



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 308 – November 2015

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Happy Thanksgiving!



Suggestions for November Reading

reviews by Carl

OK, so October has phased into November; but the nights are getting longer... and darker! *Still* a pretty good time to think about some “dark and creepy” stuff to read! Here are a couple of suggestions that should help you while away the lengthening hours between sundown and sunrise... with your curtains drawn!

The Scarlet Gospels
by Clive Barker
(St. Martin’s Press, 2015)

I can’t say as I’m a big fan of Clive Barker. Well... maybe just a bit. I enjoyed *Weaveworld* (1987), the
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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 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 3, 2015.

Here are the details for the next several book discussions:

Dec. 3 (FIRST Thursday, combined Nov./Dec. discussion) – *The City and the City*, by China Mieville (moderator: Ross).

Jan. 28 – *The Man in the High Castle*, by Philip K. Dick (mod: Ross/Dan).

Feb. 25 – *The Goblin Emperor*, by Katherine Addison (mod: Rob G.).

March 24 – *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*, by James Tiptree Jr., (moderator: Claire).

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GAYLAXICON 2016: Oct. 7-9, 2016

Check out the updated website:
<http://www.gaylaxicon2016.org/>

<<<<< November 2015 LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 8th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob’s home, **1425 “S” Street NW, Washington, DC**. The business meeting will begin at 1:30 PM and the social meeting at 2:00 PM. Please also bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

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What’s Inside?

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Peter's Bond

by Michael Tull

“This is NOT a first world problem anymore, PETER!” I screamed.

“There is no point yelling. I can hear you fine if you talk in a normal voice.”

“THIS IS A NORMAL VOICE WHEN YOU ARE SWINGING FROM YOUR ANKLES OVER A FLAMING PIT OF BROKEN GLASS!”

“You thought it was cool-looking when we got here,” Peter said as he stroked his white bunny. “And I didn’t say it was a first world problem for you. I mean I had to make the threat look real or all your exes wouldn’t take me seriously. Of course, you could have told me that you dated the CEO of the World Bank. Now people think I am some sort of Bond villain.”

“Well, if it walks like a duck...”

“But it doesn’t walk like a duck; it hops like a bunny.” An alarm sounded on the other side of the room. “Beauregard, play nice with your sister while I try to figure out what that alarm is. It is the ocean-side alarm, probably just another tourist taking a wrong turn while diving.” He turned off the alarm.

Moments later in another part of the underground cavern, accessible only by scuba, a diver emerged.

“I really wish I understood this alarm system better. When Paul and Rob set it up for me, they said it would be easy to run; but it isn’t at all easy,” Peter continued. He sat back down in his clutch of bunnies, picking up another to caress while he thought about his next move.

My head was pounding, but luckily I was able to see well enough down a hallway. First a shadow, then a man, a well-dressed one at that, peered around the corner. Tall, with dark hair and piercing blue eyes, the man slowly worked his way into the room.

A white bunny with red eyes hissed and growled. “What is it, Casper?” Peter asked, looking at the bunny. “OH! Who are you?” Peter asked

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Minutes of the October LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

Film News: Rob said he enjoyed the geek-friendly movie *The Martian*, starring Matt Damon. “It was not horrible” – Dan & Teresa’s summary comment for *Pixels*. Dan & Teresa were delighted with *Inside Out*, particularly the “Abstract Thought” scene. *Cabin in the Woods* director-producer Drew Goddard has said that he might pursue a sequel if there a possible storyline. Karl (no, not Carl) is looking forward to del Toro’s *Crimson Park*. Vin Diesel might play the Inhuman leader Black Bolt in an upcoming film? The trailer for *Pride & Prejudice & Zombies* looks promising.

TV News: Rob says he has enjoyed the three episodes of the current season of *Doctor Who*; he now thinks that Peter Capaldi is a good Doctor. New Fall season TV programs returning (or new!): *Flash, Arrow, Gotham, American Horror Story, Walking Dead, Jessica Jones*. It was with no tears to hear that *Extant* has been cancelled. Rob reported that funding has been lined up for Marvel’s *Damage Control* pilot. A general thumbs up for the over-the-top serial killer series *Scream Queens*. Rob has not been impressed with *Heroes Reborn?* Is it worth sticking it out? The *Childhood’s End* mini-series appears to be of good quality. Will the revived *X-Files* mini-series revive the magic of the original series?



