

EDITORIAL

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EDITOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

Gardner Dozois was a pretty amazing science fiction editor. There are fifteen best editor Hugos to prove it and other evidence as well. During his nineteen years at the helm of *Asimov's*, he placed 164 stories on the final Hugo ballot. Although there were ups and downs, this figure averages out to more than eight stories per year. Thirty-five of these tales took home the rocket ship. While I haven't counted the Nebula nominees, I know that during his editorship he purchased fifteen works that received that prestigious award.

Long before he became editor of this magazine, Gardner had shown a knack for uncovering the diamonds in the stacks of submissions at various magazines. In the early seventies, he convinced Ejler Jakobsson to purchase first stories by Connie Willis and George R.R. Martin. During his tenure as editor of *Asimov's*, first sales to the magazine included Kage Baker, Tony Daniel, and Mary Rosenblum. MacArthur Fellows "Genius Grant" winners Kelly Link and Jonathan Lethem both made their first professional story sales to Gardner as well.

Yet, Gardner never took any of his or the magazine's awards or other successes for granted. Whenever there was an award ceremony, whether out of respect for the other finalists, his innate pessimism, or both, he could work out a scenario in which every single *Asimov's* nominee—including him—would lose the award. He even managed to do this on the two occasions when *Asimov's* was responsible for every nominee in a particular category (novelette in 1996 and novella in 1997). In these cases he argued convincingly that "No Award" would be the ultimate winner. This reasoning kept me on tender hooks during every ceremony.

Fortunately, the voters never heard his arguments. In 1991, 1993, and from 1997 through 2000, *Asimov's* stories won the Hugo award in every single short fiction category.

One of Gardner's superpowers was the ability to convince authors to carve novellas from their novel-length work. Two of the best examples of this skill were Joe Halde- man's "The Hemingway Hoax" and George R.R. Martin's "Blood of the Dragon." Joe's April 1990 novella won the Hugo and the Nebula Award. George's excellent July 1996 novella won the Hugo. To date, "Blood of the Dragon" is the only piece from The Game of Throne's universe to receive that award in a nondramatic category.

I don't know if James Patrick Kelly's experience with his 1996 Hugo novelette winner, "Think Like a Dinosaur," was typical. If it was, then Gardner was also pretty good at coming up with new titles for stories. The story, which was published in our June 1995 issue, arrived with a title that riffed on an earlier tale and thus gave away too much of the plot. Gardner's suggestion is so perfect that it's hard to imagine the story ever carried another name.

We always sat at an *Asimov's* table during the Nebula Awards banquet. With Gardner's irrepressible sense of humor, one never quite knew what might occur. During one long-winded pre-awards speech, Gardner winked at me as he stood up, murmuring that he would have to leave the table because his beeper had just gone off. I burst out laughing and couldn't stop. An annoyed author seated to my right expressed dismay at my lack of decorum and asked me what was so funny. The jig was up; I had to reply, "He doesn't own a beeper."

Gardner could heckle award winners mercilessly, but he only did this to people he



2000 Hugo-Award Winners Left to Right: Gardner Dozois, Best Editor; James Patrick Kelly, Best Novelette for “10¹⁶ to 1” (*Asimov's*, June 1999); Connie Willis, Best Novella for “The Winds of Marble Arch” (*Asimov's*, October/November 1999); and Michael Swanwick, Best Short Story for “Scherzo with Tyrannosaur” (*Asimov's*, July 1999)

loved and whom he knew would appreciate his jokes. In 1993, as Connie Willis approached the podium to receive the short story Nebula for her taboo-breaking “Even the Queen” (*Asimov's*, April 1992), Gardner, in a perfect rendition of a PBS Masterpiece Theatre Host, shouted out, “now being recognized for her period piece . . .”

This issue celebrates Gardner. We are reprinting his own Nebula-award-winning short story, “The Peacemaker,” which was purchased by Shawna McCarthy and originally published in our August 1983 issue. Robert Silverberg’s Reflections and James Patrick Kelly’s On the Net columns are both about Gardner, and we have tributes from thirteen other well-known writers. Some of these authors were among his best friends while others knew him mostly through editorial correspondence. Yet, all worked closely with him.

Our memorialists include Connie Willis, Robert Reed, Joe Haldeman, George R.R. Martin, Mike Resnick, Nancy Kress, Pat Cadigan, and Jack Skillingstead. The rest of our memorialists also have stories in this issue. These authors are Jack Dann, Michael Swanwick, Allen M. Steele, Kristine Kathryn Rusch, and Tom Purdom. In addition, we have stories from Greg Egan, Eileen Gunn, and Lawrence Watt-Evans. All of these writers and columnists published well-known works with Gardner. We also have an author whose early career dovetailed with Gardner’s last years as editor, and, in keeping with the spirit of this great editor, we have stories by authors who are brand new to our pages. Please join our celebration of Gardner’s legacy.