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This anthology contains a number of fine stories, virtually a given with a volume of Hugo winners. Included are the honored tales from 1980, '81 and '82, among them two each by Gordon R. Dickson and George R. R. Martin, and one each by Barry Longyear, Clifford D. Simak, Poul Anderson, Roger Zelazny and John Varley...Particularly fine are Varley's little shocker "The Pusher, " which considers the dilemma of the astronaut, who ages slowly during space travel, in creating a long-term relationship with an Earth-bound lover; Longyear's "Enemy Mine", which casts an Earthman and an alien into a hostile environment and traces their relationship from antagonism through mutual dependence...."

The Hugo Winners, Volume 5: 1980 - 1982 Details

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Author : Isaac Asimov (Editor) , Barry B. Longyear (Contributor) , George R.R. Martin (Contributor) , Gordon R. Dickson (Contributor) , Clifford D. Simak (Contributor) , Poul Anderson (Contributor) , Roger Zelazny (Contributor) , John Varley (Contributor)

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From Reader Review The Hugo Winners, Volume 5: 1980 - 1982 for online ebook

Crys Jackson says

I haven't read a scifi collection in a while, and this one was particularly great because it was loaned to me by a cutie that I like. There were stories that I loved, and those that felt more like a trudge.

- 1) *Enemy Mine*, by Barry B. Longyear -- This feels like a classic, the meeting of enemies who become friends who become family through challenge and loss.
- 2) *Sandkings*, by George R. R. Martin -- Good, horrifying, a look at hubris and it's near inevitable fall.
- 3) *The Way of the Cross and Dragon*, by George R. R. Martin -- an interesting look into religion and scifi. I've read better, though those have been more recent and maybe somewhat influenced by this. I'M thinking in particular of *The Sparrow*.
- 4) *Lost Dorsai*, by Gordon R. Dickson -- Not really my favorite, too much military ponderings for me, but I did love the final image of the taunting, loan opponent standing against an army.
- 5) *The Cloak and the Staff*, by Gordon R. Dickson -- Oh man, this was such a great piece on how one strains against oppression as an underclass. Horrifying, enraging, all of that.
- 6) *Grotto of the Dancing Dear*, by Clifford D. Simak -- a lovely short story about a possibly eternal being living through time, from the cave painting era until now.
- 7) *The Saturn Game*, by Poul Anderson -- I found this one a little harder to get through. The "psychodrama" aka roleplaying games, that the crew engages in to get through their space travel and missions is an interesting idea, but I didn't connect with the characters enough to follow them in one reality, much less two.
- 8) *Unicorn Variations*, by Roger Zelazny -- Okay, I loved this one, and not just because it was the one that ventured off into fantasy the most. I liked the idea that as a species became extinct, a mythical species took its place. The chess story framework was also really fun.
- 9) *The Pusher*, by John Varley -- this was the most uncomfortable story for me, as others before me have said, the narration does closely resemble how folks groom their victims and stuff.

John W says

The gem of this book is *The Sandkings* by George RR Martin.

Charles says

Like all other areas of fiction, a science fiction story will evoke different responses in different people. Even the greatest stories of the time, so acknowledged by the author receiving a Hugo for writing it, fall into that category. This collection is no different; there were some that I found much more interesting than others. It contains the stories:

- *) *Enemy Mine*, by Barry B. Longyear
- *) *Sandkings*, by George R. R. Martin
- *) *The Way of the Cross and Dragon*, by George R. R. Martin

- *) Lost Dorsai, by Gordon R. Dickson
- *) The Cloak and the Staff, by Gordon R. Dickson
- *) Grotto of the Dancing Dear, by Clifford D. Simak
- *) The Saturn Game, by Poul Anderson
- *) Unicorn Variations, by Roger Zelazny
- *) The Pusher, by John Varley

“Enemy Mine” has since been made into a movie that was a big hit.

In my opinion, three of the stories are truly great, “Enemy Mine”, “Lost Dorsai” and “The Cloak and the Staff.” The first and the third both deal with what I consider the most significant theme of science fiction, what will happen when humans encounter an intelligent species from another world. In “Enemy Mine” the other species (Dracons) is roughly of the same technical competence and temperament, so they engage in a ruthless war with the humans over space and supremacy. There is a much greater disparity in “The Cloak and the Staff.” The Aalaag are technically superior and have conquered many other planets. The main character is human and serves the Aalaag and understands how futile resistance is. And yet, he starts a resistance movement that has no hope of success. I consider this one of the best science fiction stories ever written and fortunately, Dickson expanded it into the book, “Way of the Pilgrim.”

