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for immediate release

The winners of this year's annual Campbell and Sturgeon awards were announced Friday, June 28, at the [Campbell Conference Awards Ceremony](#) held on the University of Kansas campus in Lawrence.

The [Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award](#) for best short science fiction of 2018 was presented by jurors Kij Johnson and Noël Sturgeon, Trustee of the Sturgeon estate and Ted's daughter. This year's first-place winner is [Annalee Newitz](#), for their story "[When Robot and Crow Saved East St. Louis](#)," published by Slate.com.

On winning the award, Newitz thanked the jury, Slate Future Tense, Ed Finn, and their partners Jesse Burns (present) and Charlie Jane Anders (last year's winner). In their acceptance speech, Newitz went on to say:

It feels appropriate to be receiving the Sturgeon Award because when I was first getting into science fiction as a kid, I checked a book called *More Than Human* out of the library and it was the weirdest thing I have ever read. It really blew my mind, and it stuck with me for decades afterwards. I have continued to be fascinated by the idea of hive minds and the way Sturgeon offered such an affecting portrait of marginalized people who band together and become stronger through community. Despite being called idiots and outcasts, they take solace in each other's company and represent a better future for humanity.

In my story, I played with similar themes – an abandoned drone and a crow become friends, and together they fight to stop certain death among the humans in East St. Louis. It's a hopeful story, though it's predicated on the fact that the people in East St. Louis are in danger from an epidemic because the CDC has shut down due to budget cuts. In real life, of course, East St. Louis needs more than robots and crows – we need the CDC, and we need other government agencies that protect the most vulnerable members of the population.

It's my belief that science fiction can help us with that by providing a kind of emotional infrastructure that helps us believe in a better world despite our present difficulties. Fiction may not offer concrete ways to fix our problems, but it gives us the resolve to confront those difficulties in real life. That's what I want my story to do – to give people enough hope to carry with them into real life, to continue to resist injustice. And to push for social programs that cities need more than ever.

Winning second place for the Sturgeon was [Adam Shannon's "On the Day You Spend Forever with Your Dog."](#) The third-place winning story was [Daryl Gregory's "Nine Last Days on Planet Earth."](#)

The [John W. Campbell Memorial Award](#) for best science fiction novel of 2018 was presented by juror Chris McKitterick and Campbell Conference administrator Ruth Lichtwardt. This year's first-place winner is [Sam J. Miller](#), for his novel [Blackfish City](#), published by Ecco.

Miller accepted remotely from New York City, citing the importance of being home to participate in the 50th anniversary of Stonewall this weekend. In his acceptance speech, Miller said:

I'm really happy and really surprised by this award. I thought that my John Campbell karma wasn't very good because I wrote a story called "Things With Beards" that was gay fanfic based on the movie *The Thing*, which was based on a story of his. I thought he'd be mad about that, but apparently he's into it.

I really want to thank the jury who worked hard on a tough decision, and I want to thank my fellow finalists who are all amazing writers. There's so much great science fiction happening right now, and I'm excited and honored to be part of that. I want to thank my agent Seth Fishman and my editor Zack Wagman for seeing something in this story and bringing it out into the world. I've got to thank my sister, my brother-in-law, my nephew, and my new niece for just being generally amazing.

I have to thank my mom, who is not a lesbian grandmother with a polar bear and killer whale on a mission of bloody revenge, but who is still a kickass warrior who became the inspiration for the character who is at the heart of *Blackfish City*. She's an all-around amazing inspiration and a fucking brilliant writer, so watch out for her stuff.

Finally, above all and always, my husband Juancy, who turned me on to the three greatest narrative influences on my work: Octavia Butler, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, and *Battlestar Galactica*. I wouldn't be the writer I am without those things, and I wouldn't be the person that I am without you...

Winning second place for best novel was **Mary Robinette Kowal's** *The Calculating Stars*. The third-place winning novel was **Audrey Schulman's** *Theory of Bastards*.

On behalf of the Center, jurors, and attendees, thanks to all who participated, and congratulations to the winners.
Ad Astra!

Christopher McKitterick and Kij Johnson
Directors, [Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction](#)