

Ansible



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Ebookery Continued. The traditional Langford backlist release for May was my hefty retrospective collection *Different Kinds of Darkness*, with six stories added since the 2004 print edition. Click without thinking: ae.ansible.uk/?t=dkod. To vary the relentless hard sell I've also prepared some free ebooks for download at taff.org.uk/ebooks.php. These include four past TAFF trip reports—one of them my own—a couple of old fan classics, and Rob Hansen's massive *THEN. A History of UK Fandom 1930-1980* (with supplements taking the story to 1987).

The Total Library

Margaret Atwood is the first of 100 contributors to 'Future Library' (created by artist Katie Paterson), which will collect one unpublished MS a year and print them all in 2114 to coincide with *The Last Dangerous Visions*. Until then, fandom will be on tenterhooks as to whether the Atwood story contains talking squid in outer space. (BBC, 26 May)

Simon Pegg expressed cautious second thoughts about current superhero film blockbuster: 'Obviously I'm very much a self-confessed fan of science-fiction and genre cinema. But part of me looks at society as it is now and thinks we've been infantilised by our own taste. We're essentially all consuming very childish things—comic books, superheroes. Adults are watching this stuff, and taking it seriously! / It is a kind of dumbing down because it's taking our focus away from real-world issues. Films used to be about challenging, emotional journeys. Now we're really not thinking about anything, other than the fact that the Hulk just had a fight with a robot.' (*Independent*, 18 May) [MPU]

Cat Rambo has been elected as the latest President of SFWA.

John Scalzi's \$3.4 million deal with Tor, for 13 books to be written over ten years (*Washington Post*, 28 May), caused much comment online. Various puppy-aligned pundits—see A334—indicated that this was a terrible calamity, signalling the imminent End Times for both author and publisher; Vox Day deplored Scalzi's failure to take the wiser course of self-publishing. Others, incredible though it may seem, disagreed.

Convoluta

4 Jun • **London First Thursday** pub meeting upstairs at The Castle, 34-35 Cowcross St, London, EC1M 6DB, from 6pm. Temporary move during Melton Mowbray refurbishment: back to that pub in July. Its name is being refurbished too, changing to the Inn of Court [RR]

4 Jun • **Sci-Fi and the Future** (Cheltenham Festival sf panel), Winton Crucible, Cheltenham. 8-9pm. £10. See tinyurl.com/nbeb313.

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

5 Jun • **Double the Horror** (Derby Book Festival), QUAD, Derby. 7:30pm-9pm. Tickets £10. See www.derbybookfestival.co.uk/whats-on

6 Jun • **BSEFA/SF Foundation AGM** event, Lecture Theatre 1, Blackett Laboratory Building, Imperial College, London. With Brian Aldiss, Pat Cadigan, others. 10am-5pm. Free admission. All welcome.

19 Jun • **Asian Dub Foundation: THX 1138** (rescored), Barbican, London. See barbican.org.uk/music/event-detail.asp?ID=17911

19-20 Jun • **Space Spectacular** (sf-themed concert), Royal Albert Hall, London. 7:30pm; also 2:30pm Saturday. See tinyurl.com/os98nx2

24 Jun • **BSEFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1V 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Sarah Pinborough. Free.

4 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX. See www.tolkien-society.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2015/.

7-8 Jul 2015 • **Locating Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. Free. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com.

11 Jul • **Edge-Lit 4**, Cinema One, QUAD Centre, Derby. Tickets £30. Book online at www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/edge-lit-4.

23-25 Oct • **Fantasycon**, East Midlands Conference Centre & Orchard Hotel, Nottingham. £65 reg; couples £110; under-16s £30; under-5s free. *Rates rise 1 July*. See fantasycon2015.org.

4-5 July 2016 • **Global Fantastika** (conference), Lancaster University. See fantastikaconference.wordpress.com as above.

