are you guys doing bear that car? Clear out or I'll call the police!" We removed ourselves from the scene, and as we walked we discussed what we had found. Not being too sure if it would suite our requirements, Nick suggested that we should buy one, and since there was an Olds auto dealership close to Noreen's house she did just that.

After the purchase I asked him if it would fit our requirements. He said, "You'll have to see." I came over, examined it, and discovered to my sorrow that, while the ornament looked perfectly all right from the top when mounted on the hood of an Olds, it certainly wasn't from the bottom. It seems that, to economize, Olds had scooped out the underside of the ornament -- much like a canoe. I told Nick that it wasn't acceptable, although we could use it in a pinch. There was another problem; GM may have had it registered as a trademark.

So, for the next few weeks I was very busy. I made the rounds of the machine shops and received the same disheartening. Machining them would be beyond our means as a convention. However, after about the fifth or sixth machine shop, one of them told me that I was going at the production of trophies in the wrong manner. He suggested that

I draw a detailed, full-size picture of what I desired and take it to a pattern maker -- repeat, a pattern maker -- who would then make a mold from which hundreds could be made cheaply. The advice proved correct. He suggested the Hoffman Bronze Co. as a good starting point.

I contacted them, took my design with me, and soon found myself talking to a knowledgeable individual as well as a very patient one. He looked at the design and pronounced it workable. He threw a price at me which I found acceptable, and informed me that the pattern would be ready in about two weeks. I left a check as deposit and we agreed that I should check with him in about two weeks to see if it was ready. Two weeks later when I called I was told that the pattern was ready and to come down and take a look at it. When I walked into the foundry I was pleasantly surprised. Before me stood a wooden replica, and it looked beautiful!

THE TROUBLE WITH HUGO(S)

When I had recovered sufficiently I asked him how long it would be before he could produce six chrome-plated replicas. He informed me it would be another two weeks.

Two weeks later when I again entered the foundry I was greeted by a miniature forest of gleaming rocket ships. I found it hard to believe that I was finally successful. My jubilation was short-lived, however, when I picked up one of the completed trophies and discovered that it was heavily flawed. There were numerous pits and fissures, small but nevertheless enough to consider it undesirable for award purposes.

We discussed the problem and I was told that he could eliminate most of the defects by running another batch and then removing a "skin", about a sixteenth of an inch, by turning the casting on a lathe. I told him that I would consult with the con committee and would let him know.

When I brought the completed trophies to the meeting I was greeted with heavy applause and lots of back slapping, but I turned this all aside and told them to examine the trophies *close*. The committee did and told me that I was being too fussy. I argued and argued, and finally convinced them I was right. I asked for financial approval to have another batch made. I have to admit that we had a great committee!

To help with the financing some of the members bought three of the flawed castings, and I bought the remainder. I got in touch with Hoffman Bronze and told them to go ahead with the

second batch. Again, in another two weeks, I visited the foundry, and this time it was a different story. The second batch was beautiful *and* acceptable! They were ready to be awarded to some lucky recipients.

Not long after completing them the news spread through fandom that a new Hugo had been manufactured. One of those who had received the news was the Cincinnati Fantasy Group. Don Ford, who headed the group, called me and congratulated me on the successful completion, and asked for a favor. The group, let me point out, went in heavily for practical jokes. They wanted Lou Tabakow to bear the brunt of this particular joke.

It was pointed out to me that Lou Tabakow had submitted a story entitled "Sven" to *Other Worlds*, and it was accepted but not yet published. The CFG wanted me to design another trophy, a small one, along with a plaque saying something to the effect: "Awarded to Lou Tabakow for SVEN -- the best UNPUBLISHED story of the year."

I pondered the problem and somehow my thoughts came back to the Olds 88 hood ornament. Once again I prevailed on Hoffman Bronze. I sat in the office (my records no longer show the name of this wonderful and very helpful gentleman). Once again he listened very patiently to my

dilemma. I pointed out the canoe-like depression in the ornament and asked if he could work his way around it.

After a couple of minutes of discussion he calmly reached behind him to a shelf with numerous boxes on it. From one of these boxes he scooped out a handful of plain old putty and proceeded to mold it into the crevice of the Olds hood ornament. After a few minutes he asked, "Well, what do you think?"

I was flabbergasted! If I had known that a handful of putty held the secret to success I could have saved myself considerable anguish. I looked over what he had done and countered, "It should have a third fin (at best)." No problem; he proceeded to mold a third fin.

Again he asked, "How's that?"

"Perfect," I replied. "Make me about eight of them."

Comment: This last bit indicated *how simple* it is to make a Hugo, large or small. The same idea has been used in numerous movies by imbedding a *key* in putty or plastic.

Now, as to the name "Hugo." Who came up with the name? For this we refer to Lloyd Arthur Eshbach's excellent book "Over My Shoulder," Page 196, Line 20: "It was at the Williams apartment that the now famous Hugo was born. It

happened *before* the 1953 World Convention, and the convention committee met several months before the big event. Harold Lynch suggested that an award be given to the best writer."

