



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians

PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044

(202) 232-3141 - Issue #230 - May 2009

E-MAIL: info@lambdasf.org WEBSITE: http://www.lambdasf.org/



The LSF Book Discussion Group

If you're interested in lively discussions of F&SF books (with an emphasis on elements of interest to the LGBT community), we invite you to join the LSF Book Discussion Group. Each month, we conduct fascinating round-table discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF Book Discussion Group *generally* meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW – for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting will be held on May 28th.

Here are the details on the next several discussion meetings:

May 28th - *Farthing*, by Jo Walton; moderator: Carl.

June 25th - *A Companion to Wolves*, by Sarah Monette & Elizabeth Bear; moderator: TBA.

July 23rd - *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*, by Jane Austen & Seth Grahame-Smith; moderator: Rob.

Aug. 27th - *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, by Junot Diaz; moderator: TBA.

Λ Ψ Φ



Star Trek Movie "Plan B" for Saturday, May 9

info passed along by Peter Knapp

AMC has decided to show *Angels & Demons* at The Uptown, so we're going to Site B to see the new *Star Trek* movie. (Watch out for the Compsognathuses!)

When: Saturday, May 9, 4:00 PM (I suggest getting in line between 3:00 PM and 3:30 PM.)

Where: Regal Gallery Place Stadium 14, 701 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001 (Gallery Place Metro Stop). Three hours of free parking, with validation, is available in a nearby garage, entrance on 6th Street – \$7/hour after that.

Dinner afterward in Chinatown; venue to be selected by those who decide to go to dinner.

Tickets are available on-line at:

https://www.fandango.com/purchase/movietickets/process03/ticketboxoffice.aspx?row_count=673334952&mid=112813&tid=AATAR

Questions? Drop me an email at:

PeterKnapp@wavelengthsonline.com

or call me at: 202-483-6369.

Λ Ψ Φ



May LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on the **Sunday, May 10th**. The meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin (as usual) at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM.

Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

Λ Ψ Φ

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Minutes of the April 12th LSF Meeting (pg. 2); *Wolverine* (short film review - pg. 2); *The Bloody White Baron* (book review - pg. 3); *About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians* (pg. 4); *Con Calendar* (pg. 4)

**Minutes of the April 12th
LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott

Business:

LSF will participate at the Capital Pride celebration on Sunday, June 13. As in prior years, this means that the June LSF meeting will be moved to an earlier date (Saturday, June 12) and will include an LSF video party.

Social:

Teresa's gaming party was lots of fun! The evening ended with a hardy game of Fluxx.

Peter announced an LSF movie outing to see the new *Star Trek* movie. He suggested purchasing tickets in advance. Rob mentioned that the entire movie has been shown in advance, unannounced, in Austin TX. It was noted that the movie has also already opened in Sydney.

Rob listed the next couple of upcoming LSF book discussion group dates: April 23 (China Mieville's *Un Lun Dun*); May 22 (Jo Walton's *Farthing*).

Rob recommended *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* by Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith. "As our story opens, a mysterious plague has fallen upon the quiet English village of Meryton—and the dead are returning to life! Feisty heroine Elizabeth Bennet is determined to wipe out the zombie menace, but she's soon distracted by the arrival of the haughty and arrogant Mr. Darcy." What else could a Jane Austen-and-zombie fan ask for?

Peter reported that the latest *Doctor Who* episode, "The Planet of the Dead," has been shown in the UK. The dynamic between the new Doctor and the companion is very different. (How descriptive!) Do note that Donna will be back for the last two episodes.

Rob passed around a review copy of R.A. Salvatore's new "Forgotten Realms" book.

Rob cooed about his new Kindle II, which he passed around. The first book that he read was a *Firefly* title.

The *Terminator: Salvation* movie is coming out on May 22.



It was mentioned that an early edition of the new *Wolverine* movie was released on the Internet.

The Road, a post-apocalyptic-themed movie starring Viggo Mortenson, has not yet been released. "A father and son journey on foot across a devastated, lifeless landscape in Southeastern America following an unspecified cataclysm, eking out an existence and avoiding marauding survivors who prey on other." LSF movie outing?

Stargate: Universe premieres in July.

The current TV series *Kings*, an alternate history current-day TV series, is horrible. [Ed. Note: Actually, it's a modern-setting re-telling of the story of David and King Saul, as told in the Bible, Second Chronicles. And aren't you amazed that I knew that?! And, to top it all off, I actually *like* the series. Hey! I'm a BIG fan of Ian McShanel!]

