



The Hugo Awards for Best Novel

Jon D. Swartz

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The Hugo Awards for Best Novel

by
Jon D. Swartz

The Hugo Awards originally were called the Science Fiction Achievement Awards and first were given out at Philcon II, the World Science Fiction Convention of 1953, held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The second oldest--and most prestigious--awards in the field, they quickly were nicknamed the Hugos (officially since 1958), in honor of Hugo Gernsback (1884 -1967), founder of *Amazing Stories*, the first professional magazine devoted entirely to science fiction. No awards were given in 1954 at the World Science Fiction Con in San Francisco, but they were restored in 1955 at the Clevention (in Cleveland) and included six categories: novel, novelette, short story, magazine, artist, and fan magazine. The awards were decided by a mail vote of attending and supporting members of each World Science Fiction Convention (WorldCon). At the Detention in 1959 (Detroit) it was decided that awards would be for the previous year (rather than the more vague "preceding year") and that nominating ballots would be used for the first time. This brief history is concerned mainly with the novel category.

Prior to 1959 the categories honored also varied from year to year. Over time, however, the number of categories has become more and more standardized, although each WorldCon is allowed the privilege of awarding “special awards” at its discretion. The best science fiction novel in any given year is defined by the WSFS Constitution as follows: “A science fiction or fantasy story of forty thousand (40,000) words or more.”

The “Australian” ballot is used to assure a majority winner without runoff ballots. Each voter is asked to mark all nominees in order, picking a first, second, third, fourth, etc. choice. On the first count of ballots, only 1st-place votes are recorded. At the end of this count, the nominee with the least number of votes is dropped and the second choices are distributed among the remaining nominees. This process is repeated until the leading nominee has over 50 percent of the vote. Only ties get duplicate awards.

The physical award has always been a rocket-shaped statue, although the size of the “rocket” and its stand has varied over the years.

The Hugos have been criticized because of the relatively small number of fans involved in the selections, and some critics have said that they did not reflect either the choices of the reading public or literary merit. [For these and other reasons the Nebula Science Fiction Award, given by the Science Fiction Writers of America, was created in 1966.] Related awards, presented during the Hugo ceremonies, are the John W. Campbell Award for best new writer, instituted in 1972; and the Gandalf Award for Grand Master of Fantasy, first given in 1974. Neither of these awards is technically a Hugo Award, although both are presented at Worldcons.

In mid-1990s Retrospective Hugo Awards (abbreviated Retro Hugos) were added: Worldcons held 50, 75, or 100 years after a Worldcon where no Hugos had been awarded (i. e., 1939–1941, 1946–1952 and 1954) can retroactively select Hugos for that year, by the same process as the regular Hugos.

Regular Hugos for best novel, the most popular category, from 1953 until 2012 ,are as follows:

1953

The Demolished Man

Alfred Bester

1954

No Award

1955

They'd Rather Be Right (aka *The Forever Machine*)

Mark Clifton and Frank Riley

1956

Double Star

Robert A. Heinlein

1957

No Award

1958

The Big Time

Fritz Leiber

1959

A Case of Conscience

James Blish

1960

Starship Troopers

Robert A. Heinlein

1961

A Canticle for Leibowitz

Walter M. Miller, Jr.

1962

Stranger in a Strange Land

Robert A. Heinlein

1963

The Man in the High Castle

Philip K. Dick

1964

Way Station

Clifford D. Simak

1965

The Wanderer

Fritz Leiber

1966 (tie)

Dune

Frank Herbert

And Call Me Conrad (aka *This Immortal*)

Roger Zelazny

1967

The Moon is a Harsh Mistress

Robert A. Heinlein

1968

Lord of Light

Roger Zelazny

1969

Stand on Zanzibar

John Brunner

1970

The Left Hand of Darkness

Ursula K. Le Guin

1971

Ringworld

Larry Niven

1972

To Your Scattered Bodies Go
Philip José Farmer

1973

The Gods Themselves
Isaac Asimov

1974

Rendezvous with Rama
Arthur C. Clarke

1975

The Dispossessed
Ursula K. Le Guin

1976

The Forever War
Joe Haldeman

1977

Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang
Kate Wilhelm

1978

Gateway
Frederik Pohl

1979

Dreamsnake
Vonda McIntyre

1980

The Fountains of Paradise
Arthur C. Clarke

1981

The Snow Queen
Joan Vinge

1982

Downbelow Station
C. J. Cherryh

1983

Foundation's Edge
Isaac Asimov

1984

Startide Rising
David Brin

1985

Neuromancer
William Gibson

1986

Ender's Game
Orson Scott Card

1987

Speaker For the Dead
Orson Scott Card

1988

The Uplift War
David Brin

1989

Cyteen
C. J. Cherryh

1990

Hyperion

Dan Simmons

1991

The Vor Game

Lois McMaster Bujold

1992

Barrayar

Lois McMaster Bujold

1993 (tie)

