



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #233 - August 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 roundtable 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 August 27th.

Here are the details on the next couple of discussion meetings:

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

Sept. 24th - *Love and Rockets: Maggie the Mechanic* (graphic novel), by Jaime Hernandez; moderator: Greg.

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Gaylaxicon 2009 Progress Report



Gaylaxicon 2009
October 9 - 11, 2009

info@gaylaxicon2009.org

Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place

1500 Park Place Blvd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Guests of Honor

Margaret Weis
Andy Mangels
Lawrence Schimel
Terrance Griep
Marc DeBauch (featured artist)

Letter from Don Kaiser, the Convention Chair

We are looking forward to hosting you at our fabulous convention. We have great Guests of Honor, as well as a substantial list of Also Attending professional writers, editors, and artists who will be joining us. We know you'll have a fantastic time with our exciting line-up of events, games, programming, dealers room, art show, and programming.

Starting with our major events,

we will have the **Friday evening Opening Ceremonies**, followed by the Meet the Pros Reception, where we will serve hors d-oeuvres and where a cash bar will be available. **Saturday evening** we will have a new event at Gaylaxicon - a **Cabaret** emceed by Glori Hallelujah. We will include the chance for any costumers to strut their stuff. **Sunday evening** we'll dim the lights for a **Movie Spectacular**, including *Big Bank Love/Juvenile A* and *I.K.U.* We are still finalizing our line-up of interesting movies.

Our **game room** will be fabulous this year, with long hours. It is sponsored by the Twin Cities' largest game store - The Source Comics and Games.

We're putting together our schedule of programming and are taking suggestions for panels or other programming items. If you are interested in participating in programming, please volunteer your suggestions and time. See the Programming announcement below for information on submitting ideas or volunteering to be on panels.

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August LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on the **Sunday, August 9th**. 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!

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

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Revelation Space
by Alastair Reynolds
(Ace, 2002)

a short review by Carl

On the strength of just one book (*Revelation Space*), I've added a new author to my list of favorites (Alastair Reynolds). However, oddly enough, *Revelation Space* wasn't actually the first Reynolds book I bought; it's just the first one I've read. The first Reynolds novel I purchased was *The Prefect* (2007), which had just come out in paperback and looked like an interesting Space Opera – so I bought it. When, after a little research, I discovered that *The Prefect* is one of Reynolds's later "Revelation Space" novels, I figured I'd hold off on it until I had a little more grounding in that particular universe. And where better to begin than with his first novel, *Revelation Space* itself (originally published in 2000)?

By 2008, Alastair Reynolds had published 8 huge novels and over 30 shorter works – with 5 novels, 2 novellas, and 8 short stories set in his "Revelation Space" universe. He specializes in a combination of hard SF, high tech, and space opera – definitely a leading light in the "New Space Opera" movement. And it's no wonder. Reynolds has a Ph.D. in astronomy; and until 2004 he worked for the European Space Research and Technology Centre (part of the European Space Agency, where he spent about half his time working on the S-Cam (the world's most advanced optical camera). Now, however, he pursues his writing career full-time.

I found *Revelation Space* to be a *tour-de-force*: a massive galaxy-spanning space opera that's not by any means a *simple* read, but that's definitely a *satisfying* read. It's also received a lot of critical acclaim: described in *Science Fiction Chronicle* as "best science fiction novel of the year;" nominated for the Arthur C. Clarke Award; and shortlisted for the BSFA (British Science Fiction Assn.) Award. Not bad for a first novel.

Along with all the other "Revelation Space" novels he's written so far, *Revelation Space* itself is set within a



300-year period, roughly from 2427 to 2727. Humanity has spread out into the galaxy in near-light-speed vessels ("lighthuggers"), but – except for a couple of truly enigmatic alien races (the Shrouders and the Jugglers), and seemingly against all odds – they haven't run across any other intelligent star-spanning races. Humanity has split itself into at least several different "flavors." There are, for instance, the Conjoiners – descendants of an experimental clique on Mars who'd "systematically upgraded their minds, swapping cells for machines, until something sudden and drastic had happened... they had escalated to a new mode of consciousness..." (the so-called Transenlightenment). The Conjoiners were also responsible for the creation of the powerful Conjoiner engines that enabled humanity to colonize the galaxy in their lighthuggers. And then there are the Ultras – space-going humans who fly and live in the lighthuggers, never settling on any planet or other habitat for any length of time. Because of cryogenics ("reefer-sleep") and the time dilation effect (as well recourse to advanced life-extension technologies), some Ultras are *extremely* long-lived – and many of them have made significant personal alterations to the human phenotype. (Think of *Star Trek's* Borg, but without the drive to "assimilate" everybody else into a Collective.)