Λ Ψ Φ



October 9 - 11, 2009

Location:

Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN)

Guests of Honor:

Margaret Weis (co-author of the original "Dragonlance" stories and collaborator with Tracy Hickman on several other F&SF series)

Andy Mangels (author, journalist, editor)

Lawrence Schimel (Lambda Literary Award-winning author)

Membership:

\$70 until 10/01/2009
\$80 at the door

Visit their website at: <http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org>



Wolverine
a short film
review
by Teresa

On Saturday I spent my hard earned cash to *Wolverine: Origins*. I should have just thrown my money in the trash. As a comic book nerd, I thought this was a terrible adaptation of Wolverine, his origin, and his friends/enemies. The script (if you can call it that) was ripped from the comic-cliche manual; the plot had more holes in it than the Titanic; and most of the characters were nothing more than unneeded cameos. Now I'm just waiting to see a good movie (*Star Trek*) to cleanse my palette of *Wolverine*. If you know nothing of Wolverine and are coming to see the few shots of shirtless/naked Hugh Jackman, then rent the movie. (Note: I'll be seeing *Star Trek* on Friday, because the Rollergirl Championship is on Saturday. Sorry, guys!)

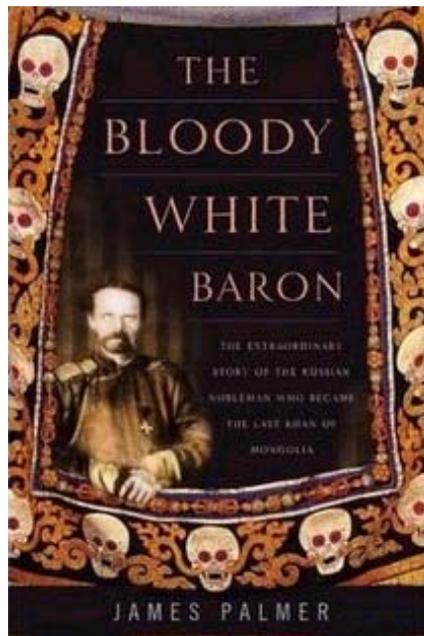
[Ed. Response: Hmm... I rather liked it. As a non-"comic book nerd," I'm afraid I can't comment on whether or not the film is faithful to the Marvel/X-Men canon; but I found it to be quite an enjoyable romp. And Hugh Jackman – and Ryan Reynolds – are really nice eye candy.]

Λ Ψ Φ

The Bloody White Baron
by James Palmer
(Perseus Books, 2009)
 a short review by Carl

OK, OK, I *know* this isn't exactly the right venue for reviewing a non-fiction historical biography; but this is just one of those books where you can't help saying: "What?! This really happened!?" It's not just some kind'a weird sci-fi story!?" In fact, as I was reading *The Bloody White Baron*, I was inescapably reminded of such Pulp Era stories as Robert E. Howard's various "Oriental fantasies" or the Cossack adventures written by Harold Lamb. And, in case you have any doubts, here's the book's subtitle: *The Extraordinary Story of the Russian Nobleman Who Became the Last Khan of Mongolia*. Intrigued? Well, how about this quote from the Baron Ungern-Sternberg (the subject of the book) himself: "My name is surrounded with such hate and fear that no one can judge what is the truth and what is false, what is history and what myth." Now are you intrigued?

Nikolai Roman Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg was born in 1885, in Austria. His father was an Estonian of German descent and his mother was a member of the aristocratic Von Wimpffen family (from Hesse). Both Nikolai's father – and his subsequent stepfather – were members of the Honourable Knights of the Teutonic Order, a charitable successor organization (based in Austria) of the infamous Teutonic Knights who had



conquered vast tracts of Baltic Europe in the name of Christianity and the German Emperor. In 1894, Nikolai and his mother moved to her new husband's ancestral estates in Estonia. And there young Nikolai's impressionable young mind was shaped by family tales of knightly prowess, as well as a daily reinforcement of German (and Lutheran) superiority over the servile peasants of his stepfather's estates (who were ethnically Balts and mostly Orthodox by faith). As with so many of the German-Estonian aristocracy, Nikolai also developed a fierce loyalty to the Russian Tsar, a desire for a career in the cavalry, a fascination for Eastern mysticism, and a strong streak of anti-Semitism.

