



# Lambda Sci-Fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians

PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044

(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 296 – November 2014

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### Combined November LSF Meeting & Gaming Party

announced by Peter Knapp



**What:** A short LSF meeting (with a membership vote on closing the LSF PO Box, to save money) and then a gaming party.

**When:** Sunday, November 9, 2014.

**Where:** Home of Peter and Rob, 1425 “S” St NW, Washington, DC.

**Time:** 1:00 PM – ?? We'll start the party with a brief LSF business meeting. Then let the games begin!!!

**What to Bring:** Bring your favorite table game or two (cards, board, etc.). Also, please bring munchies and/or soft drinks.

**Directions** (with Metro and parking advice): <http://lambdascifi.org/club/PeterRob.html>

**Dinner:** For those who are interested, we'll order pizza. To get in on the

### LSF Emergency Proposal to Be Voted on at the November 9th LSF Meeting (or By Proxy)

announced by Rob Gates,  
LSF Treasurer

*I propose that LSF cease its maintenance of a PO Box, effective immediately.*

**Background:** We currently pay \$64 every 6 months for maintenance of our PO Box. We rarely, if ever, receive any “real” mail via the PO Box as most of our correspondence is electronic. LSF's paid membership list currently hovers between 35 and 40 paid members, and the income from those members comes close to but does not quite cover the

cost of Pride Day plus our website costs – two things which are far more integral to LSF's current operations – though our occasional donations and book/video sales help bridge that gap. We simply cannot afford paying \$128 a year for the PO Box on top of those two items. The few legitimate things that come through the PO Box (bank statements, etc.) can be redirected to a private residence address.

Please vote at the Nov. 9th LSF Meeting or send your proxy/e-mail to Peter at:

[PeterPKnapp@gmail.com](mailto:PeterPKnapp@gmail.com)

by 11:00 AM Eastern on the morning of the meeting (Sunday, Nov. 9th).

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pizza order, please bring \$8 in exact change. If you don't want pizza, you can order take out or go forage for food. There are a lot of food choices in the “U” Street Corridor.

**If You Have Questions:** Please contact Peter at:

[PeterPKnapp@gmail.com](mailto:PeterPKnapp@gmail.com)

or Rob at [robatesdc@gmail.com](mailto:robatesdc@gmail.com)

or call Peter at 202-810-4678 or Rob at 202-246-7800.

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**See page 2 for Book Discussion Schedule & Field Trip/Movie Outing Announcement**

### <<<<< November LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 9th**. There will be a short business meeting, followed by a Gaming Party (see articles above). The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 “S” Street NW, Washington, DC**. The short business meeting will begin at 1:00 PM, followed by the Gaming Party. Please also bring games, munchies, and soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

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### What's Inside?

Page 2: The LSF Book Discussion Group; Nonexistent Minutes of the October LSF Meeting; Thanks to Dan! (reviews).

Page 4: Information About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians and Con Calendar.



## 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 usually 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 book discussion will be held on December 4th.

Here are the details for the next four book discussions:

**Dec. 4** (1st Thursday, combined Nov./ Dec. discussion) – *Blindness*, by Jose Saramago (moderator: Walter).

**Jan. 22, 2015** – *Children of Kings: A Darkover Novel*, by Marion Zimmer Bradley & Debra J. Ross (moderator: Randy).

**Feb. 26, 2015** – *Through the Woods* (a graphic novel), by Emily Carroll (moderator: Claire).

**March 26, 2015** – *One-Eyed Jack*, by Elizabeth Bear (moderator: Carl).

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## Nonexistent Minutes of the October LSF Meeting passed along by Ye Olde Editor

Scott couldn't make it to the October LSF meeting due to work priorities; so he sent an e-mail asking someone else to take minutes. No one wanted to.

At any rate, attendees talked about a bunch'a stuff. And Rob introduced a motion for the club to stop maintaining its P.O. box (see article on first page). That's about it.

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## LSF Museum and *Interstellar* Movie Outing

announced by Peter



**When:** Sunday, November 16, 2014

**Where:** National Air and Space Museum – Dulles, 14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy, Chantilly, VA 20151

**Museum:** Air and Space Museum Ste-ven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

**Movie:** *Interstellar*: The IMAX Experience, in 70mm Film (169 minutes)

**Time:** 1:00 PM for the Museum; 3:05 PM for the movie

**Purchase Tickets at:**

<http://www.si.edu/Imax/Theater/airbus-imax-theater>

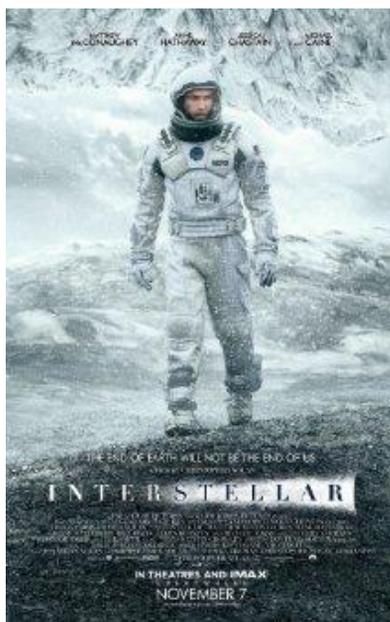
(Tickets for this showing go on sale Sunday, October 26.)

