

# Ansible



**Novacon 46.** I hope to see the usual suspects in Nottingham, where I will quite frequently be *not in the bar* but at a dealers'-room table selling that nice Rob Hansen's *Then*—with Rob on hand to sign copies.

## The Weed of Crime

**Hillary Clinton**, according to supposedly leaked email, thinks 'Doctor Who is boring garbage that feels like everyone is in on a joke nobody told her about.' That could be fatal to her campaign if it weren't a hoax tweet by comedian Mike Drucker. (Doctorwhowatch.com, 23 October)

**Adrian Greenwood**, UK antiques dealer, was tortured and stabbed to death on 6 April for the sake of his first edition of *The Wind in the Willows*—worth £50,000. So the court was told by prosecuting counsel in the trial of Michael Danaher, who planned this crime months in advance and kept detailed notes on his laptop. He was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. (*Guardian*, 4 & 24 October)

**Stephen King** tweeted, 'My newest horror story: Once upon a time there was a man named Donald Trump, and he ran for president. Some people wanted him to win.' (21 October) Not for nothing is the University of Maine creating the Stephen E. King Chair in Literature in his honour. [AIP] But who would be so foolhardy as to sit on it?

**George R.R. Martin** is #4 in the 2016 *Hollywood Reporter* list of 'most powerful' authors: 'I seem to recall dimly that I was number seven a few years ago, so I guess I am getting more powerful by the day. *Soon I will rule the world.*' (blog, 1 October) [GRRM] Those ranked higher are James Patterson (3), Stephen King (2) and J.K. Rowling (1); others include Neil Gaiman (9), Margaret Atwood (16) and Patrick Ness (24).

**Sunil Patel** is no longer published by The Book Smugglers, a decision announced after 'several women put forward their encounters with a well-known male SFF author, citing his history of manipulation, gaslighting, grooming behavior, and objectification of women in the speculative fiction community. We have read all of the accounts. We are listening to the stories. We stand with the women who have been the subject of this author's behavior. / In light of these revelations, we have made the decision to no longer publish Sunil Patel's work.' (16 October) [F770] Patel himself has responded with tweeted promises of reform.

**Alice B. Wilson**, author of the only post-1972 story in *The Folio SF Anthology* (2015), is apparently a pseudonym of the book's editor Brian (Wilson) Aldiss. C.C. Shackleton and Jael Cracken didn't make the cut.

**Wonder Woman's** enlistment as Honorary UN Ambassador for the empowerment of women and girls caused all the feminist and other controversy you might expect; some outraged folk seem to believe the UN had no idea that the 75-year-old comics character—who debuted in 1941—is in fact ... fictional. (*Variety*, 11 October)

## Consute

4-6 Nov • **Armadacon 28**, Future Inns, Plymouth. £35 reg; day £20 Sat, £15 Sun (concessions £30, £15, £10). Contact Moor Cottage, Cardinham, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 4BR; or see [www.armadacon.org](http://www.armadacon.org).

SOLD OUT: 4-6 Nov • **BCon** (Eurocon), Barcelona, Spain. See [www.eurocon2016.org](http://www.eurocon2016.org) for sumptuous details of what I'm missing.

5-6 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Leeds. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Comic Art Festival, running 1-6 November. Tickets £26 weekend or £16/day (plus booking fees) from [thoughtbubblefestival.com](http://thoughtbubblefestival.com).

5 Nov • **Not-Oxonmoot Moot** (Tolkien Society), Oxford. All welcome. See [www.tolkiensociety.org/events/not-oxonmoot-moot](http://www.tolkiensociety.org/events/not-oxonmoot-moot).

11-13 Nov • **Novacon 46**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £46 reg; under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. PayPal registration now accepted at [www.novacon.org.uk](http://www.novacon.org.uk).

11-13 Nov • **Starship Engineer Workshops**, BIS HQ, London. £99 or £59/day. See [www.i4is.org/news/starship\\_engineer\\_2016](http://www.i4is.org/news/starship_engineer_2016).

26 Nov • **Sledge-Lit**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. Tickets £25. See [www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-2016.aspx](http://www.derbyquad.co.uk/special-event/sledge-lit-2016.aspx).