A Fire Upon the Deep

Vernor Vinge

Doomsday Book

Connie Willis

1994

Green Mars

Kim Stanley Robinson

1995

Mirror Dance

Lois McMaster Bujold

1996

The Diamond Age

Neal Stephenson

1997

Blue Mars

Kim Stanley Robinson

1998

Forever Peace

Joe Haldeman

1999

To Say Nothing of the Dog

Connie Willis

2000

A Deepness in the Sky

Vernor Vinge

2001

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

J. K. Rowling

2002

American Gods

Neil Gaiman

2003

Hominids

Robert J. Sawyer

2004

Paladin of Souls

Lois McMaster Bujold

2005

Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell

Susanna Clarke

2006

Spin

Robert Charles Wilson

2007

Rainbows End

Vernor Vinge

2008

The Yiddish Policemen's Union

Michael Chabon

2009

The Graveyard Book

Neil Gaiman

2011

Blackout/All Clear

Connie Willis

2010 (tie)

The City & The City

China Miéville

The Windup Girl

Paolo Bacigalupi

2012

Among Others

Jo Walton

WINNING AUTHORS

Isaac Asimov (1920 - 1992): In addition to the award-winning books in his Foundation Series, the very prolific Dr. Asimov (PhD. in biochemistry, 1948) wrote several outstanding books in his “robot series” and six YA volumes about space ranger Lucky Starr (as by Paul French).

Paolo Bacigalupi (1972 -): In addition to the Hugo, *The Windup Girl* won the Nebula and the Campbell Memorial awards in 2010. *The Windup Girl*, his first novel, was also named one of the Top 10 Books of 2009 by *Time* magazine. *Ship Breaker* (2010) is an award-winning YA novel, and *Pump Six and Other Stories* (2008) is a collection of his short fiction.

Alfred Bester (1913 - 1987): In addition to *The Demolished Man*, Bester is known for his novel *The Stars My Destination* (aka *Tiger! Tiger!*), published in 1956. Bester also wrote for comic books and radio.

James Blish (1921 - 1975): Expatriate American Blish wrote critical essays as William Atheling, Jr, collected as *The Issue at Hand* (1964) and *More Issues at Hand* (1970). Some of his other novels were *Vor* (1958), *The Duplicated Man* (1959) [with fellow Futurian R. W. Lowndes], and *Spock Must Die* (1970).

David Brin (1950 -): Educated in physics and astronomy, hard science fiction writer Brin has written several popular novels, including the trilogy: *Brightness Reef* (1995), *Infinity's Shore* (1997), and *Heaven's Reach* (1998).

Lois McMaster Bujold (1949 -): Multiple-Hugo winner Bujold specializes in stories about military science fiction. Some of her other novels are *Shards of Honor* (1986), *Brothers in Arms* (1989), and *Diplomatic Immunity* (2002).

John Brunner (1934 - 1995): British writer Brunner also wrote as Gil Hunt, John Loxsmith, and Kilian Houston Brunner. Some of his other novels were *The Jagged Orbit* (1960), *The Sheep Look Up* (1972), *The Shockwave Rider* (1975), and *Total Eclipse* (1974).

Orson Scott Card (1951 -): Two-time Hugo winner Card is still writing novels about his famous character Ender. The latest in the popular series is *Ender in Exile* (2008). His first two novels about Ender also won Nebulas.

Michael Chabon (1963 -): His novel about comic books, *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2001. He has also written a fantasy, *Summerland* (2002). All his non-genre novels are also worth reading, including *The Final Solution* (2004), his homage to Sherlock Holmes.

C. J. Cherryh (1942 -): Most of the novels by Carolyn Janice Cherry (who writes as C. J. Cherryh) fall into series, including her Hugo-winning *Cyteen* and *Downbelow Station* that belong to her complex “Alliance-Union Universe.” Other notable “Universe” titles include *Merchanter's Luck* (1982), *Tripoint* (1994), *Finity's End* (1997), and *Regenesis* (2009). In 1977 she won the John W. Campbell Award for best new writer.

