



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians

PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044

(202) 232-3141 - Issue #235 - October 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 October 22nd.

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

Oct. 22nd - *Psycho*, the book by Robert Bloch and/or the film directed by Alfred Hitchcock; moderator: Carl.

Dec. 4th (combined Nov./Dec. meeting) - *The Host*, by Stephenie Meyer; moderator: Jack.

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THIS IS THE MONTH!!!



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)

October LSF Meeting Change of Site and Date

The next LSF meeting will be held on the **SATURDAY, October 24th**. The meeting will be combined with a Halloween-themed video party; and it will be held at Julian's home in northern Georgetown (2462 Tunlaw Road NW). There will be a short business meeting, followed by the video party. The doors will open at 3:00 PM; and the party will continue until about 11:30 PM. Please bring videos, food and soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

LSF Events in October

info passed along by Peter



Stargate: Universe Premiere Viewing Party

What: A TV viewing party to see the premier episode of *Stargate: Universe* on the SyFy Channel. (See: www.gateworld.net/universe or www.syfy.com for more information.)

When: Friday, October 2nd.

Where: The home of Peter and Rob: 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington DC. (Directions at:

[http://lambdasf.org/lsf/club/
PeterRob.html](http://lambdasf.org/lsf/club/PeterRob.html)

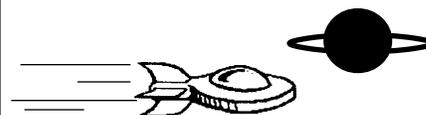
Time: 9:00 PM - 11:00 PM
(doors open at 8:30 PM).

What to Bring: Snacks and beverages to share. Dinner is not being served, so if you want to have dinner, bring your own or order delivery.

For More Information: Please send email to Peter at:

Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com
or call Peter and Rob at 202-483-6369.

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WHAT'S INSIDE?

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September LSF Meeting Minutes

taken by Scott

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This month's meeting was held at Peter & Rob's place at 1425 "S" Street NW.

Because many LSFers will be attending Gaylaxicon 2009 in Minneapolis on the 2nd Sunday of October, it was decided to move the October LSF meeting to an alternate date: Saturday, October 24th, at Julian's place in Burleigh ("upper Georgetown").

TruBlood's season finale is tonight.

Carl reported that Ben H. Winters's *Sense & Sensibility & Sea Monsters* is coming out to bookstores soon. See the book trailer here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jZVE5uF24Q

A knock-off version of *Twilight*, aka *Vampire Diaries*, is coming out soon, featuring Kevin Williamson of *Dawson's Creek*.

The next season of *Dollhouse* starts this week. Peter commented that he does not care for the premise that the *Dollhouse* participants are basically slaves.

The new film *Flash Forward* is based upon a novel by Robert Sawyer. The premise appears to be that everyone on Earth passes out at the same time and then later has visions of the same specific future date. The show will have a large cast – perhaps it will become a cult show? It premieres Sept. 24th.

There was much chatter about the new *Witches of Eastwick* show.

The remake of *V* is coming in November, with Scott Wolf and Morena Baccarin.

Returning to the small screen this Fall: *Supernatural*, *Fringe*, *Heroes*, *Smallville*, *Dollhouse* (Summer Glau is joining the cast), *Medium*, *Dexter*, *Warehouse 13*, *Eureka*. *Stargate: Universe* premieres on October 2nd.

The upcoming new series *Canine* is an Australian version of *The Sarah Jane Adventures*.

Fox's *Human Target* is a mid-

LSF Events in October

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October Book Discussion Group

What: LSF's monthly book discussion group. We will be discussing the book *Psycho* (by Robert Bloch) and/or the movie *Psycho* (by Alfred Hitchcock).

When: Thursday, Oct. 22nd.

Where: The home of Rob and Peter: 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington DC. Directions at:

<http://lambdasf.org/lfsf/club/PeterRob.html>

Time: 7:30 PM (doors open at 7:00PM).

What To Bring: Snacks and beverages to share.

For More Information: Please send email to Rob at:

RobGatesDC@gmail.com

or call Rob and Peter at 202-483-6369.