Most of the action in *Revelation Space* takes place in and around three locations: Chasm City on the planet Yellowstone (Epsilon Eridani system); the research colony on the planet Resurgam (Delta Pavonis system); and the mysterious planet Cerberus, in orbit around Hades (a neutron star in a loose binary arrangement with Delta Pavonis).

Dan Sylveste (an archaeologist and a prominent member of Chasm City society) has for years been fascinated by the Amarantin, an extinct alien race on Resurgam. He has led a massive research team to Resurgam to study the remains of Amarantin civilization; and, despite a mutiny that has stranded much of his team, he is on the verge of discovering something that could change the course of space-going humanity. But then he is captured and imprisoned by the leaders of an unexpected coup. Meanwhile, a massive (and heavily-armed) lighthugger is bearing down on Resurgam – the four-kilometer-long *Nostalgia for Infinity*, crewed by militaristic (and more-than-slightly mad) Ultras on a decades-long quest to capture Sylveste and enlist his help in saving their deep-frozen Captain from a strange mechanistic-cybernetic plague. It seems that Sylveste – or rather the software program he carries within him (a "beta-version" of his deceased father) – is Captain Brannigan's only possible hope. Nobody can anticipate the mind-boggling events that will occur when these people finally meet – and (literally) the fate of humanity hangs in the balance!

I found the sheer detail of Reynolds's "Revelation Space" universe (the societies, the super-science, the astrophysical wonders) – as well as the intricacy of the novel's plots and counter-plots and sub-plots – to be truly satisfying. And, weighing in at almost 600 pages, *Revelation Space* gives Reynolds plenty of space-time to develop it all. I truly do look forward to reading another novel (and/or one of the two collections of shorter fiction) set in this universe.

A final note on one particular "New Space Opera" aspect of *Revelation Space*. In the mind-boggling last several chapters of the novel, I couldn't

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Gaylaxicon 2009

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Our **Dealers Room** will be packed with publishers, booksellers, games, jewelry, tarot and astrology readings, and many other fine products and services. Please visit often and support them while at the convention.

We expect our **Art Show** to have many lovely items for display and sale. If you are interested in submitting pieces, please see the Art Show announcement below.

Parties! We have one confirmed book launch at the convention this year and hope to have one more. If you're interested in hosting a party at Gaylaxicon 2009, please contact us; we would love to have you do so. We have suites reserved that you can book for your party for \$180/night.

We have designed a **polo shirt with our logo** on it. If you are interested in ordering one for pick-up at the convention, or to be sent to you beforehand, check out the web site for ordering information.

Please be sure to **book your hotel rooms** through our room block, linked from our web site, so that we will get credit for your room nights. If you're willing to commit to paying at the time of booking – rather than when you stay – the hotel is offering a substantial discount on your stay. (One of our committee members saved over \$50 for a four-day stay.)

Be sure to stop in at our party at Anticipation, the 2009 Worldcon in Montreal, QB!

Please be sure to spread the word about Gaylaxicon 2009. We are looking forward to seeing you all in October.

Program Overview by Joe Agee, Gaylaxicon 2009 Program Chair

It is, of course, expected that speculative fiction conventions offer up

a diverse mix of panels, discussions, and readings; but Gaylaxicon will accomplish this with a uniquely queer perspective. If your straight friends are worried that every panel will be gay-themed, reassure them otherwise – good sci-fi is always appreciated, and we love to dish! But this is also an opportunity for us to focus on topics that are often left out of other conventions. Where else will you find **Gaylactic Jeopardy?** We'll also have a **Meet the Pros Reception**, a fabulous cabaret, an evening of special film programming, and the return of **Chocolate Madness**—plan on bringing some of your favorite to share!

