



## Ansible 344 March 2016

From **David Langford**, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website [news.ansible.uk](http://news.ansible.uk). ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: **Dan Steffan**. Cartoon: **Brad W. Foster**. Available for SAE, Fwai-chi shags or Rhune Books of Deeds.

**As Others Invoke Us.** Only genre metaphors can cope with the hellish excesses of current US presidential campaigning: 'But if Rubio's tax plan is "puppies and rainbows," then Donald Trump's may be best described as "unicorns and time portals." It's so far beyond the plausible that science fiction, rather than children's literature, feels like the right genre for capturing its essence.' (Vox.com, 25 February) [HF]

### Gharks and Hoos

**C.J. Cherryh** is to receive SFWA's Damon Knight Grand Master lifetime achievement honour at the 2016 Nebula Awards weekend.

**Daniel Clowes**, whose graphic novel *Patience* centres on time travel, revealed his secret in a *Wired* interview: 'How did you avoid science fiction clichés?' 'By not reading any science fiction.' [PDF]

**Harrison Ford** was badly injured on the *Millennium Falcon* set while filming *Star Wars VII: The Force Awakens* at Pinewood Studios in mid-2014. Now at last the Health and Safety Executive strikes back, prosecuting the allegedly responsible Foodles Production (UK) Ltd for four breaches of health and safety law. (press.hse.gov.uk, 11 February)

**George R.R. Martin** is to receive an honorary degree from Texas A&M University, home of his archives. But first a certain book project needs to be finished: 'When will I be returning to College Station to get the degree? Not till WINDS is done.' (Winteriscoming.net, 10 February)

**Robert Reed**, according to his flash-fiction blurb in *Nature* (4 February), 'is the author of several hundred stories and a few novels. He won a Hugo before it was controversial.' [MLO] Gosh, when was that?

**John Whitbourn** brags that Wikipedia records his blue-plaque equivalent: 'In 2014 a new housing development in the village of Binscombe, Surrey, was named Whitbourn Mews in honour of the author and his "The Binscombe Tales" series.' He proudly adds: 'as my Family informed me at the time: "Dad—no one cares ..."' (16 February)

### Congleton

5 Mar • **Durham Sci-Fi & Fantasy Lit-Fest**, Kingsgate Room, Durham Students Union, New Elvet, DH1 3AN. 1pm-5pm. Tickets £1.50. Contact [sf-f.society@durham.ac.uk](mailto:sf-f.society@durham.ac.uk)

11 Mar • **BFS Open Night**, The Blacksmith & Toffemaker, 292-294 Saint John St, London, EC1V 4PA. 7pm-11pm. Free; all welcome.

17-20 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £500 for two; Fri+Sat day pass £89. See [www.scifiweekender.com](http://www.scifiweekender.com).

23 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Aliette de Bodard. Free.

25-28 Mar • **Mancunicon** (Eastercon), Manchester. £75 reg; 13-17s, concessions £45; 4-12s £30; under-4s free. Day (adult): £20 Fri or Mon, £30 Sat or Sun; see [mancunicon.org.uk](http://mancunicon.org.uk) for the other day rates. Note that no memberships, day or weekend, will be available at the door.

6-9 Apr • **Terry Pratchett: The Shakespeare Codex** (play), Unicorn, Abingdon. See [www.studiotheatreclub.com/whats-next](http://www.studiotheatreclub.com/whats-next).

9-10 Apr • **Sci Fi Scarborough** (comics, media), The Spa Complex, Scarborough. Tickets £27.50 (day £16.50); 6-16s £11 (day £5.50); under-6s free. See [www.scifiscarborough.co.uk](http://www.scifiscarborough.co.uk).

11 Apr - 20 Jun • **Doctor Who** (11-week Monday evening class), Aquinas College, Stockport. Contact Sheila Lahan, 0161 419 9163.

28 May • **Wonderlands**: The UK Graphic Novel Expo. Cityspace centre, Chester Road, Sunderland. Free. See [www.wonderlands.org.uk](http://www.wonderlands.org.uk).

