

Ansible

DECEITFUL
EAR



Rulers of the Sevagram

Pat Cadigan won this year's A.C. Clarke award for her *Synners*.

Mike 'Resistance is useless!' Cule regaled *Ansible* with the latest step in his acting career—his first nude scene, for a movie too awful (he says) to be named here. 'It was extremely difficult keeping my willy out of sight. Apparently one glimpse of my willy in a cinema would cause the downfall of Western civilization.' After this (as it were) climax Mike gets suffocated in a plastic bag, albeit with disappointingly few death throes.

The Reverend Lionel Faithorpe, B.A. (Hons), F.C.P., F.B.I.M., Cert Ed., Member of the Welsh Academy, Member of Mensa, Managerial, Editorial and Educational Consultant, Radio and Television Broadcaster, Author and Lecturer ... has an awe-inspiring letterhead. He sends copious artwork from a project, perhaps autobiographical, featuring a giant bearded fighting missionary frog called the Rev Dr Hugh John Green (geddit?).

William Gibson's poem: *Agrippa (A Book of the Dead)*—the one on disk that wipes itself as you display it—is reviewed at length in the accompanying *Ansible Dumb Ideas Supplement*, which goes one better by self-destructing before you read it.

Steve Green did vast research on Katherine Kurtz, only to realize at the last minute that he was interviewing Katherine Kerr; her publishers say he 'did quite well considering'. [MS]

Dean R. Koontz was plagiarized in two recent horror novels by 'Pauline Dunn', a two-sister team who had to return their advances to Zebra Books (USA). The books were pulped. [SFC]

John Major, answering a Question on 14 July, welcomed Arthur C. Clarke's 75th-birthday visit to Parliament and said, 'We shall continue to take initiatives ... in pursuit of space [i.e. outer space] priorities.' We? Continue? [JN/Hansard] (Aged Tory MP: 'Is my right hon. Friend aware that the man Clarke intends to publish a rude *Playboy* piece on sex in space, titled "Nasa-sutra"?)

Joseph Nicholas clarifies: 'Jerry Pournelle's appearance on *Pandora's Box* was not quite as awful as Chris Priest says ... if he was drunk, it wasn't with alcohol but with crazed triumphalism at US "victory" in the Gold War. Nor was his idiotic claim that SDI helped bring down the "Evil Empire" allowed to go unchallenged; the narrative voice-over immediately countered that while there were many explanations for the collapse, SDI was not "normally" (great understatement!)—and a put-down that only a Briton would spot) advanced as one of them. Various other things intervened before the clip of Pournelle playing a video game—a clip that anyone less egomaniac would have realized would be used to embarrass him.' [10 Jul]

Terry Pratchett writes in *SFC*: 'The *Mort* film hit a stumbling block when an American film company said in effect, "we like it, but Middle American consumer research says to lose the DEATH angle, please"....' [SFC July/Aug]

Chris Priest was at *Hasticon*: 'The high (=low) spot was a talk on fractals by one of George Hay's mad scientist friends. He looked like Robert Maxwell; he was as daft as a brush; he made George sound lucid and sane. My first thought was that it was some kind of cabaret act. He wittered and twittered,

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From Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU. Fax 0734 669914. ISSN 0265-9816. Logo by Dan Steffan. *Ansible* supports Abigail Frost for TAFF if she gets round to making her mind up. Available in trade for Hugos.

repeating himself in a surreal way that reminded me of one of Ken Campbell's monologues, then played a tape he had recorded while walking to the convention. Street noises, and tuneless singing, and post-modern stuff like "I am going to a science fiction convention, and I am walking down the street!" etc. He continued to talk over this, frequently repeating what was on the tape. Then he laced up a film projector, and on the pre-recorded tape began making the noises that were to act as the soundtrack of the film: street noises continuing (and doubtless under the stare of bemused passers-by), he began imitating the sound of fireworks going off. The film was a home movie of fireworks (almost invisible because of background light in the room). The soundtrack went: "[Traffic sounds] pip pop pop poppety pip pop whoosh whoosh bang pip pop bang whoosh." And, er, so on for about ten minutes. After a bit I started laughing and could not control it; soon Paul Kincaid and Kim Newman were similarly convulsed. George frowned at us from the podium, which of course made it much worse. Etc.' [31 Jul] Others called Charles Stross 'unlikely hero of the hour' for explaining what Mr Fractal was trying to say. [MS]

Maureen Speller is reviewing sf magazines (and begs info on any obscure ones—60 Bournemouth Rd, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ): 'The major editorial proviso is "Thou shalt not jump up and down gratuitously on *Interzone*" ... *Imagination* has already passed across my desk and seemingly into oblivion: the fiction was variable, the proofing and copyediting apparently done by someone whose native language wasn't English, and the book reviews overly personal in content, but they did some very good overview-style articles. I fear they have been hit by financial problems, either that or the fell curse of Wingrove (this debate lurched on in the final issue I saw).'