26-29 Aug 2016 • **Discworld Convention**, Chesford Grange Hotel

Warwick. £64 reg; £49 concessions; £30 supp. Registration opened 4 May: 'Due to unprecedented demand, on Friday evening, just 4 days, 8 hours and 57 minutes from opening membership sales, we appear to have sold out! Amazing.' (8 May) See dwcon.org for waiting list.

Rumblings. 2015 Hugo Voting continues at sasquan.org/hugo-awards/voting/ until 31 July. Your Sasquan membership number and PIN are required to vote online; likewise to get the Hugo Voter Packet of nominated works at sasquan.org/hugo-awards/packet_download/. Coverage is incomplete, largely owing to publishers' preferences; for example, Best Novel has the whole of *The Dark Between the Stars*, *The Goblin Emperor* and *The Three-Body Problem* (all in Epub, Mobi and PDF format), but PDF extracts only from *Ancillary Sword* and *Skin Game*.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others See Us. The *New Statesman's* Rachel Cooke was swift to spot the damning flaw in the BBC's *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*: the acting may be fine but it's 'aimed, it seems to me, at a generation brought up on Harry Potter and still feebly in mourning for it. I mean, there are CGI talking statues, for heaven's sake.' (21 May) Christopher Stevens at the *Daily Mail* was horrified that it 'is not Poldark / There were no damsels with heaving bosoms, for a start. In fact, almost the only female under the age of 40 was lying on a couch, coughing herself to death with consumption.' Which leads with inexorable geometric logic to: '... this mishmash of folklore and historical fantasy is revealed for what it really is—a J. K. Rowling rip-off.' (18 May) Oh dearie me: Susanna Clarke began writing her novel several years before Potter.

Awards. *Arthur C. Clarke*: Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*. • *Compton Crook* (first novel) Alexandra Duncan, *Salvage* (2014). • *Bram Stoker* (horror) novel winner: Steve Rasnic Tem, *Blood Kin*.

Science Corner. Mere speculation, but just suppose: 'The only method of transmutation known to modern science is by radiation bombardment. The high-energy particles required are deadly to an unshielded operator. Only by the wildest stretch of imagination is it possible to suspect that some ancient alchemist found a natural radioactive energy source by accident, that he used it for transmutation and that he passed the secret to the Cathars (great healers who might have attended the dying alchemist) ...' (Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe, *The Holy Grail Revealed: The Real Secret of Rennes-le-Château*, 1982) [BA]

R.I.P. Richard L. Bare (1913-2015) US director and screenwriter who directed seven *Twilight Zone* segments including 'To Serve Man' (1962), died on 28 March; he was 101. [AIP] • **William Bast** (1931-2015), Edgar-winning US screenwriter whose script credits include *The Outer Limits* (1964), *The Valley of Gwangi* (1969), *Ghost Story* (1972 segment) and *The Big One: The Great Los Angeles Earthquake* (1990), died on 4 May; he was 84. [PDF] • **Marcia Brown** (1918-2015), US Caldecott Medal-winning children's author and illustrator whose picture books often retold fairy tales as in *Cinderella* (1954), died on 28 April aged 96. [AIP] • **Moyna Caldecott** (Olivia Brown Caldecott, 1927-2015), South-African-born UK author of many children's and YA fantasies—the best known being the sequence beginning with and named for *The Tall Stones* (1977)—died on 23 May; she was 87. [MF] • **Yvonne 'Vonnice' Carts-Powell** (1966-2015), US fan, reviewer and science writer whose *The Science of Heroes* (2008) examined the tv series *Heroes*, died on 22 May. [SFS] • **Joël Champetier** (1957-2015), French-Canadian author and editor (with *Solaris* magazine) whose first adult sf novel was *La taupe et le dragon* (1991; trans 1999 as *The Dragon's Eye*), died on 30 May aged 57. [GVG] • **Robert Foshko**, US tv producer involved with episodes of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, who wrote for the *Flash Gordon* comic and the tv series *Tales of Tomorrow* (1951) and *The Unforeseen* (1960), died on 3 May aged 85. [AL] • **Masayuki Imai** (1961-2015), Japanese actor/writer who wrote and starred in the timeslip film *Winds of God* (1995, based on his own earlier stage play)—additionally directing its remake *The Winds of God: Kamikaze* (2006)—died on 28 May aged 54. [PDF] • **Tanith Lee** (1947-2015), distinguished and prolific UK author of more than 100 fantasy, children's fantasy, horror and sf

