

## = Future Science Fiction and Science Fiction Stories =

Future Science Fiction and Science Fiction Stories were two American science fiction magazines that were published under various names between 1939 and 1943 and again from 1950 to 1960 . Both publications were edited by Charles Hornig for the first few issues ; Robert W. Lowndes took over in late 1941 , and remained editor until the end . The initial launch of the magazines came as part of a boom in science fiction pulp magazine publishing at the end of the 1930s . In 1941 the two magazines were combined into one , titled Future Fiction combined with Science Fiction , but in 1943 wartime paper shortages ended the magazine 's run , as Louis Silberkleit , the publisher , decided to focus his resources on his mystery and western magazine titles . In 1950 , with the market improving again , Silberkleit relaunched Future Fiction , still in the pulp format . In the mid @-@ 1950s he also relaunched Science Fiction , this time under the title Science Fiction Stories . Silberkleit kept both magazines on very slim budgets throughout the 1950s . In 1960 both titles ceased publication when their distributor suddenly dropped all of Silberkleit 's titles .

The fiction was generally unremarkable , with few memorable stories being published , particularly in the earlier versions of the magazines . Lowndes spent much effort to set a friendly and engaging tone in both magazines , with letter columns and reader departments that interested fans . He was more successful than Hornig in obtaining good stories , partly because he had good relationships with several well @-@ known and emerging writers . Among the better @-@ known stories he published were " The Liberation of Earth " by William Tenn , and " If I Forget Thee , Oh Earth " by Arthur C. Clarke .

## = = Publishing history = =

Although science fiction ( sf ) had been published before the 1920s , it did not begin to coalesce into a separately marketed genre until the appearance in 1926 of Amazing Stories , a pulp magazine published by Hugo Gernsback . By the end of the 1930s the field was booming . One of Gernsback 's employees , Louis Silberkleit , became a publisher in his own right in 1934 when he founded the Winford Publishing Company . Towards the end of the 1930s Silberkleit decided to launch an sf pulp magazine under his Blue Ribbon Magazines imprint ; the title he chose was Science Fiction . Gernsback recommended Charles Hornig to Silberkleit for the post of editor ; Hornig had previously edited Wonder Stories for Gernsback from 1933 to 1936 . Silberkleit took the recommendation and Hornig was hired in October 1938 . Hornig had no office ; he worked from home , coming in to the office as needed to drop off manuscripts and dummy materials , and pick up typeset materials to proof . He was given broad freedom to select what he wanted to publish ; he reported to Silberkleit 's chief editor , Abner J. Sundell , but Sundell knew little about sf and did not get involved with running the magazine . The first issue was dated March 1939 . The schedule was intended to be bimonthly , but it began to slip immediately , with the second issue dated June 1939 .

In order to spread his costs over more magazines , Silberkleit soon decided to launch two additional titles . When he had worked for Gernsback , Silberkleit had suggested " Future Fiction " as a possible title for the magazine Gernsback was planning to launch . Gernsback eventually chose " Amazing Stories " instead , and Silberkleit now decided to use his original suggestion for one of the new magazines . In November 1939 the first issue of Future Fiction appeared ; it was followed in July 1940 by Science Fiction Quarterly . Hornig was editor for all three magazines . In October 1940 , Hornig received his military draft notice ; he was a pacifist , and decided to move to California and register as a conscientious objector . He continued to edit the magazines from the west coast , but Silberkleit was unhappy with the arrangement . Silberkleit allowed Hornig to retain his post as editor of Science Fiction , and offered the editorship of the other two titles to Sam Moskowitz . Moskowitz declined , saying afterwards " I would never strike at a man 's job " , but Donald Wollheim heard of the offer and prompted Robert W. Lowndes to write to Silberkleit . Lowndes later recalled Wollheim 's idea : " In the letter , I 'd suggest that it might be a good idea to add a science fiction title to the list , offering my services as editor at a slightly lower price than Hornig was being paid , and also find fault with all the other sf titles presently out , but particularly with Hornig 's " . Lowndes relates that

Silberkleit took the bait and hired him in November 1940 ; Hornig recalls the separation as being by mutual consent because of his move to California . Lowndes subsequently agreed that this was likely to be the real reason Silberkleit replaced Hornig . The first issues Lowndes was responsible for were the Spring 1941 issue of Science Fiction Quarterly and the April 1941 issue of Future Fiction . He completed the preparations for the last issue of Science Fiction , dated September 1941 , but he used material that Hornig had already selected for the article , with minor exceptions . The changes included the replacement of Fantasy Times , a fan department by James Taurasi , with Futurian Times , a similar department from a rival group of fans , the Futurians , to which Lowndes belonged . Initially Silberkleit kept tighter control on Lowndes ' editorial selections than he had on Hornig 's , vetoing five of the seven stories Lowndes proposed for the April 1941 Future , but by the August 1941 issue , Lowndes later recalled , Silberkleit " was satisfied that I knew what I was doing , and ... didn 't need to oversee any story I had accepted " .