Brian Stableford testifies: 'Savoy's appeal against the seizure of and destruction order on novel *Lord Horror* and comic book *Meng & Ecker #1* began on 30 July before Lord Justice Gerard Humphries and two magistrates. The judge initially seemed hostile but mellowed after lunch and entered fervently into cut and thrust with Geoffrey Robertson QC (for M. Butterworth and Savoy). Three experts gave evidence: M. Moorcock, yrs truly and Guy Cumberbatch (psychologist who investigates media effects for Home Office). All declared *LH* and *M&E#1* innocent of any potential to deprave and corrupt, and argued forcibly that those who labelled *LH* "anti-semitic" while talking to the press had completely mistaken the rhetoric of the fiction.... The opposition made no attempt to defend the seizure order on *LH* and in fact never mentioned the book at all but concentrated on the comic, which they evidently thought an easier target. GR's eloquent defence of the book thus went somewhat to waste. The witnesses did not waver when cross-examined on the comic (at one point a copy of *Viz* was produced to demonstrate that *M&E#1* was no worse!) but the judge and magistrates took not a blind bit of notice and found the comic was obscene although the book wasn't. There may well be a further appeal on behalf of *M&E*.' [3 Aug]

Ansible says 'Hello' to all *MAGICON* members and urges you to ...

Vote for GLASGOW in 1995!

Bruce Sterling tried fandom's fast lane: 'I spent a long week on "The GENie Network" one afternoon ... The SFWA Forum is, by contrast, a crackling and pithy good read! ☺' [13 Jul]

Ian Watson writes: 'I must not brag about my probably impending coup of trading a story collection to Lithuania in exchange for amber beads. I mustn't, since a stall holder in Northampton market informed me that the market has really dropped out of amber beads and lapis lazuli since the Iron Curtain came down.... Recent global events have thankfully allowed *The Fire Worm* to appear in Poland. Thus now I have the words of "The Lambton Worm" in Polish, ideal for challenging people to sing in pubs. All together, now ("Whisht, lads, haad yor gobs/An' Aa'll tell ye aall an aaful story...."): *Hej! zuchy, nadstawcie uszu/Straszną historię opowiem....*'

Conepatl

2-4 Oct • **Fantasycon XVII**, Midland Hotel, New Street, Birmingham. £20 reg, 'likely to rise soon'. GoH Lisa Tuttle. Contact 15 Stanley Rd, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DE.

9-11 Oct • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Charterhouse Hotel, Manchester. £30 reg, fantastic popcorn extra. Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EB. [BGN]

24 Oct • **Dangercon**, *Dangermouse* con (!), Croydon, 11am-11pm. £3.50 reg. Contact 37 Keens Rd, Croydon, CR0 1AH.

6-8 Nov • **Novacon 22**, Royal Angus Hotel, Birmingham. Now £20 reg (£25 from 6 Oct). GoH Storm Constantine. Contact 121 Cape Hill, Smetwic, Warley, W.Midlands, B66 4SH.

7-8 Nov • **Armadacon 4**, Astor Hotel, The Hoe, Plymouth. £20 reg + 3 SAEs (or £10/day). GoH: various, all 'subject to negotiations/work commitments' (Jon Pertwee was advertised on this basis but has cancelled). Contact 4 Gleneagle Ave, Mannamead, Plymouth. PL3 5HL. Armadacon 'tries' not to clash with Novacon, but was allegedly told the wrong 1991 date and this year 'tried again to find their date ... but there was no response.'

27-9 Nov • **Hillcon III**, 18th Beneluxcon, Atlanta Hotel, Rotterdam. f52.50 reg (f65 from 4 Oct). GoHs Tanith Lee, Terry Pratchett, Peter Schaap, Tad Williams. Eurocheques to Hillcon III, Bijltespad 52 II, 1018 KJ Amsterdam, Netherlands.

8-12 Apr 93 • **Helicon**, 44th Eastercon (+Eurocon); Hotel de France, Jersey. £22 reg. Contact 63 Drake Rd, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1LQ. Plans to enact Nigel Kneale's *The Stone Tape* were dropped when NK said 'No', preferring the TV version to remain unrivalled by scummy fan productions. ('Know any other really good obscure sf plays we could do?'—M.Hoare.)

13-14 Nov 93 • **Armadacon 5** as above. Novacon please note!

1-4 Apr 94 • **Sou'Wester**, 45th Eastercon, is on the move. The Grand Hotel in Bristol continued to be 'obdurate about money', and after pondering the Norbreck Castle in Blackpool (1992 Illumination site: seems the Illumination lot were fearfully upset by this, since *they're* thinking of a second Blackpool Eastercon bid), Sou'Westish is now finalizing things with the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. 'Cornwall must now be deemed to be on the Mersey. You heard it first in *Ansible!*' said our Mid'Wester mole [CB]. £20 reg to 3 West Shrubbery, Redland, Bristol, BS6 6SZ. Nor'Wester doesn't wish to call its members 'attendees', and wonders if a better term could be suggested by *Ansible's* etymologically gifted readers (or readees).

