August 5, 2013

Dear Friends:

Thank you for naming me the recipient of the 2013 *Munsey Award*. The honor of being this year's representative means a great deal to me. There are so many others worthy of this award — for research, writing and publication, presentations, service and promotion of pulp magazine history, preservation, scholarship and fandom. Being associated with our extended group of visionaries and friends for more than three decades personally means so much and is an ongoing honor in itself— because of the people and close friends committed to this very important part of American and world literature and culture.

I have read Walter Gibson's Shadow, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Robert E. Howard, and Ray Bradbury since youth. My mother had given me paperback copies of Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* and *Long After Midnight* in the early seventies. I have collected and read Big Little Books, comic books, and newspaper strips since I was six or seven in the mid-sixties. My dad told me that, in the 1930s and 40s, his cousin Fred used to hide pulp magazines in the barn of the family farm in northeastern Illinois — probably some with semi-provocative covers like Spicys and Saucys and Detectives and *Weird Tales* and so on.

Years later in graduate school, somewhere during the fall of 1981, my new-found friend and classmate Gary Hoppenstand provided me with my first Fu Manchu story — the yellow Pyramid paperback of *The Insidious Fu Manchu*, my first Arkham House volume — Carl Jacobi's *Revelations in Black*, and my first pulp — a 1940s *Weird Tales* (with an uncharacteristically and unintentionally dreadful cover — no, I mean the art stunk, the

same cover which misspelled Fredric Brown's name on the cover); Brown's story there is the really great "Come and Go Mad." (I still have all three, and now, many dozen Rohmer hardcovers, an 85 percent complete Arkham House collection including multiple copies of some volumes, and a couple hundred *Weird Tales*.) More importantly, Gary has been a lifelong friend since. Today, together we continue writing projects; back then, we published the first volume of Frederick C. Davis's Moon Man stories under the Purple Prose Press imprint (Bob Sampson, Nick Carr, Will Murray and Bob Weinberg joined us on that project; Don Hutchison was scheduled for the second volume; we donated some the meager profits from that endeavor — by and large we lost money — to Manly Wade Wellman's end-of-life care), and wrote of defective detectives for Ray Browne's Bowling Green Popular Press. We later met Fred Davis's son (Rick Davis) and granddaughter (the talented and beautiful Karen Cunningham) — I count them as good friends, too. We published a volume of dime novel reprints featuring female detectives, and I edited a little volume entitled *A Cent A Story! The Best from Ten Detective Aces* for the Popular Press at this time as well.

Somewhere around 1982-83, I met someone else. The best student I ever had in a university class—and many thousands of students later still the best, though I love them all for different reasons—was Robert "Bob" Craig from the greater Cleveland area. I'd have been about 23 when Bob was 18 or 19. After 27 or 28 years, Bob found me again at *PulpFest*. For three or four years now, Bob and I have stayed in touch, meeting at *PulpFest* and planning a book project together (on the pulps) soon.

One day in class some thirty years ago, Bob scared the hell out of me in my Fantasy and Science Fiction class at BGSU. I had a beautiful lecture prepared on Robert E. Howard, and as I gave my presentation, Bob very politely and respectfully added specific details to my lecture. Decades later, no one has scared me so

badly in the classroom. Bob is scary bright. He is an even nicer person. Soon, Gary got Bob published in *Echoes* — this article might have been about the pulp-like Ahern novels including *The Takers* or about *The Destroyer* novels by Sapir and Murphy.

From Bowling Green in the first half of the 1980s, Gary and I increasingly strayed in quest of books and pulps. Soon we were in Ann Arbor and Dayton. Richard Clear ran The Dragon's Lair in Dayton (exactly 124 miles south on Hwy 75 from BG), and he had the original "Pulp Vault"— literally a bank vault with a thick, heavy metal door and spinning tumbler lock. White paper copies of the rarest, most wonderful pulps lived in this vault. Meanwhile, back at BGSU, Bob Craig had completed a set of Bantam Doc Savage paperbacks to date—save one. Bob was missing Bantam #50, *The Devil on the Moon*. Gary and I bought Bob the issue — only it was the original pulp. I think we paid $15 for a nice copy from Dragon's Lair. But back then, at my first Pulpcon auction at the University of Dayton, a really nice copy of "Zemba," a 1930s Shadow pulp novel, went for $12.

