



# Lambda Sci-Fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians



(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 1,513 – April 2016



E-MAIL: [info@lambdascifi.org](mailto:info@lambdascifi.org)

WEBSITE: [www.lambdascifi.org](http://www.lambdascifi.org)

 See you at Worldcon 2016   
in the Sky City Hotel and Spa, Phoenix AZ, USA!!!



Special Guest: George R.R. Martin III

Featuring the long-awaited release of *The Winds of Winter* (Book 6 of “The Song of Ice and Fire”)

Current membership rate: Ø\$2,500 (goes up after St. Elvis Day)



<<<<< April 2016 LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, April 10th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob’s home, 1425 “S” Street NW, Washington, DC. The meeting will begin at 1:30 and the “group watch” will begin at 3:00 PM. We will sacrifice a goat to Cthulhu at Midnight. Please also bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

ΛΨΦ

**LSF Gaming Party**  
**-Saturday, April 16th -**



It’s time for another LSF tabletop gaming party!!

**When:** Saturday, April 16th;  
2:00 PM – ??

**What to Bring:** There’s plenty of room for gaming, so please bring your favorite table game – or two (cards, board, etc.). Also, please bring munchies and/or soft drinks.

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

**Where:** Home of Peter and Rob, 1425 “S” Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

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

**Questions:** Send email to: [PeterPKnapp@mail.com](mailto:PeterPKnapp@mail.com)

ΛΨΦ

### What’s Inside?

Page 2: Minutes of the March 2016 LSF Meeting; LSF Book Discussion Group.

Page 3: American Myths and Legends (book reviews).

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

# Minutes of the March 2016 LSF Meeting

taken by Scott  
(annotated by Ye Olde Editor)



We had to delay the opening of the meeting when a medium-sized UFO crashed into the building next door. And after the fires were put out, *Men in Black* kept us all waiting while they sifted through the wreckage for incriminating evidence.

**Movie News:** Teresa described the *Hardcore Henry* movie, which is presented all from a first-person perspective; Dan predicts that it will be horrible. The trailer for the new *Ghostbusters* movie looks great; the ghosts look really great! (Rob might show the original *Ghostbusters* at an upcoming LSF meeting.) Scott (and others) say that *10 Cloverfield Lane* is awesome! (John Goodman's character is perfect.) *X-Men: Apocalypse* – aka, “the Quest for More Money”, sayeth Dan – is coming soon. *Warcraft* and the new *Independence Day* movie are both due out in June. A new animated movie called *Kubo and the Two Strings* will be in the theaters in August; George Takei is one of the voice actors. *Purge: The Election Year*, *Star Trek: Beyond*, and *Suicide Squad* – all are coming out in July. *Dr. Strange and Fantastic Beasts & Where to Find Them* are both set to come out in November. Rob is eager to see *Captain America: Civil War*. JK Row-

ling's portrayal of Native American magic in the new “Harry Potter Universe” movie is considered offensive by some Native America groups.

**Book News:** Karl and Rob both enjoyed reading *The Martian*; Dan says he has re-read it a few times. A couple of attendees talked about how much they have enjoyed James Corey's “Expanse” books; and they look forward to seeing SyFy's version later today.

**Movie Outing:** Peter will be organizing an LSF movie outing to see *Finding Dora* for Saturday, June 18th.

**Birthday Celebration:** Carl then brought out a cupcake-cake to celebrate the 26th anniversary of the founding of Lambda Sci-Fi! *Two members with severe cupcake phobias needed to be heavily sedated while everyone else sang “Happy Birthday” (no longer copyright-protected).* Peter and Carl, two of the founding members, reminisced about the club's early years.

