

Possibly

"Advice To The New Writer"

Introduction To
L. Ron Hubbard presents
writers of the future

2002

Among humans of the Western world one of the signs of humanity itself is reading. The state of civilization can be judged by the literacy of its people. Reading and writing offer the ability to record, feed the imagination, a desire to learn more concerning one's life, surroundings, and fellowship with one's kind.

Even though the past may record many errors---remember that game wherein one whispers a fact to one's neighbor which is then whispered on and on from one member of a circle to another, ending by being spoken aloud by the last member of the group which is quite different from the original saying. Each piece of writing can not help but be subtly (and sometimes arbitrarily) altered by the beliefs of the writer. We increase our knowledge by reading.

Thus the most important service of a book is just that---to add to the knowledge of the reader. This does not come from factual material alone---though that is the first and foremost reason to read. Fiction also has its duty in the same direction. An idea presented by story form often catches attention more speedily than straight fact.

One of the questions most often asked of a writer is: Where do you get your ideas?

The answer is simple enough: I read.

And the writer does read basic facts for fiction. Many readers accept description and parts of action in

what he or she already knows, as fact. If that portion of the narrative is particularly well written it will sink into mind as truth. Thus it is the first and foremost duty of the writer to be sure such minor portions of the tale ARE right.

In the writing of works of imagination besides the building of action necessary for the plot one must also do research---are you dealing with swords, or space ship and lasers read what can be found to make such subjects real to the reader. Writing is twin to painting and drawing. It should present to the reader a picture. Words are colors, they must be well chosen and used.

Thus read--- History, natural history, descriptions of cities as they were, as they are, as they may come to be. Sloppy or non-existent research is an unforgivable sin on the part of any writer.

Study housing, Inns, castles, floating cities, the imagined interiors of space vessels. Try to find material on what your characters might wear, eat and what would be their entertainment. Any political action which might influence the plot, any religious belief which might have meaning must be clear in your own mind, anchored to some fact or facts that your reader has met in his or her life, or must have heard of. You may use little of your research at one time. However while dealing with another piece of work you may rediscover it for an even more judicious use. Keep lists of names which sound to be ones which would fit Heroes, heroines, villains, rulers and the like.

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newspapers dealing with strange discoveries which will plant a very useable plot in the future.

L. Ron Hubbard wrote in a number of different genres at a time when genre writers were confined to writing for the pulps. Few younger readers today are aware that his action stories were written in a number of different genres. Until Sputnik astounded the world in the Fifties very few science fiction or fantasies appeared in hard covers from well established publishing firms. After the Russians broke into space such companies began to search for book length ms.

There was already a core of writers in the pulps who readily made the transition to the other market. L. Ron Hubbard saw even farther ahead. From his belief that new comers in the imaginative field should be encouraged and nourished came in time The Hubbard Foundation and Writers of the Future wherein those beginning such careers would have support .

For several years the chance has been given me to read stories of high merit proving exactly that Mr. Hubbard was right---that there is a pool of new comers able to deliver the best when given the chance offered by Writers of The Future. They will certainly find readers waiting.