28-29 May • **Satellite 5**, Marriott Hotel, Glasgow. £55 reg; 12-17s £20; 5-11s £5; under-5s £2. Rates rise on 4 April. Contact c/o Flat 2/1, 691 Shields Rd, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 4QL. Membership forms and online registration at [satellite5.org.uk](http://satellite5.org.uk).

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. 'Early' tickets until 31 March £85; 5-15s £28.50; under-5s free. Book online at [ninemeworlds.co.uk](http://ninemeworlds.co.uk).

30 Oct • **Paperback & Pulp Fair**, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, Russell Sq, London, WC1H 0DG. Contact [harry.np@virgin.net](mailto:harry.np@virgin.net).

3-5 Feb 2017 • **Quoi de Neuf** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks

Tey, Colchester. GoH Cecilia Eng, Jackie Mitchell. £34 reg, £24 unwaged, rising to £36 and £25 on 1 April. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 20 Glynbridge Gardens, Cheltenham, GL51 0BZ. See [www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf](http://www.contabile.org.uk/quoideneuf); email [quoideneuf@hewett.org](mailto:quoideneuf@hewett.org).

**Rumblings.** *London First Thursdays*: another change of plan thanks to a double booking. 3 March will again be at the Inn of Court without exclusive use of the cellar bar. The move to The Bishop's Finger now begins with the 7 April meeting; see [news.ansible.uk/london.html](http://news.ansible.uk/london.html).

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others See Us.** 'Though there are extraterrestrials, *We Are the Ants* by Shaun David Hutchinson (*The Five Stages of Andrew Brawley*) isn't really a science fiction novel.' (Shelf Awareness, 19 February) [AIP] Like so much non-sf, it 'blends existential despair with exploding planets.'

**Awards.** *Crawford* (debut fantasy): Kai Ashante Wilson, *The Sorcerer of the Wildeeps*. • *Horror Writers Association Life Achievement*: Alan Moore and George A. Romero. • *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship*: Cristina Bacchilega. • *Jack Gaughan* (best new artist): Tommy Arnold. • *New York State Writers Hall of Fame*: 2016 inductees include Samuel R. Delany and Stephen Sondheim. • *Skylark Award*: Gardner Dozois.

**Apocalypse Soon.** Amazon's terms and conditions for its Lumberyard Materials games development tools forbid use with drones, medical equipment, nuclear facilities, manned spacecraft or live military combat, except as permitted by Clause 57.10: 'This restriction will not apply in the event of the occurrence (certified by the United States Centers for Disease Control or successor body) of a widespread viral infection transmitted via bites or contact with bodily fluids that causes human corpses to reanimate and seek to consume living human flesh, blood, brain or nerve tissue and is likely to result in the fall of organised civilisation.' (*Guardian*, 11 February)

**R.I.P.** *Bill Baldwin* (1935-2015), author of the eight-book 'Helmsman' space opera sequence opening with *The Helmsman* (1985), died in October 2015; he was 80. [JB] • *Robert Beecher* (1924-2016), US character actor and theatre builder seen in *Space Patrol* (1950-1955 tv, his first role), *Quantum Leap* (1990), *Phantasm III* (1994) and *Thirst* (1998), died on 12 February aged 91. [PDF] • *Umberto Eco*, Italian author and academic famed for his international bestseller *The Name of the Rose* (1980; filmed 1986), died on 19 February aged 84. The darkly comic tangle of conspiracy theories in *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988) edges into fantasy, and his children's story *The Three Astronauts* (1966) is sf. I love his work. • *Wayne England*, UK artist known for games-related illustrations—*D&D* books, *Magic: The Gathering* cards, Games Workshop products and *GW's* magazine *White Dwarf*—died on 9 February. [F770]

