



# Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



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## Star Trek in Crystal City

info passed along by Wayne # 1

On Monday nights from June 7 through August 16 (after sundown, of course), Crystal City's annual outdoor movie festival will devote all 11 of its screenings to *Star Trek* movies. The price is right – it's free! Bring a picnic basket and join the fun.

Location: 18th and Bell Streets, across from the Crystal City Metro Station.

### Schedule of Remaining Films:

- 7/5 – *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*
- 7/12 – *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*
- 7/19 – *Star Trek Generations*
- 7/26 – *Star Trek: First Contact*
- 8/2 – *Star Trek: Insurrection*
- 8/9 – *Star Trek Nemesis*
- 8/16 – *Star Trek* [2009 J.J. Abrams film]

For more information, check out their website: [www.crystalcity.org/do/crystal-screen-star-trek](http://www.crystalcity.org/do/crystal-screen-star-trek)

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## Highlights of the Gaylactic Network Board Meeting (June 21, 2010)

info passed along by Carl



As there will be no Gaylaxicon this year – and as there probably won't be sufficient Network Board attendance at NASFiC – the Gaylactic Network Board decided to try out something new: a phone conference. It worked quite well, and the Board plans to hold similar phone conferences in future on a quarterly basis.

Here are a few of the highlights from that phone conference:

### Going to NASFiC?

One of the items discussed at the Board meeting was the amount of GLBT-related programming planned for this year's North American Science Fiction Convention (NASFiC, ReConstruction – Raleigh, NC, August 5-8). And, guess what? The Network (as far

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## 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 July 22nd.

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

**July 22nd** - *Stealing Fire*, by Jo Graham; moderator: Claire.

**Aug. 26th** - *The Windup Girl*, by Paolo Bacigalupi; moderator: Carl.

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## July LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, July 11th**. 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!

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

The Prefect (book review - pg. 2); About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (pg. 4); Con Calendar (pg. 4)

## Highlights of the Gaylactic Network Board Meeting

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as we can tell) had nothing to do with it! The con-comm apparently planned it all by themselves. That's great!!

Go take a look at their website: [www.reconstructionsf.org](http://www.reconstructionsf.org)

Then go to the **Navigation** column on the left, click on **Programming**, and then click on **Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transsexual**. You'll see a list of nine GLBT-related discussion panels on a "Tentative Topic List." Pretty cool. I believe they're also looking for panelists for these nine panels.

Hopefully, there'll be a Network presence (or at least a significant GLBT presence) at NASFiC – the Board is even willing to throw in some \$\$\$ to support a GLBT-party. If you're interested in helping out with a GLBT room party at NASFiC, there's a link on the Gaylactic Network's website Contacts Page you can use to contact the Network Board President, Wayne Wilkening. Just go to:

[www.gaylacticnetwork.org](http://www.gaylacticnetwork.org)

and then use the navigation bar at the top of the page to access the Contacts Page.)

[Ye Olde Editor requesteth: If you attend NASFiC, please send us a report to let us all know how it worked out. Inquiring minds want to know...]

### Gaylaxicon 2012 Approved!!

Hooray! The Board approved the bid by North Country Gaylaxians to host Gaylaxicon in 2012!

So, in case you've forgotten, in 2011 we're off to Atlanta, (May 13-15 – held in conjunction with OutLantaCon). Gaylaxicon 2011 will be hosted by the folks who ran the successful 2007 Gaylaxicon.

And then, in 2012, we head North to Minneapolis (October 5-8)! It'll be hosted by the same folks who hosted the successful 2009 Gaylaxicon.

[Ye Olde Editor sayeth: Oh boy! Minneapolis! I can hardly wait to get back to Uncle Hugo's and DreamHaven, two absolutely *incredible* SF bookstores, as well as Uncle Edgar's, an equally *incredible* Mystery bookstore!!]

## The Prefect by Alastair Reynolds

(Ace Books, 2009)

reviewed by Carl

Back in the August 2009 issue of the LSF newsletter, I reviewed Alastair Reynolds's first novel: *Revelation Space* (Ace, 2002). At that time, I mentioned that I'd previously purchased another Reynolds novel, *The Prefect* (Ace, 2009), but that I'd decided to read *Revelation Space* first, as it was the first novel Reynolds wrote for what came to be known as his "Revelation Space" universe. Well, I finally decided to read *The Prefect* during a recent two-week assignment in Seattle. All I can say is: "Wow! Another *tour de force* by Reynolds!" It's no wonder that he's a leading light in the "New Space Opera" sub-genre.

As with 5 other novels, 2 novellas, and 8 short stories, *The Prefect* takes place in Reynolds's "Revelation Space" universe. It's a high-tech, hard-SF, morally ambiguous setting. Humanity (in its various forms) has expanded into a massive, galaxy-spanning civilization, loosely tied together by starships utilizing near-light-speed technology ("lighthuggers"). Faster-than-light travel is apparently possible, but it's so dangerous that nobody uses it. At least a couple of contemporary non-human sentient races are known (the Shrouders and the Pattern Jugglers), but they're elusive and mysterious.