Xena, Dan, and Teresa display the Paranormal Activity goodies

Other Stuff: Carl passed around a current issue of *Nostalgia Digest* magazine, containing several F&SF-related articles. Both Teresa and Xena shared their fun times at the SPX convention.

Upcoming LSF Events: Upcoming LSF book discussions: *The Monstrumologist* by Rick Yancey (Oct.); *The City and The City* by China Mieville (Nov./Dec.). An LSF board game party is planned for New Year’s Eve at Peter’s and Rob’s place.

Cool Stuff: We had been contacted by folks involved with the upcoming release of the film *Paranormal Activity*. They had been scheduled to appear at today’s meeting; but unfortunately that fell through. However, they did send a number of promotional items to LSF (T-shirts, posters, mugs, etc.). As you can see from the picture (above), all the goodies found a good home.

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November Reading

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topic of the LSF Book Discussion Group many years ago. I also really enjoyed both *Sacrament* (1996) and *Coldheart Canyon* (2001). But, at any rate, I’m definitely not a fan of Barker’s more lurid creations, such as *The Books of Blood* (1984-1985) and the film *Hellraiser* (1987). (Hmmm. Now that I think of it, I did sort’a enjoy the 1995 film *Lord of Illusions*, which was based on Barker’s short story “The Last Illusion” from Volume 6 of *The Books of Blood*.)



Clive Barker’s “Pinhead”

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Peter's Bond

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the man in the suit.

"The best alarms in the room always seem to be furry," the man quipped. "I am Bond... James Bond. If you must know, I am an agent with the World Bank, hired to tie up a few loose ends for the CEO."

"You don't look a thing like Timothy Dalton"

"That hair style is out of fashion; and I am a real person and not a fictional action-movie hero."

"So you are here to save..."

"No, Peter, no. I am here to recruit you. Clearly you have the mind of a master criminal. I am here to help you tie up a few loose ends," he said, looking at me. "My employer has a proposition."

Peter settled into his chair again. "I'm listening."

Bond confidently stepped into the room and put his powerful hand on Peter's shoulder, squeezing lightly. "You know, you are really quite handsome."

"From this angle, you do look surprisingly like Timothy Dalton, a younger version, like from *Sextette* or one of those late 70s TV shows," Peter said.

The Dalton wanna-be moved gracefully and sat on the arm of the chair. "What would it take to discuss terms of this proposition."

"Well, ahem, I... ah..."

"There will be time to talk later." Bond leaned in and kissed Peter.

From my swinging perch, I saw it all. Bond deftly pulled Peter to his feet and led him across the room. Peter was in a daze as the younger man kissed and caressed him. Items of clothing slid from both men until they were dancing nude and making out.

"We would be more comfortable in the other room," Peter said, pointing to the hall. Bond took his hand and led Peter from the room.

"Hey, guys?" I said.

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[Ed. Note: As Peter said when he sent it to me, this story is just in time for the upcoming premiere of the new James Bond film, *Spectre*.]

November Reading

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Be that as it may, I have no clear explanation as to why I decided to buy a copy of Barker's latest novel, *The Scarlet Gospels*. Ya see, *The Scarlet Gospels* has some very clear links to the gorier side of Clive Barker: it brings back the Hell Priest, "one of the most famous characters in the pantheon of horror" – better known as "Pinhead". Yes, Pinhead, who first appeared about 30 years ago in Barker's novel *The Hellbound Heart* (1986) and was so memorably portrayed in the film *Hellraiser* (1987) and its sequels.

But, wait, there's more! *The Scarlet Gospels* also features the return of Harry D'Amour, a private investigator who specializes in cases involving the occult. (D'Amour first appeared in "The Last Illusion" and has made appearances over the years in several other Barker novels and short stories.) Hmm... maybe that's it. I've always enjoyed PI stories – and, as I said, I did enjoy the film *Lord of Illusions*, featuring Scott Bakula as Harry D'Amour. (Although, as it turns out, *The Scarlet Gospels* isn't anything like a PI story.) At any rate... Here they are! Pinhead and D'Amour, together again... for the first (and probably last) time!