Rumblings • The first **Mexicon**, say revisionist historians, was *not* in Newcastle but in Mexico (1975), organized by the Sociedad de Ficción Ciencia de Guadalajara. So there. [RH]

Infinitely Improbable

Curse of Ansible: Dick Jude of *Forbidden Planet*, appalled by A59 coverage of how Leo Stableford's copy of *The Eye of the World* was confiscated by a zealous FP security thug, has sent Leo an apology plus copies of the book and its sequel. [BS]

SF Encyclopaedia. Little, Brown have now decided that the new edition will contain no pictures. 'The idea is to go for a

sort of super-sophisticated Oxford University Press look, and I think it's right.' [PB] Also presumably cheaper. What of the final delivery deadline on 15 July? What, indeed....

Arthur C. Clarke Revealed As Pseudonym: *Private Eye* notes that Moscow University's school of journalism library, once named for Karl Marx, has been hideously renamed after L.Ron Hubbard—and adds that Russia now awaits 'a million-strong edition of one of Hubbard's turgid and posthumous novels, *Imperial Earth*.' Answers on a postcard, but not to me.

Clubmen: Iain Banks (*The Crow Road*) and Geoff Ryman (*Was...*) are Sept choices of 'The Softback Preview' book club.

Star Rejection Letter: 'We are now buying only lead titles.'

Pulphaüs (*The Only SF Magazine*) is a US jape with columns by Awesome Scott Card and Algae Buttress ('I'm not going to review the latest volume of *Mary Baker Eddy Presents the Burnt-out Hacks of the Future*, since I am intimately involved with it, to the tune of many thousands of dollars. Rather, I am simply going to announce its publication, and allow you to visit your local Christian Science Reading Room to pick up a free copy'), ads for items like *The Annotated Last Dangerous Visions Letters* ('follow the generations-long disputes; despair as editors, readers and writers' families beg for a look at stories they have only heard about through rumor!'), etc. [DG]

From the Crypt: 'Four GW Books authors have been summoned to a 6 Aug meeting to discuss with an as-yet-unnamed publisher the possibility of resurrecting the GW line.' [BS]

TAFF: fun-loving Michael Ashley confirms that he's standing partly because Harry Bond and/or Kev McVeg might—'Can't stand the thought of either of those two winning, even if it means having to go myself.' Word is awaited from Ashley Watkins and Undecided of Bethnal Green ('if you nominate anyone else, Langford, I will *scratch your eyes out*').

Magazines. *Fantasy Tales 8* ('Spring 92') is apparently still on hold while better distribution schemes are examined. [BGN] *Nexus 3* will appear 'Octoberish ... might extend to Xmas'. [PB] *New Moon* is in eclipse because editor Trevor Jones is ill. [MS] *Cleveland Ansible* of Ohio is in no way related....

Oops (A59): John Brunner's 'less than \$300 royalties' from Del Rey wasn't for all 1991 as he'd thought, merely for its second half. *Storm Constantine's* wedding dress was misreported—'Dark green,' sniffed fashion buff Maureen Speller. I fearlessly blamed the 'white' report in *Matrix*, but: 'This excuse will not do. Any reporter would think twice before using the genre's equivalent of the *Sun* as his source. Suitable punishment, we feel, is that you purchase all hardback copies of the *Chung Kuo* series and not only read them but *memorize* them.' [SCIS]

C.O.A. Neil Gaiman: somewhere, we hear, in Minneapolis. *New England SF Association*, PO Box 809, Framingham, MA 01701-0203, USA. *Paperback Inferno (BSFA)*: new editor Stephen Payne, 24 Malvern Rd, Stonegate, Leicester, LE2 2BH. *SF Foundation*: soon c/o Liverpool University, probably ... despite an interesting late report that many Polytechnic (now University) of East London people didn't know the SFF was being axed, and rather expected to carry on using its resources for teaching. *Sou'Westoid*: see cons. A conrunner comments: 'Oh God, we're going back to Thieves' Paradise again.'

Gosh: Nigel E. Richardson made his first (computer) magazine sale!

Hubbardry: 'Wordstar forms tie with cash-rich Elron'. (*PC Dealer*)

More Hasticon: 'Famous Author: Any idea what's happening? Me: All George sent me was a menu from the pub. FA: Menu—let them eat Hay! • Chris Evans, urgently summoned to replace Colin Greenland, found his talk wasn't scheduled (and no space was made for it). • In years to come grizzled survivors will gather their grandchildren round their knees and proclaim, "I was there to hear Mr Fractal!" He was also scheduled to talk on "Underwater Cities"; I know of no one brave enough to stay and hear him go "Glug glug glug".' [PK]

This is a *Magicon* remake of *Ansible 61* with short-term material (*August UK cons* etc) deleted to make room for blatant Glasgow propaganda. *Ansible* currently appears monthly in strange English places.

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