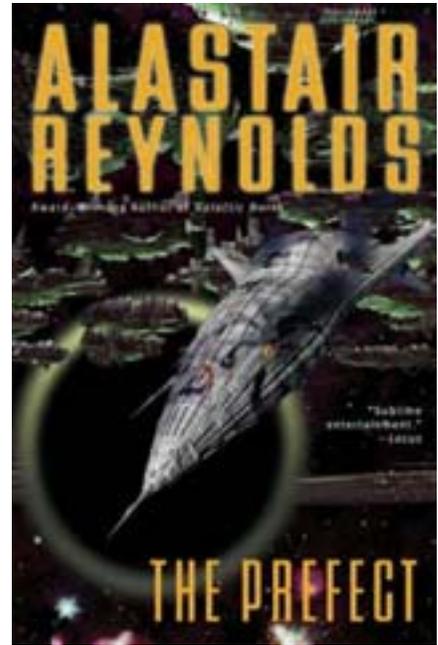
### Gaylactic Network Website?

Have you been to the Gaylactic Network's website recently? There have been some updates and changes recently. Go ahead; go take a look at it – I'll wait 'til you get back:

[www.gaylacticnetwork.org](http://www.gaylacticnetwork.org)

The Board would also like your input. What would you like to see included on the Gaylactic Network website? Toward the bottom of the Home Page, there's a link to "a handy online survey" that you can use to provide input. On the Contacts Page, there's also a direct link to Andrew Bertke, the Website Administrator.

What's your opinion? Inquiring minds want to know...



In *The Prefect*, Reynolds takes his readers to the planet Yellowstone (in the Epsilon Eridani system) a century prior to the events in the novel *Revelation Space*. *The Prefect* is set during the later years of the Belle Epoque, the "high tide" of human civilization during the 25th Century, before the advent of the destructive Melding Plague. Yellowstone had been colonized 200 years earlier by generation ships from the Sol System. Now the planet is ringed by the Glitter Band: thousands of semi-independent high-tech orbital habitats with a population of about 100 million. (After the Melding Plague, the ruined Glitter Band will become known as the Rust Belt.)

Each of the habitats in the Glitter Band features its own unique socio-political structure, everything from collectivist semi-anarchy to outright despotism. All habitats are linked by the common right to vote; and every habitat has a polling core, part of a giant network that runs thousands of polls every day to decide the general actions of the Glitter Band as a whole. The only universal crime in the Glitter Band is to deny someone the right to vote (or to interfere with or tamper with the results) or to deny someone access to "the abstraction" (a form of digital communication

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## The Prefect

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and virtual reality used throughout the Glitter Band).

The right of each Glitter Belt inhabitant to vote and to access “the abstraction” is policed by an organization known as the Panoply. However, as long as it’s not a matter of enforcing the right to vote or to access the abstraction, the Panoply isn’t permitted to interfere with the internal workings of any habitat, not even to address any other type of what *we* could consider obvious human rights violations. (Most habitats have their own security forces to deal with what they label as “crimes.”) Panoply officials are only armed with “whip-hounds” (a semi-sentient electronic whip) and are not allowed to use any heavier weaponry unless authorized by an emergency poll of the entire Glitter Band. (But don’t be deceived, those whip-hounds are pretty damn deadly in any person-to-person confrontation. I think even a Jedi with a light-saber would need to worry.)

As the story opens, Field Prefect Tom Dreyfus (an officer of the Panoply) and his assistant, Deputy Prefect Thalia Ng, have been sent to the habitat House Perigal to arrest its owner/ruler for tampering with polling results. After a violent (and successful) raid, Dreyfus and Ng return to Panoply HQ. Then Deputy Prefect Ng is sent off to several habitats to install an experimental software patch she developed in an effort to prevent future tampering of the type tried by Matriarch Perigal. If successful, this patch will be installed throughout the Glitter Band.

And Prefect Dreyfus is immediately assigned to investigate the destruction of the habitat known as the Ruskin-Sartorious Bubble. All 960 inhabitants are believed dead, and only a few “beta-level recoverables” (lower-grade digital back-up personalities) have been salvaged from the wreckage. Forensic analysis seems to indicate that the habitat was destroyed when the engines of the lighthugger *Accompaniment of Shadows* were deliberately aimed at it. Purpose for the destruction?

Unknown. But, if confirmed, this could lead to conflict with the Ultras, the touchy and semi-independent crews of the lighthuggers that connect the Glitter Band to the rest of human interstellar civilization. Dreyfus’s orders are concise: find out what happened; find out fast; and keep it quiet. As his investigation proceeds, Dreyfus uncovers disturbing hints that “the Clockmaker” is somehow involved in this mess. (The Clockmaker was a homicidal machine that escaped from a research center nine years before and initiated a violent killing spree. The Panoply was finally able to stop it, but only at the cost of nuking the entire research habitat. Maybe the Clockmaker escaped after all?)

