

# ansible



## Ansible 343 February 2016

From Davd 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 Stefan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE, aposiderium, idemtion or ondinium.

### The Pain of the Goat

**Gerry Anderson** may yet be honoured with blue plaques at his early home (or at least its general location; the house is long gone) and school in Kilburn, London, if the Historic Kilburn Plaque Scheme can raise the needed £2,500. (*Brent & Kilburn Times*, 21 January) [AH]

**Theodore Beale** and his 'Rabid Puppy' cronies decided it would be fun to game the Goodreads.com review ratings by organized bloc-voting, as with 2015 Hugo nominations. This rules violation very soon came to light: Beale and others were banned from Goodreads. [F770]

**Neil Clarke** is the new editor of the *SFWA Bulletin*. [PDF]

**Joseph Green** revealed his hitherto secret pseudonym, used since 1989 for stories in *Analog*, *F&SF* and elsewhere: Francis Marion Soty.

**Rob Latham**, noted of critic, was fired from his position as a supposedly tenured Professor of English at University of California Riverside. This 'incredibly rare step' (*Academe Blog*, 26 January) ignored the recommendation of UCR's Faculty Senate and is, Latham believes, driven by 'driven by political pressures, homophobic bias, and administrative hostility'. A civil-court case against UCR is to follow.

**Steven Moffat** is stepping down from *Doctor Who* after season 10, Spring 2017. 'At the start of season 11, Chris Chibnall will become the new showrunner of Doctor Who. And I will be thrown in a skip.' (*Ars Technica UK*, 25 January) Peter Capaldi is leaving at the same time.

**Terry Pratchett** will also have a blue plaque, in his birthplace of Beaconsfield—if the town council can win approval from the gods of Cori Celesti, i.e. Bucks County Council. (*Bucks Free Press*, 22 January)

**Lois Tilton**, long-time reviewer of short fiction for *Locus Online* with 205 columns, announced her resignation in January because 'Without consulting or informing me, they had begun deleting material they considered negative from my reviews.' Liza Groen Trombi of *Locus* responded that there was a new policy of 'folding the online columns in to the existing *Locus* editorial stream and applying the same standard to online reviews as the magazine. The offending edit was of the latest-written column, withdrawn by Tilton and so unpublished. [F770]

### Conichalcite

Until 24 Feb • **Ionawr**: Rodney Matthews exhibition, Bishop's Palace, Wells, Somerset, BA5 2PD. 10am-4pm; closed Mon/Tue until 10 February. See [www.bishopspalace.org.uk/rodney-matthews-ionawr](http://www.bishopspalace.org.uk/rodney-matthews-ionawr).

Until 17 Apr • **Alice in Wonderland** (exhibition), British Library, London. Free. See [www.bl.uk/events/alice-in-wonderland-exhibition](http://www.bl.uk/events/alice-in-wonderland-exhibition).

5-7 Feb • **Con2bil18** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. £37 reg/£27 unwaged; children (5-17) £1 per year of age; under-5s free. Cheques to UK Filk Convention, c/o 119 Whitehill Lane, Gravesend, DA12 5LU. Online booking: [con2bil8.wordpress.com](http://con2bil8.wordpress.com).

5-7 Feb • **SF Ball** (media), Grand Harbour Hotel, Southampton. £150 reg; child £75; other options. See [sfventures.com/sfball](http://sfventures.com/sfball).

20 Feb • **Picocon 33**, Imperial College Union, London. GoH Paul Cornell, Carrie Hope Fletcher, Michelle Payer. £12 reg; £10 concessions; £8 ICSF members; large-party discounts, past GOHs free. Contact ICSF, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London, SW7 2BB; [picocon.at/icsf.org.uk](http://picocon.at/icsf.org.uk).

24 Feb • **BSFA Open Meeting**, upstairs, The Reliance, 336 Old Street, London, EC1V 9DR. Note new venue; but these meetings may soon move again. 5/6pm for 7pm. With Gareth L. Powell. Free to all.