• *Anthony Fredrickson* (1953-2016), US scenic and graphic artist who worked on *Star Trek* productions and props from *The Next Generation* onward, died on 15 February; he was 62. With Doug Drexler he illustrated the *Star Fleet Medical Reference Manual* (1977). [F770] • *P.D. Angel Gabriele* (1956-2016), US comics artist and publisher who worked on DC's *Kobra* and published a comics adaptation of the manga-based tv animation *The Space Giants*, died in late February aged 59. [PDF] • *Kim Gamble*, Australian artist best known for illustrating the popular Tashi children's fantasies by Barbara and Anna Fienberg, died on 19 February aged 63. [AIP] • *Daniel Gerson* (1966-2016), US screenwriter who with Robert L. Baird co-scripted *Monsters, Inc.* (2001), *Monsters University* (2013), *Big Hero 6* (2014) and other Pixar/Disney animations, died on 6 February; he was 49. • *Michael Hanlon* (1964-2016), UK science journalist who wrote *The Science of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005), died on 9 February aged 51. (*Independent*, 27 February) • *Bayard Johnson*, US screenwriter and producer who co-scripted *The Second Jungle Book* (1997) and *Tarzan and the Lost City* (1998), died on 10 February aged 63. [PDF] • *Mark Justice* (1959-2016), US sf/horror author and radio host who wrote the zombie-apocalypse 'Dead Earth' trilogy (2007-2013) with David T. Wilbanks, died on 10 February. A solo novel is *The Dead Sheriff: Zombie Damnation* (2012). [BK] • *David J. Lake* (1929-2016), Indian-born UK author and academic, in



Australia from 1967, whose distinguished sf career began with *Walkers on the Sky* (1976)—which like his Wellsian tales *The Man Who Loved Morlocks* (1981) and ‘The Truth about Weena’ (*Dreaming Down Under*, 1998) won a Ditmar Award—died on 31 January; he was 86. [BRG] ● **Tony Luke** (1970-2016), UK comics/anime and animation creator who drew *Dominator* for *Metal Hammer* (1988; film versions from 2003) and produced the animated feature *Archangel Thunderbird* (SyFy UK 1998), died on 18 February after long illness. [JC] ● **Nigel McDowell**, Northern Irish author of the children’s fantasies *Tall Tales from Pitch End* (2013) and *The Black North* (2014), died on 7 February; he was only 34. A third novel awaits publication. [AIP] ● **Angelos Mastorakis** (1949-2016), Greek sf editor who founded the magazine *Nova* in 1978 and was chief editor of *Ennea* 2000-2010—publishing both translated international and new Greek sf and comics—died on 10 February. He was a co-founder and President of the Greek SF Society. [SP] ● **Chiaki Morosawa** (1959-2016), Japanese anime screenwriter who supervised and scripted the *Mobile Suit Gundam Seed* tv series plus its sequel and related film compilations, died on 19 February aged 56. [PDF] ● **Jake Page** (1936-2016), US *Smithsonian* magazine editor and author (mostly of non-fiction) whose four fantastic novels include the alternate-history titles *Operation: Shatterhand* (1996) and *Apacheria* (1998), died on 10 February aged 80. [MMW] ● **Jon Rollason** (1931-2016), UK tv actor seen in *The Avengers* (1962) and *Doctor Who* ‘The Web of Fear’ (1968), died on 20 February aged 84. [PDF] ● **Chris Rush** (1965-2016), US artist who illustrated more than 100 *Magic: The Gathering* cards including the famously rare and expensive Black Lotus, died on 10 February. [io9] ● **Douglas Slocombe** (1913-2016), UK cinematographer whose credits include *The Man in the White Suit* (1951), *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967), *Rollerball* (1975) and the first three Indiana Jones films, died on 22 February; he was 103. [PDF] ● **Murray Tinkelman** (1933-2016), US artist and academic who painted some 40 covers for genre books (mostly in the 1970s, including several John Brunner and Robert Silverberg paperbacks) and was honoured by the Society of Illustrators and various other non-genre organizations, died on 30 January aged 82. [AIP] ● **Bud Webster** (1952-2016), US author, sf critic/historian, book dealer, poetry editor of the late *Helix SF* and SFWA Estates liaison, whose most substantial works are the nonfiction collections *Anthopology 101* (2010, on genre anthologies) and *Past Masters* (2013), died on 13 February; he was 63. [PDF] ● **Andrzej Zulawski** (1940-2016), controversial Polish film director and writer whose surreal-horrific approach was applied to symbolic fantasy in *Possession* (1981) and to sf in *On the Silver Globe* (1988, based on sf by his great-uncle Jerzy Zulawski), died on 17 February aged 75. [AIP]

