



# LAMBDA SCI-FI

DC Area Bi/Gay/Lesbian Science Fiction Association

P.O. Box 10087 \* Silver Spring, MD 20914 \* (301) 445-5650 Issue #4 - July '90

## FOURTH MEETING MINUTES

June 10, 1990

Present: Carl C, Scott I, Jaime I, Peter K, David N, Al W.

Yes, it's official. Lambda Sci-Fi is indeed now a full-fledged member of the Gaylactic Network, the seventh local Gaylaxian group.

This meeting seemed to be much more free-form than usual, with discussions ranging throughout such subjects as the projected "Star Trek VI" movie, disturbing psychological aspects of "Freddy" (of "Nightmare on Elm Street" fame), recent episodes of "Star Trek: the Next Generation", (continued on page 4)

## Movie Review

### Total Recall

Directed by Paul Verhoeven

This latest addition to the science-fiction genre of movies brings together an unusual array of moods and attitudes. Blending adventure, action, suspense, some high-tech special effects, and even humor, Total Recall propels us into an environment reminiscent of Blade Runner and The Road Warrior. And I do mean...propels. Paul Verhoeven has taken the liberty of providing us with mental-imagery overload. The visuals and action sequences are so sleekly designed and choreographed that you may have to see it again to catch what you missed the first time. (continued on page 5)

## BOOK REVIEW

### GREEN EYES

by Lucius Shepard

Ace Science Fiction, 1984

Lucius Shepard's first novel is an off beat look at medical technology, metaphysics, and life after death in what could be the present, tucked away in a secret scientific insitute.

"Green Eyes" follows a current trend of SF/horror fiction in updating and modernizing such gothic monsters as vampires, werewolves, and zombies. However, Shepard's account of laboratory produced zombies, or "bacterially induced artificial personalities" as they are clinically called, weaves a clever tale of medical experimentation and ethics, of spirituality and religion, around a rather simple story structure of one man's discovery that he's not who he thinks he is and must find means to extend the temporary existence -- shades of "Bladerunner." (continued on page 4)

## Convention Review

### Creation Convention

College Park Campus

On June 2 and 3, Creation, Inc., a professional convention producer, put on a small science fiction convention at the University of Maryland. For those of you who have never been to a Creation Convention, let me explain how they are run. Creation usually gets a famous personality to be the guest of honor, and the main draw at the convention. This guest will stand in front the audience and talk about anything s/he wants to talk about. S/he then opens to floor to questions. (continued on page 2)

Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next meeting will be on July 8th in Silver Spring at 2:00 -- call for directions.

## Convention Review - cont'd.

In addition to the guest, the organizers of the convention usually have slide shows about something of interest to the fans, autograph sessions with the guests, and trailers of soon to be released movies. Also, there is always a dealer room filled with all kinds of science fiction related items.

Creation College Park tried to please different audiences. Ron Fassler, who portrays Captain Grazer on Alien Nation, Irina Irvine, from Beauty and the Beast, and George Takei of Star Trek were guests.

Ron had the sad news that Fox has decided to cancel Alien Nation and replace it with two situation comedies. This is especially unfortunate because the producers of the show were going to introduce a continuing Gay character next season. On an optimistic note, there is a chance that Fox may bring back the show as a mid season replacement. We can only hope.

Irina's talk centered around her role in Beauty and the Beast. Not having watched the show, her reminiscing did not mean much to me, and therefore I can't report on specifics of her talk. I do remember that she enjoyed working on the show very much.

George's talk was the highlight of the afternoon, and was full of news and gossip. He confirmed that there will be a Star Trek VI, and that it will star the original cast.

Paramount decided to follow this route after the massive negative fan reaction to the idea of placing Star Trek VI during the academy days of the original crew, and casting a new set of younger actors to play youthful versions of Kirk, Spock, and the others.

George also commented that rumor has it that Leonard Nimoy (who directed #3 and #4) will be directing #6 and that Gene Roddenberry will write the script. Also, Paramount may premier the movie here in Washington at the National Air

and Space Museum in late 1991 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Star Trek.

Not much else happened at the convention. I should point out that a big difference between Creation conventions and fan run conventions is that Creation conventions tend to be much more impersonal than fan run conventions. They have very set hours (in this case 11:35-5:30) with very limited programming and they don't offer facilities for fans to interact with each other. At this convention there were two rooms, the event room and the dealers room. No con suites to meet and mingle with other fans were provided.

