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COSMOS BOOKS
an imprint of Wildside Press
9710 Traville Gateway Dr. #234
Rockville, MD 20850
USA

NONFICTION
Publication Dates:
May 2009 (hardback and trade paper)
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STARCOMBING

columns, essays, reviews

and a few stories by

DAVID LANGFORD

“Nobody I can think of in genre, and few writers working today, writes comic prose as well as Langford.” –Adam Roberts on *The Sex Column*.

“Langford has been for years science fiction’s chief critical gadfly, reading vast numbers of books and writing about them with authority, almost unimaginable zest and a lively blend of sass and sympathy.” –Michael Dirda, *Washington Post*

“Langford is a consistently entertaining stylist who takes his material seriously, but not too seriously, and who after nearly three decades remains a valuable and eminently sane voice in the field.” –Gary K. Wolfe, *Locus*

Starcombing contains 85 newly collected pieces, all written in the twenty-first century. The focus is on science fiction and fantasy: scintillating magazine columns, in-depth reviews, thoughtful essays, and even a handful of short-short stories from the famous ‘Futures’ page of *Nature*. It’s crammed with Langford’s legendary wit and wisdom, a cornucopia of brilliant insights, cheap shots, deep analysis, low jokes and a few outright surprises. Adam Roberts provides a learned introduction, while Langford has added corrections, updates, afterthoughts and a relentlessly detailed index.

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Over the years David Langford has won an astonishing twenty-eight Hugo awards—twenty-one of them as Best Fan Writer, for critical and humorous commentary on SF. He received six further Hugos for his witty SF newsletter *Ansible*, the 2001 Hugo for Best Short Story ('Different Kinds of Darkness'), the 2002 Skylark Award, British SF Association Awards for both fiction and nonfiction, and the European SF Award (shared with his co-authors).

Langford was born in 1953 in South Wales, read physics at Oxford, and was for some years a nuclear weapons physicist at the UK Atomic Weapons Research Establishment. His many books include *The Space Eater* (1982 sf novel; Cosmos 2004), *The Leaky Establishment* (1984 black comedy of nuclear research; Cosmos 2003), a contributing editor's share of the multiple-award-winning *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (1997), the authorized Discworld quizbooks *The Unseen University Challenge* (1996, revised 2005) and *The Wyrdest Link* (2002, revised 2006), and the high-selling *The End of Harry Potter?* (2006). His Cosmos SF originals include the well-reviewed collections *Different Kinds of Darkness* (fiction, 2004) and *The Sex Column* and other misprints (nonfiction, 2005) - a Locus recommended title and a Hugo nominee as Best Related Book.

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More about his books can be found on his personal website at
<http://ansible.co.uk>. More on this one at <http://ansible.co.uk/books/starcomb.html>.

STARCOMBING: columns, essays, reviews and more - SPECIFICATIONS

Format	Hardback, May 2009	Trade paperback, May 2009
ISBN	9780809573431	9780809573486
Price	US\$29.95	US\$14.95
Pages	236	236
Ordering Information	See www.wildsidepress.com . Bookshops may order directly from Ingram or Wildside Press.	

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