novels and collections since 1971, died on 24 May; she was 67. Her honours include the British Fantasy Award for *Death's Master* (1979), and three life-achievement accolades: World Horror (2009), World Fantasy (2013) and Bram Stoker (2015). Her talent was amazingly diverse. Many heartfelt tributes have already appeared. ● **Chuck Miller** (1952-2015), US publisher, editor and author best known for the small press Underwood-Miller Inc (1976-1994 with Tim Underwood) which published Jack Vance and the collected stories of Philip K. Dick, died on 24 May aged 62. [PDF] He also coedited various U-M anthologies of Stephen King criticism. ● **Betsy Palmer** (1926-2015), US actress who starred in horror films including *Friday the 13th* (1980) and *Bell Witch* (2007), died on 29 May aged 88. [PDF] ● **Robert Riety** (1923-2015), UK voice and character actor whose credits include *Blood Beast from Outer Space* (1965), *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad* (1973), *Space: 1999* (1975-1976), *The Omen* (1976) and various James Bond films, died on 3 April; he was 92. [MMW] ● **Jannick Storm** (Finn Jannick Storm Jørgensen, 1939-2015), Danish author, critic, editor and translator (of Ballard, Dick and others) who did much to establish the sf genre in Denmark, died on 9 May aged 76. Three collections of his stories appeared; his 1970s sf novel *Hjertet er trumf* [*Hearts are Trumps*], though unpublished until 1995, became a major 1976 film. [J-HH] ● **Doris Elaine Sauter**, friend of Philip K. Dick who co-edited *What If Our World Is Their Heaven? The Final Conversations of Philip K. Dick* (2000), died on 25 May aged 63. Her memoir of Dick remains unpublished. [GVG] ● **John Stephenson** (1923-2015), US voice actor whose genre credits include *Charlotte's Web* (1973), *The Hobbit* (1977) and many tv series (*Flinstones*, *Galaxy High School*, *Jasons*, *Transformers*, *Scoby-Doo*, *Superman* etc), died on 15 May aged 91. [SFS] ● **Nigel Terry** (1945-2015), UK actor best known as King Arthur in *Excalibur* (1981), died on 30 April aged 69. Other genre credits include *FearDotcom* (2002) and *Doctor Who* (2008). [MPJ] ● **Norman Thaddeus Vane** (1928-2015), US writer/director who co-wrote *Shadow of the Hawk* (1976) and wrote and directed *Frightmare* (1983), died on 2 May aged 86. His *Exorcist*-like horror novel is *The Exorcism of Angela Gray* (1974). [PDF] ● **Grace Lee Whitney** (1930-2015), who played Yeoman *Jeanice Rand* in the 1960s *Star Trek* and reappeared in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* (1979) and other film spinoffs, died on 1 May; she was 85. [DKMK]

The Weakest Link. This author described a Utopian republic in his 1966 novel *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*. Contestant: 'Who is H.P. Lovecraft?' (*Jeopardy*, 7 May) [BFA/FP] ● **Dale Winton:** 'Who created the characters Tweedledum and Tweedledee? Was it J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis Carroll or Dr Seuss?' Contestant: 'Well it's not Lewis Carroll. He wrote *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*.' (BBC1, *In it to Win It*) [PE]

Count Circular. Sherlock Holmes may be mostly in the public domain, but the Doyle estate is suing Miramax over its coming film *Mr Holmes*. This shows Holmes in later life, as in some late stories where copyright is still a live issue. (*Hollywood Reporter*, 22 May) [DKMK] Thus marginal matters, like Holmes living in a lonely Sussex Downs farmhouse in sight of chalk cliffs, are sternly invoked as 'protected elements'.