**The Weakest Link.** *John Pantry*: ‘Name a character in the Bible beginning with G.’ *Contestant*: ‘Gandalf.’ (Premier Christian Radio, *Breakfast Show*) [PE]

**Court Circular.** Sherrilyn Kenyon, author of the Dark Hunter urban fantasies, is suing Cassandra Clare over the latter’s Shadowhunter series, allegedly too similar and increasingly tending to imitate the DH ambience: ‘Both the Dark Hunter series and the Shadowhunter series are about an elite band of warriors that must protect the human world from the unseen paranormal threat that seeks to destroy humans as they go about their daily lives.’ What an utterly novel concept. (*The Bookseller*, 9 February) It seems that Clare (as Claire) has past form in the world of Harry Potter fan fiction, as recorded at tedious length at fanlore.org/wiki/The\_Cassandra\_Clare\_Plagiarism\_Debacle. But the general resemblances now cited hardly add up to a copyright case.

**Proleptic Dept.** Recent *Publishers Weekly* headline: ‘LAST OCTOBER, PW VISITED THE LATE UMBERTO ECO AT HIS MILAN APARTMENT’. [PDF]

**Publishers and Sinners.** Samhain Publishing announced on 26 February that it will ‘soon’ cease operations. (*RT Book Reviews*)

**As Others See Us II.** Hank Stuever, tv critic, notes a possible downside to the new sf series *Colony*—if only for some of us: ‘... what’s also immediately apparent is a care for setting and character-building. “Colony” probably won’t work for the passionate sci-fi fan who demands the blueprints up front, but it might appeal to those who generally avoid the genre.’ (*Washington Post*, 13 January) [SM]

**Awards Shortlists.** BSFA: NOVEL Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Chris Beckett, *Mother of Eden*; Aliette de Bodard, *The House of Shattered Wings*; Ian McDonald, *Luna: New Moon*; Justina Robson: *Glorious Angels*. SHORT Aliette de Bodard ‘Three Cups of Grief, by Starlight’ (*Clarkesworld* 100); Paul Cornell, ‘Witches of Lychford’ (Tor.com); Jeff Noon, ‘No Rez’ (*Interzone* 260); Nnedi Okorafor, ‘Binti’ (Tor.com); Gareth L. Powell: ‘Ride the Blue Horse’ (*Matter*). NONFICTION Nina Allan: ‘Time Pieces: Doctor Change or Doctor Die’ (*IZ* 261); Alisa

Krasnostein and Alexandra Pierce, eds, *Letters to Tiptree*; Jonathan McCalmont: ‘What Price Your Critical Agency’ (*Ruthless Culture*); Adam Roberts, *Rave and Let Die*; Jeff Vandermeer: ‘From Annihilation to Acceptance: A Writer’s Surreal Journey’, (*Atlantic* 1/15). ARTWORK Jim Burns, cover, *Pelquin’s Comet* (Newcon Press); Vincent Sammy, ‘Songbird’ (*IZ* 257); Sarah Anne Langton, cover, *Jews Versus Zombies* (Jurassic London). ● **Kitschies** novels: Margaret Atwood, *The Heart Goes Last*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe at Midnight*; Hugo Wilcken, *The Reflection*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Adam Roberts, *The Thing Itself*. DEBUT Sara Taylor, *The Shore*; A. Igoni Barrett, *Blackass*; Kirsty Logan, *The Gracekeepers*; Paul Meloy, *The Night Clock*; Tade Thompson, *Making Wolf*. See www.thekitschies.com for more. ● **Nebula** novels: Charles E. Gannon, *Raising Caine*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*; Ann Leckie, *Ancillary Mercy*; Ken Liu, *The Grace of Kings*; Naomi Novik, *Uprooted*; Lawrence M. Schoen, *Barsk: The Elephants’ Graveyard*; Fran Wilde, *Updraft*. YA (Andre Norton Award): Tina Connolly, *Seriously Wicked*; Kate Elliott, *Court of Fives*; Frances Hardinge, *Cuckoo Song*; Nicole Kornher-Stace, *Archivist Wasp*; Fonda Lee, *Zeroboxer*; Daniel José Older, *Shadowshaper*; Laura Ruby, *Bone Gap*; Noelle Stevenson, *Nimona*; Fran Wilde, *Updraft*. More at www.sfwaworld.com/2016/02/2015-nebula-awards-nominees-announced/. ● **Stoker** novels: Clive Barker, *The Scarlet Gospels*; Michael Brent Collings, *The Deep*; JG Faherty, *The Cure*; Patrick Freivald, *Black Tide*; Paul Tremblay, *A Head Full of Ghosts*; DEBUT Courtney Alameda, *Shutter*; Nicole Cushing, *Mr. Suicide*; Brian Kirk, *We Are Monsters*; John McIlveen, *Hannahwhere*; John Claude Smith, *Riding the Centipede*. YA Jennifer Brozek, *Never Let Me Sleep*; Michael Brent Collings, *The Ridealong*; John Dixon, *Devil’s Pocket*; Tonya Hurley, *Hallowed*; Maureen Johnson, *The Shadow Cabinet*; Ian Welke, *End Times at Ridgmont High*. More at stokercon2016.horror.org/?page\_id=30.