Arthur C. Clarke (1917 - 2008) : Famous for *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Sir Arthur Charles Clarke was both a science fiction writer and a scientist. In 1945 he proposed a satellite communication system that became a reality in 1965, and he served as chairman of the British Interplanetary Society (1947-1950, 1953). His other genre novels include *The Sands of Mars* (1951), *Prelude to Space* (1951), and *Childhood's End* (1953). His *The Exploration of Space* (1951) won The International Fantasy Award for non-fiction. Of interest to fans is *Clarke's Astounding Days: A Science Fictional Autobiography* (1989). The Clarke Awards are named after him.

Susanna Clarke (1959 -): Her Hugo-winning novel, *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell* also won the Mythopoeic Fantasy Award and the World Fantasy Award. A collection of her short fiction, *The Ladies of Grace Adieu and Other*

Stories (2006), consists of eight sophisticated fairy tales that focus on the power of women.

Mark Clifton (1906 - 1963): Personnel worker Clifton's science fiction was set mainly in his “Bossy” and “Ralph Kennedy” series. The Hugo-winning *They'd Rather Be Right* (with Frank Riley) was originally a story in the “Bossy” series. The book was also published as *The Forever Machine*. Other novels by Clifton were *Eight Keys to Eden* and *When They Come From Space*.

Philip K. Dick (1928 - 1982): In addition to the Hugo Award, Dick's novels won The John W. Campbell Jr Memorial Award in 1975 (for *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*); the BSFA Award for a novel in 1978 (for *A Scanner Darkly*); and the Kurd Lasswitz Award for best foreign novel in 1984 (for *Va-lis*). Other Dick novels were *The World Jones Made* (1956), *Time Out of Joint* (1959), *Martian Time-Slip* (1964), and *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (1964). The Philip K. Dick Memorial Award for best American original paperback novel was established shortly after his death. Dick was elected to the Science Fiction Hall of Fame in 2005.

Philip José Farmer (1918 - 2009): Famous as the writer who introduced sex into science fiction, Farmer also received a Hugo as the best new writer in the field (1953). His other novels included *Flesh* (1960), *The Lovers* (1961), *A Feast Unknown* (1969), and *Venus on the Half-Shell* (1975), the last work crediting Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s fictional character, Kilgore Trout, as the author.

Neil Gaiman (1960 -): In addition to his two Hugos for best novel, Gaiman has won many other awards: World Fantasy Award (Best Short Story), 1991; Diamond Distributors “Gem” Award, 1993; Mythopoeic Award (Adult Literature), 1999 [for *Stardust* with Charles Vess]; Locus Award (Best Fantasy Novel) for *American Gods*, 2002; British Fantasy Award (August Derleth Award) nominee (for *American Gods*), 2002; Nebula Award (Novel) for *American Gods*, 2002; Collectors Award, 2002; Locus Award (Fantasy Novel) for *American Gods*, 2002; Bram Stoker Award (Work for Younger Readers) for *Cor-aline*, 2003; and Geffen Award for *American Gods*, 2003.

William Gibson (1948 -): His “*Neuromancer* trilogy” consists of the award-winning *Neuromancer* (1984), *Count Zero* (1986), and *Mona Lisa Overdrive*

(1988). *Virtual Light* (1993), *Idoru* (1996), and *All Tomorrow's Parties* (1999) form another popular trilogy of Gibson novels.

Joe Haldeman (1943 -): Haldeman was named the 2010 Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master by the SWFA. A popular Haldeman trilogy consists of *Worlds* (1981), *Worlds Apart* (1983), and *Worlds Enough and Time* (1992).

Robert A. Heinlein (1907 - 1988): Four-time Hugo winner for best novel, Heinlein once dominated the science fiction scene in the United States. In addition to the novels that won the Hugo, his other novels of note include *Beyond This Horizon* (1948), *The Puppet Masters* (1951), *Methuselah's Children* (1958), the fantasy *Glory Road* (1963), and most of his so-called “juvenile” novels. He also won Retro Hugos in 2001 for *Farmer in the Sky* (Novel) and *The Man Who Sold the Moon* (Novella), both originally published in 1950. Heinlein also wrote under the pseudonyms of Anson MacDonald and Lyle Monroe.