At Bowling Green, I used to order pulps, pulp reprints, and pulp-related publications from Robert and Phyllis Weinberg's catalogs. In those days we ordered by phone, and it got to a point where—whether Bob or Phyllis answered in Chicago—we knew each other's voices so well that we didn't have to introduce ourselves.

One day, around 1984 or '85, Gary and I drove another hour northwest of Ann Arbor and arrived in East Lansing at Ray Walsh's Curious Bookshop. That summer, we worked in East Lansing for Michigan State, cataloging Fantasy and Science Fiction fanzines donated by P. Schuyler Miller and others. Lots of ERB and REH. (Two strangely titled fanzines I remember were *Amoeboid Scunge* and *The Four Door Grape*. We used a hot-burning Apple IIE and lots of note cards.) There was one strange

photo of a young Ray Bradbury, who later became my good friend, but . . . .

The summer of 1985 also saw the debut of two wonderful movies: *Goonies* and *Return to Oz*. Gary and I visited Curious Books almost daily that summer — especially when we had a little money to spend. I got a really nice copy of Arkham House's *Tales of Science and Sorcery* by Clark Ashton Smith from Ray that summer. Still have it and a couple of other copies of the book. Oh, that was also the summer that Ray sold me Clark Ashton Smith's first book (of poetry) — corrected in fountain pen by the author — *The Star Treader* (1912). That one is locked away in a special place in my collection.

Ray Walsh has been my dear friend ever since. Unlike Bradbury, Mr. Walsh has yet to be found in any embarrassing photos! Working part-time in Ray's shop in 1988, I met his new employee, Virginia, a reddish-brown-haired art major; well, you know… Virginia and I were married July 31, 1994, in Madison. One winter about 1990 or '91, I spent my tax refund on part of an Arkham House collection Ray had on consignment. I think the seller was from Minnesota. But that is ahead of the story.

May 10, 1986, I completed five years of graduate school and went through commencement at BGSU. After one last summer at my parents' home in northern Wisconsin, I became an Assistant Professor at Mankato State University in Minnesota. More very important friends appeared.

During the fall of 1986, I journeyed northeast of Mankato about an hour and fifteen minutes to the Twin Cities. My little red Pontiac Sunbird (two-door, hatchback, four-on-the-floor) was filled with fourteen boxes of books to sell and/or trade — in the boxes were multiple copies of what for me were duplicate British

Clark Ashton Smith paperbacks and much more. Eventually I walked into this really beautiful store called “DreamHaven” and met a guy named “Greg.” Greg Ketterer has been my good friend ever since.

A few months later, I discovered that Jack and Helen Deveny lived in Edina, a nice, semi-rural suburb of the cities. I visited them often after Friday morning classes at the university. I had corresponded with Jack and had bought pulps from his catalogs for several years. But I cannot tell you how important Jack and Helen were in my life. My friend, Tony Davis, printed a short essay/tribute I wrote about Jack and Helen in *The Pulpster* about five years ago. I was so happy that Tony let me provide happy personal memories of Jack and Helen. Thanks, Tony.

In the spring of 1987, I received an offer to interview for a professorial position at Michigan State University. I got a job offer, and Mankato countered. I loved Mankato, and I have often wondered what would have happened if I hadn’t headed east for the big-city lights of a Big Ten school. But Ray Walsh, and later Jay, Mark, Christian, Bob, Virginia, and so many others, would meet me there.

I mention this career and life transition to set up another pulp remembrance. Michigan State flew me from the Twin Cities (Hubert H. Humphrey Airport) to Detroit for my interview. At the time, my old buddy Gary Hoppenstand was teaching in Toledo; he came north to Detroit to meet me. I got off the plane briefcase in hand, and we went to Gary’s car as if to complete some sinister espionage transaction straight from the pulps. Gary brought out his briefcase, and we opened our cases at the same time on the hood of his car. Gary handed me pulps and books, and I handed Gary pulps and books. It was all unscripted. The shady transaction was complete.

So many other stories and friends came before, in between, and after.