In *The Scarlet Gospels*, D'Amour accidentally finds himself in possession of a Lament Configuration, one of the intricate puzzle boxes that are rumored to open a doorway to Hell. (These boxes were featured in all the "Hellraiser" films.) Meantime, the Hell Priest has been wreaking havoc throughout the world's occult communities: he's killing off all the dark magicians (quite graphically, I might add) and gathering up all their mystical texts and paraphernalia. Pinhead has plans – very ambitious plans – and Harry D'Amour has unfortunately gotten dragged into those plans.

The Scarlet Gospels is definitely a creepy – and fascinating – read. And if you're a big fan of the works of Clive Barker, I think it's absolutely a "must read".

H.P. Lovecraft: The Mysterious Man Behind the Darkness

by Charlotte Montague

(Chartwell Books, 2015)

This book hit the stands at Barnes & Noble – on the discount shelves, no less – just in time for the Halloween season! I simply couldn't resist!

It's a lavishly-illustrated book about Lovecraft. Yes, it tells the story of his life; but it also includes synopses of many of his works (as they come up in the narrative of his life), excerpts from his diaries and letters, and sidebars about the people in his life: his friends, his family, his influences, his "writing circles", and so on. The last three chapters specifically deal with Lovecraft's posthumous legacy: the contributors to the so-called "Cthulhu Mythos" (a term originated by August Derleth) and their books and films. And, as I said, it's lavishly-illustrated with photographs and reproductions of paintings and book and magazine covers – even a copy of the "Map of the Principal Parts of Arkham, Massachusetts" hand-drawn by Lovecraft in early 1934. What a treasure trove!

Montague certainly doesn't pull any punches in her descriptions of Lovecraft's personal beliefs. Right from the start, she states: "After all, he was decidedly racist, vehemently reactionary and viewed all 'direct erotic manifestations' as repellent. He was frustratingly uncommercial, disdainful of democracy and resolutely against technological progress." On the other hand, "...this misanthropic visionary also displayed extraordinary kindness to those who knew him and corresponded with him..." And on the *other* "other hand", I couldn't help but feel sorry for his long-suffering wife, Sonia Greene (who was a businesswoman and Jewish). I was also surprised to learn how many gay men were members of his "circle".

I think Montague's *H.P. Lovecraft* is an absolute "must have" for any serious Lovecraft fan. I'm certainly glad that I own a copy!

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* * 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 8th, 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



Nov. 20-22, 2015 **PHILCON 2015**. Crown Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). GoH: Wen Spencer; Artist GoH: Richard Hescox; Special Musical Guest: Murder Ballads. Membership: \$55. Make checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society" and send to: Philcon Registration, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303.

For on-line registration and additional information: www.philcon.org

Nov. 27-29, 2015 **CHESSIECON 2015** ("Where Traditions Evolve"). Radisson North Baltimore Hotel (Timonium, MD). Author GoH: Seanan McGuire; Artist GoH: Ursula Vernon; Music GoH: Heather Dale; Special Guest: Tamora Pierce. Membership: \$55 until Nov. 15; \$60 at the door. On-line membership available (using PayPal), or print out the membership form and mail it and a check payable to "Thanksgiving Science Fiction Society" to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg, MD 20883-2032.

Website: <http://chessiecon.org>

Info at: info@chessiecon.org

Feb. 12-14, 2016 **FARPOINT 23**. Radisson Hotel North Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guests to include: Sean Maher ("Simon Tam" from *Firefly*); more guests TBA. Membership: \$80 for the weekend (daily rates available). On-line membership available (using Everbrite). Website: <http://www.farpointcon.com/>

Feb. 12-14, 2016 **KATSUCON 2016** (anime, manga, cosplay, etc.). Gaylord National Resort (National Harbor, Washington DC). Membership: \$70 until Jan. 31, 2016. Registration is on-line.

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

Aug. 17-21, 2015 **MIDAMERICON II, the 74th Worldcon**. Kansas City Convention Center & Bartle Hall (Kansas City, MO). GoHs: Kinuko Craft; Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden; Tamora Pierce; Pat Cadigan. Membership: \$185 "until Spring 2016" (will go up after that). Registration is on-line (via PayPal).

Website: <http://midamericon2.org/>

Oct. 7-9, 2016 **GAYLAXICON 2016**. Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). Guests of Honor: Eleanor Arnason (author); David Maxine (Hungry Tiger Press); Eric Shanower (*Age of Bronze*). Registration: \$50 thru 2015; \$80 at the door. Registration is on-line.

Website: <http://www.gaylaxicon2016.org/>