Collections of award-winning stories always contain a wide variation of themes and this one is no exception. However, unlike some others, even the worst of this group is very, very good and well worth reading.

This review also appears on Amazon

Skjam! says

The Hugo Awards are given out every year by the membership of the World Science Fiction Convention (Worldcon.) This series of books from 1986 collected the winners in the three short fiction categories: Novella (17,500-40,000 words), Novelette (7,500-17,500 words) and Short Story (less than 7,500 words.) Anything over 40,000 words is considered a novel. The volume is organized by year, in the order from longest to shortest, giving a kind of wave effect.

“Editor” Isaac Asimov spends much of the introduction detailing the history of the science fiction magazine Isaac Asimov’s Science Fiction Magazine, of which he was the figurehead. It’s relevant because 1980 was the first year a story from that magazine won a Hugo.

“Enemy Mine” by Barry B. Longyear was that story. Two soldiers from opposing sides are stranded on a deserted island—one of whom is a pregnant alien. To survive, they must work together, and come to respect each other and bridge the gap between their cultures. This one was made into a movie, and Hollywood inserted an actual mine run by enemies. Perhaps this was necessary as the emotional climax of the story is a three-hour recitation of family history, but Mr. Longyear was not well pleased. It’s an excellent story.

“Sandkings” by George R.R. Martin is a chiller about a man who collects exotic pets. The Sandkings of the title are hive-mind creatures vaguely reminiscent of ants. They come in sets of four colored “castles” which have wars until only one remains. Simon Kress, however, is a cruel man and does not want to wait for his pets to war in their own time. How does it end? It’s by George R.R. Martin, how do you think it ends? An outstanding application of horror sensibilities to science fiction.

“The Way of Cross and Dragon” is also by George R.R. Martin, the first time an author had ever won two of

the short categories in the same year. An inquisitor for a future Catholic church is sent to stamp out a heresy that venerates Judas Iscariot (and dragons.) The inquisitor finds it a particularly appealing heresy, well-crafted and visually attractive. But that's not the real trap—there's a more dangerous heresy underneath. Of note is that the heretics have vandalized the local equivalent of the internet and Wikipedia so that those doing research would find supporting evidence for the heresy.

Also in 1980, *The Fountains of Paradise* by Arthur C. Clarke took home the novel Hugo, and *Alien* won Best Dramatic Presentation. Barry B. Longyear was also picked as Best New Writer.

“Lost Dorsai” by Gordon R. Dickson is as you might suspect set in his Dorsai Cycle, a story universe where the resource-poor planet Dorsai makes its employment credits by hiring out its inhabitants as top-notch mercenary soldiers. This story tackles the question of what happens when a Dorsai decides that he will not kill humans under any circumstances. Even when he’s one of a handful of people in a fortress surrounded by bloodthirsty revolutionaries. What does make a man a hero, anyway?

“The Cloak and the Staff” is also by Mr. Dickson, making him the second author to win two of the short categories in the same year. Both he and Mr. Martin had won the third short category previously as well. The Aalaag are superior to Earthlings in every way, and hold our planet in an unbreakable grip. Even if somehow humans managed to rise up and kill all the Aalaag on Earth, the vast Aalaag Empire would simply wipe out the inhabitants and replant. Courier Shane knows this better than almost anyone else, and yet he finds that he’s sparked a resistance movement with a bit of graffiti. He manages to save one rebel for the moment, but there’s noting more he or anyone can do....

“Grotto of the Dancing Deer” by Clifford D. Simak concerns an archaeologist who goes back to the dig site of some cave paintings one last time. He discovers the title grotto, and its connection to one of the dig workers. It’s a rather sad story about a man who wants one person to know the truth before he leaves again.

Also in 1981, *The Snow Queen* won Best Novel for Joan D. Vinge, Best Dramatic Presentation went to *The Empire Strikes Back*, and Somtow Sucharitkul (S.P. Somtow) was Best New Writer.

“The Saturn Game” by Poul Anderson concerns an expedition to Iapetus, a moon of Saturn, which turns deadly due to a moment of inattention.

A bit of context for our younger readers—the turn of the 1980s is when role-playing games, especially Dungeons and Dragons, went from an obscure hobby to a cultural phenomenon. The usual cultural conservative distrust of anything new that kids get into converged with the 1980s “Satanic Panic” in which people sincerely believed there was a worldwide network of Satanists abusing children and performing human sacrifices. So many people worried that RPGs would either teach children how to perform actual black magic (see Jack Chick’s unintentionally hilarious Dark Dungeons for an example of this thinking) or make impressionable teens unable to distinguish between reality and fantasy and thus act out their violent pretend fun times on real people. This last one was a bit more plausible; most roleplayers know that one guy who takes the game way too seriously, akin to the sportsball fans that have violent temper tantrums when their team loses.

