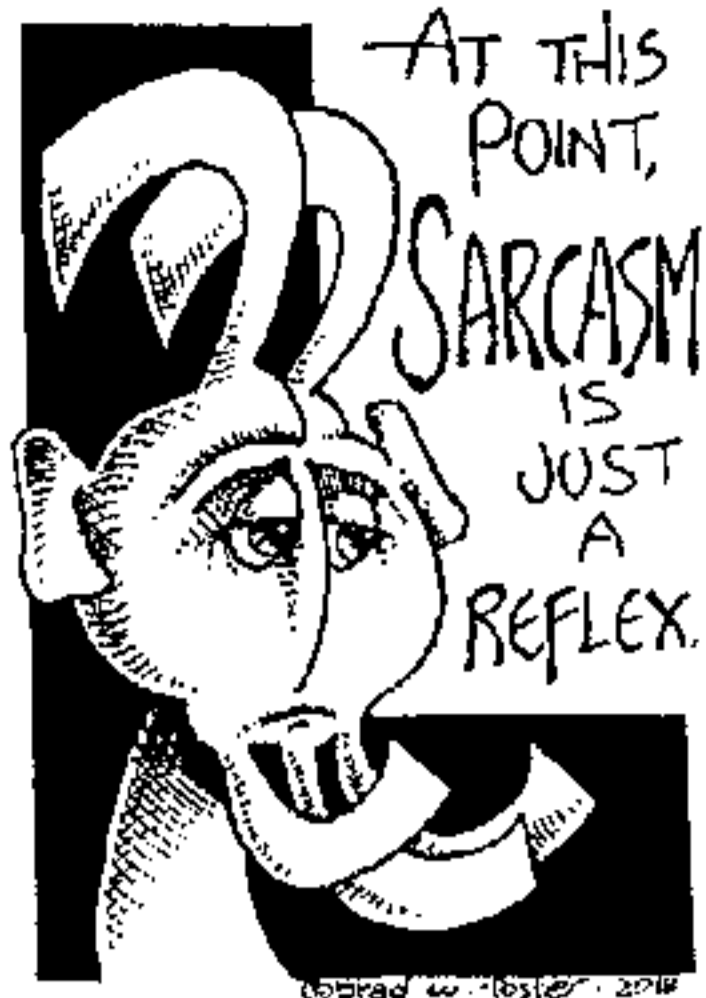


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From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Website news.ansible.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE or specifications for the Flazgaz Heatray.

Editorial. According to past tradition, media adaptations of Langford stories never actually happen. I'm thus thrilled to report that the noted actor LeVar Burton—clearly a man of excellent taste—released his free podcast reading of 'Different Kinds of Darkness' (*F&SF* Jan 2000) on 27 February. See www.stitcher.com/podcast/stitcher/levar-burton-reads and itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/levar-burton-reads/id1244649384.

The Thing from Sheol

Diane Duane & Peter Morwood feared they'd lose their Irish home owing to a temporary cashflow problem and rent arrears; but fans rallied round in mid-February with donations and ebook purchases, and the problem went away with remarkable speed. (Dianedduane.com)

Lionel and Patricia Fanthorpe kindly authorized an ebook of Debbie Cross's 'Fanthorpe's greatest hits' compilation *Down the Badger Hole* (1995), now added to the TAFF site's free downloads page—see taff.org.uk/ebooks.php?x=BadgerHole. This corrected, much expanded edition includes the 1999 *Bibliographic Supplement* by Debbie Cross and Brian J. Hunt, plus further tasty Fanthorpeana from the annals of Thog.

Rhys Hughes discovered that silence is golden when he mentioned online that he wasn't too keen on H.P. Lovecraft's writing or racism, and was very soon told by his publisher Derrick Hussey of Hippocampus Press: 'Get f*cked, Rhys. Your unprofitable book is out of print as of this moment and in the unlikely event if you ever see me on the sidewalk, I'd advise you step the other way.' (Facebook, 25 February)

Terry Goodkind disliked the cover art (by Bastien Lecouffe-Deharme) on his latest novel, and invited all of Facebook to a mockery competition. '*Shroud of Eternity* is a great book with a very bad cover. Laughably bad. So let's have some fun with it.' (23 February) John Picacio commented: 'Heads up to everyone in the publishing industry: Authors, please take note, especially those new to the sf/f field. Pictured here is some of the most unprofessional behavior you will ever witness. This is a writer publicly throwing his cover artist under the bus, while embarrassing his publisher and their art director. This is the behavior of a child throwing a tantrum.' (24 February) Goodkind apologized, saying his real quarrel is with the Tor Books art department. The story spread worldwide, with *Guardian*, *Bookseller* and much other coverage.