26 Feb • **Alice's Adventures in Comics-Land** (panel), British Library, London. With Paul Gravett, Chie Kutsuwada and Bryan Talbot. 6:30pm-8pm. £10 admission; £8 over-60s; £7 under-18s and other concessions. See [www.bl.uk/events/alices-adventures-in-comics-land](http://www.bl.uk/events/alices-adventures-in-comics-land).

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

3 Jul • **Tolkien Society Seminar**, Hilton Hotel, Leeds, LS1 4BX.

£20. See [www.tolkienociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016](http://www.tolkienociety.org/events/tolkien-society-seminar-2016).

6 Aug • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am-5pm. £8; children £4, under-5s free. See [www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk](http://www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk).

12-14 Aug • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia) venue revealed: Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London. Early tickets £85; child £28.50; rates rise 1 April. Book online at [ninemeworlds.co.uk](http://ninemeworlds.co.uk).

8-11 Sep • **Oxonmoot** (Tolkien Society), St Antony's College, Oxford. Cost TBA. See [www.tolkienociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2016/](http://www.tolkienociety.org/events/oxonmoot-2016/).

8 Oct • **Nor-Con 6** (tv/film/comics), Norfolk Showground Arena. 9:30am-6pm. Tickets £15 for 9:30 entry, £10 for £10:30 (under-15s £10 and £6) plus booking fees. See [www.nor-con.co.uk](http://www.nor-con.co.uk).

14-16 Oct • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. Guests TBA. €25 reg; concessions €20; accompanied under-12s free. Rates will rise through the year. Join online at [2016.octocon.com](http://2016.octocon.com).

24-26 Feb 2017 • **Redemption '17** (multimedia), Royal Victoria Hotel, Sheffield. Rates until 11 April: £55 reg, under-18s £25 (day £40 and £15); under-3s free; £15 supp. Contact 61 Chaucer Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8SP. See [www.redemption-convention.org.uk](http://www.redemption-convention.org.uk).

16-18 Jun 2017 • **U-Con** (Eurocon), Fritz-Henssler-Haus, Dortmund, Germany. €30 reg. See [www.dortmund-in-2017.com](http://www.dortmund-in-2017.com).

9-13 Aug 2017 • **Worldcon 75**, Helsinki, Finland. €95 reg (site selection voters €60), €80 youth (16-25), €55 child (6-15), €35 supp. Rates are to rise on 14 February 2016. See [www.worldcon.fi](http://www.worldcon.fi).

**Rumblings**. London First Thursdays: 4 February will be at the Inn of Court (formerly the Melton Mowbray) as usual, but without exclusive fannish use of the cellar bar, future gatherings from 3 March onward are moving to The Bishop's Finger; see [news.ansible.uk/london.html](http://news.ansible.uk/london.html). • *Hugo Nominations* are open (closing 31 March) to those with Hugo PINs, currently being emailed; they should all have been sent out by 5 February. See [midamericon2.org/the-hugo-awards/hugo-nominations/](http://midamericon2.org/the-hugo-awards/hugo-nominations/).

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others Evaluate Us**. Made in Chelsea star Lucy Watson expertly assesses the zombie threat in *The Walking Dead*: 'But it's not so far-fetched it could never happen.' (*Metro*, 5 January) [MH]

**Awards**. American Library Association YA. Michael L. Printz Award: Laura Ruby, *Bone Gap*. Margaret A. Edwards Award (life achievement): David Levithan. Alex Awards (adult with YA appeal): winners include Joe Abercrombie for *Half the World* and David Wong for *Futuristic Violence and Francis Suits*. [L] • *Costa Book of the Year*: Frances Hardinge, *The Lie Tree*. • Philip K. Dick Award shortlist: Brenda Cooper, *Edge of Dark*; Douglas Lain, *After the Sauces Landed*; P.J. Manney, *(R)evolution*; Ramez Naam, *Apex*; Adam Rakunas, *Windswept*; Marguerite Reed, *Archangel*. • *Prometheus* (libertarian), special life achievement award: L. Neil Smith. • *Richard Gangel Art Director Award*: Irene Gallo of Tor Books. • *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Kim Stanley Robinson.