Meanwhile, things aren’t going so well for Deputy Prefect Ng either. Someone seems to have tampered with the experimental software patches she installed; and, at a pre-set command, servitor robots have begun taking over the habitats, cutting off external communications, exterminating the inhabitants, using the production facilities to create “weevils” (nasty little war machines), and sending the weevils out to take over other habitats. Thalia Ng and a few other locals have barricaded themselves into the polling core in habitat House Aubusson, and – and so far – they’ve managed to keep the marauding servitors out.

But who – or what – is behind this mechanical insurrection? Is it somehow connected to the destruction of Ruskin-Sartorious? There are indications that someone *inside* Panoply is working with a disembodied intelligence named “Aurora” (sort of a “ghost in the machine”) to take over the Glitter Band; and Aurora seems to view humans as “expendable.”

As with many Reynolds novels, several seemingly disparate plotlines all coalesce into a major confrontation of world-shattering proportions: plots within plots; Black Ops organizations; technological marvels. I found the super-science to be particularly fascinating; and I couldn’t help but marvel at that very thin line between “magic” and “science.” (I’ve read that Reynolds doesn’t like to include potential scien-

tific advances into his stories unless he personally believes them to be possible, which probably explains his reluctance to rely on FTL spaceflight. From 1991 to 2004 he worked for the European Space Research and Technology Center, part of the European Space Agency.)

All in all, I found *The Prefect* to be an incredibly satisfying read; and I highly recommend it to all fans of New Space Opera.

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I wanted the hurtling moons of Barsoom. I wanted Storisende and Poictesme, and Holmes shaking me awake to tell me, “The game’s afoot!” I wanted to float down the Mississippi on a raft and elude a mob in company with the Duke of Bilgewater and the Lost Dauphin.

I wanted Prester John, and Excalibur held by a moon-white arm out of a silent lake. I wanted to sail with Ulysses and with Tros of Samothrace and eat the lotus in a land that seemed always afternoon. I wanted the feeling of romance and the sense of wonder I had known as a kid. I wanted the world to be what they had promised me it was going to be—instead of the tawdry, lousy, fouled-up mess it is.

- Robert A. Heinlein -  
*Glory Road* (1963)

quoted in  
*Science Fiction Quotations: From the Inner Mind to the Outer Limits*  
edited by Gary Westfahl  
(Yale University Press, 2005)

**\*\* 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 **Sunday, July 11th**, 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. 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



July 8-11, 2010 **READERCON 32**. Burlington Marriott (Burlington, MA). Guests of Honor: Nalo Hopkinson & Charles Stross. "The conference on imaginative literature." Membership: \$55 thru 6/19. Make checks payable to "Readercon" and send to: Readercon, PO Box 65, Watertown, MA 02472 Website: [www.readercon.org](http://www.readercon.org)

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 \$120 (will go up!). Make checks payable to "ReConStructure" and send to: ReConStructure, PO Box 31706, Raleigh, NC 27622 Website: [www.reconstructionsf.org](http://www.reconstructionsf.org)

October 22-24, 2010 **CAPCLAVE 2010**. Hilton Hotel & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville, MD). Guests of Honor: Connie Willis, Ann Vandermeer, Jeff Vandermeer. Membership: \$45 until 6/30; \$55 from 7/1 to 9/30; \$60 from 10/1 to 10/17. Make checks payable to "Capclave 2010" and send to: Capclave 2010, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861. On-line registration also available. Website: [www.capclave.org](http://www.capclave.org) For information: [info@capclave.org](mailto:info@capclave.org)

Nov. 26-28, 2010 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL 33**. A very gay-friendly convention. Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guest of Honor: Elizabeth Bear; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Musical GoH: Clam Chowder. Membership: \$45 until Nov. 1st: \$50 thereafter. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907 Website: [www.darkovercon.org](http://www.darkovercon.org)

May 13-15, 2011 **GAYLAXICON 2011** (held in conjunction with OutlantaCon 2011). Holiday Inn Select Chamblee-Dunwoody (Dunwoody, GA). Guest: Melissa Carter. More information as it becomes available. Website: [www.outlantacon.org](http://www.outlantacon.org)

Aug. 17-21, 2011 **RENOVATION** (69th World Science Fiction Convention). Reno-Sparks Convention Center (Reno, Nevada). Guests of Honor: Ellen Asher, Charles N. Brown, Tim Powers, Boris Vallejo. Membership: currently \$160 (will go up!). Website: [www.renovationsf.org](http://www.renovationsf.org) Membership queries: [memberships@renovationsf.org](mailto:memberships@renovationsf.org)