**Questions:** contact Peter at

[PeterPKnapp@gmail.com](mailto:PeterPKnapp@gmail.com)

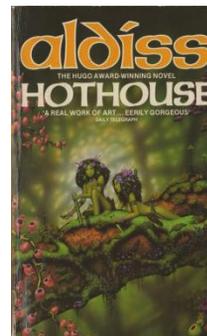
or call 202-810-4678.

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## Thanks to Dan!

reviews by Carl



*Hothouse*  
by Brian Aldiss  
(Granada, 1962)

One day at an LSF meeting (I don't remember which one), Dan asked if anyone was interested in reading *Hothouse*, an old-style SF novel by Brian Aldiss (one of SFWA's Grand Masters) – and, of course, I said "yes". I'd certainly heard of Brian Aldiss; but I'd never heard of *Hothouse*.

In 1961, five of the "stories" that make up *Hothouse* were published serially in *F&SF* magazine and subsequently won the 1962 Hugo Award for Best Short Fiction. In 1962, Signet published an abridged version (titled *The Long Afternoon of Earth*), but a complete version of the novel wasn't published in the US until 1976.

The story takes place on Earth in the unimaginably far future: "the long afternoon of Earth" as the death of the Sun approaches. The Earth has locked rotation, with one side always facing the greatly swollen Sun. The increased heat and light has thrown the ecological balance in favor of plants, which have driven most land-based animal life to extinction. Plants have evolved to fill virtually all ecological niches (land, sea, and air); many have evolved nervous systems, become ominous, and are very mobile. The descendants of various social insects (wasps, bees, ants, termites) are still around (albeit in larger forms); and small, scattered tribes of primitive humans have managed to survive in the canopy of the massive banyan forest that now covers almost the entire sunny side of the planet. *Hothouse* follows the adventures (and misadventures) of a small band of outcast humans as they wander about the world (including into the Earth's Twilight Zone and even up to the Moon).

(continued on page 3)

## Thanks to Dan!

continued from page 2

Great literature? No, *Hothouse* certainly isn't that – and some of the “science” strained my ability to “suspend dis-belief”. (To cite one instance, there's the whole backstory of how fungi helped prehistoric humans achieve sentience. Yikes!) Nevertheless, Aldiss's sheer inventiveness in detailing the evolutionary possibilities of plant life is an absolute delight. I couldn't help but think of two other favorites of mine that speculate on the path of future post-human evolution: *After Man: A Zoology of the Future* by Dougal Dixon (St. Martin's Press, 1981); and *The Future Is Wild* (13-part documentary from 2002; now available as a 3-DVD set).

Thank you # 1 to Dan. I'm glad I had a chance to read *Hothouse*; it's a hoot!



### *Usagi Yojimbo: Senso*

by Stan Sakai

(Dark Horse Comics, 2014)

It was toward the end of another LSF meeting that Dan mentioned he and Teresa were walking over to a comic book store. What? A nearby comic book store? Take me along! Ever since Blue Monkey closed, I kind'a missed regularly visiting a comic book store after the LSF meeting. So, now there's Big Planet Comics, 1520 “U” Street. At any rate, as I was browsing around Big Planet that first time, I was delighted to discover one of my favorite titles back on the stands after a two-year hiatus: Stan Sakai's *Usagi Yojimbo*.

Sakai's *Usagi Yojimbo* (“rabbit bodyguard”) stories first appeared 30 years ago; and I've been a fan for much

of that time. Yes, Usagi is a rabbit: a *ronin* (wandering samurai) named Miyamoto Usagi in an anthropomorphic (“furry”) version of Japan during the late-16th/early-17th Century. Fascinating stories, great artwork – love it, love it, love it! In 1988 Sakai created a limited spin-off series called *Space Usagi*: a descendant of the original Usagi in a Japan-esque space opera. *Really great!*

