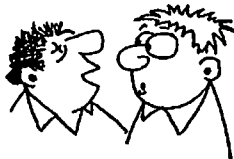


# ansible



Norman Spinrad is invited to SMOFcon

Ansible 122 September 1997

From Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, UK. Fax 0118 988 9914. ISSN 0265-9816. E-mail ansible@cix.co.uk. Logo: Dan Steffan. Cartoon: Atom, 1987. Available for SAE or questions requiring the answer 'Fourteen'.

**JOLT OF THE YEAR.** Martin Hoare's very-early-morning call: 'Hello, Dave, you won the Fanwriter Hugo and Princess Diana's died.'

## The Inner Circles

**Brian Aldiss** announced his holiday plans in *The New Yorker* (11 Aug): 'I'd sign up for a trip to Mars. I'd like to see it as a sort of Ayer's Rock in the sky, where you can commune with the cosmos. It would also be good for a honeymoon.' [MM] But Brian will practise safe tourism as founder of the Association for the Protection and Integrity of an Unspoilt Mars: 'I have established APIUM in response to the argument that we must terraform Mars. We don't want it to become a dreary suburb of a terrestrial city. We must pause and think. All environments are sacred, even a dusty, rocky planet; we must not wreck it.' Too late?

**George Alec Effinger**, despite depression, a recent diagnosis of hepatitis C, and bankruptcy following vast medical bills, was cheered by a bit of luck in court. 'The good news: at the bankruptcy hearing, when the judge decided who would maintain my rights to the continuing characters (Maureen Birnbaum, Marid, etc.) as well as the rights to everything else I've published, the bank's trustees didn't show up. I won by default and was out of there in ten minutes.'

**Greg Egan** on his *Diaspora* (Millennium, UK): 'the publisher's claim that I've been shortlisted for the Clarke Award is a load of old bollocks.'

**John Elliot** (1918-1997), the TV writer who collaborated with Fred Hoyle on the BBC's *A for Andromeda* and *The Andromeda Breakthrough*, and both serials' novelizations, died in Bristol on 14 Aug.

**Greg Feeley** responds to A120: 'I didn't know about Patera Feeler in *Exodus from the Long Sun*, but can't summon deep surprise. Here's a Fun Quiz for your readers. What do the following novels—*The Paper Grail* by James P. Blaylock, *Fallen Angels* by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle, and Michael Flynn, *The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter* by Lucius Shepard, and *Exodus from the Long Sun* by Gene Wolfe—have in common?'

**David Garnett** sent a press release: 'The latest (last?) *New Worlds* has been published in the USA by White Wolf, and David Garnett has said he's quitting as editor. Is there any connection? "No comment," said Garnett. What about the spineless, brainless, gutless behaviour of British publishers in refusing a British edition? "No fucking comment."'

**John Grant** has something to fill his copious free time: 'Collins & Brown, who bought the Paper Tiger list, have hired me (part-time) to run it. I'll be working from home, so in effect this'll become the editorial address. That said, there'll be a fair amount of start-up organization to do, so anyone who eagerly sends me a portfolio or comes to the door will, for at least the next couple of months, be told to Go To Bed.'

**Peter F. Hamilton**, unusually, doesn't appear to have mentioned Greg Feeley in a novel. But might there be some hidden link between negative Hamilton criticism by a certain BSFA reviewer and *The Reality Dysfunction's* cameo of a grotesque and troll-like torturer (soon nastily killed off) who is known only as Kincaid? For *Interzone* readers there's also this more genial chap who tortures prisoners, called Dr Gilmore.

**Carl Jacobi** (1908-1997), US author of pulp fiction since 1929, died in Minnesota on 25 Aug. He wrote for *Weird Tales* in its 1930s heyday; Arkham House published books of his supernatural stories. [JC]

**Terry Pratchett** was, naturally, at the Discworld Event: 'You'd have found it ... odd. I don't know how many people were there on the Saturday, maybe 800, probably not more than half a dozen you'd have remembered from an sf convention. Refreshing, really. More than 50 people in the masquerade, about ten of whom would have done well on a Worldcon stage. There were five Rincewinds of various sizes, all with pretty good costumes, so in the end we lined 'em up about thirty yards away and the first one to cross the line got a prize. If I close my eyes I can still see them, robes flapping, as they stampeded straight at me....'

