Delany, Samuel R.

Samuel R. Delany collection
1967–1999

Abstract: The Samuel R. Delany collection includes Delany's letters to publisher Bill Bamberger (Bamberger Books), manuscript drafts of novels in progress, comic books, science fiction anthologies, and journals of fantasy and science fiction to which Delany contributed or served as editor.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 618
Creator: Delany, Samuel R.
Title: Samuel R. Delany collection
Inclusive Dates: 1967–1999
Extent: 2 linear ft. (2 boxes)
Language: Materials in English and French.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 618, Samuel R. Delany collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-2: Shelved in SPEC MSS record center cartons.
Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Processing: Processed and encoded by Christopher La Casse, April 2010.
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Biographical Note

Samuel R. Delany, born April 1, 1942, in New York City, is an author, editor, professor, and literary critic, noted for his work in the science fiction genre. Delaney's writing is often characterized by his interest in gender, sexual orientation, race, and social issues.

Delany identified as a gay black male, but for twelve years, he remained married to the poet Marilyn Hacker, whom he met in high school. During their marriage, the couple raised a daughter and co-edited a short-lived magazine *Quark*, which had a print-run of four issues in the early 1970s. Delany has also edited *Nebula Winners Thirteen*, and many of his shorter pieces have circulated through numerous science fiction periodicals, anthologies, and collections.

Delany’s literary career began at the age of 20 with the publication of his first novel, *The Jewels of Aptor*. Shortly thereafter, he published several more successful novels of science fiction that gained both literary acclaim as well as praise from writers of the sci-fi genre. Delany's science fiction, widely regarded as literary, carried many themes that raised questions of identity for individuals within the conventions of society. Specific lines of inquiry dealt with social and sexual politics as many of Delany’s characters were seen as representing women’s rights, gay rights, and racial equality. Established as an innovator in science fiction of the 1960s, Delany’s work has appeared in various forms of print media, and his talent and interests moved him beyond the boundaries of genre where he published non-fiction, literary criticism, film and book reviews, comic books, and transgressive literature.

Delany’s works of non-fiction explored a variety of subjects related to social causes and conditions. In his 1979 memoir, *Heavenly Breakfast*, he related his own particular "summer of love" in 1967 while living at the time in a New York City commune. His award-winning 1988 memoir, *The Motion of Light in Water*, was based on the author’s reflections as a gay science fiction writer. *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (1999) described New York City’s pornographic movie theaters and the eventual displacement of this sexual landscape in Time’s Square. Delany’s autobiographical work also took the form of a comic book in *Bread & Wine: An Erotic Tale of New York*.

Delany’s writing not only addressed social themes but raised questions about language, which is to say, how language "connects and constrains" the thought patterns of individuals within society, how myth and archetype influence reality, and how reality shifts depending on perceived experience through language. The depth and complexity of Delany's novels have attracted numerous scholars who have written book-length studies about Delany and his work. Delany's critical studies have peered into the language of science fiction through the lens of post-structuralism and semiotics, which has resulted in his work being well-received by the literary world. Since the late 1990s, Delany has taught at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, SUNY Buffalo, and Temple University.

Sources:

Scope and Content Note

The Samuel R. Delany collection includes correspondence to publisher Bill Bamberger (Bamberger Books in Flint, Michigan), manuscript drafts of novels in progress, comic books, science fiction anthologies, and journals of fantasy and science fiction in which Delany provided contributions or served as editor.

Delany’s fourteen letters to Bamberger covered subjects that were both professional and personal. After permitting the reprinting of his book, Heavenly Breakfast, Delany mentioned possible changes. The letters continued to discuss other writing projects while also delving into other topics, such as social politics, sexuality, and writing. Delany offered personal information about his past, described a fire that occurred in his apartment building, and discussed a conference he attended in Boston on gay writers.