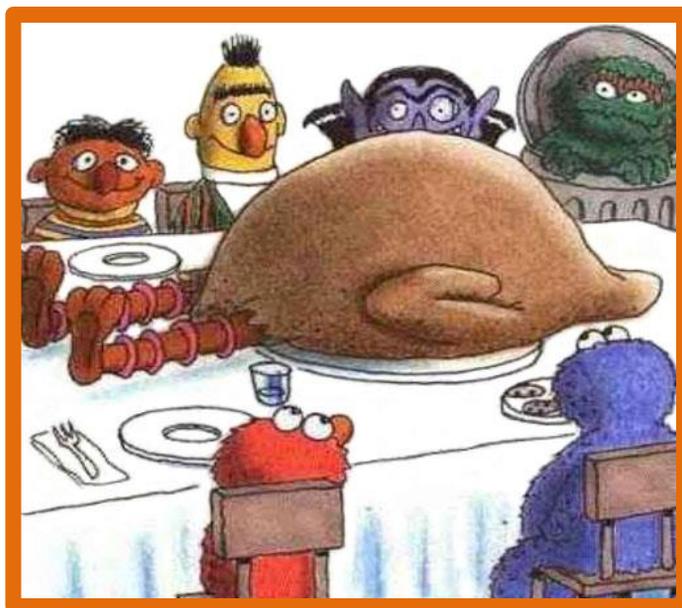
At any rate, back to Big Planet Comics and the return of *Usagi Yojimbo*... Sakai's rabbit samurai has returned in a six-part, sci-fi-based mini-series: *Usagi Yojimbo: Senso*. It's set in the early 17th Century – about 20 years beyond the previous storyline. A terrible civil war still rages between Lord Noriyuki (Usagi's overlord) and the power-hungry Lord Hikiji, with a final showdown in the offing. By the way, *Senso* means “war”, but the title doesn't necessarily refer to the *civil* war. As the final battle between the opposing forces is about to begin, a huge bullet-shaped projectile crashes to earth between them. Towering, three-legged war-machines emerge from the projectile and begin blasting about at everyone regardless of whose side they're on. Yes, you guessed it, the war-machines are huge tripods that fire powerful heat rays – it's an invasion by H.G. Wells's Martians, but they're a couple of centuries ahead of schedule. Instead of facing

mechanized Victorian armies, it's feudal Japanese armies that the Martians are up against. Sounds like the Ewoks against the Empire all over again, doesn't it? Well, not quite – Lord Noriyuki has a few steampunkish surprises up his sleeve. Still, the odds are *definitely* in the Martians' favor; and a surprising number of major characters from the *Usagi Yojimbo* saga (both heroes and villains) have been killed off in the first three issues. And I'm not so sure that Sakai is going to rely on Wells's “viral solution” to the Martian threat – the scuttlebutt is that Sakai will return to the original *Usagi Yojimbo* storyline after this six-issue series has been completed. Is Usagi's world facing a Japanese version of *Götterdämmerung*? I can hardly wait to see what happens next!

Oh, and besides the *Usagi Yojimbo: Senso* series, I also found a big, expensive coffee table book entitled *The Sakai Project: Artists Celebrate Thirty Years of Usagi Yojimbo*. In it, dozens of artists offer up their stunning tributes to the rabbit.

So, another big “Thank you!” to Dan for letting me know about Big Planet Comics! (Although this one is a mixed – *i.e.* expensive – blessing.)

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Happy Thanksgiving!

## \* \* 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 copy of 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, **November 9th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** 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



November 6-9, 2014 **WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 2014**: 1914-2014 – Three Centennials. Hyatt Regency Crystal City (Arlington, VA). Guests: Les Edwards (aka Edward Miller), Guy Gavriel Kay, Stuart David Schiff, Laid Finlay (daughter of Virgil Finlay), Jane Yolen. Attending membership: \$200. On-line and mail-in membership forms available on the website.

Website: <http://worldfantasy2014.org/>

For more info: [info@worldfantasy2014.org](mailto:info@worldfantasy2014.org)

November 28-30, 2014 **CHESSIECON 2014**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Author GoH: Tamora Pierce. Music GoH: Tom Smith. Art GoH: Theresa Mather. Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz. Membership: \$55 until Nov. 14; \$60 at the door. Payment via Paypal; or print membership form from website (checks payable to "Thanksgiving Science Fiction Society") and send to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg, MD 20883-3032

Website: <http://chessiecon.org>

For more info: [info@chessiecon.org](mailto:info@chessiecon.org)

February 13-15, 2015 **FARPOINT 22**. North Baltimore Plaza Hotel (Timonium, MD). Guests: Colin Ferguson ("Jack Carter" from *Eureka*), Tim Russ ("Tuvok"), Marc Okrand, Timothy Zahn (author), and more. Membership: \$80 weekend rate (daily rates available).

Website: [www.FarpointCon.com](http://www.FarpointCon.com)

June 19-21, 2015 **CAPITAL CON DC 2015**. "A new science fiction/fantasy convention for the Washington DC area." Washington Court Hotel on Capitol Hill (Washington DC). Media GoH: Doug Jones ("Abe Sapien" in *Hellboy* and *Hellboy 2*). Author GoH: Sherrilyn Kenyon. Artist GoH: Ruth Sanderson. More info as it becomes available.

Website: <http://www.capitalcon.org/>

Nov. 6-8, 2015 **BENT-CON/GAYLAXICON 2015**. Los Angeles Marriott Burbank Airport Hotel and Convention Center (Burbank, CA). Membership: \$60 weekend rate. More info as it becomes available.

Website: <http://bent-con.org/>