Combined October LSF Meeting and Video Potluck Party

What: A short LSF Meeting, followed by a Halloween-themed science fiction/fantasy/horror video and potluck party.

When: Saturday, October 24th.

Where: The home of Julian: 2462 Tunlaw Road NW, Washington DC. Directions at:

<http://lambdasf.org/lfsf/club/Julian.html>

Time: 3:00 PM - 11:30 PM.

What to Bring: Bring science fiction, fantasy, and horror DVDs to watch and snacks, dinner food, and/or non-alcoholic drinks to share. We will watch the movies that receive the most votes.

For More Information: Please contact Peter at:

Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com

or call him at 202-483-6369. On the day of the party, call 202-306-1497. ΛΨΦ

season replacement. It's about a guy who is a shape-shifter.

Carl passed around the new American Library Association catalogue; it includes a number of new genre-related bookmarks that we might consider to hand out at next Pride Day.

Rob described the Outer Alliance, a queer-content-literature-oriented organization.

The first volume of Robert Jordan's next book in the "Wheel of Time" series is coming out in October. "The Wheel of Time" originally began as a 3-book series but has stretched out to a 12-book series.

Rob reported on *The Guild*, an on-line series about gamers who start meeting each other: www.theguild.com

Is *Pandorum* a genre movie? Can't tell just yet.

Rob and Peter announced that they will host a party for the Oct. 2nd

premiere of *Stargate: Universe*.

Barrett and Carl reported on WorldCon 2009 in Montreal. They enjoyed listening to Neil Gaiman. The 2011 WorldCon will be held in Reno, Nevada.

Alex and David enjoyed the new movie *9*, although they weren't quite sure of the plot by the end of the movie.

Peter and Wes saw the new movie *Ponyo*, with a nice bedtime story plot.

Disney has acquired Marvel!

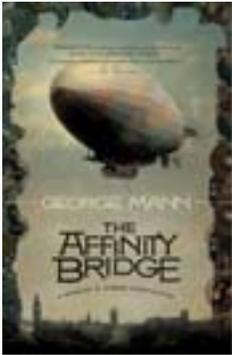
In 2010, the new *PeeWee Herman's Playhouse* will be coming out.



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Two Short Reviews

by Carl



The Affinity Bridge
by
George Mann
(TOR Books,
2009)

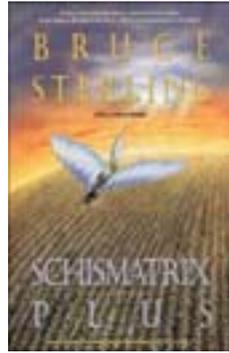
“The Widow of Windsor” is on the throne; zeppelins roam the skies; automata and other fantastical Victorian “super science” abound – looks like Steampunk to me! But *The Affinity Bridge* is rather more than that. It also interweaves elements of several different strands of popular Victorian literature: the Great Detective (in the tradition of Holmes and Watson); mad scientists (in the tradition of Captain Nemo, Dr. Jekyll, and Dr. Moreau); and Gothic chills (in the tradition of such authors as Bram Stoker, Sheridan LeFanu, and Robert Louis Stevenson). There’s also a nod to the *current* F&SF interest in zombies. And, as I learned at Worldcon in Montreal, *The Affinity Bridge* has even been classified as “alternate history” – good enough to be included on the 2009 Short List for the Sidewise Awards (honoring excellence in works of alternate history). Wow! That’s quite a mix! And ya know what? Mann pulls it all off really well!

Crown Investigators Sir Maurice Newbury and Miss Veronica Hobbes are assigned (without explanation) by Her Majesty to investigate the mysterious crash of a huge zeppelin (with the loss of all lives aboard) – and the even more mysterious disappearance of the automaton that had been piloting it. In the meantime, a mass murderer (reputedly a “glowing policeman”) is terrorizing London’s East End, while a zombie plague ravages the city’s slums. Is it possible there’s some sort of connection between all these events? Follow Newbury and Hobbes as they search for clues through the dangerous night-time streets and alleys of Victorian London.