**Language Lesson**. 'Google has fixed a bug in an online tool after it began translating "Russian Federation" to "Mordor."' (BBC, 7 January) This was apparently based on recent Ukrainian usage.

**R.I.P.** Paul Aratow, US film screenwriter, producer and director who co-wrote and directed *Doctor Dracula* (1978) and produced the comics-based *Sheena* (1984) and *The Spirit* (1987), died on 15 November aged 78. [SG] • **David Bowie** (1947-2016), renowned pop star and actor whose sf imagery in 'Space Oddity' (1969) and such albums as *Ziggy Stardust* and *The Spiders from Mars* (1972) and *Diamond Dogs* (1974) earned him an *SF Encyclopedia* entry, died from cancer on 10 January; he was 69. He memorably played the title role in *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976); further film appearances include *Labyrinth* (1986) and *The Prestige* (2006); he entered the SF Hall of Fame in 2013. • **Frank Finlay** (1926-2016), UK actor whose genre credits include *Target Luna* (1960), *Count Dracula* (1977) *The Thief of Baghdad* (1978), *A Christmas Carol* (1984), *Lifeforce* (1985) and *Johnny and the Bomb* (2006), died on 30 January; he was 89. • **Dan Haggerty** (1941-2016), US stunt man, animal trainer and actor best known for *The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams* (1974 film; tv series), whose genre credits include *Elves* (1989),

*Father Frost* (1996) and *Axe Giant: The Wrath of Paul Bunyan* (2013), died on 15 January aged 74. [AIP/MMW] • *Pat Harrington Jr.* (1929-2016), US actor whose many genre credits include *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1965-1967), *The President's Analyst* (1967), the animated TV *Aquamani* (1968-1969) and *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes* (1969), died on 6 January aged 86. [SFS] • *David G. Hartwell* (1941-2016), major US sf editor at Tor Books (formerly Signet, Berkley/Putnam, Gregg Press and Pocket/Simon & Schuster/Timescape) who received a great many Hugo nominations as Best Editor and won three times, died on 20 January; he was 74. Among many other achievements he was the publisher and a founding editor of *The New York Review of SF*, and won two World Fantasy Awards, one for his colossal horror anthology *The Dark Descent* (1987). Patrick Nielsen Hayden wrote at Making Light: 'It's like a mountain range is gone, or nitrogen, or a verb tense. We can't believe it. David. Goodbye.' Amen to that. • *Paul Kantner* (1941-2016), US musician who co-founded Jefferson Airplane—reformed as Jefferson Starship—and recorded the Hugo-nominated sf concept album *Blows Against the Empire* (1970), died on 28 January aged 74. His title song in *Crown of Creation* (1968) takes its lyrics from John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*. • *Jan Franzer 'Lemmy' Kilminster* (1945-2015), UK Motörhead musician formerly (1971-1975) with the space rock band Hawkwind—he was lead vocalist for their sf hit single 'Silver Machine' (1972)—died on 28 December aged 70. He also appeared in the film *Hardware* (1990). • *Oleksiy Logvynenko* (1946-2016), Ukrainian translator who translated (among others) Günter Grass, Hermann Hesse, Franz Kafka and H.G. Wells, died on 18 January aged 69. [PDF] • *Stanley Mann* (1928-2016), Canadian screenwriter who scripted *The Mouse That Roared* (1959), *Damien: Omen II* (1978), *Meteor* (1979), *Firestarter* (1984) and *Conan the Destroyer* (1984), died on 11 January aged 87. [PDF] • *David Margulies* (1937-2016), US character actor whose best-known genre role was as Mayor of New York in *Ghostbusters* (1984) and *Ghostbusters II* (1989), died on 11 January aged 78. • *Marvin Minsky* (1927-2016), much-honoured US computer scientist and pioneer of artificial intelligence, who advised Stanley Kubrick on AI possibilities for *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), died on 24 January aged 88. [AIP] He co-wrote the sf thriller *The Turing Option* (1992) with Harry Harrison. • *A.R. Morlan* (1958-2016), US author of many sf and horror stories since 1985 (assembled in nine collections), whose first novel was *The Amulet* (1991), committed suicide on 6 January; she was 58. [BD] • *Joe Raftery*, UK folk singer and folk concert organizer, reportedly died on 29 January. [SFS] • *Alan Rickman* (1946-2016), Golden Globe-winning UK actor whose genre credits include *Truly Madly Deeply* (1999), *Galaxy Quest* (1999; 'By Grabthar's hammer...'), *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (2005, voicing Marvin) and the role of Severus Snape in all the Harry Potter films, died on 14 January aged 69. • *Jack Robins* (1919-2015), original US member of First Fandom (entering its Hall of Fame in 2012) and the Futurians, whose fanzines were the late-1930s *The Scientific Thinker* and the early-1940s *Looking Ahead*, died on 23 December aged 95. [F770] • *Angus Scrimm* (1926-2016), US actor best known for his horror role *The Tall Man in Phantasm* (1979) and its sequels, died on 9 January aged 89. Other credits include *Subspecies* (1991), *Automatons* (2006) and *Satan Hates You* (2010). • *Robert Banks Stewart* (1931-2016), Scots TV scriptwriter who wrote episodes of *The Avengers* (1965, 1966) and two *Doctor Who* serials—"Terror of the Zygons" (1975) and "The Seeds of Doom" (1976)—died on 15 January aged 84. [GW] • *Michel Tournier* (1924-2016), French screenwriter and Prix Goncourt-winning author whose novels were myth-based and/or dense with mythological allusion and resonance (see his *SF Encyclopedia* entry), died on 18 January; he was 91. [GF] • *Abe Vigoda* (1921-2016), US character actor whose genre credits included *Dark Shadows* (1969-1970), *Fantasy Island* (1979) and *Batman: Mask of the Phantasm* (1993 voice), died on 26 January; he was 94. [MMW]