Frank Herbert (1920 - 1986): Although he published many other novels besides *Dune* (including five more in the “*Dune*” series) Herbert's reputation rests upon only a few: *Dune* (1965), winning the first Nebula award, as well as the Hugo; *The Eyes of Heisenberg* (1966); *The Heaven Makers* (1968); and *Hellstrom's Hive* (1973).

Ursula K. Le Guin (1929 -): Other books of interest by Le Guin include her “Earth Universe” collection *Dreams Must Explain Themselves* (1975); the non-fiction work *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1979); the novel *The Lathe of Heaven* (1971), which has been adapted for Public TV; the science fiction novel *The Eye of the Heron* (1983); and the “visionary” and multimedia *Always Coming Home* (1985), sold with a tape cassette of music, drawings and recipes.

Fritz Leiber (1910 - 1992): When he died, SWFA Grand Master Leiber (name rhymes with fiber) was recognized as a master craftsman in most of the sub-genres of speculative fiction. Ballantine published *The Best of Fritz Leiber* in 1974; and DAW published *The Book of Fritz Leiber* in 1974 and *The Second Book of Fritz Leiber* in 1975.

Vonda McIntyre (1948 -): McIntyre was one of the earliest successful graduates of the Clarion Science Fiction Writer's Workshop (1970). Her "Starfarers" series, with a black female protagonist, has so far resulted in four titles: *Starfarers* (1989), *Transition* (1990), *Metaphase* (1992), and *Nautilus* (1994). In addition, she edited the anthology *Nebula Awards Showcase 2004*.

China Tom Miéville (1972 -): Some of his other novels are *King Rat* (1998), *Perdido Street Station* (2000), *The Scar* (2002), *Iron Council* (2004), and *Kraken* (2010).

Walter M. Miller, Jr. (1922 - 1996): *A Canticle for Leibowitz* was the only novel by Miller published during his lifetime; but one was published posthumously, a "parallel novel" to *Canticle* (completed by Terry Bisson from a manuscript left by Miller), *Saint Leibowitz and the Wild Horse Woman* (Bantam, 1997). Collections of Miller's short fiction were *Conditionally Human* (Ballantine, 1962), *The View From the Stars* (1965), *The Science Fiction of Walter M. Miller Jr.* (1978), and *The Best of Walter M. Miller Jr.* (1980). Miller also edited the anthology, *Beyond Armageddon* (1985).

Larry Niven (1938 -): In addition to the "Ringworld" series, his and Pournelle's *The Mote in God's Eye* (1974), *Inferno* (1976), *Lucifer's Hammer* (1977), *Warrior's World* and *Warrior's Blood* (1981) [both with Richard S. McEnroe], *Roger's Rangers* (1983) [also with John Silbersack], *Footfall* (1985), *The Legacy of Heorot* [also with Steven Barnes] (1987), *Fallen Angels* [also with Michael Flynn] (1991), *The Gripping Hand* (1993), and *Destiny's Road* (1997) all made Niven a very successful "hard" science fiction writer. He is known in fandom for Niven's Law: There is no cause so right that one cannot find a fool following it.

Frederik Pohl (1919 -): At 16 Pohl published his own fanzine (*Mind of Man*), became a literary agent for his friends in the late 1930s, and in 1940 became editor of *Astonishing Stories* and *Super Science Stories*. His honors include SFWA President, 1974-1976; First Fandom Hall of Fame, 1989; SFWA Grand Master, 1992; and SF & Fantasy Hall of Fame, 1998. His most popular novels are in his "Heechee" series: *Gateway* (1977), *Beyond the Blue Event Horizon* (1980), *Heechee Rendezvous* (1984), *Annals of the Heechee* (1987), and *The Boy Who Would Live Forever: A Novel of Gateway* (2004). A collection of short stories in the series is *The Gateway Trip* (1990).

Frank Riley (1915 - 1996) : Freelance writer Frank Wilbert Ryhlick wrote fiction as Frank Riley. He co-authored the award-winning *They'd Rather Be Right* (with Mark Clifton), but otherwise wrote very little science fiction.

Kim Stanley Robinson (1952 -): Robinson's "Three Californias" series (*The Wild Shore*, 1984; *The Gold Coast*, 1988; *Pacific Edge*, 1990) was very popular; and his "Mars" trilogy (*Red Mars*, 1992; *Green Mars*, 1993; *Blue Mars*, 1996) has been called one of the few genuine examples of epic science fiction.