**Magazine Scene.** *Cosmos*, the Australian popular-science magazine that regularly ran short sf stories, has downsized its editorial team; victims, alas, include the fiction editor Cat Sparks. [DB]

**The Dead Past.** 70 Years Ago: ‘Hugo Gernsback issued in Jan. 36-page slick-paper 5x7 mag. called “Tame” in parody of “Time”. Dated Xmas 2045 the issue was devoted to a revue of the first 100 years of the atomic age; four-colour cover shows bald-headed stenographer writing letter with “mindwriter” machine; 29 interior pictures of people and things of 2045—actress with hair being publicized throw-back because all normal people are “baldies”; advertisements in tune with rest of mag....’ (*British Fantasy Society Bulletin* 25, March 1946) ● 40 Years Ago: ‘Those fans who read the British editions of Marvel Comics may be seeing artwork by a well known fanartist and not even realise it. Steve Stiles, American fanartist and former TAFF winner, is currently working for Marvel’s British comics. [... But] he does not get any credits.’ (*Checkpoint* 66, March 1976) ● 20 Years Ago, Ursula K. Le Guin wrote: ‘Tell me what I can send in exchange for *Ansible*. In Oregon we grow many large fir trees; also we have fish.’ (*Ansible* 104, March 1996)

**Fanfandery.** TAFF: your final reminder for 2016. Anna Raftery and Wolf von Witting are still contending for the westbound trip to Mid-Americon II in Kansas City this August. The voting deadline is 29 March 2016. See taff.org.uk for more; vote online at tafftrip.com/taff-ballot-2016/. ● DUFF opened nominations for its 2016 race (northbound from Australasia to Mid-Americon II) after the February *Ansible*, and they close today; the ballot is awaited at downunderfanfund.wordpress.com.

**Media Awards.** BAFTAs and Oscars: best animated film was *Inside Out*. ● Razzies, Worst Film (tie): *Fantastic Four* and *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

**Thog’s Masterclass.** Dept of Arresting Opening Lines. ‘The sun peeked over the horizon like the head of a giant radioactive manatee.’ (Brandon Sanderson, *Calamity*, 2016) [DG] ● *Synaesthesia* Dept. ‘Everything she did was for his benefit, but Tom couldn’t see it; he was dumb to her games.’ (Elizabeth Brundage, *A Stranger Like You*, 2010) [PB] ● *Eyeballs in the Sky*. ‘His eyes fixed like grappling hooks on Aari’s face ...’ (Rachel Pollack, *Golden Vanity*, 1980) ● *Exotic Future Profanity Dept* (*Grindhouse Division*). ‘That pair of toad droppings are trying to kill my ass!’ ‘Oh, bloody monkey-grinding CRAP!’ ‘What the bleep does it matter to a mother-grinding bear what I’m wearing!’ ‘Crapping mother-grinding lobsters!’ ‘What a monkey bleeping dry-dock you are!’ ‘Okay, you piece of monkey crap. You are under lobster-grinding arrest.’ (all Carleton Grindle, ‘Star Guard’, Fall 2010 *Startling Stories*) [DL]

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