I started at Michigan State University in the fall of 1987; Gary started at MSU a year later, in 1988 — the place where, back in the summer of 1985, we cataloged fanzines for the Russel B. Nye Special Collections section of the MSU libraries — and where we haunted Curious Books. In 1994, I moved 175 miles northwest to Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City.

A few years later, I started work on what would become an award-winning volume of Fantasy and Science Fiction — not because of me, but because of the content and the vision of my Senior Editor, Ms. Carrie Brandon. (In 1995 I was a Mystery Writers Finalist for the Edgar Allan Poe Award for *Dick Tracy and American Culture: Morality and Mythology, Text and Context* McFarland). Again, pulp fiction was the mainstay of the F and SF project. Late in life, the great pulp artist Edd Cartier (*Shadow* and *Unknown* artist) actually provided an original pulp painting for color reproduction in the book. The book, a college and university textbook and, yet, popular anthology, is still in print: *The Prentice Hall Anthology of Science Fiction and Fantasy* (Pearson Education). Bob Weinberg and Forry Ackerman helped with that one. And my friend, Carrie? She is the granddaughter of the prolific pulp Western writer, C. W. Harrison. She has become a member of the Roberts family. Carrie toured us through the Louisa May Alcott House outside of Boston during the spring of 2012. It was a trip of a lifetime for my youngest, Morgan, then eleven years old. Before and after, Morgan had read, and still has read, the vast majority of what Alcott wrote—memoirs, romances, social melodramas, Civil War hospital accounts, bodice-rippers, supernatural stories, and all the *Little Women*-type books.

About ten years ago (in the early days of the twenty-first century), I first met Dr. George Vanderburgh. I was participating in a National American Culture/Popular Culture Association meeting in Toronto. Virginia and our children were with me. Another shady pulp deal was in the offing. George drove to the conference hotel to sell me three hardcover volumes — a complete set of reprints of Seabury Quinn's Jules de Grandin stories. The whole experience was unbelievable. The volumes were and are extraordinary, and George was a really neat man who quickly became a very dear friend. Dr. George brought me on to his publishing company and has included me in several publishing projects ever since. Bob Weinberg, Rodney Shroeder, and Randy Vanderbeek were and are part of George's team, too. I edited and introduced a range of pulp reprints for George under *the Lost Treasures from the Pulps* heading. We completed (along with Gary) Frederick C. Davis's Moon Man saga, and we got Rick Davis and Karen Cunningham on board for that one, too. George had me edit Clayton Rawson volumes, including some very rare Don Diavlo and related pulp stories; volumes of G.T. Fleming-Roberts (no direct relation to me) Green Ghost stories; Park Avenue Hunt Club stories; and more. George's books are massive and definitive, and we all need them. I hope George, our friends, and I will be releasing some new projects soon. Some great ones are in the wings.

A couple of years ago, my friend, Steve Haffner, had me write a lengthy introduction to the first of two large volumes of Henry Kuttner weird-menace stories. I got to share the cover bylines on that great book with Kuttner and the recently passed Richard Matheson. A couple of months ago, I published essays on Kuttner and Robert Bloch in a book for Salem Press. Two or three more essays on my late friend, Ray Bradbury, are due in a Salem Press book later this year.

Rick Hall and I are contributing essays to Matt Moring's Altus Press reprint volumes of James B. Hendryx novels and stories. I have some neat stories to share about Hendryx, probably my favorite adventure writer. Hendryx and I both spent many years in the greater Traverse City, Michigan area at different times. More introductions for volumes of Giesy and Smith Semi Dual stories are coming soon from Altus Press. Thanks, Matt, for the opportunities.

Mark Hickman is letting me write an essay for the second collection of his father's (Lynn's) historic *Pulp Era* prozines. If you do not have the first collection of Lynn and Mark's book, you need to get it. Here's a preview: in part, I'll talk about how Lynn's excellent life and work continue in his son, my dear friend, Mark.

Ed Hulse has published my work before, too. What an honor for me to be in Blood 'n' Thunder. Ed, I promise you something new soon. Ed and Murania Press have recently released *The Blood 'n' Thunder Guide to Pulp Fiction*. This study is an instant cornerstone of any pulp scholarship. If you haven't already, add Ed's book and Nathan Vernon *Madison's Anti-Foreign Imagery in American Pulps and Comic Books* (McFarland, 2013) to your personal library as soon as possible.