S.T. Joshi marked the film premiere of *Annihilation* by reposting his important views ('An Aesthetic Catastrophe') on Jeff VanderMeer's novel: 'The first-person narrator of *Annihilation* is a biologist, and she is part of an expedition—consisting of exactly three other members (all, implausibly, women) ...' (stjoshi.org, 23 February)

Robert J. Sawyer was inducted into the Order of Ontario on 27 February and may now be addressed as Robert J. Sawyer O.Ont. [AIP] Somehow I keep remembering the first line of a famous Poul Anderson story: 'Please, mister, could I have a cracker for my O.Ontatherium?'

Consocieties

2-3 Mar • **Frightfest** (film), Glasgow Film Theatre. £75 reg or £10.50 per film. See www.frightfest.co.uk. Also 2018 London events: Leicester Square, 23-27 August, and Empire Haymarket, 27 October.

16-18 Mar • **Starburst Media City Festival** (film), The Landing, Salford. Free. See starburstmagazine.com/filmfestival/.

20 Mar • **An Afternoon with Brian Aldiss** in association with the Oxford Literary Festival: Weston Library Lecture Theatre, Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BG. 2pm-3pm (Chris Priest *et al*, Aldiss celebration) and 4pm-5pm (Philip Pullman *et al*, sf in general). Each event £12.50; students £7. Bookings at oxfordliteraryfestival.org.

22-25 Mar • **Sci-Fi Weekender**, Hafan y Mor Holiday Park, near Pwllheli, Gwynedd, North Wales. Booking by accommodation from £490 for two; 3-day pass £120; more at www.scifiweekender.com.

24 Mar • **Highlighting Horror**, QUAD Centre, Derby. 10am-6pm. £35 reg. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/courses.aspx.

28 Mar • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Speaker to be announced. Free.

30 Mar - 2 Apr • **Follycon** (Eastercon), Majestic Hotel, Harrogate.

£80 reg; £45 YA (18-24)/unwaged; £30 child (5-17) and supporting; under-5s free. Day rates Fri £25; £15 YA/unwaged; child £10. Sat or Sun £35; £20; £10. Mon £10; £10; £5. Register at www.follycon.org.uk.

1 May • **Tolkien Lecture**: V.E. Schwab. Pichette Auditorium, Pembroke College, Oxford. 6:30pm. *Waiting list* via tolkienlecture.org.

6-7 Jul • **Futurefest** (futurology), Tobacco Dock, London. Tickets £80; Friday or Saturday only, £50. More at www.futurefest.org.

7-8 Jul • **Comics Uncovered**, BCEC, Birmingham. £85 reg; £45/day; students £45 and £25. More at www.comicsuncovered.co.uk.

14 Jul • **Edge-Lit 7**, QUAD Centre, Derby, DE1 3AS. 10am-late. GoH Frances Hardinge and Paul Tremblay. Tickets £30. Box office 01332 290 606. See www.derbyquad.co.uk/events/edge-lit-7.aspx.

20-23 Jul • **Continuum** (RPG), John Foster Hall, Leicester University. Cost revealed when you register at continuumconvention.co.uk.

16-20 Aug • **Worldcon 76** (Worldcon), San José, CA, USA. \$230 reg; \$115 YA (15-21) and military; under-15s \$75; under-6s free; \$50 supp. See worldcon76.org. *Hugo Award nominations close on 16 March*.

24-27 Aug • **The Asylum** (steampunk), Lincoln. £42.50 reg; £21 ages 5-16; also pricier options with extras. Rates rise after each 1,000 sales. No day tickets until April. See www.asylumsteampunk.co.uk.

1-2 Sep • **Middle-earth Festival**, Sarehole Mill, Cole Bank Rd, Hall Green, Birmingham. Free. See middleearthfestival.wordpress.com.

29 Sep • **Preston Comic Con**, Guild Hall, Preston. 10:30am £8 (9:30 'early bird' £12) to 5pm. See www.prestoncomiccon.co.uk.

19-21 Oct • **Celluloid Screams** (horror film festival), Showroom Cinema, Sheffield. See celluloidscreams.co.uk. 0114 275 7727.

19-21 Oct • **FantasyCon**, The Queen, City Rd, Chester, CH1 3AH. Still (as of 1 March) 'coming soon' at www.hwsevents.co.uk, so how to become a member and what it costs remain shrouded in mystery. The hotel is reportedly taking bookings at FantasyCon rates on request.