Outraged Letters. *Rog Peyton:* 'So the news about K.J. Parker being Tom Holt is finally out. When Tom died at signing at Andromeda shortly after the second Parker book he let me into his secret but made me swear not to reveal it. He signed all the stock we had of the Parker books (as K.J. Parker) and when I listed them in the catalogue I stated that she had popped into the shop as she had relatives in Birmingham. I think I even said 'I'd learned that the K stood for Katherine. Yes, 'twas I who started the "female" story—I can now own up to my little fib. Sorry folks.' ● *Triffid Alley.* One comment on the unveiling of this London plaque (see A334): '... to be complete, they should have incorporated a blurb in braille.' ('Lord Blood', Twitter, 26 May) [BB] ● *Lisa Tuttle* felt this legend should read DANGER: HEAVY PLANT CROSSING.

Awards Shortlists, novels only. *John W. Campbell Memorial Award:* Nina Allan, *The Race*; James L. Cambias, *A Darkling Sea*; William Gibson, *The Peripheral*; Daryl Gregory, *Afterparty*; Dave Hutchinson, *Europe in Autumn*; Simon Ings, *Wolves*; Cixin Liu (trans Ken Liu), *The Three-Body Problem*; Emily St. John Mandel, *Station Eleven*; Will McIntosh, *Defenders*; Claire North, *The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*; Laine Paull, *The Bees*; Adam Roberts, *Bête*; John Scalzi, *Lock In*; Andy Weir, *The Martian*; Jeff VanderMeer, *Area X* (The Southern Reach Trilogy); *Annihilation*, *Authority*, *Acceptance*; Peter Watts, *Echopraxia*. ● *Locus:* SF *The Peripheral*, William Gibson; *Ancillary Sword*, Ann Leckie; *The Three-Body Problem*, Cixin Liu; *Lock In*, John Scalzi; *Annihilation/Authority/Acceptance*, Jeff VanderMeer. FANTASY *The Goblin Emperor*, Katherine Addison; *Steels of the Sky*, Elizabeth Bear; *City of Stairs*, Robert Jackson Bennett; *The Magician's Land*, Lev Grossman; *The*

Mirror Empire, Kameron Hurley. YA *Half a King*, Joe Abercrombie; *The Doubt Factory*, Paolo Bacigalupi; *Waistcoats & Weaponry*, Gail Carriger, *Empress of the Sun*, Ian McDonald; *Clariel*, Garth Nix. ● *Shirley Jackson* (suspense): *Annihilation*, Jeff VanderMeer; *Bird Box*, Josh Malerman; *Broken Monsters*, Lauren Beukes; *Confessions*, Kanae Minato; *The Lesser Dead*, Christopher Buehlman; *The Unquiet House*, Alison Littlewood. ● *Scribe* (media ties): ORIGINAL, *SPECULATIVE Sleepy Hollow: Children of the Revolution* by Keith R. A. DeCandido; GRIMM: *Chopping Block* by John Passarella; *Star Trek: Disavowed* by David Mack; *Star Trek: Foul Deeds Will Rise* by Greg Cox; GRIMM: *The Killing Time* by Tim Waggoner; *Pathfinder: The Redemption Engine* by James Sutter; *Fringe: Sins of the Father* by Christa Faust. ADAPTED, GENERAL/SPECULATIVE *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* by Alex Irvine; *Noah* by Mark Morris; *War of the Worlds: Goliath* by Adam Whitlach. YOUNG ADULT, ALL *Spirit Animals: Blood Ties* by Garth Nix & Sean Williams; *Battletech: The Nellus Academy Incident* by Jennifer Brozak; *Penguins of Madagascar* by Tracey West.

