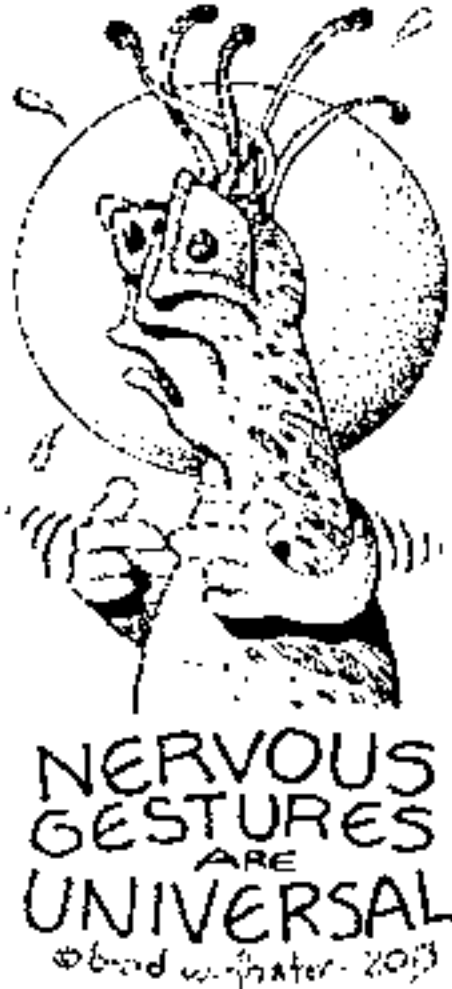


# ansible



## Ansible 316 November 2013

From David Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK. Web news.ansible.co.uk. ISSN 0265-9816 (print); 1740-942X (e). Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Brad W. Foster. Available for SAE or the final director's cut of *Parkroads*.

**Amazing BBC Revelation.** Wild rumours of 5,271,009 lost issues of *Ansible* discovered in a Nigerian outhouse were modified to the more realistic announcement that 315 had been unearthed in London Road, Reading. Elsewhere, they found some episodes of *Doctor Who* as well.

### The Trail of Doom

**David Birnbaum**, US jeweller turned philosopher, has allegedly solved the mysteries of the universe in his self-published *Summa Metaphysica* (typical breathless aperçu: 'The cosmic trajectory is from the bottomless VOID to the limitless EXTRAORDINARY.'). According to a comment at the *US Chronicle of Higher Education* website, this 'reads like L Ron Hubbard had drunken sex one night with Ayn Rand and produced this bastard thought-child'. (*Guardian*, 19 October) [PDF]

**Sir Ben Kingsley** argues that the *Ender's Game* film has qualities that mere sf fans won't appreciate: 'I think there's a much bigger audience than just your science fiction fans—we'll get them as well—but we'll also get people who want a philosophical journey, that journey of spirit through the film.' (Getreading.co.uk, 23 October) [MPJ]

**C.S. Lewis** is in the news for the approaching 50th anniversary of his death on 22 November 1963; rather less is being said about Aldous Huxley, who died on the same day. There's to be a Lewis memorial in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey, dedicated on 22 November.

**Robert Silverberg**, in London en route to the World Fantasy Convention, had a heart attack on 29 October. Treatment went well, with a stent inserted and discharge from hospital after only two days; but Bob and Karen Haber sadly had to skip the convention. [MJE/PCa] One Silverbergian comment from inside the system: 'Lunch was lousy. I think I'm going to stop eating in hospitals and go back to restaurants.'

**Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five** was cleared by the *Sunday Times* literary tribunal of any horrid genre taint: 'The cultish Vonnegut's part memoir, part study of psychosis and escape is not the sci-fi it's often dismissed as.' ('100 books to love', 6 October) [LC]

**Jacob Wallenstein** 'is the greatest science-fiction writer to never have lived', declares a *Tablet* headline. The magazine had accepted an piece about this unknown Israeli's forgotten 1955 sf epic *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow*—revealed by research to be a hoax or Borgesian invention by article author Shay Azoulay. After an editorial preface explaining all this, it appeared as fiction. (*Tablet*, 16 October) [MMW]

### Condoc

Until 19 Jan 2014 • **Alien Invasion** (exhibition), The Lightbox, Chobham Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4AA. 10:30am-5pm Tuesday-Friday, 11am-5pm Sunday. Free. See <http://tinyurl.com/q6bbqx8>.

Until 26 Jan 2014 • **Picture This: Children's Illustrated Classics** (fantasy art exhibition), British Library. Free.