**Group Viewing:** Attendees then watched the first two episodes of SyFy's new series *The Expanse*. (But we did not see any “vomit-zombies”.) *Until, however, a ravening horde of vomit-zombies broke down the front door and we all had to run for our lives!*

ΛΨΦ

## 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 April 28, 2015.

Here are the details for the next five book discussions:

**April 28** – *When Gravity Fails*, by George Alec Effinger (mod: Rob).

**May 26** – *The Three-Body Problem*, by Cixin Liu (moderator: Ross).

**June 23** – *Annihilation*, by Jeff VanderMeer (moderator: Conrad).

**July 28** – *The Magicians*, by Lev Grossman (mod: Ross/Carl).

**Aug. 25** – *Nimona* (graphic novel), by Noelle Stevenson (moderator: Greg).

ΛΨΦ

The first of April, some  
do say,  
Is set apart for All-  
Fool's Day;  
But why the people call  
it so  
Nor I nor they them-  
selves do know.

- Poor Richard's Almanac -  
(1790)



For details, see Con Calendar on page 4.

## American Myths and Legends

two reviews by Carl

Here are a couple of delightful Fantasy books set in the great American wilderness in by-gone days.

*Six-Gun Snow White*  
by Catherynne M. Valente  
(Saga Press, 2015)

This first selection is a classic fairy tale as reimagined by the talented Catherynne M. Valente. It's the story of Snow White re-set in the Wild West (or, more accurately, the Weird Wild West) of the early 1860s.

"Mr. H" is a miner and entrepreneur who has made himself into a wealthy and powerful man. (From internal evidence, it would seem that Valente's "Mr. H" is based on George Hearst, father of millionaire newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst.) One day, while Mr. H is trading with the Crow Indians in the Dakota Territories, he falls in love (more probably "in lust") with a beautiful maiden named Gun That Sings. He pretty much buys Gun That Sings from her family; but then he actually marries her – although he never announces this marriage to his family or business associates. Soon afterwards, Gun That Sings dies while giving birth to a beautiful daughter.

Mr. H loves his daughter (whose name we never learn) "after a kind" – he raises and educates her lavishly (but privately) in his "slowly growing castle by the sea". But, as we all know must happen with ambitious, wealthy men, Mr. H marries again: this time to a coldly beautiful socialite from the East. Also predictably, the new Mrs. H doesn't get along well with Mr. H's daughter – in fact, she considers her half-breed step-daughter to be barely human. She constantly mistreats the girl while ostensibly trying to "civilize" and "humanize" her. (This is, in part, understand-

able, since Mrs. H was herself brutalized by her own mother while being trained for a life in Society.) And Mrs. H even gave her step-daughter a name: "She named me a thing I could aspire to but never become, the one thing I was not and could never be: Snow White."

Eventually, the situation becomes more intolerable (not to say dangerous) than Snow White can bear. "So this is what happens: Girl gets her gun, puts on a man's clothes, steals a horse, and lights out for Indian Territory." She is eventually pursued by Mrs. H's supernaturally-engendered son "Charming".

Time and time again, Valente brilliantly re-frames the Snow White story in a delightfully unexpected way. Snow White's six-shooter is named "Rose Red". Mrs. H's magical powers (including her mirror "so full up of dark") are based on Eastern "Puritan magic" and a pact she made with a dark spirit in the woods. I was particularly delighted with Valente's version of the Seven Dwarves: a band of rather unique outlaws in the town of Oh-Be-Joyful, Montana Territory. (I won't tell you any more about them – I don't want to spoil the surprise.)

*Six-Gun Snow White* is another triumph for Valente; and I highly recommend it.

*Fearsome Creatures of the Lumberwoods: 20 Chilling Tales from the Wilderness*  
by Hal Johnson  
(Workman Publishing Co., 2015)

I ran across this one accidentally on a "specialty items" table in the local B&N. However, this cute little book isn't *exclusively* set in the "Wild West" (Weird or not) – it's based on the folklore from a combination of various American forested locations: whether in the West, the Northwest, or the swamps of the Deep South. It's a real hoot – sly and urbanely witty from start to finish.