Here's the part where I remind you that a convention is only as good as the contributions of its members; so please help us fill our program schedule by sharing with us your ideas for great panels, or volunteer to be a program participant. Maybe you have a favorite panel from past Gaylaxicons you want us to recreate, or perhaps you've seen something at another convention that would be great at Gaylaxicon. You can find submission forms for programming ideas on the website. You can contact me with questions or volunteer to be on panels by dropping a note to:

programming@gaylaxicon2009.org

Registered yet? It's not too late to register for Gaylaxicon 2009. **Our pre-registration deadline has been extended to September 25.** Visit our registration page to register on-line or to download a PDF of our registration form.

Art Show: We are looking forward to many artists displaying (and selling) their beautiful work in this year's Art Show! To review the rules and to see other details relevant to artists, visit our on-line Art Show information page. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about participating, contact me via:

artshow@gaylaxicon2009.org

Dealers Room: The Dealers Room is ready for you! We're moving along nicely with a number of friendly purveyors of all things sci-fi, comic-based, gaming, other-worldly, and otherwise; and you are going to love spend-

Revelation Space

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help but think of Arthur C. Clarke's famous dictum that "any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Yes, there's "science" somewhere in there, as events come to a world-shattering climax in the Hades-Cerberus system; but it's a science so far beyond what I'm personally able to grasp that it might as well have been describing the interplay of vast Lovecraftian entities. I was inescapably reminded of some Pulp Era sword-and-sorcery stories that I'd read recently. These stories, by Henry Kuttner, are collected in *Elak of Atlantis* (Planet Stories, 2007) and feature a Conan knock-off who encounters rather more ultra-metaphysical phenomena than Robert Howard's barbarian ever did. And I am amazed at just how closely Kuttner's trans-mundane mega-magic and Reynolds's cosmic hyper-science suggest one another. As a famous Vulcan says: "Fascinating."

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ding time with them. In our Dealers Room you'll get to browse through our fabulous vendors' wares and services and to enhance your Gaylaxicon 2009 experience. If you are interested in being a dealer or in volunteering in our Dealers Room, please contact:

dealers@gaylaxicon2009.org

(Shopping – it's not just for malls anymore!)

Program Book Ads and Artwork: The Gaylaxicon 2009 publications team is currently accepting artwork and advertising for the convention program book. Visit our program book page for more details, including ad rates and format requirements.

Want to spend more time in the Twin Cities? Check out our guide for how to find more great places and events of interest in and around the Twin Cities.

Need more information? To find our more information on guests, hotel, activities, and more, visit our website at: www.gaylaxicon2009.org



****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, August 9th**, 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

August 6-10, 2009 **ANTICIPATION: THE 67TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION**. Palais des congrès de Montreal (Montreal, Quebec, Canada). GoHs: Neil Gaiman & Elisabeth Vonarburg; Artist GoH: Ralph Bakshi. Membership: \$195 until July 15 (higher after that and at the door). Website: www.anticipationsf.ca

October 9-11, 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). GoHs: Margaret Weis, Andy Mangels, Lawrence Schimel, Marc DeBauch. 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: \$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

November 20-22, 2009 **PHILCON 2009**. The Crowne Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). Principal Speaker: Catherine Asaro; Artist GoH: Frank Wu; Special Guest: L.A. Banks. Membership: \$55 from Sept. 1 to Oct. 31; \$60 at the door. "If you are able to, please use online registration, even if you're mailing in a check. Just select 'Other Payment Options,' then click on 'Pay by Check' when you've completed the form."
Website: <http://2009.philcon.org>

November 27-29, 2009 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XXXII**. The Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). GoHs: Emma Bull and Will Shetterly; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Musical GoH: Clam Chowder. Membership: \$45 until Nov. 1; \$50 thereafter and at the door. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring MD 20907
Website: <http://www.darkover.org>

February 12-14, 2010 **FARPOINT** ("Baltimore's Fandom Family Reunion"). Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Guest: Mira Furlan ("*Rousseau*" from *Lost*; "*DeLenn*" from *Babylon 5*); and more to be announced! Pre-registration membership for the weekend: \$70. (Daily rates available.) Register on-line at: www.farpointcon.com -- or make your check payable to "Farpoint Enterprises" and send registration info to: Farpoint Enterprises, Inc., 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601.
Website: www.farpointcon.com E-mail: trekcontact@comcast.net

