



*Lawrence, Kansas
for immediate release*

This year's winners of the [Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award](#) for the best short science fiction story, and the [John W. Campbell Memorial Award](#) for best science fiction novel, have been announced by [Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction](#) director [Chris McKitterick](#). The honors were presented during the [awards ceremony and banquet](#) held at the University of Kansas campus on Friday, June 22, as part of the annual [Campbell Conference](#).

Winners of the 2018 Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award

The winners of the [Theodore Sturgeon Memorial Award](#) for best short science fiction of 2017 were presented by award juror and Sturgeon's daughter [Nöel Sturgeon](#), and juror and Center associate director [Kij Johnson](#):

1st: "[Don't Press Charges and I Won't Sue](#)," by [Charlie Jane Anders](#). *Boston Review: Global Dystopias*, Oct 2017.

2nd: "[And Then There Were \(N-One\)](#)," by [Sarah Pinsker](#). *Uncanny*, March 2017.

3rd: "[A Series of Steaks](#)," by [Vina Jie-Min Prasad](#). *Clarkesworld*, Jan 2017.

In her acceptance speech, [Charlie Jane Anders](#) discussed the role science fiction plays in helping think about and understand our differences, topics that the genre helps address. She used the example of a book often considered a classic, *Myra Breckenridge* by Gore Vidal (1963), to discuss how mainstream culture envisioned transgender individuals as Other and even as a problem to be solved. Anders wrote her story in part to respond to harmful stereotypes and present a thoughtful, nuanced view of the transgender experience, using science fiction to throw gender assumptions into sharp relief.

The [Sturgeon Award](#) recognizes the best science fiction short story of each year. Established in 1987 by [James Gunn](#) (the Center's Founding Director) and Sturgeon's partner Jayne Engelhart Tannehill and his children, this important award honors the work of a man who often explored seeing the Other as ourselves. Just as Sturgeon considered the social and psychological impact on the characters in his stories, Anders looks closely at how real people might respond to these scenarios in her story.

Winners of the 2018 John W. Campbell Memorial Award

The winners of the [John W. Campbell Memorial Award](#) for best science fiction novel of 2017 were presented by conference administrator [Ruth Lichtwardt](#), award juror [Elizabeth Anne Hull](#), and newly named award chair [Chris McKitterick](#):

1st: [The Genius Plague](#), by **David Walton**. Pyr, Oct 2017.

2nd: (tie) [The Moon and the Other](#), by **John Kessel**. Saga Press, April 2017.

2nd: (tie) [The People's Police](#), by **Norman Spinrad**. Tor Books, Feb 2017.

3rd: [The Rift](#), by **Nina Allan**. Titan Books, July 2017.

In his acceptance speech, [David Walton](#) talked about the impact of science fiction on his life. He related that reading his first science fiction book, *Rendezvous with Rama* by Arthur C. Clarke (winner of the 1974 Campbell), ended with a revelation every bit as amazing as the rest of the novel. This tradition of eye-opening awe, seeing the world in new ways, has inspired him throughout his life. Walton expressed deep joy and gratitude at being included among the greats honored by this award.

Walton's novel is about a smart network of fungal intelligences in the Amazon which infects humans with genius, and the forces in this world that try to stop it. He sees these questions of natural and unnatural drives to greater understand the world as extremely relevant to the struggles our society faces. Taking apart what it means to be human and looking at it in a new way is, to Walton, the great gift of science fiction.

The [Campbell Award](#), established by Harry Harrison and Brian W. Aldiss in 1972 to honor the late editor of *Astounding Science Fiction* magazine (now *Analog*) and continue his efforts to encourage writers to produce their best work, has been presented at the Campbell Conference since 1979. One of the top awards for science fiction, its [finalist lists](#) have been called the "gold standard" in the genre, honoring work that finds new ways to use science fiction to look at the human condition. Many consider Campbell – who edited the magazine and guided its authors from 1937 until his death in 1971 – the father of modern SF. Jurors this year included Gregory Benford, Sheila Finch, James Gunn, Elizabeth Anne Hull, Paul Kincaid, McKitterick, Pamela Sargent, and Lisa Yaszek.

Campbell Conference and Awards 2018

The [Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction](#) has held the [Campbell Conference](#) each year since 1979, usually in Lawrence, Kansas. This year's event delved into one of today's most intriguing concepts, "**The Posthuman and Science Fiction**," offering insights from both mainstream and SF scholars and authors. Most activities took place **June 22-24** at the [University of Kansas Student Union](#), including a panel discussion on SF writing; the Awards Banquet; formal presentations on this year's topic; a round-table discussion with scholars, scientists, writers, and fans; readings and signings by attending authors and editors; and receptions. As with this year, the award winners usually attend this intimately sized event.

On behalf of the Center, jurors, and attendees, Chris McKitterick thanks all who participated and congratulates the winners. *Ad Astra!*