When the Russian Revolution

broke out, Nikolai predictably fought on the side of the pro-Tsarist "White Russian" forces. Based on his early military experiences among the Cossacks and others in Siberia – and under pressure from the increasingly-victorious Red Army – Nikolai (now styling himself Baron von Ungern-Sternberg) began his long and bloody career of attempting to resurrect the Tsarist cause from the steppes and mountainous wildernesses of Mongolia, Central Asia, and northern China.

And what a career it was! He seems to have become a quasi-Buddhist (of the Tibetan/Tantric variety) – he was definitely an anti-Semitic and anti-Communist fanatic – and he instigated a long series of genocidal atrocities that would have made Vlad the Impaler blush. He virtually ruled his own barbaric kingdom from the back of a horse; and, eventually, he was even believed to be the incarnation of one of the Tibetan war gods! (Need I add that he came to a very bad end?)

As I said, what a story! James Palmer (the author) has sifted through all the legends that grew up around "the Baron" (as well as all the propaganda, both his own and that of his numerous enemies), to tell a well-nigh-unbelievable – but true! – account of Ungern-Sternberg's bloody rise to power and virtual godhood. There's gotta be enough material in here to serve as the basis for *dozens* of F&SF stories!

▲ΨΦ



Say you're a villain and you've lined up your evil henchmen, you've perfected your sinister laugh, and you've hatched your dastardly plans. Yet you still feel strangely empty inside. Fret not. Villainy isn't always a bed of nails. And here to help is *The Villain's Guide to Better Living*.

Within lie answers to such pressing questions as:

- Friends – Do I have any? Can I make them?
- Home decor – Should I go Gothic? Post-Apocalyptic? Wicker?
- Health – Just how do I maintain that sickly palor?
- Career – Is being a Corporate Bastard really the best fit for me?

The Villain's Guide to Better Living is a fiendish lifestyle guide for the modern-day evil-doer. And, as one very, very famous villain says, "It's a good thing."

from the back cover of *The Villain's Guide to Better Living*
 by Neil Zawacki, illustrations by Bill Brown (Chronicle Books, 2004)

****INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS****

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered (GLBT) people, and their friends who are interested in science fiction, fantasy, horror and related genres in all forms (SF/F/H). LSF's primary goals are to have fun, to provide a community, and to:

- promote SF/F/H, with particular attention to materials of interest to GLBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for GLBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of GLBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the GLBT community.

Annual membership fees are \$10, for which you will receive an e-mailed this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. (Hard copies of the newsletter cost an additional \$15 per year.) Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **Sunday, May 10th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is an affiliate of **the Gaylactic Network**, an international organization for gay people and their friends who are interested in science-fiction and fantasy.



Con Calendar

by Carl



May 1-4, 2009 **COSTUME-CON 27**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Theme: "Vampires, Villains & Vixens." Membership: \$90 until 4/1/2009; \$100 after 4/1/2009 and at the door. Make checks payable to "Costume-Con 27" and send to: Costume-Con 27, PO Box 207, Beallsville, PA 15313. "Open to all who love costume in all its forms."
Info on-line at: castleb@pulsenet.com or www.costume-con.com

May 22-25, 2009 **BALTICON 43**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). GoH: Charles Stross; Artist GoH: Kurt Miller; 2009 Comoton Crook Award Winner TBA. Membership: \$53 until April 30; \$60 as of May 1 and at the door. Make checks payable to: "Balticon 43" and send to: Balticon 43 Registration, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686.
E-mail: balticoninfo@balticon.org or registration@balticon.org Website: www.balticon.org

July 10-12, 2009 **SHORE LEAVE 31**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests: TBA. Membership: \$70 for the weekend; daily rates available. (Deadline for pre-registration: 6/15/2009.) Make checks payable to "Shore Leave" and send to: Shore Leave 31, PO Box 6809, Towson, MD 21285-6809.
E-mail: information@shore-leave.com Website: <http://www.shore-leave.com>

October 9-11, 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). GoHs: Margaret Weis, Andy Mangels, Lawrence Schimel. Membership: \$70 until 10/01/2009; \$80 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2009" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2009, P.O. Box 2412, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 Website: www.gaylaxicon2009.org
Register on-line at: <http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org/index.php/registration>

October 16-18, 2009 **CAPCLAVE 2009**. Hilton Washington DC/Rockville (Rockville, MD). GoHs: Harry Turtledove (author), Sheila Williams (*Asimov's* editor). Membership: \$45 until July 1; \$55 from July 1 to Oct. 1; \$60 at the door. Make checks payable to "Capclave 2009" and send to: Capclave 2009 Registration, c/o Barry Newton, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861
Website: www.capclave.org