9-11 Nov • **Novacon 48**, Park Inn, Nottingham. £48 reg (*this rate may rise after Easter*); under-17s £12; under-13s free. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. More at www.novacon.org.uk.

1-3 Feb 2019 • **31-ET** (filk), Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey, Colchester. GoH Chantelle Smith (UK), Cheshire Moon (international). £33 reg/£27 unwaged until 31 March 2018; under-18s £1/year of age; under-5s free. Further details at www.contabile.org.uk/31et/.

15-19 Aug 2019 • **Dublin 2019** (Worldcon), Dublin, Ireland. €160 reg, €100 under-26s or first-time Worldcon members, and €60 under-13s—*rising on 3 April to €180, €110 and €65*. The following rates will remain unchanged: €5 under-6s; €40 supporting. See dublin2019.com.

Infinitely Improbable

As Others ... 'Although commonly considered a science fiction author, Le Guin was also widely acknowledged as a literary voice of significant depth and insight.' (Finebooksmagazine.com, 24 January) [JDB] • *Explaining Douglas Adams*: '[Kevin Jon] Davies says the key to Adams' work is that he is not a science fiction writer: he is a satirist and Hitchhiker is a modern Gulliver's Travels. "Douglas didn't set out just to do sci-fi," he explains, "but he said that whatever he was writing ended up with robots and spaceships."' (*Guardian*, 27 February) [DA]

Awards. *BAFTA Best Director*: Guillermo Del Toro for *The Shape of Water*. • *Gaughan* (emerging artist): Alessandra Maria Pisano. • *Gemmell* (heroic fantasy) longlist voting is open, closing on 30 March; see www.gemmellawards.com/award-voting-2018/. Shortlist voting will run from 20 April to 1 June. • *Horror Writers Association Specialty Press Award*: Eraserhead Press. • *IAFA Distinguished Scholarship Award*: Fred Botting. • *IAFA William A. Crawford Award* (fantasy debut): Carmen Maria Machado, *Her Body and Other Parties*. • *PEN Art of the Essay*: Ursula K. Le Guin for *No Time to Spare*. [AIP] • *Robert A. Heinlein Award*: Neal Stephenson. • *SFWA Kate Wilhelm Solstice Award*: Gardner Dozois and Sheila Williams. • *Skylark Award*: Dan Kimmel.

Prediction Corner. 'But I wonder: are we heading for an era, a decade or two hence, when science fiction, our soaring and mind-expanding literature, is a musty and ritualized entertainment consumed

only by elderly Baby Boomers, hearkening back nostalgically to the good old days of their twenties, while the illiterate young 'uns divert themselves with the electronic hardware that science fiction predicted?' (Robert Silverberg, *Amazing*, July 1983) [MMW]

R.I.P. David F. Case (1937-2018), US horror author contributing to the *Pan Book of Horror Stories* series in the early 1970s, whose Arkham House novel was *The Third Grave* (1981), died on 3 February aged 80. [SJ] ● Reg E. Cathey (1958-2018), US actor in *The Mask* (1994), *Tank Girl* (1995) and *Fantastic Four* (2015), died on 9 February aged 59. [SG] ● Nanette Fabray (1920-2018), US actress whose genre credits include *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (1966) and *The Man in the Santa Claus Suit* (1979), died on 22 February aged 97. [SG] ● Bill Crider (1941-2018), US author of crime fiction plus sf and supernatural stories, who won a Sidewise Award for 'It Doesn't Matter Anymore' (2015), died on 12 February aged 76. He had entered hospice care in December. [LP] ● John Gavin (1931-2018), US actor in *Psycho* (1960), died on 9 February aged 86. [PDF] ● Lewis Gilbert (1920-2018), director of *Haunted* (1995) and three Bond films including *Moonraker* (1979), died on 23 February aged 97. [MMW] ● Hugh Hancock, UK game designer who co-founded the machinima group Strange Company in 1997 and created such machinima animations as *Bloodspell* (2007), died unexpectedly on 5 February. [MLR] ● Jóhann Jóhannsson (1969-2018), Icelandic composer whose scores include *Arrival* (2016), died on 9 February aged 48. [SG] ● Mickey Jones (1941-2018), US musician and actor in *Starman* (1984), *Total Recall* (1990), *It Came From Outer Space II* (1996), *Penny Dreadful* (2006) and *Necrosis* (2009), died on 7 February aged 76. [SG] ● Bud Luckey (1934-2018), US animator who designed characters for Pixar films including *Toy Story* (1995) and had voice roles in *The Incredibles* (2004) and several others, died on 24 February aged 83. [CH] ● John Mahoney (1940-2018), UK-born actor whose voice work included *Antz* (1998), *The Iron Giant* (1999) and the *Atlantis* videogame series from 2001, died on 4 February aged 77. [SG] ● Victor Milán (1954-2018), prolific US novelist in fantasy—beginning with *The Sundered Realm* (1980) with Robert E Vardeman—and sf, beginning with the Prometheus-winning *The Cybernetic Samurai* (1985), died on 13 February. He contributed a novel and shorter stories to the Wild Cards series. [F770] ● Peter Miles (1928-2018), UK actor whose *Doctor Who* roles included Davros's evil henchman Nyder in 'Genesis of the Daleks' (1975), died in late February aged 89. [PDF] ● William O'Connor (1970-2018), US artist whose work featured in *Dungeons & Dragons* and *Magic: The Gathering*, died on 2 February aged 47. [SFS] ● David Thomas, Coventry-based UK fan and convention-goer, died on 22 February; he was 64. [KM] Kari Maund writes: 'He was a genuinely nice man, which was his main feature, really.' ● John Anthony West (1932-2018), US author of a handful of genre stories, mostly for *F&SF* and *Omni* 1961-1980, died on 6 February aged 85. [PDF]