**Norman Spinrad** has issued another public-domain message to the sf world, complaining of being effectively blacklisted by US distributors following poor sales—scribed to poor promotion—of his *Pictures at 11*, and offering his new novel *He Walked Among Us* for a \$1 advance to any publisher prepared to give it a good home. The sample chapter at

the Spinrad web site peevishly describes an sf author's rotten time as guest at a convention full of overweight fans. Students of fan slang were interested to find 'smoffing' defined as 'public gropings and smoochings'. So that's what the Worldcon politicians have been doing for all these years in their smoke-filled rooms....

**Cherry Wilder** 'is setting out in October for New Zealand, to spend the autumn of her days, which starts next Tuesday.' (Dated 26 Aug.)

**Tad Williams** was at the Aug BSFA meet: 'It was a small but merry event. I banged on at, I'm sure, nauseating length about various things dear to my heart, and slandered Norman Spinrad with faint praise.'

## Conapye

5-7 Sep • **Festival of Fantastic Films**, Sacha's Hotel, Manchester. £55 reg. Contact 5 S.Mesnesfield Rd, Salford, Manchester, M7 3QP.

5-7 Sep • **South Trek 97** (media), Southend Pier. Open air, £1.85 pier rail fare daily; 10am onward. 01494 715933 or 01702 305876.

20 Sep • **Whitchurch Fireworks**, nr Pangbourne ... moved from usual 'approx 4 July' date. Contact 45 Tilehurst Rd, Reading, RG1 7TT.

24 Sep • **BSFA London meeting**, Jubilee, York Rd, nr Waterloo. 7pm on (fans in the bar by 5pm). 'Killing Books' panel on criticism.

26-8 Sep • **Masque 5** (costuming), Sheringham Youth Hostel, Sheringham, Norfolk. £30 reg. Hostel accommodation £25/person/night full board. Contact 35 Iverley Road, Halesowen, W.Midlands, B63 3EP.

27-8 Sep • **Hypotheticon**, Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Anne Gay, Brian Waugh. £20 reg. Contact 38 Scotstoun St, Glasgow, G14 0UN.

18 Oct • **Dr Who Event**, Cardiff University. With Elisabeth Sladen ('Sarah Jane Smith'). £8 reg. Cheque + SAE to SFFC Events c/o 57 Keppoch St, Roath, Cardiff, CF2 3JS. 'Places for this event are limited.'

25-7 Oct • **Octocon/Eurocon '97**, Dublin Castle. GoH Robert Jordan; several others. £30/£30I reg. Contact (SAE/IRC) Eurocon, PO Box 5130, Dublin 4, Eire. Sterling cheques to English agent D.J.Lally 'No 2 a/c', 64 Richborne Terrace, London, SW8 1AX; 0171 735 3819.

29 Oct • **Jubilee** (as BSFA): unofficial pre-World Fantasy Con evening. In London for WFC? Make merry with impoverished non-attendees.

30 Oct - 2 Nov • **World Fantasy Convention, The International Hotel**, Marsh Wall, London. £100/\$165 reg; day rates £50 Sat, £30 Fri or Sun. Contact PO Box 31, Whitby, North Yorks, YO22 4YL.

14-16 Nov • **Novacon 27**, De Vere Abbey Hotel, Great Malvern. £30 reg, rising 30 Sep. Contact 14 Park St, Lye, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 8SS. At last report the hotel was very nearly full.

10-13 Apr 98 • **Intuition** (Eastercon), Jarvis Piccadilly Hotel and Britannia Hotel, Manchester. £30 reg, £15 supp, now rising in Nov 97. Contact 1 Waverley Way, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey, SM5 3LQ.

25-28 Sep 98 • **Albacon 98**, Central Hotel, Glasgow. GoH Ray Harryhausen, Diana Wynne Jones, Kim Newman. £25 reg, £15 supp to 31 Dec. Contact F1/2, 10 Atlas Rd, Springburn, Glasgow, G21 4TE.

**Rumblings • Reconvene** (Eastercon '99): overhearing a rumour at the August Jubilee about resignations having reduced the committee to two people, the three committee members present wondered nervously how to break this to the other seven.... • **Eastercon 2000**. A new bid has emerged, chaired by Andrew A.Adams and using the Central Hotel, Glasgow. Contact **2Kon**, 15 Kersland Street, Glasgow, G12 8BW.