Science Fiction was not selling well , and later that year Silberkleit merged it with Future Fiction , under the title Future Combined with Science Fiction . The last independent issue of Science Fiction was dated September 1941 , and the first merged issue was dated October 1941 . The final two issues of the combined magazine , dated April and June 1943 , were , confusingly , titled Science Fiction Stories ; this was an attempt to improve sales by reminding readers of Science Fiction , but before sales figures could be tallied to determine the impact of the title change , Silberkleit made the decision to cease publication . The June 1943 issue was the last for some years : Silberkleit was forced to cut some of his titles because of wartime paper shortages , and he decided to retain his western and detective magazines instead .

= = = Revival in the 1950s = = =

In 1950 , Silberkleit brought back Future , under the title Future Combined with Science Fiction Stories ; this allowed Silberkleit to keep the rights to both the titles . The first issue was dated May / June 1950 . In January 1952 the title changed to just Future Science Fiction Stories . Payment rates at that time were one to three cents per word . In the summer of 1953 , with Future still in pulp format , Silberkleit issued a single digest @-@ sized magazine with no number and no date , under the title Science Fiction Stories . Another issue with the same format and title followed in the spring of 1954 , also unnumbered . Silberkleit decided that the digest format was partly responsible for the good sales of these experimental issues , so he changed the format of Future from pulp to digest . The first issue in the new format was dated January 1955 , and in response to reader feedback the title was changed to Science Fiction Stories . The volume numbering was continued from the existing Future volume numbering , despite the fact that the title was taken from Science Fiction , the earlier magazine . Complicating matters , Silberkleit decided later in 1955 that the market could support both titles , so he revived Future again . Since Science Fiction Stories was using the volume numbering from the previous pulp @-@ format incarnation of Future , Silberkleit switched to an issue number format , with no volume . The first issue was numbered 28 , counting forward from the May / June 1950 issue as 1 .

Both Science Fiction Stories and Future Fiction were able to maintain a fairly regular schedule through the rest of the 1950s . Science Fiction Stories was bimonthly throughout , except for a brief period from mid @-@ 1958 to early 1959 when it patchily adhered to a monthly schedule . Future Fiction began with three undated issues , then switched to a quarterly schedule in 1956 , and finally to a regular bimonthly schedule from the start of 1958 .

With the September 1955 issue , the title graphic of Science Fiction Stories was modified so that the cover read The Original Science Fiction Stories . This was intended to make it clear that the magazine was a continuation of the 1939 version of Science Fiction , but it led to additional confusion , with some readers believing that this was an entirely new magazine . Lowndes addressed the confusion in the letter column of Science Fiction Stories , saying

I am often asked whether Future SF October 1954 Volume 5 Number 3 should be followed by Volume 5 Number 4 ( Science Fiction Stories January 1955 ) or by Future SF No. 28 . To this I reply that you may have it either way , or in this instance , both ways ! Really , I don 't see why science

fictionists , who can absorb alternate time tracks etc. with the utmost aplomb , should be confused . In 1960 Silberkleit 's distributor stopped carrying his magazines , and both titles ceased publication , with no notice given in their final issues that this was the end . The last issues were the April 1960 Future Science Fiction and the May 1960 Science Fiction Stories . James Taurasi acquired rights to the Science Fiction Stories title from Silberkleit and produced three semi @-@ professional issues in 1961 , 1962 , and 1963 , but the venture was not successful enough for Taurasi to continue .

= = Contents and reception = =

The first issue of Science Fiction showed the continuing influence of Hugo Gernsback in the sf magazine field : in addition to an editor who had worked for him , the magazine featured a guest editorial by Gernsback , and the cover was painted by Frank R. Paul , a stalwart of the Gernsback days ? in fact , all 12 of Science Fiction 's covers for the first series were painted by Paul . Both Future Fiction and Science Fiction began life with very limited budgets . Hornig worked with Julius Schwartz , a literary agent who was a friend of his ; this gave him access to stories by the writers Schwartz represented , but Schwartz would not allow his authors ' real names to be used unless they were paid at least one cent per word . Hornig could not afford to pay the one cent rate for everything he bought , so he paid half a cent a word for much of what he acquired through Schwartz , and ran those stories under pseudonyms . Unsurprisingly , given the low rates , the stories sent to Hornig had usually already been rejected by the better @-@ paying markets . The result was mediocre fiction , even from the better @-@ known writers that Hornig was able to attract . The magazines paid on publication , rather than acceptance , and this slower payment also discouraged some authors from submitting material .