J. K. Rowling (1965 -): Joanne Kathleen Rowling reports she wrote her first novel, *Rabbit*, when she was five or six. The seven books in her award-winning "Harry Potter" series are *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997) [published as *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the United States], *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2003), *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (2005), and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007).

Robert J. Sawyer (1960 -): Other novels of this prolific Canadian writer are *End of an Era* (1994) [revised edition in 2001], *Starplex* (1996), *Frameshift* (1997), *Illegal Alien* (1997), *Factoring Humanity* (1998), *Flash-forward* (1999), and *Calculating God* (2000). He is a past president of SFWA. His website states that he is the only writer in history to have won the top science fiction awards in the United States, China, Japan, France, and Spain.

Dan Simmons (1948 -): Other books by Simmons are *Phases of Gravity* (1989), *The Hollow Man* (1992), and *Endymion* (1996), a sequel to *Hyperion Cantos*. *The Rise of Endymion*, published in 1997, reportedly is the last of the four books in the "Hyperion Cantos" sequence. Appearing in 2003 was the novel *Ilium* [a SF retelling of *The Illium*], and in 2005 *Olympos* [a science fiction retelling of *The Odyssey*]. More recently appeared *The Terror* (2007), *Drood* (2009), and *Black Hills* (2010).

Neal Stephenson (1959 -): Other novels include *Quicksilver* (2003), first volume in Stephenson's "The Baroque Cycle" trilogy [a prequel to his award

-winning *Cryptonomicon* (1999) and related through some of its characters and themes]. The other two novels in the cycle are *The Confusion* and *The System of the World*, both of which appeared in 2004. In 2008 he published *Anthem*, which was nominated for the BSFA Award.

Joan D. Vinge (1948 -): *World's End*, a sequel to *The Snow Queen*, was published in 1984. Another novel, *Tangled Up in Blue* (2000) is also set in the *Snow Queen* universe. She is the former wife of genre writer Vernor Vinge. A famous quote from Vinge: "Science fiction is the anthropology of the future."

Vernor Vinge (1944 -): Multiple Hugo-winner Vinge's popular series "Across Realtime" consists of *The Peace War*, "The Ungoverned," and *Marooned in Realtime*. His 1969 novel, *Grimm's World*, was revised in 1987 as *Tatja Grimm's World*. Famous quote: "Within thirty years, we will have the technological means to create superhuman intelligence. Shortly after, the human era will be ended."

Jo Walton (1964 -): Walton, born in Wales and now residing in Canada, won the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer in 2002, the World Fantasy Award for her novel *Tooth and Claw* in 2004, the Mythopoeic Award for her novel *Lifeload* in 2010, and the Nebula for best novel (for *Among Others*) in 2011.

Kate Wilhelm (1928 -): Her *Crazy Time*, a comic science fiction novel, appeared in 1987. *The Infinity Box*, part of a Tor Double Novel [with Roger Zelazny's *He Who Shapes*], was published in 1989; and *The Dark Door* in 1990. *Storyteller: 30 Years of the Clarion Writers Workshop*, a nonfiction account of the years she and husband Damon Knight spent teaching at the annual workshop that began in 1967, appeared in 2005.

Connie Willis (1945 -): Other genre novels include *Light Raid* (1990) [with Cynthia Felice], *Uncharted Territory* (1994), *Remake* (1994), and *Bellwether* (1996), the last three books published in a BCE omnibus volume in 1996 as *Futures Imperfect*. She and Felice also co-authored *Water Witch* (1982), Willis' first novel.

Robert Charles Wilson (1953 -): Wilson has written several other award-

winning novels, including *Mysterium* (1994), *Darwinia* (1998), *Bios* (1999), *The Chronoliths* (2001), and *Blind Lake*, (2003). More recent novels include *Axis* (2007), a sequel to *Spin*, and *Julian Comstock* (2009).

Roger Zelazny (1937 - 1995): Other works include *Unicorn Variations* (1983), *Trumps of Doom* (1985), and *Frost and Fire* (1989). Known for his ability to create believable fictional characters, Zelazny vaulted to the front rank of science fiction/fantasy writers in the mid-1960s and stayed there until his death. In 1994 he published the humorous Victorian Gothic fantasy *A Night in the Lonesome October*. He later edited *The Williamson Effect* (1996), a tribute to Jack Williamson. A posthumous fantasy, *Lord Demon* [with Jane Lindskold], appeared in 1999.

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