3 Dec • **Dragonmeet** (gaming), Novotel London West, Hammersmith. 10am-midnight. Tickets £10 (concessions £6); £12 at door; group discounts. Booking at [www.dragonmeet.co.uk](http://www.dragonmeet.co.uk).

# Ansible® 352 November 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: **Alexis Gilliland** (1992). Available for SAE, jersey-pods or neptune's shawl.

3 Dec • **Yulemoot** (Tolkien Society), Old Contemptibles, Birmingham. All welcome. See [www.tolkiensociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/](http://www.tolkiensociety.org/events/yulemoot-2016/).

10-12 Feb 2017 • **Conrunner 4** (conrunning), Park Inn, Nottingham. Now £45 reg. Contact 56 Jackmans Place, Letchworth Garden City, Herts, SG6 1RH. See [www.conrunner.co.uk](http://www.conrunner.co.uk).

8-9 Apr 2017 • **Sci-Fi Scarborough** (multimedia), The Spa, Scarborough. £25 reg, £15/day; other rates at [scifiscarborough.co.uk](http://scifiscarborough.co.uk).

20-23 Apr 2017 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse Cinema One, 88 Lothian Rd, Edinburgh, EH3 9BZ. £75. Box office 0131 228 2688. Online booking opens in 2017: [www.deadbydawn.co.uk](http://www.deadbydawn.co.uk).

4-6 Aug 2017 • **Nine Worlds Geekfest** (multimedia), Novotel London West, Hammersmith, London (provisional venue). £99 reg (this will rise); children free. Book online at [ninemeworlds.co.uk](http://ninemeworlds.co.uk).

11-13 Aug 2017 • **Wadfest** (Discworld camping event), King's Bush Farm, London Road, Godmanchester, Cambs, PE29 2NH. Adult campers £45; child £5. See [www.wadfest.co.uk](http://www.wadfest.co.uk).

25-28 Aug 2017 • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. Booking details will presumably follow at [www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk](http://www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk).

27-28 Aug 2017 • **Stars of Time** (media), Tropicana, Weston-super-Mare. 10am-5pm. £6.50; child £3.50. See [www.starsoftime.co.uk](http://www.starsoftime.co.uk).

9 Sep 2017 • **International Comics Expo** (ICE), Birmingham Conference Centre, Smallbrook, Birmingham. Tickets from £12; students £6; VIP £35 (etc). See [www.thecomicsshow.co.uk](http://www.thecomicsshow.co.uk).

6-8 Oct 2017 • **Octocon**, Camden Court Hotel, Camden St, Dublin, Ireland. €20 reg; concessions €20 (it says here); accompanied under-13s free. Rates will rise. Join online at [octocon.com](http://octocon.com).

**Rumblings.** *Worldcon 2024*: The UK bid discussion group now has a web page at [www.ukin2024.org](http://www.ukin2024.org); the opposing Washington DC bid is at [dcin2024.org](http://dcin2024.org). • *London Christmas Meeting* in the First Thursday pub (The Bishop's Finger): booked for the evening of 15 December.

## Infinitely Improbable

**As Others Saw Us.** Thomas Hobbes on superheroes: 'There are some that are not pleased with fiction, unless it be bold, not only to exceed the *work*, but also the *possibility* of nature; they would have impene-trable Armors, Incharnted Castles, invulnerable bodies, Iron Men, flying Horses, and a thousand other such things, which are easily feigned by them that dare.' ('Answer to Davenant's Preface to *Gondibert*', 1651; cited in *The New Yorker*, 16 May) [MMW] • 'I felt wonderful. Then he started talking. It's better if nothing is said. Once you find he's a librarian in Walthamstow, with a special interest in science fiction and lives with his aunt, then forget it.' (Caryl Churchill, *Cloud 9*, 1979) [MMW]

**Awards.** *Gaylactic Spectrum* (novel exploring LGBT themes): Ian MacDonald, *Luna: New Moon*. • *World Fantasy*: NOVEL Anna Smaill, *The Chimes*. LONG FICTION Kelly Barnhill, *The Unlicensed Magician*. SHORT FICTION Alyssa Wong, 'Hungry Daughters of Starving Mothers' (*Nightmare* 10/15). ANTHOLOGY Silvia Moreno-Garcia and Paula R. Stiles, eds., *She Walks in Shadows*. COLLECTION C.S.E. Cooney, *Bone Swans*. ARTIST Galen Dara. SPECIAL—PROFESSIONAL Stephen Jones for *The Art of Horror*. SPECIAL—NONPROFESSIONAL John O'Neill for *Black Gate*.