A letter from Ray Bradbury , who was a friend of Hornig 's , was published in the second issue of Science Fiction , encouraging Hornig to publish sophisticated stories ; in response , Hornig wrote " I 'm trying to give the magazine an appeal to mature minds " , but sf historian Mike Ashley comments that " this never became evident " . Hornig 's comment was probably intended as a criticism of Raymond Palmer 's editorial approach at Amazing Stories and Fantastic Adventures , but Ashley points out that the authors Hornig relied on , concealed behind pseudonyms , were generally the same authors that were selling to Palmer . The first issue of Future included stories by M.M. Kaplan , J. Harvey Haggard , and Miles J. Breuer , all of whom had been more active some years earlier , and Ashley suggests that Hornig may have obtained some of the many stories that Palmer threw out when he became editor of Amazing Stories in 1938 .

When Future was relaunched in early 1950 , the sf magazine field was not particularly crowded , and Lowndes was able to attract moderately good stories from writers who were either well @-@ known or on their way up in the field . The first issue included stories by James Blish , Lester del Rey and Murray Leinster ; other authors featured in the early issues included Fritz Leiber , Judith Merril , H. Beam Piper , and L. Sprague de Camp . Some of the better @-@ known stories Lowndes published in the early 1950s were " And There Was Light " by del Rey , " If I Forget Thee , Oh Earth " by Arthur C. Clarke , and " Liberation of Earth " by William Tenn , which Damon Knight described as " the funniest story [ Tenn has ] ever written " . He also bought work by some of the women writers active in the 1950s , including several early stories by Carol Emshwiller . Lowndes knew many successful writers in the field , and was able to call on them for stories , but the expanding sf magazine market of the mid @-@ 1950s meant that the best material was spread thinly . To attract readers , Lowndes established a friendly and personal style for the magazine , with letter columns and departments aimed at science fiction fans . Blish , writing as William Atheling , Jr . , commented in 1953 that Lowndes was doing a " surprisingly good job " with Future , despite the low rates and the slow payment to authors .

The trial issues of Science Fiction Stories in 1953 and 1954 were competent but unremarkable , with stories by some popular writers , such as Poul Anderson , Algis Budrys , and Philip K. Dick . Once Science Fiction Stories became established in 1955 , Future was relegated to the junior role , and Science Fiction Stories tended to publish the better stories of the two . During the period when Science Fiction Stories was monthly , it carried serialized novels , including de Camp 's The Tower

of Zanid and Ward Moore and Robert Bradford 's Caduceus Wild . It also published " Genius Loci " , described by Ashley as one of Thomas N. Scortia 's best short stories . Some well @-@ received stories did appear in Future towards the end of the decade , including " Vulcan 's Hammer " , an early novella version of Philip K. Dick 's novel of the same name ; Clifford D. Simak 's " Worlds Without End " ; and Judith Merrill 's " Homecalling " , reprinted in the 1960s in SF Impulse , whose editor , Kyril Bonfiglioli , commented " I don 't believe I have ever read a more successful attempt to imagine an utterly alien way of thought . " Lowndes did what he could to provide interesting non @-@ fiction departments : a book review column was started in the early 1950s , and the end of the decade saw a series of science articles written by Isaac Asimov , and critical articles on science fiction history , written by Lowndes himself . R.A. Lafferty 's first story appeared in Science Fiction Stories in the January 1960 issue , shortly before the magazine was closed down . The budget for both magazines , never very great , shrank even further towards the end , so that Lowndes had to fill space with reprints and re @-@ use old illustrations to avoid paying for new stories and artwork .

= = Bibliographic details = =

Charles Hornig was the editor of all 12 issues of the first incarnation of Science Fiction , and of the first five issues of Future Fiction . Robert W. Lowndes was the editor of all subsequent issues of both titles . Both Future and Science Fiction began as pulp magazines ; the 1953 experimental issue of Science Fiction Stories saw a change to digest format for that title , and Future followed suit in late 1955 with issue 28 . Both titles were initially priced at 15 cents . Future raised its price to 20 cents for the July 1943 issue , the last of its first run , but dropped to 15 cents again when it was relaunched in 1950 . With the November 1950 issue the price went back to 20 cents , and it rose to 25 cents with the January 1953 issue and 35 cents in June 1954 . When Science Fiction Stories reappeared in 1953 , it was priced at 35 cents , and stayed at that price throughout the remainder of its run .

