

leg injuries and an interview

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 07 Apr 2013

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6366>

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Marc Aramini — 07 Apr 2013, 15:25

Certainly we have all noticed the chronic leg injuries of many of Wolfe's characters. I honestly don't like putting biographical stuff into interpretation unless it is very clear or explicitly referenced, but I thought this statement, by Gene in an interview with Larry McCaffery, was interesting. It seems to me that he associates his earliest Tackman Babcock type realization of SF with a leg injury:

Did you read a lot of SF as a child?

Wolfe: ?Every chance I could. I had a very nice grandmother named Alma Wolfe who used to save me the Sunday comics so that when I visited her there would always be a huge stack of Sunday funnies. I read those with particular attention to Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon. Once when I was a kid in Houston I fell off my bike and hurt my leg badly enough so that my mother had to drive me to school for a while in the family car. On one of those drives she had a paperback book lying in the front seat, and when I looked down at the picture on the cover I saw a picture like the one I had seen in the Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon comics, with a tremendous chrome tower and a rocket ship being launched. It was a paperback collection of SF stories edited by Don Wollheim, who was about 22 in those days. My mother had brought it to read while she was waiting for me to get out of school (she was a big mystery fan but had bought this as a change of pace). I asked her if I could read this one when she was finished, and she said I could have it right away since she didn't much care for it. The first story I came across was "The Microcosmic God" by Theodore Sturgeon, which was my first real encounter with SF. It was at that point I realized these were not just stories I enjoyed like those of Edgar Allan Poe, or the Oz books by L. Frank Baum and the books by Ruth Plumly Thompson but that they constituted a genre. From the Wollheim anthology, which was the very first American SF paperback anthology, I worked backwards and discovered the SF pulps?Planet Stories, Thrilling Wonder Stories, Weird Tales, Famous Fantastic Mysteries (that was my favorite) and Amazing Stories, all of which were still on sale for 20 or 25 cents. As a kid in junior high school, I used to walk six blocks or so up to the Richmond pharmacy, pick up one of those magazines, hide behind the candy case, and read until the pharmacist saw me and threw me out. Since I was usually interrupted in the middle of the story, I'd go away for a few days and then sneak back and take up where I'd left off.

David Stockhoff — 07 Apr 2013, 20:28 · in reply to Marc Aramini

/Microcosmic God/ blew my mind at a young age too. Nice. And maybe ironic too, given that he was not even a Catholic at the time, but the title is right up his alley.

On 4/7/2013 11:25 AM, Marc Aramini wrote:

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