7 Nov • **Weird Reading**, Horse Hospital, Colonnade, Bloomsbury, London, WC1N 1JD. 6:40pm for 7-11pm. £10 reg. See next item.

8 Nov • **The Weird** (conference on weird fiction), Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU. From 9:30am. £30 reg. Linked to the above. Details at [www.ies.sas.ac.uk/events/ies-conferences/TheWeird](http://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/events/ies-conferences/TheWeird).

8-10 Nov • **Novacon 43**, Park Inn, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. GoH Jo Walton. £45 reg. Contact 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ.

15 Nov • **50 Years of Doctor Who**, Junction 3 Library, Bristol, BS5 0YL. 7pm-8:15pm. Also creative writing workshop for youngsters aged 11-18, 4pm-5:30pm. Free booking and enquiries: 0117 9223001.

15-17 Nov • **Armadacon 25**, Future Inn, Plymouth. £30 (£25 concessions) to 18 Wadham Rd, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 3BD.

23-24 Nov • **Comic Con** (comics), Clarence Dock, Leeds, LS10 1LT. Part of Thought Bubble, the Leeds Sequential Art Festival, running 17-24 November. £22 reg; £14/day. More at [thoughtbubblefestival.com](http://thoughtbubblefestival.com).

23 Nov - 27 Apr 2014 • **Robot!** (exhibition), Palace Green Library, Durham. See [www.dur.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/exhibitions/future/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/palace.green/whatson/exhibitions/future/).

27 Nov • **BSFA Open Meeting**, Artillery Arms, 102 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8ND. 5/6pm for 7pm. Celebration of *Doctor Who*. Free.

29 Nov • **New Age of Discovery** (steampunk/performance), Snib-

ston Discovery Museum, Coalville, Leicestershire. 7pm-9:30pm. £25 reg inc meal, drink. See [www.snibston.com](http://www.snibston.com); box office 01530 278444.

7-9 Feb 2014 • **Zemi6breve** (filk), Ramada Grantham Hotel, Grantham. Now £42 reg, £29 unwaged; £45 and £30 at door. Under-18s £1/year; under-5s free. Cheques: UK Filk Convention, c/o 159 Winns Avenue, Walthamstow, London, E17 5HB.

12-13 Apr 2014 • **QED** (science/skeptics), Palace Hotel, Oxford St, Manchester, M60 7HA. £99 reg; £60 concessions. See [www.qedcon.org](http://www.qedcon.org).

24-27 Apr 2014 • **Dead by Dawn** (horror film festival), Filmhouse, Edinburgh. Box office 0131 228 2688; see [www.deadbydawn.co.uk](http://www.deadbydawn.co.uk).

5-7 Sep 2014 • **FantasyCon 2014**, Royal York Hotel, York. GoH Kate Elliott, Toby Whithouse, Larry Rostant. £40 reg, £70 joint (2 adults), under-16s £20; BFS members £30, £55, £12.50; under-5s free. Join online at [www.fantasycon2014.org](http://www.fantasycon2014.org). Rates rise 1 January.

20 Sep 2014 • **Andromeda Two**, Digbeth, Birmingham. GoH Sam Stone, David G. Hardy. 9am-10pm. £20 reg or £75 for a group of five, rising to £25 and £100 on 1 January 2014. More details and online registration at [terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw](http://terror-tree.co.uk/andromeda-tw).

18 Oct 2014 • **BristolCon**, Ramada Hotel, Bristol. GoH Jon Courtenay Grimwood, Emma Newman. £20 reg, probably rising in Spring 2014. Cheques to 18 High Leaze Road, Patchway, Bristol BS34 5AF.

31 Oct - 2 Nov 2014 • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, ?Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville St. £25 reg (short-term offer). Contact 95 Meadowgate Rd, Salford, Manchester, M6 8EN. See [fantastic-films.com](http://fantastic-films.com).

**Rumblings. Helsinki in 2017!** Recovering with a single bound from the narrow defeat of their 2015 Worldcon bid this year, the Finns are trying again for 2017: see [helsinki2017.org](http://helsinki2017.org). Existing bids are Japan and Montréal. • **London Paperback & Pulp Bookfair**: The October 2013 event was cancelled at short notice on 8 October, and no more of these fairs are planned. See [paperbackandpulp.blogspot.co.uk](http://paperbackandpulp.blogspot.co.uk).

