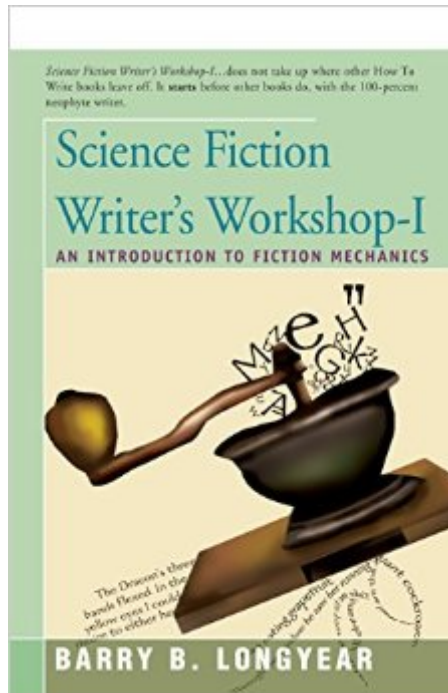


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# Science Fiction Writer's Workshop-I: An Introduction To Fiction Mechanics



## Synopsis

“About a year after (my stories began being published), magazine editor George Scithers, suggested to me that since I was so new at being published, I must be very close to what I had to learn to move from fooling around with writing to actually producing professional stories. There are a lot of aspiring writers out there who would like to know just that. Write that book. *Science Fiction Writer’s Workshop-I* is that book. It’s the book I was looking for when I first started writing fiction.” —Barry B. Longyear

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Joel (*Guardians of the Flame* series) Rosenberg turned me on to this book. In the afterword to his *Emile and the Dutchman*, he said that anybody aspiring to write SF/fantasy should "either get a copy...or cop to not being serious." To put it into plain English, this is simply the best book available for would-be writers. Although a lot of the information is specifically aimed at SF/fantasy writers, the exercises presented would do a lot for anybody at all who seriously wants to write fiction. Longyear gives examples of what he’s talking about that anybody can understand, and explains the whys and wherefores of fiction writing with uttermost clarity. There are other books for would-be SF/fantasy writers on the market, but this one is, in my own view, the very best. It would serve admirably well as a text for a "creative writing" course, or as such a course in and of itself

I bought this book about 15 years ago and loved it. The stories were well thought out, original and

just plain good. I still have my copy of this book and occasionally pull it out to read again. If you want to read several very good short stories this is the book for you

I read a borrowed copy of the original paperback of *It Came from Schenectady*, oh, gee, perhaps twenty years ago (hey! kids! this was, like, back before the Internet (or ) was around to make book finding really easy!). I never saw a copy in a book store, so I missed my chance to have one of my own. It is a pleasure to see back in print. This is a wild ride from one of the really inventive minds in science fiction. The stories range from thought-provoking to hilarious. I'll second the motion of another reviewer who encourages a serious reading of the introduction. Longyear has one hell of a sense of humor.

This is a spiffy collection of short stories by the author, and includes the stories listed below. Rating my enjoyability of each of the component stories (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest):

Rating	& Title
9	- Forepiece (Prologue)
8	- Collector's Item
7	- Dreams
7	- The House of If
6	- The Initiation
9	- The Portrait of Baron Negay
8	- SHAWNA, Ltd.
8	- A Time For Terror
9	- The Homecoming (Hugo Nominee)
8	- Twist Ending
10	- Catch The Sun
9	- Adagio
7	- Where Do You Get Your Ideas ?

Although the most loudly trumpeted piece in this collection is "The Homecoming" (which was nominated for a Hugo award), my personal favorite is, by far, "Catch The Sun", which could easily have been a major award winner in it's own right, if it'd been published as a stand alone novel. In hindsight, I'd guess the only reason it didn't get the Hugo nod is that it was published right on the heels of Homecoming, in the same calendar year, right after the latter was nominated ... and was thus ineligible. In any case, it's the best of the bunch, in my reckoning. This collection is a solid offering by Longyear, even though the title is a bit obscure, and doubtless deterred sales by confusing people walking past it in the book aisles. Style wise, the stories in this collection are an odd mix of quirky ideas, developed into stories by the author. Some follow the same general style as Harlan Ellison and *The Twilight Zone* motif, and others are more in the hard scifi vein. Overall, this is a very strong and enjoyable collection ... well worth the cover price, even if you have to buy it new.

I met Barry Longyear at *Odyssey 2008* and was so impressed with him as a writer and teacher that I bought this book. Although I consider myself a semi-pro writer, I have learned a tremendous amount from what he calls an "introduction." It is straightforward and contains numerous examples from Longyear's own award winning stories. He includes rejected versions and the subsequent revised stories which did sell, along with critiques. I am now reading this book for a second time and doing

the exercises (the first time I read straight through). I am also reading one short story from his book *It Came From Schenectady* to see how he applied the lessons. At least one other science fiction writer I know considers this his "go-to" book. As far as the sequel, Barry said that he did write it. I believe it is a pdf book which you can order through his personal website for around \$33. I plan to do that next year.

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