Science Fiction began in March 1939 at 132 pages . Future Fiction was 112 pages when it was launched in November of that year , and shortly afterwards , March 1940 , Science Fiction dropped to 116 pages . The combined magazine , Future Combined with Science Fiction , retained Future 's page count of 112 ; when Future was relaunched , still as a pulp , in 1950 , the page count had dropped again , to 96 . Both Future and Science Fiction Stories were 128 pages long when they changed to digest format ; Future remained at that length , but Science Fiction Stories switched to 144 pages for nine issues , from January 1956 to May 1957 .

The sequence of title changes for the two magazines is summarized below . For Science Fiction :

Note that although the cover read " The Original Science Fiction Stories " for much of the second run , the title was always " Science Fiction Stories " , though some reference books index the magazine under " O " . For Future :

Louis Silberkleit was the publisher of both magazines throughout their existence , but he changed the imprint he used for them twice . Both were initially published by Blue Ribbon Magazines , Holyoke , Massachusetts . Starting with the March 1940 issue of Future , and the March 1940 issue of Science Fiction , the magazines were published by Double Action Magazines , with offices in Chicago . This changed to Columbia Publications , with offices in Springfield and Holyoke , Massachusetts , with the March 1941 issue of Science Fiction and the April 1941 issue of Future .

A Canadian edition of Science Fiction ran for 6 pulp @-@ sized issues of 64 pages from October 1941 to June 1942 , priced at 25 cents ; it was intended to be monthly but there were no issues in December 1941 , or in April or May 1942 . The publisher was Superior Magazines of Toronto for the first two issues , and Duchess Printing of Toronto for the remaining four . A different editor , William Brown @-@ Forbes , was listed , but the fiction was all reprinted from Silberkleit 's U.S. magazines . The artwork was new , however , with covers by John Hilkert and Edwin Shaw , among others .

Two issues of Science Fiction were reprinted in the UK by Atlas Publications ; these were abridged versions of the October and December 1939 issues . They were 96 pages , in pulp format . There were no British reprints of the first series of Future , but Thorpe & Porter reprinted 14 numbered and undated issues from November 1951 to June 1954 , corresponding roughly to the U.S. issues from

March 1951 to March 1954 . They were 96 pages in pulp format , and were priced at 1 / 6 ( 7.5p ) . In 1957 Strato Publications reprinted another 11 issues , again undated , from November 1957 to February 1960 , corresponding to the U.S. issues from Summer 1957 to August 1959 , skipping the February 1958 issue . These were in digest format , and were 128 pages ; they were priced at 2 / - ( 10p ) . Strato Publications also produced a reprint series of Science Fiction ; this ran from October 1957 to May 1960 , for 12 undated issues , in digest format , 128 pages , priced at 2 / - . The first 11 of these reprints were cut versions of the U.S. originals , corresponding to 11 of the U.S. issues between September 1957 and May 1959 ? the omitted issues were January , March , and September 1958 . The final issue was the U.S. issue for May 1960 , overprinted with the British price .

There are no anthologies of stories drawn solely from either Science Fiction or Future , but in the 1960s Ivan Howard edited several anthologies for Silberkleit 's publishing imprint , Belmont Books , with contents drawn solely from Silberkleit 's magazines . These included :

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1962 ) . The Weird Ones . New York : Belmont Books . Three stories from Future Fiction .

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1962 ) . Escape to Earth . New York : Belmont Books . Three stories from Future Fiction .

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1963 ) . Rare Science Fiction . New York : Belmont Books . Four stories from Science Fiction .

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1963 ) . Novelets of Science Fiction . New York : Belmont Books . Four stories from Future Fiction

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1963 ) . 6 and the Silent Scream . New York : Belmont Books . Three stories from Science Fiction

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1964 ) . Masters of Science Fiction . New York : Belmont Books . Four stories from Science Fiction .

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1964 ) . Things . New York : Belmont Books . Three stories from Future Fiction .

Howard , Ivan , ed . ( 1965 ) . Now and Beyond . New York : Belmont Books . Four stories from Science Fiction , and four from Future Fiction .

In addition , Douglas Lindsay edited an anthology titled Blue Moon in 1970 , published by Mayflower Books , which contains six stories from the August 1942 issue of Future , plus one story from the Winter 1942 issue of Science Fiction Quarterly .