



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 309 – December 2015

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New Year's Eve LSF Gaming Party - Dec. 31st -



Celebrate New Year's Eve with LSF at Rob and Peter's home. Here are the details on how to join the fun!

Date: Thursday, Dec. 31, 2015

Time: The doors will open at 3:00 PM. The potluck dinner and gaming will begin in the 3:30 PM-to-4:00 PM range. We'll toast in the New Year with champagne, sparkling wine, and/or sparkling cider.

Where: Rob & Peter's home: 1425 "S" St NW, Washington, DC

What to Bring: Your favorite table game or two (cards, board, etc.). It's a potluck meal, so bring something to eat: appetizers (veggies, chips, etc.), main course item (enough to serve at least 4-5 people), dessert, and/or non-alcoholic drinks (both regular and diet). For the New Year's toast, it's OK to bring some sparkling wine or cider (champagne, if you're feeling generous). The hosts request that no one drink alcohol during the party other than at midnight.

For more information, call 202-810-4678 or send e-mail to:

PeterPKnapp@gmail.com

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Directions and Parking Suggestions:
<http://lambdascifi.org/club/PeterRob.html>



<<<<<< December 2015 LSF Meeting >>>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 13th**. 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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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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What's Inside?

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**Reminder:
Annual LSF Book (et al)
Exchange at
Jan. 10th Meeting**



That's right, gang, the Holiday Season is almost upon us again; and it's time for a short reminder about LSF's upcoming *twenty-sixth* annual book (et al) exchange, which will occur at the January 10th meeting! All LSF members are invited to participate in this "blind exchange" – and visitors are invited to join in the fun, too!

Briefly, this will be an opportunity for LSFers to exchange copies of their favorite science-fiction, fantasy, or horror books/videos/etc. and, thus, get to know each other a little better.

For those of you unfamiliar with the process, here's how it works: You won't be assigned to exchange with any *particular* person – it's a "blind" exchange, where participants will get their pick from a pile of anonymous wrapped packages. **Full details on the exchange in the next (January) newsletter.**

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“Christmas at my house is always at least six or seven times more pleasant than anywhere else. We start drinking early. And while everyone else is seeing only one Santa Claus, we'll be seeing six or seven.”

– W.C. Fields –

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

**Minutes of the November
LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott

Carl passed around some articles/etc. sent in by Wayne, including an article on George Takei's musical *Allegiance* and an ESPN "swimsuit issue" of Marvel comic book superheroes.

Movie News: Peter enjoyed the current James Bond film *Spectre*, but thought that it helped if one had watched all three of the previous Daniel Craig "James Bond" movies. Coming out soon – *The Good Dinosaur*, *Hunger Games Part 4*, the next *Star Wars* film. The trailer for the film *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* looks promising.

TV News: Rob and David are enjoying the new *Supergirl* series; David commented that the series definitely passes the Bechdel Test. Rob liked seeing the character of Constantine appear on *Arrow*. (So, it appears that magic exists in the *Arrow* universe.) Rob liked the new *Doctor Who* Zygon two-part episode; but will the character of Clara die soon? Perhaps, since the actress has another upcoming commitment. Peter said that River Song is slated to appear in the *Doctor Who* Christmas Special. Universal agreement that *Heroes Reborn* is poorly written and acted and is generally awful. Carl really enjoyed the DVD of the 2nd season of *Penny Dreadful*. The upcoming six episodes of the *X-Files* mini-series look promising. The finale of Syfy's *Faceoff* is coming up; Peter said that you either love the show or have no interest in the content.

Upcoming LSF Events: The upcoming LSF Book Club titles were reviewed: *The City and the City* by China Mieville (Nov./Dec.); *The Man in the High Castle* by Philip K. Dick (Jan.); *The Goblin Emperor* by Katherine Addison (Feb.); and *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever* by James Tiptree Jr. (March). The annual LSF New Year's Eve Party – a gaming party – was announced (see announcement on page 1 of this newsletter).