**Yo-Ho-Ho.** The Hungarian magazine *Galaktika* has had a bad press for its many unauthorized translations of English-language sf (see A345, A351). Belated payment is now being offered to some. I never got around to complaining—the queue seemed far too long—but in October *Galaktika* emailed me with an apology and an offer of modest fees for two Langford stories they'd used. This money has since been paid.

**As Others Write Us Off.** Recent non-fantastic YA novels ('realist ... grittier') mark the end of genre as we knew it. 'Now, though, the appetite for paranormal lunacy has abated, and issue-driven fiction set very much in a universe of urbanism's chief concerns is having a renaissance.' (Ginia Bellafante, *New York Times*, 21 October) [JB]

**R.I.P.** *Natalie Babbitt* (1932-2016), US children's author best known for the immortality fantasy *Tuck Everlasting* (1975; filmed 1981, 2002), died on 31 October aged 84. [PDF] • *Paul Brazier*, UK fan who edited the Brighton-based semiprozine *Nexus* (1991-1993) and for ten years

was typesetter and graphic designer for *Interzone* (which absorbed *Nexus* in 1994), died on 10 October; he was 66. [DP] ● **Jack Chick** (1924-2016), US cartoonist whose ultra-fundamentalist comic-strip tracts—such as the notorious ‘Dark Dungeons’, where *D&D* equals witchcraft and Satanism—often seemed like crude parody to the uninitiated, died on 23 October aged 92. ● **Arthur Jean Cox** (1929-2016), long-time LA fan and writer who helped run the 1946 Worldcon and published sf from 1951 onward—his first novel being *Nude in Orbit* (1968) as by Gene Cross—recently died; he was 87. [F770] ● **Dennis M. Cummins** (1951-2016), US musician, author of short horror stories and Horror Writers Association member, died on 18 October aged 64. [AIP] ● **David Delamare** (1956-2016), UK artist whose first collection was *Mermaids and Magic Shows* (1994) with Nigel Suckling, died on 19 September aged 59. [SFS] ● **Steve Dillon** (1962-2016), UK comics artist who featured in *Doctor Who Magazine* and *Warrior*, drew *Judge Dredd* and *Rogue Trooper* episodes for *2000 AD*, co-created *Preacher* with Garth Ennis and worked with Ennis on *Hellblazer* and *The Punisher*, died on 22 October; he was 53. [PDF/GW] ● **Ed Gorman** (1941-2016), popular US crime, western and horror author who as Richard Driscoll co-wrote the 1992 *Star Precinct* sf trilogy with Kevin D Randle, died on 14 October; he was 74. Gorman co-edited several sf/fantasy anthologies with Martin H. Greenberg and others. [GVG] ● **Per G. Hvidsten**, Norwegian fanzine and comics fan, publisher, artist, editor, and author of sf/fantasy stories (many collected as *Dead and Cheerful in New York*, 1979) under his birth name Per G. Olsen, died after long illness on 11 October. [J-HH] ● **Austin ‘Rocky’ Kalish** (1921-2016), US tv writer/producer whose genre credits include multiple episodes of *My Favorite Martian* (1963-1966) and *The Flying Nun* (1967-1968), died on 5 October aged 95. [BM] ● **Barry R. Levin** (1946-2016), noted US antiquarian sf/fantasy book dealer (as Barry R. Levin Books of California) since 1973, committed suicide on 14 September; he was 70. [AIP] ● **Michael Masee** (1955-2016), US actor seen in *The Crow* (1994), *Tales from the Hood* (1995), *Lost Highway* (1997), *Catwoman* (2004), *Flashforward* (2009-2010) and *The Amazing Spider-Man* (2012; also 2014 sequel), died on 26 October aged 61. PDF ● **Kevin Meaney** (1957-2016), US actor/comedian whose genre credits include *Big* (1988), *The Brave Little Toaster to the Rescue* (voice, 1997), *Mad Jack the Pirate* (voice, 1998) and *Hey Monster, Hands Off My City* (2014), died on 21 October aged 59. ● **Ted V. Mikels** (1929-2016) US cult film-maker whose genre productions include *The Astro-Zombies* (1968, plus three sequels/remakes), *Blood Orgy of the She-Devils* (1973), *The Worm Eaters* (1977) and *Demon Haunt* (2009), died on 16 October aged 87. [PDF] ● **Cornel Robu** (1938-2016), Romanian academic and sf critic/historian who chronicled and anthologized his country’s sf, and wrote for *Foundation* and the *SF Encyclopedia*, died on 27 October; he was 78. [AS/RR] ● **Norman F. Stanley** (1916-2016), US fan, original member of First Fandom (entering its Hall of Fame in 2013) and member of the early-1940s Boston Stranger Club—collective Fan Guests of Honour at the 1989 Worldcon—died on 26 October at the age of 100. His best known fanzine was the 1940s *Fan-Tods*. [JDS/JLC] ● **Kazunari Tanaka** (1967-2016), Japanese voice actor in videogames and many anime productions including *Haikyu!!* and various incarnations of *Mobile Suit Gundam* and *Sailor Moon*, died on 10 October aged 49. [PDF] ● **Sheri S. Tepper** (1929-2016), US author of much notable sf with strong ecological and feminist themes, including *The Gate to Women’s Country* (1988) and *Grass* (1989), died on 22 October; she was 87. Her genre novels began with the popular *True Game* science-fantasies (nine books, 1983-1986); her straight sf debut was *The Revenants* (1984); frequently shortlisted for major awards, she received the 2015 World Fantasy Award for life achievement. [MJE] ● **John Vulich** (1961-2016), US special effects make-up artist for many genre productions including *The Lost Boys* (1987), *Babylon 5* (1994-1998) and spinoffs, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2002), *The X-Files* (1998-1999), *Being John Malkovich* (1999) and *Angel* (2000-2001), died on 12 October aged 55. [PDF] ● **Bill Warren** (1943-2016), US fan and genre film historian who worked with Walt Lee on *Reference Guide to Fantastic Films* (1972-1974) and wrote the 1950s-focused reference *Keep Watching the Skies!* (1982, 1986; combined edition 2009), died on 7 October; he was 73. [DK] ● **Kate Yule** (1961-2016), US fan since 1984, past President of the Portland OR sf club, whose best-known fanzine was the small but charming *Bento* (produced with her husband David D. Levine), died on 4 October. Alas.