As I’ve said many time before,

I’m a big fan of Steampunk; and I consider *The Affinity Bridge* to be a fine addition to this sub-genre. Give it a try; I think you’ll enjoy it, too.

Schismatrix Plus
by
Bruce Sterling
(Ace Books,
1996)



Back in the August LSF newsletter, I reviewed a book by a new favorite author of mine: *Revelation Space* by Alastair Reynolds. And thereby hangs a tale...

In the Afterward to *Galactic North* (a collection of his short stories), Reynolds comments that he owes “an equally obvious debt to Bruce Sterling, whose ‘Shaper/Mechanist’ sequence blew my mind on several levels.” And then he says: “Read *Schismatrix* if you haven’t already done so: it will melt your face.” Sounds like heart-felt praise to me. I can’t say as I’ve read much by Sterling; in fact, all that comes to mind is *The Difference Engine*, the Steampunk *magnum opus* co-authored by Bruce Sterling and William Gibson. (And I definitely liked it!) So, OK, I decided to check out what affected Reynolds so deeply. Fortunately for me, all five of Sterling’s “Shaper/Mechanist” stories (including the novel *Schismatrix*) were collected into one volume back in 1996: *Schismatrix Plus*. And off I went to Amazon.com.

In his Introduction to the volume, Sterling describes the “Shaper/Mechanist” stories and *Schismatrix* as “the most ‘cyberpunk’ works I will ever write.” All of them were first published in the early 1980s, with the short stories appearing in such magazines as *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, *Universe 13*, *Omni*, and *Interzone*. But they’re not like the other “classic cyberpunk” stories I’ve read – they don’t have the same “urban noir-ish” feel that I’d come to expect of that sub-genre. Like the Reynolds novels they inspired, Sterling’s “Shaper/Mechanist” tales are sort’a like

“cyberpunk in outer space” – they explore a lot of the “classic cyberpunk” themes and concepts, but in a less Earth-bound context. I’d almost classify Sterling’s “Shaper/Mechanist” works as precursors of the recent New Space Opera sub-genre. (Unlike Reynolds’s humanity, however, Sterling’s humans haven’t yet expanded beyond our Solar System.)

In Sterling’s version of the 23rd Century, society is basically divided between two major human factions: the Shapers (who employ genetics and psychology to alter the basic human type) and the Mechanists (who use computers and body prosthetics). And there are all the confused and confusing political associations based on one of those two major factions. Within this framework, Sterling explores such issues as what it means to be “human” and how tinkering with the basic human type can affect societies and politics. And he does it all while telling fascinating stories.

I’m not sure I enjoyed Sterling’s “Shaper/Mechanist” stories as much as I have the Reynolds novels that they inspired. This isn’t to say that I didn’t enjoy everything in *Schismatrix Plus* – because I *did* enjoy it all. (I found the experimental format of his “Twenty Evocations” to be particularly interesting.) Maybe it’s just that I prefer the sense of being immersed in Reynolds’s *massive* novels. Whatever. If you like Cyberpunk or New Space Opera, I’d recommend getting your hands on a copy of *Schismatrix Plus*. I think you’ll like it, too.

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What happens if a big asteroid hits the Earth? Judging from realistic simulations involving a sledgehammer and a common laboratory frog, we can assume it will be pretty bad.

-- Dave Barry --

quoted in *The Mammoth Book of Zingers, Quips and One-Liners*
edited by Geoff Tibbals
(Carroll & Graff Publishers, 2006)

****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. But the *next* Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **SATURDAY, October 24th**, at Julian's home (2462 Tunlaw Road NW), in "northern Georgetown," combined with a Halloween-themed video party. The short business meeting will begin at about 3:00 PM; and the video party will begin shortly afterwards. Please bring videos, food, 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



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 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

August 5-8, 2010 **RECONSTRUCTION** (NASFiC 2010). Raleigh Convention Center; Raleigh Marriott City Center; Sheraton Raleigh Hotel (Raleigh, NC). GoH: Eric Flint; AGoH: Brad Foster. Membership: currently \$95 (will go up!). Make checks payable to "ReConStructure" and send to: ReConStructure, PO Box 31706, Raleigh, NC 27622
Website: www.reconstructionsf.org