### Infinitely Improbable

**As Others See Some of Us.** 'Take Arkham Gift Shoppe, for instance, a small comic book store on the northern fringe of Pittsburgh. When regulars arrive to pick up their monthly orders, some slip in with all the stealth of Catwoman eluding Batman. These guys carefully hide their comic-buying habit, or the extent of it, from their girlfriends, their wives (yes, they have those) because these women "aren't cool with them spending their money on something so juvenile," shop owner Jeff Bigley says.' (Melissa Keyworth, Associated Press, 6 October) [MMW]

**Awards** at WFC. *British Fantasy*. FANTASY NOVEL Graham Joyce, *Some Kind of Fairy Tale*. HORROR NOVEL Adam Nevill, *Last Days*. NOVELLA John Llewellyn Probert, *The Nine Deaths of Dr Valentine*. SHORT Ray Cluley, 'Shark! Shark!', (*Black Static* 29). COLLECTION Robert Shearman, *Remember Why You Fear Me*. ANTHOLOGY Jonathan Oliver, ed., *Magic*. SMALL PRESS ChiZine Publications. NONFICTION Pornokitsch. MAGAZINE *Interzone*. ARTIST Sean Phillips. COMIC/GRAPHIC NOVEL Brian K. Vaughan & Fiona Staples, *Saga*. SCREENPLAY *The Cabin in the Woods*. NEWCOMER Helen Marshall for *Hair Side, Flesh Side*. SPECIAL Iain Banks. • **Gemmell** (heroic fantasy): NOVEL Brent Weeks, *The Blinding Knife*. DEBUT NOVEL John Gwynne, *Malice*. COVER ART Didier Graffet & Dave Senior for Joe Abercrombie's *Red Country*. • **World Fantasy**: NOVEL G. Willow Wilson, *Alif the Unseen*. NOVELLA K.J. Parker, 'Let Maps to Others' (*Subterranean*). SHORT Gregory Norman Bossert, 'The Telling' (*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*). ANTHOLOGY Danel Olson, ed., *Postscripts #28/#29*. COLLECTION Joel Lane, *Where Furnaces Burn*. ARTIST Vincent Chong. SPECIAL PROFESSIONAL Lucia Graves, translation of *The Prisoner of Heaven* by Carlos Ruiz Zafón. SPECIAL NON-PROFESSIONAL S.T. Joshi, *Unutterable Horror*.

**The Analogizer™.** 'If Lord Justice Leveson is the Voldemort of press freedom, then I guess that makes the editor of the *Daily Mail*, Paul Dacre, Harry Potter.' (Fearlessly outspoken *Daily Mail* columnist Sarah Vine on BBC Radio 4's *What the Papers Say*) [PE]

**R.I.P.** Nick Cardy (1920-2013), US artist whose 1938 to mid-1970s comics career included work on DC's *Aquaman* and *Teen Titans*, died on 3 November aged 93. [SFS] • Tom Clancy (1947-2013), bestselling US