**The Weakest Link.** Q: ‘Which part of the Medusa’s body was made up of snakes?’ Contestant: ‘Her lower abdomen’. (ITV, *The Chase*) [PE]

**As Others Avoid Us.** From a ‘By the Book’ interview with author and historian H.W. Brands: ‘For enjoyment I read almost everything but

history (see previous), fantasy and sci-fi. The real world is bizarre enough for me.’ (*New York Times Book Review*, 9 October) [JB]

**Outraged Letters.** *Steven Goldstein* on *A361*: ‘Avedon Carol is incorrect in stating that Douglas Fratz “started the sf club at University of Maryland (College Park), and even managed to throw a little convention”. In actuality the club existed prior to my entering the University in 1969 which was a year or two prior to Doug’s appearance. The club and its associated Unicon conventions were run by a group of students but Doug’s only contribution was to run the dealer’s room for a few years. *Thrust* was originally published by the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society with Doug as editor-in-chief and myself as managing editor for 6 issues. After leaving college he took the magazine with him, causing a bit of fannish feuding.’ ● *Simon R. Green* grumbles: ‘... the RIP section is taking over. It’s running to almost half the material now, taking up space that might more profitably be devoted to gossip. Maybe you could start a separate newsletter; call it Dearly Departed, or Missing In Action, or People Who’ve Died That You Didn’t Know Were Still Alive.’ Stop dying, fandom, and gossip more!