**The Weakest Link.** *Jeopardy host, as a black-and-white photograph of H.G. Wells is shown:* "This author saw many of the 20th century's inventions [?] become true before anyone else." *Contestant:* "Who is Arthur C. Clarke?" (*Jeopardy*, 5 January) [AIP] • *Gabby Logan:* "Charles Babbage is best known for inventing an early version of what? *Contestant:* "The Hobbit." (BBC1, *The Edge*) [PE]

**The Great Hwauk.** There is now an official UK chapter of the Horror Writers of America, whose website can be found at [hwauk.org](http://hwauk.org).

**Outraged Letters.** *Simon R. Green* remembers: 'So, Lemmy's gone, and Bowie, and Alan Rickman. It's not just that people I admire keep dying, it's that they're all so close to my age... I wrote the novelization of *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*, and I can tell you that Alan Rickman's Sheriff of Nottingham came mostly from him, not the script. Mind you,

there was a lot in that film that wasn't in the script I saw, and vice versa. I can remember seeing the film in the cinema for the first time, and being quite startled at how much of the plot was missing.'

**For the Record.** 'Correction: An earlier version of this post stated that *Nightcrawler* [of the *X-Men*] says "Bamf" when he teleports. It is the sound that happens when he teleports. *City Paper* regrets the error.' (*Baltimore City Paper*, 2015) [AL] • 'In yesterday's report "Copernicus and Galileo: now stars in their own right", we said Copernicus had demonstrated that the Sun goes round the Earth. It has been pointed out to us that this is wrong and, in fact, the Earth goes round the Sun. We are sorry for the mistake.' (*Independent 'i'*, 18 December) [PE]

**Magazine Scene.** *Apex* and *Lightspeed* are no longer (as far as the Hugos are concerned) semiprozines, according to Neil Clarke's researches while updating the directory at [semiprozine.org](http://semiprozine.org). [F770] • *SFWA's* regular market reports are now available to everyone (not just members) on the SFWA blog: see [www.slwa.org/tag/market-report](http://www.slwa.org/tag/market-report).