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GAYLAXICON 2016: Oct. 7-9, 2016

Check out the updated website:

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



Mars and Venus “The Way They Were”

- Part 2 -

review by Carl

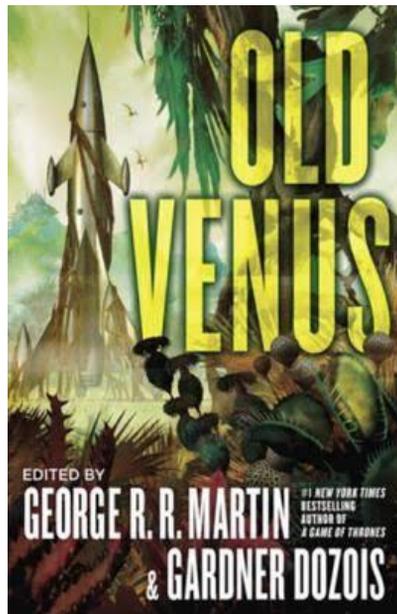
A couple of months ago, I reviewed the first of two “old planet” anthologies edited by George R.R. Martin and Gardner Dozois. That was *Old Mars*, an anthology of short stories harking back to the era when classic F&SF authors wrote stories set on a Mars that was a dying, desert planet filled with native lifeforms and Earthly adventurers. Now it’s Venus’s turn.

Old Venus

edited by George RR Martin
& Gardner Dozois
(Bantam Books, 2015)

Several years after *Old Mars*, Martin and Dozois put together this companion volume: 16 stories set amidst the ultra-humid swamps and dinosaur-infested jungles of “old Venus”, including contributions by such well-known writers as Allen Steele, Joe Haldeman, David Brin, Garth Nix, Elizabeth Bear, Joe Lansdale, Mike Resnick, and Ian McDonald. This time, as Gardner Dozois says in his Introduction (“Return to Venusport”), they wanted “stories set in the kind of nostalgic, habitable Venus... before the hard facts gathered by space probes blew those dreams away.” I can’t say I was ever as much a fan of the Venusian planetary romances as I was of their Martian relatives; but I must admit that I quite enjoyed this anthology, too.

I was surprised to see that this time *several* stories contain LGBTQ elements. “The Drowned Celestial” by Lavie Tidhar is an action-adventure story, in which a hard-bitten Earth explorer is pitted against a vengeful god-monster from a lost Venusian civilization. (The hero becomes more than just a friend to his male Venusian guide.) Eleanor Arnason weaves a tale of international intrigue carried over onto Venus in her story “Ruins”. An Earth journalist is asked to lead a National Geographic expedition in search of Venusian megafauna; but they find themselves up to their necks in mud, slime, and “dark ops” operations. (Se-



veral secondary characters are shown as comprising same-gender couples.) Garth Nix (“By Frogsled and Lizardback to Outcast Venusian Lepers”) tells the story of an ex-soldier who is forced by the Terran Space Navy to join a rescue mission into the most impenetrable part of the Venusian swamps; he discovers he must bodily mix with the local flora and fauna in order to survive. (Some ex-military-turned-lizardranchers in the outback are female-female “life partners”.) Finally, in Elizabeth Bear’s “The Heart’s Filthy Lesson”, an Earth scientist out in the Venusian wilds is attempting to prove her theory about “aboriginal Cytherean settlement patterns”, at risk to life and limb. (She’s had a years-long rocky relationship with her female “romantic and professional partner”.)

Here are some of my other favorites. In Allen Steele’s “Frogheads”, a tough private investigator is sent to Venus to find his wealthy client’s son somewhere in the trackless cloud-shrouded Venusian world-ocean. Paul McAuley (“Planet of Fear”) spins a tale of biological terror amongst the miners on Venus’s equatorial continent. Mike Resnick’s “The Godstone of Venus” is a good old-fashioned planetary romance, featuring the same Indiana Jones-like adventurer as in his *Old Mars* story “In the Tombs of the Martian Kings”. Now he’s after fabulous riches in the Venusian jungles. Ian McDonald’s fascinating and unique story – “Botanica Veneris: Thirteen Pa-

percuted by Ida Countess Rathangan” – brings the anthology to a satisfying conclusion. In this story, a young researcher attempts to determine the fate of a famous artist who disappeared some 50 years previously during her only visit to Venus, using the artist’s diaries, sketchbooks, and field notes to trace her route among the turbulent native civilizations. Wow! ΛΨΦ



— Jules Verne —

If we are to believe certain narrow-minded people — and what else can we call them?—humanity is confined within a circle of Popilius from which there is no escape, condemned to vegetate on this globe, never able to venture into interplanetary space! That’s not so! We are going to the moon, we shall go to the planets, we shall travel to the stars just as today we go from Liverpool to New York, easily, rapidly, surely, and the oceans of space will be crossed like the seas of the moon!

From the Earth to the Moon (1865),
translated by
Walter James Miller
(1978)

Quoted in
Science Fiction Quotations,
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 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, **December 13th, 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



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/>