## LoneStarCon 2

Another Worldcon enters history: the 55th, held in San Antonio, Texas, in weather so hot that merely thinking about it caused Brits to sweat profusely. Perhaps inevitably, the opening ceremony featured a cowboy singer, plus six-gun, rope and bullwhip tricks. Final attendance: 4,006. *Teresa Nielsen Hayden*: 'This convention has too much white space.'

**Hugo (And Other) Awards.** NOVEL Kim Stanley Robinson, *Blue Mars*. NOVELLA George R.R.Martin, 'Blood of The Dragon' (*Asimov's* 7/96). NOVELLETTE Bruce Sterling, 'Bicycle Repairman' (*Asimov's* 10/96). SHORT Connie Willis, 'The Soul Selects Her Own Society ...' (*Asimov's* 10/96). NON-FICTION L.Sprague de Camp, *Time & Chance* (autobiography). DRAMATIC *Babylon 5* 'Severed Dreams'. EDITOR Gardner Dozois.

PRO ARTIST Bob Eggleton. SEMIPROZINE *Locus*. FANZINE *Mimosa*. FAN WRITER Dave Langford. FAN ARTIST William Rotsler. ● JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD Michael A. Burstein. FIRST FANDOM AWARD Hal Clement. BIG HEART AWARD John L. Coker III, for 'fannish photographic service'.

**Hugo Statistics.** Winners tended to lead the count all along, none more dramatically than the B5 episode, with 319 votes to *Star Trek's* 85. (This was again the most popular category—641 ballots.) The Texas fanzine *Tangent* began with 88 votes to *Mimosa's* 72, which after mystic transferable-vote calculations became 135 to 142. Illustrating the value of high-profile Hugo campaigning, *Nova Express* emerged as the fanzine with fewest first-place votes ... one fewer, indeed, than *Ansible*. (British *News: Attitude* proved to have missed nomination by just one vote.) A final wince of sympathy for one of the two nominees cruelly placed below 'No Award'. The other, in Dramatic Presentation, was *Mars Attacks*.

**Sidewise Awards:** new prizes for alternate-history sf. LONG Stephen Baxter, *Voyage*. SHORT Walter Jon Williams, 'Foreign Devils'.

**Worldcon 2000.** Psephologists failed to register astonishment at the shock victory of Chicago's bid to hold the 58th Worldcon, which was unopposed. Hence **Chicon 2000** (31 Aug - 4 Sep), with guests Ben Bova, Bob Eggleton, Jim Baen, Bob & Anne Passovoy, and Harry Turtledove (toastmaster). \$125 reg (presupporters \$115); \$40 conversion for site selection voters; \$40 supp; rates rise 1 Mar 98. Contact Chicon 2000 Registration, PO Box 642057, Chicago, IL 60665, USA.

**Art Attack.** *Kelly Freas* reported that a mass of his artwork was stolen early on its journey to the worldcon: 10 large framed colour paintings, 18 smaller pieces, total minimum-bid value around \$25,000. 'Odds are that the thief is not oriented in the direction of art or sf and that everything will have wound up in a Los Angeles dumpster.'

**Oddsments.** LoneStarCon must have felt crushed by its pre-publicity in that journal of record, the *Harlan Ellison Record Collection Newsletter*: 'Due to the outstandingly disrespectful, rude and insulting behaviour towards Harlan by an arrogant lackey of the programming committee of this year's Worldcon, Harlan will NOT be attending.' [DMS] ● The Hugos have granite slab bases in the shape, though luckily not the size, of Texas. *Gardner Dozois*: 'Pennsylvania will be jealous!' ● *Martin Hoare* ('Martin Lewis' in web coverage) enjoyed making his usual speech: 'It is an unaccustomed pleasure to be with you tonight ... and Dave Langford sends a very big thank-you for this Hugo Award. Now this is my opportunity for ... revenge! You see, in February this year the British con *Attitude* presented its very own "Trilby Awards", including a prize for Best Spoof Award. By popular vote this went to the Hugos, so Dave accepted on their behalf. I was at Boscione in America and the bastard phoned and got me out of bed at five in the morning to tell me that the Hugos had won. Well, you all know what I'm going to do tonight, don't you?' ● *GoH Michael Moorcock* ('Moocock' in the programme book) mysteriously announced that he'd been told no one would ever track him down if he moved to Texas, as 'that's where all the washed-up writers go.' ● Frequently overheard: 'Where were you when you heard about Princess Di?' 'In the Hugo Losers' party, drinking a beer.' [LM]