author of spy thrillers and technothrillers, died on 1 October; he was 66. [GW] His 'Jack Ryan' sequence moves into near-future sf territory with nuclear terrorism in *The Sum of All Fears* (1991; filmed 2002), war with a nuclear-armed Japan in *Debt of Honor* (1994), and further doomsday scenarios. ● *Frank Dietz*, long-time US fan who was a founder of the Lunarians (New York SF Society) in 1956 and chaired its first 14 Lunacons, reportedly died in October. His fanzines included *Science, Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1948-1951) and *Luna Monthly* (1969-1977). [AIP] ● *Noel Harrison* (1934-2013), UK singer/actor who's best known for 'The Windmills of Your Mind' and also co-starred in the sf-gadget-infested *The Girl from U.N.C.L.E.* (1966-1967), died on 22 October aged 79. [GD] ● *William Harrison* (1933-2013), US author and screenwriter who adapted his 1973 'Roller Ball Murder'—title story of his 1974 collection—for the film *Rollerball* (1975; remade 2002), died on 22 October; he was 79. [SFS] ● *Anthony Hinds* (1922-2013), UK film producer and (as John Elder) scriptwriter who was chiefly responsible for the X-rated Hammer Horror film phenomenon, died on 30 September aged 91. His first productions in this vein were *The Quatermass Xperiment* (1955) and *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1956). [MPJ] ● *Stanley Kauffmann* (1916-2013), US critic, author, editor and film reviewer who while at Ballantine Books acquired Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, died on 9 October aged 97. [RB] ● *Ed Lauter* (1938-2013), US character actor whose many genre credits include *King Kong* (1976), *The Clone Master*, *Timerider*, *The Rocketeer*, *Digital Man*, *The Prometheus Project* and *Starship Troopers 2* (plus the tv *ST:TNG* and *The X-Files*) died on 16 October aged 74. [MMW] ● *Dot (Dorothy) Lumley*, UK agent who ran the Dorian Literary Agency and represented various genre authors including former husband Brian Lumley, died on 5 October. In her early career as Dot Houghton she was a publisher's editor at NEL and Methuen. [PCo/JF] ● *Bruce C. Murray*, planetary geologist who headed NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in the late 1970s, died on 29 August aged 81. *Mars and the Mind of Man* (1973) by Ray Bradbury, Arthur C. Clarke, Murray, Carl Sagan and Walter Sullivan grew from a 1971 panel discussion on Mars. [AIP] ● *Philip Nutman* (1963-2013), UK journalist, horror author, comics writer and screenwriter who was *Fangoria's* British correspondent for ten years, died on 7 October. [AIP] ● *Leland Sapiro* (1924-2013) US fan who edited the 'sercon' academic fanzine *Riverside Quarterly* (formerly *Inside*, with others) from 1962 to 1993, died on 8 October aged 89. RQ, a three-time Hugo nominee, saw the first appearance of Alexei Panshin's *Heinlein in Dimension*. [PDF/AIP] ● *Lou Scheimer* (1928-2013), US tv producer whose animated series included *Star Trek* (1973-1974, winning him a daytime Emmy), the toy-based *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* (1983-1985) and *Ghostbusters* (1986), died on 19 October; he was 84. [MPJ] ● *Elliot K Shorter* (1939-2013), long-time US fan, SCA stalwart, TAFF delegate to the 1970 Worldcon in Germany and former genre book dealer, died on 1 October. He was 74. [F/AIP] ● *Larry Tucker* (1948-2013), US fan and former con organizer active in the Stilyagi Air Corps, SF Oral History Association and Ann Arbor SF Association, died on 8 October. [SHS] ● *Takashi Yanase* (1919-2013), Japanese manga writer/ animator famed for his widely franchised manga/anime superhero Anpanman (whose replaceable head—sometimes fed to the needy—is an *anpan*, a bun stuffed with red bean paste), died on 13 October. He was 94. [MMW]

**The Weakest Link.** Richard Bacon interviewed author Susan Hill on his Radio 5 Live radio show on 31 October; they discussed children and Hallowe'en. RB: 'Is there a ghost story you would recommend for children under 11?' SH: 'Anything by M.R. James.' RB: 'Oh, she's great.' SH: 'She is a he.' RB: 'I did not know that.' [MPJ]

**As Others So Very Rarely See Us.** Ned Denny reviews *The Secret of Abdu el Yezdi* by Mark Hodder: 'Great fun, thought-provoking, highly literate and beautifully written, this is a perfect example of the all-round superiority of "genre" fiction over the dreary literary mainstream.' (*Daily Mail*, 11 October) [CMJ]

**Outraged Letters.** Simon R. Green on Frederik Pohl: 'He was there at the beginning of my discovery of sf. My father had a pile of old *Galaxy* magazines, which I discovered at a young age, and hungrily devoured. I can still remember *Galaxy* no 46, UK edition [... with] Fred Pohl's "The Man who Ate the World". It fascinated me. I'd never read anything like it. I have to say, it scared the hell out of the eight-year-old me; it wasn't until I re-read it many years later, as a student, that I realized it was a satire. Still an amazing story, though. It seems like Fred Pohl was there with me for years, always turning out new work, always innovative, always fun. Now, more and more, the great voices are falling silent.' ● *Lee Wood* was thrilled to learn that, for only \$150 a bottle, one Australian vintner offers a Shiraz wine called Giant Squid

Ink. 'I wonder if this is what Margaret Atwood drinks? ... I could see it in a special bottle with rocket fin-tips...' Checking the product page to learn what proportion of Giant Squid Ink this actually contains, I suspect it may not even be an ingredient. *Lee*: 'Well, since Margaret Atwood "doesn't write science fiction," a bottle of Giant Squid Ink wine with no squid ink in it seems ... appropriate, somehow...'

**Random Fandom.** *Ian Schoenherr* seeks sf paintings and b/w artwork by his father John Schoenherr of *Dune* fame, hoping to scan or photograph them for a book. Contact [ianschoenherr@rcn.com](mailto:ianschoenherr@rcn.com).