Mr. Anderson’s story works with the latter concept; it never uses the phrase “role-playing games” as those died out during a bad time in human history—the future equivalent is “psychodramas.” Three-quarters of the expedition have been playing in the same game for the last eight years as their larger ship has been headed to Saturn. In the future, psychiatry has been replaced by pharmacology to balance brain chemistry, and no one thought ahead about the possible consequences. So when the players find themselves in a fantastic landscape

that suits their story, they fall into a semihypnotic state acting out the play, and miss the real danger.

Mind, Poul Anderson also shows the strength that can be drawn from imagination, as the fantasy helps sustain the strength of the survivors, even as they know they must not succumb to it and ignore what must be done. One of the flashbacks is about the significant other who doesn't "get" role-playing games, and is unable to distinguish between in-character romance and an actual affair between players. She forces the player to choose between her and the gaming group—it does not turn out the way she hoped.

"Unicorn Variations" by Roger Zelazny is more in the fantasy realm than straight science fiction. When a species goes extinct, a new species comes to take its place. And in a future where extinctions have become even more common, the unicorns have grown impatient to replace humans. But one human bargains with the unicorn representative. If he can beat it in a game of chess, the unicorn will not directly hasten the extinction of humans. Unicorns, as it turns out, are very good at chess...but the human turns out to have a surprise backer. If you have your chessboard handy, play along!

"The Pusher" by John Varley, is set in a future with relativistic space travel and time dilation. That is, time on ship passes more slowly than for those standing still. Six months on board is thirty years back on Earth. Ian Haise, a "pusher" (starship crewmember) doesn't want to entirely lose touch with those on the ground, so he has a scheme to befriend children so that when he returns decades later, they will remember him and welcome his return. It's an uncomfortable story, as Haise's methods are strikingly similar to those used by a pedophile to "groom" victims.

1982's Best Novel was *Downbelow Station* by C.J. Cherryh, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* took home the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo, and the Best New Writer was Alexis Gilliland (who beat out David Brin!)

This collection really strikes a chord for me as it's in my early adulthood, and I read most of these stories first-run. It looks "modern" to me in ways that early SF doesn't, and the field was becoming more diverse (even though all these stories happen to be by white guys.) It's worth finding just for "Sandkings" if you've never read that story, but the others are good as well, especially "Enemy Mine."

Brian says

Although the stories are wildly uneven, the high notes are just so high that it pushes this anthology into the 5 stars area.

Highlights include "SandKings" by George RR Martin which is an incredibly suspenseful SF Horror tale, "The Pusher" by John Varley that examines the effects of space travel time dilation on the human psyche, and "Enemy Mine" which effectively explores the interaction between alien species.

Steve Carroll says

This one was wildly uneven. I think 1980 is my favorite hugo year so far: *Enemy Mine* won for Novella and its very affecting (lou gossett, jr aside :)), and George RR Martin won for both novelette and short story for *Sandkings*, an amazing little sci-fi horror story, and *The Way of Cross and Dragon*). 1981 is I believe my least favorite Hugo year so far. Gordon Dickson won both the Novella and Novelette and I tend to assume

this was a lifetime achievement award as neither of them was remarkable. Short story was by Simak who I usually like but again, minor story lifetime achievement award. 1982 novella was the Saturn Game by Poul Anderson who has won the award more than anyone at short lengths and I just don't get it but it picked up with the Zelasny (Unicorn Variations) being quite fun and the Varley (The Pusher) being quite good

Thomas Watson says

No duds in this collection. My enjoyment of this anthology was increased by remembering these stories from when they were first published. I read all but Longyear's "Enemy Mine" before they were Hugo winners - and now I understand why Longyear was unhappy with how the film adaptation of his story turned out. All of the stories were to some degree familiar to me, but none lost any appeal for all of that. Martin's "Sandkings" was every bit as creepy as I remembered. "Lost Dorsai," has lost none of its impact with the passing of the years. Varley's "The Pusher" was as strangely twisted at the end as I remembered. And these are just the three that come to mind without trying. A lot of entertainment in one book!

Dan says

Just finished. All top name authors including 2 from George R. R. Martin before he was the Game of Thrones guy. Very good stories, will keep me thinking for weeks. I love Asimov's intro's as a look into the old school Sci-Fi lifestyle.