The working titles of Delany’s manuscripts are American Shore 1, International Short Story, Heavenly Breakfast, The Politics of Paraliterary Criticism, Shadow and Ash, Notes on the Star-Pit, Tale of Gorgik, Tale of Norema, and Three, Two, One, Contact: Times Square Red, 1997. The manuscripts cover all stages of the writing process and include many original typescripts that contain extensive holographic corrections, penned by both Delany and fellow science fiction writer Joanna Russ.

The printed materials of this collection include many first editions, comic books, anthologies, five periodicals edited by Delany, sixteen periodicals that include his contributions, and articles written about Delany.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Delany, Samuel R.--Correspondence.

Bamberger, Bill--Correspondence.

Topical Terms

Authors, American--20th century.

Fiction--United States--History--20th century--Sources.

Gay men--United States--History--20th century--Sources.

Science fiction--History and criticism.

Science fiction--Authorship.

Form/Genre Terms

Clippings (information artifacts)

Correspondence.

First editions.

Little magazines.

Manuscripts.

Novels.

Comic books.

Occupation

Novelists.

Editors.

Personal Contributors

Bamberger, Bill, correspondent.

Related Materials in this Repository
MSS 504, Roland Bounds science fiction periodicals collection
MSS 553, Roland E. Bounds science fiction paperback book collection
Arrangement

I. Correspondence, 1993-1996
II. Writing projects, 1976-1999
III. Printed materials, 1967-1990
Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Correspondence, 1993-1996

Letters to Bill Bamberger, 1993-1999 [Box 1 F1]

16 items

14 letters from Samuel Delany to publisher Bill Bamberger, of Bamberger Books in Flint, Michigan. Letters primarily concerned the publication of *Heavenly Breakfast*, but also discuss other writing projects as well as detailed personal information about the Delany’s personal life and perspective of politics and culture. Also includes “file copy” of letter from Bamberger to Delany and Bamberger's response to Scott McLemee's review of Delany's *Longer Views* in *The Nation*.

Clippings and articles, 1996 [Box 1 F2]

3 items

Includes Scott McLemee's review of Delany's *Longer Views*.

Series II. Writing Projects, 1976-1999

Subseries II.A. Manuscript materials, 1976-1998

The manuscripts cover all stages of the writing process and include many original typescripts that contain extensive holographic corrections, penned by both Delany’s and fellow science fiction writer, Joanna Russ.

*American Shore 1*, circa 1977 [Box 1 F3]

Original corrected typescript, early draft 4 to 253 pages. Extensive holographic corrections with type revision slips inserted.

*American Shore 2*, circa 1977 [Box 1 F4]

Original corrected typescript, early draft 4 to 319 pages to be used as a setting copy for Dragon Press.

*American Shore 3*, circa 1977 [Box 1 F5]

Photocopy of page proofs. Eighteen copies were made for his students at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee


One of two stories housed in custom-made, half-cloth slipcase box. Includes original corrected typescripts of *Tale of Gorgik*, pages 4 to 64. Typescript contains extensive holograph corrections with additional corrections written by Joanna Russ.

*Tale of Norema*, circa 1977 [Box 1 F6]
One of two stories housed in custom-made, half-cloth slipcase box. Includes original corrected typescripts of *Tale of Norema*, pages 4 to 80. Typescript contains extensive holograph corrections with additional corrections written by Joanna Russ.

*Times Square Blue*, 1979 [Box 1 F7]

*Heavenly Breakfast*, 1979 [Box 1 F8]

Author's corrected copy with minor ink and white-out markings. Used as the corrected text for the revised edition of the book. Includes original mailing envelop.

*Shadow and Ash*, 1992 [Box 1 F9]

Photocopy of publisher's page proofs including author's holograph corrections reproduced in facsimile. Also includes pages 4 to 30.

*The Politics of Paraliterary Criticism*, 1996 [Box 1 F10]

Original laser-printed typescript including pages 1 to 56.

*... Three, Two, One, Contact: Times Square Red, 1997*, 1997 [Box 1 F11]

Original laser-printed typescript includes pages 1 to 72.