In Typo Veritas. A *Guardian* article explained a right-wing US blog title as homage to the revered Ayn Rand: 'Atlas Shurges.' (4 May) [MM] **Random Fandom.** *File 770* has proudly adopted a new motto on its website masthead: "... the 770 blog, that wretched hive of scum and villainy ..."—John C. Wright. Another satisfied customer! Mike Glycer is still running daily roundups of commentary on current Hugo ructions at file770.com; rather him than me. ● *Making Light* (Public Enemy #2 in the Sad/Rabid Puppy pantheon, after John Scalzi at #1) hosted much constructive discussion of how the Hugo nominations process can be made more resistant to slate voting—regardless of any slate's politics—and came up with what has been nicknamed 'E Pluribus Hugo'. This, a truly remarkable system which this *Ansible* is too small to contain, will be proposed at the Sasquan WSFS Business Meeting. Read all about it at nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/archives/016262.html.

The Dead Past. 70 Years Ago, a familiar exhortation from a fore-runner of the BSFA: 'Whatever fan activity you wish to indulge in the BFS will give you every aid in its power, but if you do not wish to do anything then we cannot help you.' (*British Fantasy Society Bulletin* 22, June 1945) ● 50 Years Ago, an appeal to a familiar market segment: 'TAFF delegate Terry Carr is editing Doubleday's *Science Fiction for People who Hate Science Fiction*.' (*Skyrack* 80, June 1965) ● 30 Years Ago, a note on editorial policy: "'A Zine is classed as a terror weapon. It rends and distorts, twisting the structure of the target completely out of shape.'" (Philip E. High: *Come, Hunt An Earthman*.) (*Ansible* 43, May/June 1985) ● 20 Years Ago: 'The 8th Earl of Clancarty, famous for UFO books under the byline Brinsley Le Poer Trench (his actual name, minus an initial 'William Francis'), died in May aged 83. Perhaps his finest hour was the 1979 House of Lords UFO debate, whose transcript in *Hansard* sold out on the following day...' (*Ansible* 95, June 1995)

What I Missed. Ursula K. Le Guin posted a follow-up to her A333-cited *Bookview* comment reproof of Kazuo Ishiguro, apologizing for 'my evidently over-hasty response' (10 March). 'Many sites on the Internet were quick to pick up my blog post, describing it as an "attack", a "slam", etc. They were hot on the scent for blood, hoping for a feud. I wonder how many will pick up this one?' Oops. Well, eventually...

Thog's Masterclass. *Out-of-Context Entendre.* 'Dinah didn't mention the other reason, which was that the biggest part of Sean's package was so screamingly radioactive that it couldn't be allowed anywhere near Izzy.' (Neal Stephenson, *Seveneves*, 2015) [JC] ● *Dept of X-Ray Vision.* 'Not for the first time, a cold fist appeared deep within her stomach.' (Becky Chambers, *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet*, 2014) ● *Tone of Voice Dept.* "'Just for one, Miss?' the waitress asked in a long black-skirted uniform.'" (Fiona McIntosh, *The Last Dance*, 2015) [VR] ● *Neat Tricks.* '... having spent a sleepless night, filled with uncomfortable dreams ...' (Priscilla Masters, *Slipknot*, 2007) [PB] ● *Dept of Synaesthesia.* 'I heard Learner then, a noise so soft and invisible it wouldn't mean anything unless you knew what it was.' (John Burnham Schwartz, *Reservation Road*, 1998) [PB] ● *Feminist Sympathy Dept.* 'Connie had a wry, compact intelligence, a firm little clitoris of discernment and sensitivity ...' (Jonathan Franzen, *Freedom*, 2010) [J] ● *Dept of Extreme Etiquette.* 'But one does not scream with a beer barrel tap inserted deep into one's jugular vein ...' (Jack Oleck, *The Vault of Horror*, 1973) [BA]

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