**Magazine Scene.** Warren Lapine: ‘*Fantastic Stories of the Imagination* has terminated its relationship with Sunil Patel. He will no longer be editing the POC Take Over issues.’ (Facebook, 17 October) ● Mur Lafferty: ‘Sunil Patel has resigned as Fiction Assistant Editor at *Mothership Zeta*, effective immediately.’ (mothershipzeta.org, 18 Oct)

**Random Fandom.** *Brian Aldiss* recently had a stroke and spent ten days in hospital, but is home again and recovering well. [RP] May this continue. ● *Yvonne Rousseau*, who traditionally forwards paper copies of *Ansible* to select Australian fans, is stepping down after this issue owing to life complications that include plans to move house. Bereft readers should check their online options at [ansible.uk](http://ansible.uk).

**The Dead Past.** *50 Years Ago*: ‘Interesting 2 page leaflet recently circulated round British fandom. Posted in London this was stated to have originated with Ted Tubb, Archie Mercer, Chris Priest, Brian Aldiss, Mike Moorcock, Ken Slater and Pete Weston. The circular discussed the possibility of the BSFA forming regional committees and asked interested parties to send 2/6 to Chris. If you haven’t already heard, this was a fake, parties’ names being used without their knowledge.’ (*Skyrack* 93, November 1966) ● *40 Years Ago*, UK politics was rather less fraught: ‘Pamela Boal notes that the Liberal candidate for Abingdon is a keen sf reader and voices a rather far-fetched hope that fandom might gain its first MP. Actually it’s already been done, since I remember meeting an MP at the 1970 Scicon—Raymond Fletcher, a well-established Conservative. This reminds me that a fannish Lord has been turning up at One Tun meetings recently, thereby unhappily encouraging Pete Weston’s fantasies about the Queen opening the 1979 UK Worldcon (I wouldn’t mind, but we’ve already invited the Archbishop of Canterbury).’ (*Checkpoint* 76, November 1976) ● *30 Years Ago*: ‘David Garnett is proud, or not, of writing “the Christmas sex story which is to appear in the next issue of *Mayfair*, with hero and heroine called Hugo and Nebula”....’ (*Ansible* 47, November 1986)

**Fanfundery.** *TAFF 2017*: nominations are now open (closing at the end of November) for the westbound race to the Helsinki Worldcon. Prospective candidates and nominators should contact NA administrator Curt Phillips, [Absarka\\_prime \(at\) comcast.net](mailto:Absarka_prime(at)comcast.net). See also [taff.org.uk](http://taff.org.uk).

**Thog’s Masterclass.** *Dept of Purpureal Prose*. ‘The glassy scaurs and grim ramparts of Mount Voormithadreth, highest and most formidable of the Eiglaphians, had beetled above them, wedging the sun with dark scoriac peaks at mid-afternoon, and walling the blazonries of sunset wholly from view.’ (Clark Ashton Smith, ‘The Seven Geases’, 1934) [LP] ● *Literally Dept*. ‘In loyalty to his lord, he had literally kept his eyes shut for seventeen years.’ (Randall Garrett, ‘The Eyes Have It’, January 1964 *Analog*) ● ‘Every trick of sexual technique he had ever learned, every last ounce of his masculinity was being literally pumped into me like a transfusion of blood.’ (‘Petra Christian’, *Hitch-Hiker*, 1971) [BA] ● *Dept of Truly Alien Aliens*. ‘I suppose you might liken us to huge steaming lumps of purple jelly, anchored to metallic plates which are embedded within rubberized constructions of great architectural beauty.... And we emit a soft, musical blurping sound for the purposes of communication.’ (Alexander Thynn, *The King is Dead*, 1976)

Ansible® 352 © David Langford, 2016. Thanks to Brian Ameringen, John Boston, John L. Coker, Paul Di Filippo, Malcolm Edwards, File 770, John-Henri Holmberg, Dan Kimmel, George R.R. Martin, Bill Mullins, Lawrence Person, Rog Peyton, Andrew I. Porter, David Pringle, Private Eye, Roger Robinson, SF Site, Andy Sawyer, Jon D. Swartz, Gordon Van Gelder, Gary Wilkinson, Martin Morse Wooster, and our Hero Distributors: Dave Corby (Birmingham SF Group), SCIS/Prophecy and Alan Stewart (Australia). 1 November 2016