**The Dead Past.** *11 Years Ago.* Danny Sichel points out that *Ansible* missed the 2002-2006 tv cultural phenomenon *Fantasy Bedtime Hour*: 'It's two seminaked women in bed together, reading passages from *Lord Foul's Bane* out loud, discussing what they've read, doing live re-enactments, and then consulting with experts (i.e., people who've actually read the whole book) ... There's a lovely section in episode 2 where they try to figure out what the hell "preterite exaltation" means.' Later guest experts included Stephen R. Donaldson, who should know. ● *40 Years Ago,* Novacon 3 presented the first Nova Award for UK fanzines—to Peter Weston, for *Speculation*. (*Checkpoint* 43, November 1973) ● *50 Years Ago:* 'A tragic gap will be left in the professional science fiction field next March [1964] when Nova magazines *New Worlds* and *Science Fantasy* will follow their late sister magazine *Science Fiction Adventures* into limbo by ceasing publication.' Editor John Carnell wrote: 'It is with regret that I announce that with the March published issues of *New Worlds Science Fiction* and *Science Fantasy*, these two publications will be discontinued and Nova Publications Ltd. will cease to exist. This decision has been forced upon us by a steady decline in sales during the past few years ...' (*Skyrack* 60, November 1963) In the event, *New Worlds* was taken over by Roberts & Vinter/Compact Books with a new young editor, Michael Moorcock. Whatever became of him?

**C.o.A.** *Rosy & Guy Lillian*, c/o Green, 1389 Holly Avenue, Merritt Island, FL 32952, USA. (Email unchanged. PO Box address to follow.)

**Fanfundery.** *TAFF 2014.* Nominations are open for the eastbound race from North America to the London Worldcon. Intending candidates must arrange their nominees, platform etc by 31 December 2013—see [taff.org.uk/news/ann1310.html](http://taff.org.uk/news/ann1310.html) for more. Voting runs to 22 April 2014.

● *GUFF 2014.* Nominations are open for the northbound race, Australasia to (again) Loncon 3. Candidates need to get their acts together, as above, by 15 November 2013: see [taff.org.uk/guff/ann-1310.html](http://taff.org.uk/guff/ann-1310.html).

**So Long, and Thanks for All the Fish.** *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Radio Show* 2013 UK Tour was cancelled with immediate effect on 21 October owing to 'extreme economic pressures ... Ticket holders are being contacted and should contact venues for refunds.'

**Chog's Masterclass.** *Hostage to Fortune Dept.* 'And then, as if written by the hand of a bad novelist, an incredible thing happened.' (Jonathan Stroud, *The Amulet of Samarkand*, 2003) [JI via DVB] ● *Joy of Anatomy.* 'The hole was off-centre, so the end of the belt projected upwards and then dangled down again under its own weight, like a failed erection.' (Anne Holt, *Blind Goddess*, 1993; trans Tom Geddes 2012) [PB] ● *Dept of Free Fall.* 'But now that they were in orbit the *Ingersoll* was operating in zero gravity.' [*In which context:*] 'Tarrant's face twisted into a death's head grimace, then he crumpled to the floor. [...] Siffra finally let go of him and stood up again ...' (Gary Gibson, *Marauder*, 2013) [JC] ● *Tell-Tale Heart Dept.* 'His heart pounded loudly inside his head.' 'His heart pumped loudly inside his head.' 'He could feel his heart thumping loudly inside his head now.' (Matthew Reilly, *Contest*, 1996) [GW] 'His heart pounded loudly inside his head.' '... and suddenly his heart was pumping very loudly inside his head.' (Matthew Reilly, *Ice Station*, 1998) 'He was breathing hard, his heart pounding loudly inside his head.' (Matthew Reilly, *Temple*, 1999) ● *Dept of Complicit Carpeting.* 'The blue carpet underfoot was embroiled with the CyberTech Defence Systems insignia every five meters or so.' (R.S. Johnson, *The Genesis Project: The Children of CS-13*, 2011) [AR] ● *Neat Tricks Dept.* 'A gang of priests gathered around Cushing's old white head, kissing his ass.' (John Flood, *Bag Men*, 1997) [PB] ● *Dept of Eyebrow Motility.* "'Things here are just hopping,'" he told me, his eyebrows flying all over his narrow face.' [*A different chap:*] 'His eyebrows were winging around his face in interrogation.' (both Charlaine Harris, *Real Murders*, 1990) [MP]

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