That's not to say Creation conventions are not worth going to. They are a good source of current science fiction related information, and a good place to pick up a tribble or two. If you want to socialize though, go to a fan run convention.

On a final note, I'd like to mention that this is the first time I've heard Creation acknowledge that Merritt Butrick, who played David, Kirk's son in Star Trek II: The Wrath of Kahn and Star Trek III: The Search for Spock, and T'Jon in the Next Generation episode "Symbiosis", died of AIDS. At past conventions they have mentioned that he had passed away, but declined to give a cause.

I don't know why they did not acknowledge the cause of his death in the past, but I applaud Creation for doing so at this convention. While the disclosure of Merritt's cause of death may not have the same impact as Rock Hudson's did, my hope is that this information will make at least one fan stop and think about how AIDS has affected his/her life.

-- by Peter Knapp

**MEMBERSHIP ALERT!** As of June 14th, we have 30 members on the mailing list...

## DISCLAVE '90 REPORT

For some time, I'd been looking forward to attending Disclave '90. ("Finally, a convention almost in my own back yard!") And then I happened to read "Disclave '89 Report" by Steve Owens in the July '89 issue of Gaylactic Gazette. He described Disclave '89 as a party-goers con, with quite a number of less-than-well-behaved attendees. He labelled the programming as "skimpy" and also cited the lack of a gay fandom party. I got a little worried.

I'm pleased to report that I had a great time at Disclave '90. Yes, there were a lot of very young, borderline-bizarre/Neo-Punk types around--but I found them rather well-behaved and no weirder than some of the fen wandering around the halls at a Westercon or a Worldcon. Yes, I'm sure some of the parties got (shall we say) "wild"; but I'm afraid I can't comment on the overnight revels, since I went home every night. However, there didn't seem to be any wreckage lying about on the mornings-after; and I didn't hear of any sleep-deprived guests stalking the corridors in search of vengeance.

"Skimpy" programming? I don't know about that--there were five rooms of more-or-less continuous programming, featuring various speakers and panels and activities. The programming may not have filled every single minute of each day; but it was comfortably full, allowing you time to attend a number of different activities and still have time to catch your breath. I was in Seventh Heaven myself, getting my fill of Guest-of-Honor Mike Resnick (his reading session, his autographing session, the Guest-of-Honor speech, and a panel entitled "What the Writers Read").

There's one thing you need to remember about Disclaves, however. To quote the Disclave '90 Program booklet: "... this con is about books and so you should expect our program to focus on things of interest to Science Fiction readers, writers and artists..." It may not have been the biggest con I've ever been to; but it certainly featured participation by scads of writers. Here are a few of the several-dozen-some program participants: Mike Resnick, Somtow Sucharitkul,

Jack L. Chalker, Brenda W. Clough, Esther M. Freisner, Alexis Gilliland, Joe Haldeman, Eric Kotani, John Maddox Roberts, Don Sakers, Hannah Shapiro, Charles Sheffield, Judith Tarr, Lawrence Watt-Evans. (Recognize any of your favorites in there?)

The Art Show wasn't bad at all--a lot of very nice pieces that filled a respectable-sized room. And there was the Artist Guest of Honor, Dawn Wilson--she had a number of her magnificent works on display in the Art Show. (A bit out of my price range, though.) There was also a nice little film program (generally late evening until early morning, with Saturday morning cartoons thrown in for good measure).

One thing Steve Owens and I seem to agree on: the dealer's room was great! To quote Steve's article: "I'll miss the dealer's room though; I came back with a load of books..." (So did I, Steve!!! Oh, my aching bank balance!) There's certainly something to be said for a dealer's room that concentrates on books and art (with just enough jewelry, role-playing games, comics, videos, etc. thrown in for diversity).

I was also very pleased with the set-up of the Disclave Con Suite. There was a lot of comfortable furniture scattered around and a seemingly never-ending supply of FREE soft drinks and munchies. The Con Suite was a great place to catch a little "quiet-time" for reading, looking through the loot you'd picked up in the dealer's room, reviewing the program guide, or socializing with friends. (It was closed from 3 AM to 10 AM for general clean-up and to prevent it turning into a fannish version of Skid Row.)

And now a final bit of good news! Yes, there was a gay fandom party at Disclave '90! The D.C. Gaylaxians were, as yet, too new to be able to get one organized; but Eric Browning (a member of the Gaylaxian Network from Harrisburg, PA) hosted one in his room.