This is part of fan history. But what isn't well known is the one who suggested the name. Let Oswald Train tell it. He was there. The awards were under discussion and Jim said they should have a name because, after all, we have the Oscar.

"What shall we call them -- Hugos?"

I was standing beside Jim and said "Why not, sounds good!" It caught on immediately, and henceforth we had Hugos, named after Hugo Gernsback of course. Others, among them Robert A. Madle, have received credit for this, but the fact remains that it was Jim Williams who came up with the name.

SETTING THE RECORDS STRAIGHT DEPARTMENT

Pick up any Worldcon program book and turn to the section containing the Rules and Regulations (Constitution). Let's take the Confrancisco Program Book as an example. This is what it says: "Section 2.4: NAME AND DESIGN. The Hugo Award shall

continue to be *standardized* on the rocket ship design of Jack McKnight and Ben Jason (underlines mine)."

This would imply that both of us worked together on designing and producing the trophies. Unfortunately this is far from the truth.

1. Jack McKnight produced eight (8) trophies (very small ones, about half the size of the Ben Jason version) *in 1953*. I can find no evidence that McKnight produced more trophies after that for any convention!

2. As pointed out in (1), the designs were not the same (see photos).

3. McKnight lived in Landsdown, Pennsylvania, and Jason in Cleveland, Ohio -- a good trick if we could have combined our efforts.

4. McKnight was a skilled machinist, Jason was not. Jason could not be of any help. He used an entirely different design and method of production.

5. At no time did we *combine* our efforts. I hope that this point is clear.

At this point you may have come up with the idea that the above statements are an effort to discredit Jack McKnight -- far from it. I've had the opinion that Jack McKnight's heroic efforts have gone unrewarded. You would think that in the 40 year history of the awards some well-meaning

Worldcon committee would have given him a plaque or some certificate of recognition. It's still not too late, even now! I should add that, although we met only twice, we were friends and we remained friends.

Two comments, or observations, before I wind up this article. While attending Confrancisco I made it a point to take in the Hugo Award ceremony. After just a few minutes I became very disappointed. First I realized that time had passed by both the Philcon and Clevention committees as originators and producers of the first awards. Secondly, the projection of the 35mm slides was so dim that it was easy to miss a lot of material. This is surprising. With the megabucks at their disposal the presentation could have been bright and clear. I know, I've been a photographer for better than 50 years, and a pretty good one.

To go on, what most fan historians don't realize is that if the 1955 Clevention had not reinstated the Science Fiction Achievement Awards the awards as we know them would not exist. I realize that there will be a lot of rebuttal on this, but consider: 1953 was a one-time presentation; there were *no awards* in 1954. In 1955 Cleveland came up with a cheap method of mass production.

Yes, I'll admit that some form of award like a plaque, framed

certificate, scroll, MONEY, figurine (plastic or metal), or even a revamped football trophy could have replaced the rocket ship design. Bear in mind that money was a critical item in the budgets of the early cons. Consider, in 1955 when we made our trophies, the registration was a paltry \$1.00. In 1966 the fee rose to a mere \$3.00. It's no surprise that most con committees didn't put the welcome mat out for the Hugos.

Let me cite you a glaring example of how poorly Mr. Hugo was received. I was attending a Midwestcon in June of a certain year and brought along a batch of finished castings to hand over to the Worldcon of that year. One of the committee, a good friend of mine, informed me that the committee was having one helluvan argument concerning *a Hugo*.

It seems that Hugo Gernsback discovered that the worldcons had been giving out trophies named after him. He had seen some of the trophies, and directed a request to the chairman that he be given one as a memento. The chairman FLATLY REFUSED, and the arguments waxed hot and heavy. I finally resolved the argument by offering one of my own assembled trophies -- free of charge.

Think about that for a moment -- refusing the acknowledged Father of Science Fiction his own

trophy as a memento -- SHEESH!

DINOSAUR DROPPINGS

Dear Mark --

NASFiC was a very large gathering of mostly younger fans interested in gaming and media (and not much else including science fiction)! There were actually several book dealers in the huckster room, but also a lot of jewelry, videos, buttons, weapons, etc. We had a pretty good time anyway.

I'll be attending World Fantasy Con in Baltimore during the Halloween weekend. Lloyd A. Eshbach will be there along with the usual gang, so I'll have my camera ready.

All best wishes for much continued success.

John L. Coker, III

(Any chances of a con report, John? -- Mark)

Dear Mark:

It was a pleasure meeting you at Archon in June. I have always gotten a good deal of pleasure in reading the First Fandom newsletter. I hope to get to more of the SciFi cons in the future, especially

those that cater to First Fandom members.

Yours,

Conrad Ruppert

(And it was a pleasure to meet you as well, Connie. We had a very congenial get-together in St. Louis, and I got to meet some folks I only knew through the mails. I hope you'll be able to get to Inconjunction in 1996. -- Mark)

Mark,

Maybe next year's (if there "is" a next year!) roster ought to include all our email @dresses?

Just a thought.