The book purports to be a description of 20 fearsome creatures that inhabit the Great American "out back", as written by "one of the last

surviving cryptozoologists". It's also a retelling – or, as the author/editor says, "a reimagining" – of an actual work by William Cox published in 1910, and still available on-line:

<http://lumberwoods.com/home.htm>

Although Cox appears to have conceived his work as a serious compilation of American folklore, Hal Johnson has clearly intended his "update" as a work of humorous entertainment. Consider the following excerpt from its front matter (entitled "Dear Reader"):

*...I am a cryptozoologist and, if I do say so myself, at or near the forefront of my field. So many colleagues have been eaten by chimeras, incinerated by salamanders, or pecked to death by barnacle geese; there is not necessarily much competition left... The focus of my study has been the lumberwoods of North America, a land still wild and untamed at the margin, populated only by lumberjacks and their mortal enemies, the cruel trees that once tyrannized this land – and, of course, by fearsome creatures.*

In addition to Mr. Johnson's tongue-in-cheek descriptions of encounters with various fantastical creatures, the book is packed with wild and amusing black-and-white illustrations by artist Tom Mead.

As a final comment, I couldn't help but notice that Johnson's work has an interesting element in common with another famous American humorist and teller-of-tall-tales: Mark Twain. Johnson can't seem to go more than a few pages without taking a snide shot at the French (or, indeed, several other European nationalities). By way of belated explanation, Johnson has this to say about Cox's original 1910 work: "Readers should be aware that the book contains racism above and beyond what one might expect from that era and approach it accordingly." Indeed?

To repeat myself, I found Johnson's *Fearsome Creatures of the Lumberwood* to be an absolute delight; and I'm so very glad I stumbled across a copy. ΛΨΦ

Tom Mead's depiction of an "acropelter"



## \* \* 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, **April 10th, 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



May 27-30, 2016 **BALTICON 50**. The Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel (Baltimore, MD). GoH: George R.R. Martin; Artist GoH: John Picacio. Membership: \$64 4/15; \$70 thereafter. On-line registration available at: [registration@balticon.org](mailto:registration@balticon.org) Website: [www.balticon.org](http://www.balticon.org) E-mail: [balticoninfo@balticon.org](mailto:balticoninfo@balticon.org)

July 15-17, 2016 **SHORE LEAVE 38**. (Celebrating Star Trek's 50th Anniversary.) Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Membership: \$90 for the weekend (daily memberships available) – deadline for pre-registration 6/15/2016; prices higher at the door. Send a membership form, self-addressed stamped envelope, and check payable to "Shore Leave" to: Shore Leave 38, PO Box 6809, Towson, MD 21285-6809  
Website: [www.shore-leave.com](http://www.shore-leave.com) E-mail: [information@shore-leave.com](mailto:information@shore-leave.com)

Aug. 17-21, 2016 **MIDAMERICON II, the 74<sup>th</sup> 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/>

October 7-9, 2016 **CAPCLAVE 2016**. Hilton Washington DC North/Gaithersburg (Gaithersburg, MD). Membership: \$50 thru 5/31/2016; \$55 from 6/1 thru 7/31; \$60 from 8/1 thru 9/30; \$65 at the door. Author GoHs: Sarah Beth Durst, Tim Powers. On-line registration. Website: [www.Capclave.org](http://www.Capclave.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: \$65 thru Sept. 12th; \$80 at the door. Registration is on-line.  
Website: <http://www.gaylaxicon2016.org/>

Nov. 25-27, 2016 **CHESSIECON 2016**. Radisson North Baltimore [formerly North Baltimore Plaza Hotel] (Timonium, MD). Membership: \$55 until 11/15; \$60 at the door. GoH: Sarah Pinsker; Artist GoH: Tabitha Ladin; Music GoH: S.J. Tucker; Special Guest: Elizabeth Schechter. On-line registration via PayPal; or make check payable to "Thanksgiving Science Fiction Society" and send (with membership form) to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg, MD 20883-3032  
Website: <http://chessiecon.org/> Information: [info@chessiecon.org](mailto:info@chessiecon.org)