## DISCLAVE '90 REPORT - cont'd.

Eric prepared all kinds of snacks (ham, veggies, fruit, junk food, etc.), and there were plenty of soft drinks. Dozens of very nice gay fans showed up for introductions and general socializing; and I had some fliers on hand to alert them to the existence of the Lambda Sci-Fi group. (I also had a stack of these fliers out at the Con Suite; and most of them apparently found their way into the hands of interested parties.)

My considered opinion? All in all, it's "thumbs up" from me! I had a wonderful time at Disclave '90! Kudos to The Washington Science Fiction Association! (And special thanks to Eric Browning for the nice gay fandom party!) I look forward to next year's Disclave---May 24 through May 27, 1991, at the Sheraton Greenbelt in New Carrollton. See you there!

-- by Carl Cipra

## FOURTH MEETING MINUTES - cont'd.

"Total Recall", what everyone's first experiences in SF reading were, possible logos for Lambda Sci-Fi, "The World of Information" (a current exhibit at the Smithsonian's Museum of American History), and Disclave.

Plans were finalized for our table at Pride Day. (Attention, attention, attention: we could still use a few bodies during the day. So far, it's just Barrett Brick, Carl, and Al. We'll probably need help with break-down at the end of the day.)

Suggestions were made for improving Carl's one-sheet flier to be handed out at the table; and David turned in the "banners" for the table that he designed on his computer. The idea of membership applications (like the one for the Gaylaxian Network) was tabled for the moment; but there will be a sign-up sheet of some sort at the table.

Plans for a "let's-all-go-to-the-movies" party were discussed, as was the possibility of a "let's-all-sit-and-watch-videos" party. No definite plans were made for the movie-night; but "Flesh Gordon" was discussed for a "Friday-night-videos" party. (Stay tuned! We'll let you know when/where/what as this idea develops!) For our next meeting (July 8th), Carl will bring a videotape of "Quarantine", a recent "New Twilight Zone" episode (running time: approx. 22 min.).

Peter gave everyone an update on the rumors about the possible "Star Trek VI" movie and talked about the Star Trek convention he attended a couple of weeks ago (guest: George Takei). Carl talked about his experiences at Disclave and passed around some fliers about upcoming conventions.

-- By Carl Cipra

## BOOK REVIEW - cont'd.

The novel's premise, the technical aspects of which are sketchy and ambiguous, is that a group of cloistered scientists and medical researchers have created a strain of bacteria which injected in to the recently deceased, stimulates or recreates brain activity. However, the zombies are born with out memories or personalities. They live at an accelerated pace and subconsciously create for themselves an identity, a process that is not quite understood by the doctors. The "slow burners" which live longer, seem to develop psychic abilities, which the book succeeds in explaining with great detail.

I found the novel very engrossing, the pace is quick, the social and spiritual insights are very intriguing. The novel also succeeds in creating a vivid murky atmosphere, with colorful descriptions of the Louisiana byou setting laced by a cultural backdrop of back-woods Fundamentalism and ancient Voodoo legends.

## BOOK REVIEW - cont'd.

There is nothing specifically gay about this novel, but there are some interesting moments. One zombie who has taken the identity of a road house rebel is presumably bisexual. Sexual politics are explored in two settings: first, within the institution as the doctors try to manipulate and study the zombies; second, within a wealthy woman's household entourage of psychic delinquents, a setting which seems inspired by the song "Hotel California." Perhaps the best scene involves the protagonist zombie ducking in to a Fundamentalist tent revival; the consequences of which border on the satirical.

-- by David Neveu

## Movie Review - cont'd.

Arnold Schwarzenegger has the lead role as a construction worker in the 21st century who has dreams of a Mars he never knew...or thought he never knew. Hard to tell sometimes where the reality begins and ends. Seems Arnold (Douglas Quaid in the film) has been implanted with someone else's mind. And the tale continues to whirl at light-speed between very expensive and impressive special effects to fighting sequences that make you gasp. Eventually he finds himself having to return (or go for the first time?) to Mars as an incredible plot of mind-control and memory implantation becomes clear, then not so clear.

Fortunately, the movie permits you to figure out what's going on and where the reality begins and ends, too. The special effects from the vector-graphic imaging security system to the prosthetic multi-split disguise keep you wondering at their ingenuity and probable future uses. To say more would spoil the show.

If you're looking for a new twist in science-fiction adventure, I highly recommend Total Recall as a needed vacation from the planet...just a two hour roller coaster ride. How would you know if someone stole your mind?

-- by Scott Iles

## Services

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