Les & Es Cole (lhcole@rain.org)

(Good idea, folks. As I acquire e-mail addresses I'll consider including them in the roster. -- Mark)

Dear Mark:

Received the Autumn '95 issue a couple of days ago. As you noted, I do now have the membership roster; sorry to say that none of my old pals are there. Some familiar names do appear, but ant any of my old friends; guess they must be long gone from fandom.

Yes, the DC-X does seem to be doing quite well in meeting its established test criteria. Didn't

know that NM is considering a commercial spaceport. Maybe it will eventually be built, and the DC-X replace the present shuttle.

Conrad H. Ruppert's essay was the most enjoyable item in this particular issue. He goes back somewhat farther than I, but it still evoked a few memories.

To bad *Amazing Stories* has finally folded, but I notice your mention that it is up for sale. Let's hope the obit is premature and it will be taken over by another publisher. I think *Amazing* was probably the second pulp sf magazine I ever bought; *Planet Stories* was the first. At that time *Amazing* was published by Ziff-Davis and edited by Ray Palmer; he was milking the infamous Shaver Mystery for all it was worth to increase circulation. Consequently *Amazing* had a bad reputation for a few years.

Regarding your question about the WWII M-1 carbine being considered an assault weapon: Yes, it probably would be. It meets all the criteria except the ability to fire full rock and roll, even though it was originally designed to replace the .45 pistol as a side arm. The later M-2 carbine would certainly be an assault weapon; it could fire full automatic. As for the M-1903 Springfield rifle, I think not. The Springfield was a long rifle, bolt action, fed from a 5 cartridge internal clip, not all that much different from any other

30-06 bolt action; it was the standard Army rifle of WWI. WWII saw the advent of the M-1 Garand rifle, again a long rifle in 30-06 caliber; it fired from an internal 8 round clip on semi-auto. Believe it or not, there are still a lot of M-1 carbines, Springfields, and Garands out there; they're scattered all over the world.

I haven't had the opportunity to read the law banning assault weapons, but reportedly the criteria are: relatively short barrel and light in weight (in comparison to a long rifle), an oversize magazine, and the capability to fire fill rock and roll. They are designed exclusively for military use and don't really have any application for target shooting or hunting.

Thanks for printing my address. Anyone out there looking for pen pals, drop a lone or two my way.

Sincerely,

Roy R. Wood

(Roy, the DC-X is the prototype craft. The full-size spaceship, the Delta Clipper will have much more cargo capacity than the creaky Shuttle. What's best is that it's put together from off-the-shelf components. My comment about assault rifles was designed to point out that any rifle that was used in a military assault would have at one time be designated as an "assault" rifle. This includes the Krag-Jorgensen, the '03

Springfield, the M-98 Mauser, and the Henry. The term "Assault Rifle" seems to have become a synonym for the term "any weapon some politician doesn't want the citizenry to have." -- Mark)

Dear Mark,

Thank you for the Autumn issue of *SciEntiFiction*. I particularly enjoyed Donald Franson's article, since I am one of *Amazing's* orphaned subscribers, and I also took the book rather than the refund. I note Don did not mention the odd manner in which the book was shipped, or possibly his copy was more carefully packed than mine was. My *Buck Rogers* came between two very large pieces of cardboard that had obviously been slashed out of a previously used box. Whoever did the packing did not wrap the tape completely around in any dimension, using instead four short strips, one in the middle of each side. All the corners gaped open and the otherwise unwrapped book had been left completely free to slide back and forth; it was gritty and scuffed. Unlike Don, I am a comics fan, and I still found the volume disappointing, in part because *Buck Rogers* was never as well-drawn and well-scripted as *Flash Gordon*, *Tarzan*, or *Prince Valiant*, but also because the volume is light on solid information and the production is far from first-rate. I rather wish I'd taken

the money.

Sincerely,

Catherine Mintz

whatever and send them to him.

Till next time-----

Ray

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

I lost one of my best friends on Labor Day. My Hard Drive crashed. I had to use that stone age thing called a typewriter to write a letter. I am just getting the system put back together, this time with a 530 meg Hard Drive, a tape backup, and a couple more meg's of RAM. All this with the help of young Tom Sherred (T.L.'s son). This has caused me to be late with this. If *SciEntiFiction* is late this quarter, it is my fault and not Mark's.

Last week-end I attended Octocon in Cincinnati. As usual it was the low key Relaxicon. I had a chance to talk to FF members Lynn Hickman, Fred Prophet, Roger Sims, and George Young. Also in attendance were Cincy's residence authors Mike Resnick and Steve Leigh. Our son, Wesley, has an eye for Steve's daughter Megin.

Mark tells me that he needs material for future issues of *SciEntiFiction*, so please write letters or

FINAL COMMENTS

No, *StF* is late this because of me. I had to have surgery for colon cancer early in November, and must undergo radiation therapy for it starting in early December.

The entire process of diagnosis, and said diagnosis was benign, biopsy, and planning for surgery took several weeks, and all that time kept me from working on the copy. Recovery from surgery is taking some more time, and it's hard for me to get around to do the necessary work.

I am on the mend, though, and will give a more comprehensive report next ish. Thanks very much to all those FFers who sent me cards and, most of all, who called me in the hospital. It's nice to be thought of in such a nice way!

Mark

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