I also need to mention another friend of more than three decades — one of the genuine gentlemen of the pulp community. Albert "Al" Tonik has provided sincere friendship, excellent research, and camaraderie all that time, and I am so glad I was able to get a few pieces from his research library through the *PulpFest* auctions of 2012 and '13.

I haven't even mentioned the legendary Doug Ellis (and Deb Fulton) and John (and Maureen) Gunnison, Mike (and Dianne) Chomko, Jack (and Sally) Cullers and their family, and Barry

Traylor, Neil and Leigh Mechem, Martin (and Michelle) Grams, Jr., and Francis “Mike” Nevins.

Tom Roberts (friend and family, but not blood relation), John Locke (excellent researcher), Gene Christie (excellent researcher), Bill Mann (Bill, I have enjoyed some G-8 stories through the years, but hadn’t considered myself an aviation pulp guy until your books — thanks for some really wonderful research and scholarship), Chris Kalb (looking forward to part two of your pulp premiums next summer), Anthony Tollin (master of The Shadow), Laurie Powers (I am so glad to get to know you, Laurie), Walker Martin (we need to collect your blogs and writing in one volume — you are very good, and funny), Phil Nelson and Holly, and Dave Schmidt and Zoey and their family.

What lifelong friends you all are. You have made my life much more than it would have been without you. There are so many others — I am sorry I have not listed you all here. Maybe there will be more stories of all of you soon—all good, I promise.

Maybe I am naïve. Yet it seems to me that the Pulp community, as it has expanded, is comprised of people who work together; petty jealousies and squabbles do not exist. The sincere mutual support for collectors, researchers, writers, publishers, newcomers, and others is extraordinary. I think the old pulpmasters of days gone by would approve of what today’s Pulp community has done for their collective legacy.

All this is to say “Thank You” for naming me the 2013 recipient of the *Munsey Award*. I have been honored beyond words to be associated with the Pulp community for thirty-plus years. The image on that Munsey, by my very good friend, David Saunders, is better up close than I could have imagined—I was always afraid to even consider that I might one day have this image as

an award. I am still in awe and humbled, but mostly you need to hear my sincere “thank you,” and know my love for you, my friends—no, my extended family. I bet there are pulps in Heaven, and I bet Bob Sampson and Jack Deveny are already cataloging them there.

Garyn G. Roberts, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

A response from Walker Martin, Aug. 15, 2013

Thanks for writing this extremely interesting letter, Garyn. It brings back a lot of memories.

There are two things I used to do before attending Pulpcon in Dayton, Ohio. First, I would visit The Dragon’s Lair, owned by Richard Clear. I also remember the big bank vault where he stored pulps. Richard Clear not only sold me pulps, but I also bought some pulp art from him, including four big illustrations by Norman Saunders.

The second thing I’d do is visit Bonnett’s Bookstore. Once a year, he would bring pulps up from his basement for Pulpcon. In fact, at an early Pulpcon, Bonnett was the unofficial guest of honor and gave a talk about his pulp-writing days, when he even managed to crack BLACK MASK.

I also miss Jack Deveny and his wife, Helen. Every Christmas he would send Christmas greetings with a pulp cover on the card. I once loaned him a box of pulps that had Christmas covers, and he used the images for many holidays.

Bob Sampson! For 25 years we carried on an extensive correspondence about pulps. I still have his letters, a couple hundred of them. And Ray Walsh! I recently wondered why I don't find as many pulps at his table as I used to. Then I realized the answer was that I had bought so many from Ray in earlier years. Ray's been attending the pulp conventions since the first or second one. We started off as young collectors in our twenties or thirties (I was 30 at the first *Pulpcon* in 1972), and now we have turned into grizzled veterans.

Well, at least I have, though lately I seem to be fading and crumbling like an old pulp magazine. Just as long as I don't start shedding like a pulp!

I could go on and on about some of the collectors you mention, guys like Bob Weinberg, who I've known since the 1960's. Thanks for the great letter, and congratulations again.