The Weakest Link. Host: 'What does the MI stand for in MI5 and MI6?' Contestant: 'Mission Impossible.' (BBC1, *Celebrity Mastermind*) [PE] ● *Jeopardy Mad Scientist Dept.* Answer requiring the correct question: 'I collected the instruments of life around me, that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing that lay at my feet.' Contestant: 'What is Pinocchio?' (26 February) [AIP]

Award Shortlists. BSFA: NOVEL Nina Allan, *The Rift*; Anne Charnock, *Dreams Before the Start of Time*; Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West*; Ann Leckie, *Provenance*. SHORTER Anne Charnock, *The Enclave*; Elaine Cuyegkeng, 'These Constellations Will Be Yours' (*Strange Horizons*); Greg Egan, 'Uncanny Valley' (Tor.com); Geoff Nelder, 'Angular Size' (*SFeries* 2017); Tade Thompson, 'The Murders of Molly Southbourne' (Tor.com). NON-FICTION Paul Kincaid, *Iain M. Banks*; Juliet E. McKenna, 'The Myth of Meritocracy ...' (*Gender Identity and Sexuality in Current Fantasy and SF*); Adam Roberts, 'Wells at the World's End' 2017 blog posts; Shadow Clarke Award jurors (blog); Vandana Singh, 'The Unthinkability of Climate Change ...' (*Strange Horizons*). ARTWORK Geneva Benton, cover, *Fiyah Magazine* #3; Jim Burns, cover, *The Ion Raider* by Ian Whates; Galen Dara, illustration for 'These Constellations Will Be Yours' by Elaine Cuyegkeng (*Strange Horizons*); Chris Moore, cover, *The Memoirist* by Neil Williamson; Victo Ngai, illustration for 'Waiting on a Bright Moon' by JY Yang (Tor.com); Marcin Wolski, cover, 2084 ed. George Sandison. Fuller details at www.bsfa.co.uk/bsfa-2017-awards-voting-form/. ● *Compton Crook* (genre debut): Nicky Drayden, *The Prey of Gods*; Elan Mastai, *All Our Wrong Todays*; Robyn Bennis, *The Guns Above*; Karin Tidbeck, *Amatka*; Vic James, *Gilded Cage*; Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*; Cat Sparks, *Lotus Blue*. [SFS] ● *Nebulas* (selected): NOVEL Lara Elena Donnelly, *Amberlough*; Theodora Goss, *The Strange Case of the Alchemist's Daughter*; Daryl