**Discworld Is Everywhere.** More than one fan noticed that in the season finale of the *Morse* prequel *Endeavour*, young Morse's veteran cop mentor Fred Thursday mentioned how he'd long ago cut his teeth under Sergeant Vimes on Cable Street.... (ITV, 24 January) [SB]

**Random Fandom.** *Linda Deneroff* of the WSFS Mark Protection Committee 'is assembling citations of usage of The Hugo Award in Europe (including the UK) in support of its application for registering it as a service mark in the EU. Things that could be useful include [...] references to the Hugo Awards in EU-based publications, including fanzines.' Contact [indandee@gmail.com](mailto:indandee@gmail.com). (Relevant citations from the *Ansible*, *Checkpoint* and *Skyrack* archives already communicated.) • *FAAN Awards:* voting on 2015 fan/fanzine activity is open and will continue to 23 April. See [corflu.org/Corflu33/faan2015.html](http://corflu.org/Corflu33/faan2015.html).

**The Dead Past.** 30 Years Ago, William Gibson wrote: 'I would like to point out, for the benefit of my massive and utterly devoted British following, that the version of my second novel, *Count Zero*, which will run in serial lumps (three) in *Asimov's SF*, is a special Lite version with reduced motherfucker-count and no graphic but intensely poetic and moving descriptions of oral sex. "At *IASFEM*," I was told, "you can't come in anybody's mouth." I should also point out that these changes were made under my supervision and with my express approval. I agreed to go along with them, after due soul-searching, when it was pointed out to me how urgently young people in small towns in the US need fiction of this sort, and how much my new ear is going to cost. / But with Gollancz, friends, you get it ALL!' (*Ansible* 45, February 1986) • 40 Years Ago: 'The SF Foundation is sponsoring a new award for excellence in SF criticism. The first award is to be presented at this year's Mancon [Eastercon].' (*Checkpoint* 64, February 1976; presumably this was the SFF's James Blish Award, presented only once, to Brian Aldiss in 1977.)

**Media Madness.** *Golden Globes:* Best Motion Picture—Musical or Comedy was somewhat mysteriously won by that non-musical, non-comedy, hard sf film *The Martian*. • *Oscars:* the Best Picture shortlist of eight includes *Mad Max: Fury Road* and, again, *The Martian*.

**Thog's Masterclass.** *Sound Effects Dept.* 'His voice had its usual quality of furtively rustling underbrush.' (Isaac Asimov, 'The C-Chute', October 1951 *Galaxy*) [CG] • *Dept of This Door Is Alarmed.* 'The door went into histrionics.' (Garth Risk Hallberg, *City on Fire*, 2015) [SN] • *How to Describe Cockroaches Dept.* '... six-legged forest creatures came lumbering out of the broiler grate...' (*Ibid.*) • *Eyeballs in the Sky.* 'Eyes like anguished talons were clutching hers.' (Charles L. Harness, 'The Rose', March 1953 *Authentic*) [AWA] • *Dept of Would That Be Fahrenheit or Celsius?* '... layer after layer of synthetic mercury, capable of withstanding temperatures as low as minus five hundred degrees.' (Robin Wayne Bailey, 'Tombaugh Station', 2015) • *True Romance (With Side-Effects Dept.)* 'But then it's all right, because we're alone and naked on the bed with its flannel sheets. My sense of smell roars in my head and when Keller pushes—slowly, insistently—inside of me, it's as if we are sinking together two inches beneath the water, bobbing. The feelings are so different from what I experienced with Charlie, it's as if my own body is changing: I breathe water and grow gills. My hands and feet are distended, my toes curl, my lips and nipples turn orange, my eyes are webbed, golden scales spring up and shimmer over my body.' (Diana Abu-Jaber, *Origin*, 2007) [PB]

*Ansible* 343 © David Langford, 2016. Thanks to Paul Barnen, Stephen Baxter, Ellen Datlow, Paul Di Filippo, Gregory Feeley, Fila 770, Carl Glover, Steve Green, Alison Hopkins, Mike Hubbard, Lucas, Andy Love, Sandra Newman, Andrew I. Porter, Private Eye, SF Site, Alan Walker, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Waitman, Andrew Wells, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Brum Group), SCS/Prophecy, Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 February 2016