## Infinitely Improbable

**Publishers and Sinners.** HarperCollins US has backed down after compounding its dodgy cancellation of 106 book contracts with attempts to intimidate authors into repaying advances or assigning HC a share of income from resale of their work (as a condition of receiving the balance of the advance). These shark-like demands are now to be relaxed. All this results from a \$270 million 'restructuring' which aims to make HC hugely more profitable by publishing fewer books. [MB]

**Random Fandom.** *Cindy Lee Berryhill & Paul Williams* married on 20 July. ● *Norman Beswick*, long-time fan and BSFA/Foundation reviewer, has terminal prostate cancer and would be glad of letters and fanzines to enliven his last months: 21 Churchill Rd, Church Stretton, Shropshire, SY6 6AE. ● *Marcia McCoy & Tim Illingworth* were duly married on 23 Aug in Chattanooga; the appreciative fan audience included—to list only Brits—Chris Cooper (best man), Paul Dormer, the Hoares and Chris O'Shea. 'Who gives this woman away?' 'Her sons do!' [SJ] ● *Michael Scarpa* submitted a fantasy story for *Ansible* publication. I read as far as his pen name, M. Malefica Grendelwolf Pendragon Le Pay. ● *Bob (fake) Shaw* may shortly be homeless: 'his flat, which belonged to his recently deceased father, is to be sold from under him by the rest of the family.' [C] ● *Bjo Trimble*, though optimistic in the face of a lupus diagnosis, regrets that her media zine *SF Spotlight* must 'go on long hiatus, due to lack of money to continue with it. Ah well ...'

**In Typo Veritas.** *Mike Ashley* noticed that the Borgo Press scanning software has trouble with the letter-pair 'cl', and has usefully improved

the text for their coming reprint of William F. Temple's *The Fleshpots of Sansato* ... 'He shut the door quietly with a soft dick.'

**Wyndham Archive.** The SF Foundation hopes to buy this material (including unpublished MSS) and is busy raising money. Details from Andy Sawyer, U of Liverpool Library, PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA.

**World Fantasy Awards** shortlist: NOVEL Terence M. Green, *Shadow of Ashland*; William Kotzwinkle, *The Bear Went Over The Mountain*; Marc Laidlaw, *The 37th Mandala*; George R.R. Martin, *A Game of Thrones*; Rachel Pollack, *Godmother Night*; Melanie Rawn, Jennifer Roberson & Kate Elliott, *The Golden Key*; Mark Sumner, *Devil's Tower*. ● NOVELLA Suzy McKee Charnas, 'Beauty and the Opera or The Phantom Beast'; Mark Helprin, *A City in Winter*; George R.R. Martin, 'Blood of the Dragon'; Susan Palwick, 'GI Jesus'; Michael Marshall Smith, 'Hell Hath Enlarged Herself'. ● SHORT James P. Blaylock, 'Thirteen Phantasms'; Dennis Etchison, *The Dead Cop*; Graham Masterton, 'Underbed'. ● ANTHOLOGY Ellen Datlow/Terri Windling, *The Year's Best Fantasy & Horror*; Katharine Kerr/Martin H. Greenberg, *The Shimmering Door*; Stephen Jones/David Sutton, *Dark Terrors 2*; Patrick Nielsen Hayden, *Starlight 1*. ● COLLECTION Richard Chizmar, *Midnight Promises*; Terry Lamsley, *Confession with the Dead*; Jonathan Lethem, *The Wall of the Sky, The Wall of the Eye*; Thomas Ligotti, *The Nightmare Factory*; James Morrow, *Bible Stories for Adults*; Norman Partridge, *Bad Intentions*; S.P. Somtow, *The Pavilion of Frozen Women*. ● ARTIST Thomas Canty, H.R. Giger, Moebius (Jean Giraud), J.K. Potter. ● SPECIAL/PROFESSIONAL Diana Wynne Jones, *The Tough Guide to Fantasyland*; Stephen Jones, editing & anthologies; David Pringle, contributions to genre; Kristine Kathryn Rusch, editing *F&SF*; Michael J. Weldon, *The Psychotronic® Video Guide*. ● NON-PROFESSIONAL Pedogan & Bremer, book publishing; Paula Guran, *DarkEcho*; Barbara & Christopher Roden, Ash-Tree Press.