Gregory, *Spoonbenders*; N.K. Jemisin, *The Stone Sky*; Mur Lafferty, *Six Wakes*; Fonda Lee, *Jade City*; Annalee Newitz, *Autonomous*. DRAMATIC *Get Out*; *The Good Place*: 'Michael's Gambit'; *Logan*; *The Shape of Water*; *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*; *Wonder Woman*. ● Andre Norton (YA book): Fonda Lee, *Exo*; Kari Maaren, *Weave a Circle Round*; Sam J. Miller, *The Art of Starving*; Cindy Pon, *Want*. For shorter fiction categories, see nebulas.sfwaweb.org/2017-awards-finalists-announced/. ● *Starburst Brave New Words* (inaugural): Katie Khan, *Hold Back the Stars*; Adrian Tchaikovsky, *Dogs of War*; Margrét Helgadóttir, editor, *Pacific Monsters*; Cassandra Khaw, 'Degrees of Ellision' (2084); Claire North, *The Sudden Appearance of Hope*; Jeannette Ng, *Under the Pendulum Sun*. ● *Stokers* (horror; best novel only): Christopher Golden, *Ararat*; Stephen King and Owen King, *Sleeping Beauties*; Josh Malerman, *Black Mad Wheel*; S.P. Miskowski, *I Wish I Was Like You*; Steve Rasnic Tem, *Ubo*. For the other categories see horror.org/2017-bram-stoker-awards-final-ballot/.

As Others See Us II. BBC News arts editor Will Gompertz explains reassuringly that it's all right to like *The Shape of Water*: 'But when I left the cinema 123 minutes later, I was elated. / Not because the film was thankfully over, but because I had just been treated to an intelligent, tender, beautifully shot, meticulously crafted work of art. / It's not really a fantasy at all.' (BBC, 17 February) [JH]

Random Fandom. *Jim Barker*, after frustrating delays, had his much-needed liver transplant on 13 February. [JS] ● *Jon Del Arroz* is outraged that Worldcon 76 (like SFWA—see A367) decided that it didn't want a member with his history of abusive online behaviour, and therefore refunded his membership. He's now trying to raise \$10,000 through GoFundMe for a lawsuit against the convention. [F770]

C.o.A. Eaton Collection (preferred address for donations), Erika Quintana, Acquisitions Unit Supervisor, UCR Library, P.O. Box 5900, Riverside, CA 92517-5900, USA. ● *Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden*, 485 6th Ave #2R, Brooklyn, NY 11215-4036, USA.

The Dead Past. 20 Years Ago: 'Wild turtles could not persuade me to print the long extract from Dan Gallagher's *The Pleistocene Redemption*—selected for the author's own PR as a specially good bit—in which a "monstrous turtle" subtly makes its presence known: "It sliced off Abrih's entire jaw from ear to ear, just missing the carotid artery and jugular vein. Abrih's upper larynx, ripped completely out of his neck, formed a lump of bloody sinew and cartilage floating from the right side of the hungry reptile's hideous head." Further hostilities take us into *Thog's Elegant Variations Masterclass* as in rapid succession this turtle becomes "the eight foot long horror", "the voracious monster", "the vicious animal", "the nightmarish turtle", "the Meiolania" (thrice), "the horrendous eating machine", "the monster", "the grotesque turtle", "the gigantic spiked turtle" and "the terror", all in four very busy paragraphs. Thog smack lips...' (*Ansible* 128, March 1998) ● Also: 'Lionel Fanthorpe sightings continue unchecked despite sceptics' sneers: showers of inexplicable Fanthorpeana are regularly reported in crop-circle territory, on motorbikes and on TV.' (*Ibid*)

Fanfunder. GUFF 2018: voting is open for the southbound race from Europe to Continuum (Melbourne, June) with candidates Marcin Klak (Poland) and, jointly, Steve and Alice Lawson (UK). Voting deadline: 3 April. See ozfanfunds.com/?page_id=101 for the ballot and full details. ● DUFF 2018: Down Under Fan Fund voting for the northbound trip is open and closes on 31 March. The only candidate is Marlee Jane Ward. See downunderfanfund.wordpress.com. ● TAFF 2018: TransAtlantic Fan Fund voting is still in progress and continues to 3 April. See taff.org.uk for the ballot and platforms.

Thog's Masterclass. *Bilingual Dutchman Dept.* "Glub!" said a startled Hudman aloud, in English.' (A.E. van Vogt, 'Pendulum', 1978) [BA] ● *When Yoga Goes Bad.* 'How long before I found myself curled in a sweating knot, furiously caressing myself?' (N.K. Jemisin, *The Kingdom of Gods*, 2011) [JC] ● *Out of Context.* 'Resting one hand caressingly upon the huge member, he explained exultantly that it was the ultimately last word in strength ...' (E.E. Smith, *Skylark of Space*, 1928) [HW] ● *Soiled Dept.* 'She stated that she felt like a piece of sullied cloth removed from a boiled pudding.' (Terence Haile, *Space Train*, 1962) ● *Literary Review Bad Sex Award Winner.* 'Her face and vagina are competing for my attention, so I glance down at the billiard rack of my penis and testicles.' (Christopher Bollen, *The Destroyers*, 2017)

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