*Notes on the Star-Pit*, 1998 [Box 1 F12]

Original laser-printed typescript including pages 1 to 11. "The Star-Pit was first broadcast by The Mind's Eye Theater over WBAI-FM in New York City, November 1967."

**Subseries II.B. Teaching materials, 1999**

*Language and the City: Art and Revolution: 1848*, circa 1999 [Box 1 F13]

Photocopy of syllabus taught at the University of Massachusetts.

*International Short Story*, 1999 [Box 1 F14]

Original syllabus for a course taught by Samuel R. Delany at the University of Massachusetts.

**Series III. Printed materials, 1967-1990**

**Subseries III.A. Magazines and periodicals, 1967-1990**

The printed materials of this collection include many first editions, comic books, anthologies, 6 books edited by Delany, 16 periodicals that include Delany’s contributions, and two journals that include articles written about Delany.

Story.


Poem.


Story.


Short novel.


Story co-authored with Harlan Ellison. Issue also includes Delany's review of *Black Easter* by James Blish.


Review of "I have no mouth & I must scream," by Harlan Ellison.


Story.


Film review.

"Cage of Brass," *Worlds of IF: Science Fiction*, Vol. 18, No. 6, June 1968 [Box 1 F23]

Story.


Novelette.


Film review.

Film review.

"They Fly at Ciron," *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, Vol. 40, No. 6, June 1971 [Box 2 F27]

Novelette, with James Sallis.


Novelette.


*Starlog's Science Fiction Yearbook*, Vol. 1, 1979 [Box 2 F32]


Story.

"Seven Moon's Light Casts Complex Shadows," *Epic Illustrated*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1980 [Box 2 F34]

Story.


Article.

"In the Once Upon a Time City," *Locus*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1985 [Box 2 F36]

Article.
"Film/ Pigs (or, at any rate, grunts) in space" Night Cry, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1987 [Box 2 F37]

Film review of Aliens.


Article.


Article.

"Neither the Beginning Nor the End of Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Semiotics, or Deconstruction for SF Readers: An Introduction," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 6, February 1989 [Box 2 F40]

Article; part 1 of 3.

"Neither the Beginning Nor the End of Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Semiotics, or Deconstruction for SF Readers: An Introduction," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 7, March 1989 [Box 2 F41]

Article; part 2 of 3.

"Neither the Beginning Nor the End of Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, Semiotics, or Deconstruction for SF Readers: An Introduction," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 8, April 1989 [Box 2 F42]

Article; part 3 of 3.

"How Not to Teach Science Fiction," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 13, September 1989 [Box 2 F43]

Article.


Article.

"Modernism, Postmodernism, Science Fiction," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 24, August 1990 [Box 2 F45]

Article.

"Life of/and Writing," New York Review of Science Fiction, No. 26, October 1990 [Box 2 F46]

Article.
Subseries III.B. Anthologies and collections, 1968-1974

Story.

Story.

Story.

Story.

Story.

Story.

Story.

Story.

Subseries III.C. Periodicals and articles about Samuel R. Delany, 1977-1987


Morales, Robert, "Chip Shot (interview)," *Heavy Metal*, Vol. 6, No. 10, 1983 [Box 2 F56]

Cover photograph of Delany.


*Quark / 1: a quarterly of speculative fiction.* Paperback Library, 1970 [Box 2 F58]
Edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker.

*Quark / 2*, 1971 [Box 2 F58]
Edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker.

*Quark / 3*, 1971 [Box 2 F59]
Edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker.

*Quark / 4*, 1971 [Box 2 F59]
Edited by Samuel R. Delany and Marilyn Hacker.


**Series IV. Book jackets, circa 1984, 1987, 1988 3 items**

*Stars in My Pocket Like Grains of Sand* (Bantam), circa 1984 [Box 2 F62]


*The Bridge of Lost Desire* (Arbor House), circa 1988 [Box 2 F62]