**C.O.A.** *Cindy Lee Berryhill & Paul Williams*, PO Box 232517, Encinitas, CA 92023, USA. *Bill Bowers*, 4651 Glenway Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45238-4503, USA. *Alison Freebairn*, 41 Kendal Rd, East Kilbride, G75 8QT. *Roelof Goudriaan & Lynne Ann Morse*, PO Box 5861, Dublin 6, Ireland. *Jonathan Jones & Sharon Lewis*, Ground Floor Flat, 32 Theobald Rd, Canton, Cardiff, CF5 1LP. *Dents Parsley Leigh & Stephen Leigh*, 1549 Teakwood Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45224, USA. *Neil Rest*, 1549 W Birchwood Ave, Chicago, IL 60626, USA. *Nick Shears*, Heptagon, Broomfield Lane, Farnsfield, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG4 2LQ. *N. Lee Wood*, 30 Town End, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 1PF; 01538 750352. *Cuddles* lost her address book in a Windows 95 disaster: updates are requested.

**Price of Fame.** The legendary International Biographical Centre is again informing a select few that they're included in *International Authors and Writers Who's Who* and can buy copies to impress friends—only £95 each! One *Ansible* regular received a whole wad of exclusive offers: to the 'Rev Armytage Ware, Paul le Page Barnett, John Grant, Eve Devereux, Dennis Brezhnev and even little Freddy Duff-Ware....'

**TAFF.** Honest D. West (The Punter's Friend) has calculated these odds for the current eastbound TransAtlantic Fun Fund race: 'even money O'Brien, 5/4 Gonzalez, 2/1 Rosenzweig, 3/1 Sadler, 10/1 HO Funds.' Candidates for the westbound trip to next year's Baltimore worldcon are beginning to emerge: so far, Bridget Hardcastle and Maureen Kincaid Speller. ● In a fit of megalomania, your editor is organizing the retyping of old, uncollected TAFF reports for web and later, paper publication. Volunteers welcome! ● **GUFF:** I hear rumours of a new (out-of-sequence?) race to bring an Aussie to Intuition.

**Thog's Flasterclass.** *Dept of In Space No One Can Hear You Scream:* 'He'd soon learnt to speak in a half shout, sound didn't carry far in free fall.' (Peter F. Hamilton, *Mindstar Rising*, 1993) [JB] ● 'The argument was a peripatetic orang-utan, bouncing off the walls of their separate frustrations like a ping-pong ball in a wind tunnel.' (David Gerrold, 'Chess with a Dragon', 1987) [PW] ● 'The underwriter seemed equally amused, frisking up the ends of his moustache, eager for them to join in the fun.' (J.G. Ballard, *Cocaine Nights*, 1996) [BS] ● "'Theory is able to predict long-term dangers in practice," the mouth beneath those cornflower eyes commented.' (Robert Conquest, *A World of Difference*, 1955) [JB] ● 'He covered his face and pressed his fingertips against his closed eyes in a vain effort to wipe the blood-stained images from his retinas. His fingers could not reach deep enough.' (Patrick Tilley, *The Amtrak Wars*, 1983) ● 'And with his eyes he literally scoured the corners of the cell.' (Vladimir Nabokov, *Invitation to a Beheading*, 1959)

*Ansible* 122 © Dave Langford, 1997. Thanks to Paul Barnett, John Boston, Molly Brown, John Clute, Cuddles, Samantha Joudé, Laurie Mann, Murray Moore, D.M. Sherwood, Bernard Sigaud, Martha Soukup, Robert Sneddon, Peter Wareham, and our Hero Distributors: Janice Murray (NA), SCIS, Alan Stewart (Oz), and Martin Tudor (Brum Group). 4 Sep 97