



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 373 – April 2021

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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.

Before the COVID-19 shut-down orders, the LSF Book Discussion Group usually met 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. *Now, book discussions are held virtually (same "4th Thursday" schedule).* The next book discussion will be held on April 22 (via Zoom).

Here are the details for the next several discussions:

April 22 – *They Both Die at the End*, by Adam Silvera (moderators: Ben/Rob).

May 27 – *Too Like the Lightning*, by Ada Palmer (moderator: Judy).

June 24 – *Watership Down*, by Richard Adams (moderator: Peter).

July 22 – *The Alteration*, by Kingsley Amis (moderator: Carl).

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U.S. Space Force "Guardians"

info passed along by Wayne #1 and Carl

As if there wasn't enough risible controversy associated with the newest Branch of the U.S. Military (see the article in the September 2020 LSF newsletter), now there's the announcement that members of the United States Space Force are officially known as "Guardians". Can the addition of "of the Galaxy" be far behind?

A brief announcement on the U.S. Space Force website states that the name "Guardians" traces back to a 1983 Air Force Space Command motto: "Guardians of the High Frontier". (Although it's a distinct entity, the U.S. Space Force is still officially part of the U.S. Air Force.)

In addition to the official Space Force logo (with its uncanny similarity to the Starfleet logo), the U.S. Space Force has a more concise horizontally-shaped logo (shown above). The Force's official motto is "Semper Supra" (Always Above), representing "the Service's role in establishing, maintaining and preserving U.S. freedom of operations in the ultimate high ground." (I think Buzz Lightyear says it better: "To Infinity and Beyond!")



UNITED STATES
SPACE FORCE

And you just gotta love the tag line on their website's "Join the Space Force" page:



Check out the U.S. Space Force website: www.spaceforce.mil

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Plans to Disband Lambda Sci-Fi by the End of 2021?



See article on page 4.

<< April 2021 LSF Meeting TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY >>

Due to Coronavirus concerns, we plan to hold the April 11th LSF meeting virtually. Anyone who would like to participate can contact Rob for virtual meeting information at rob gatesdc@gmail.com. Hope to "see" you there!

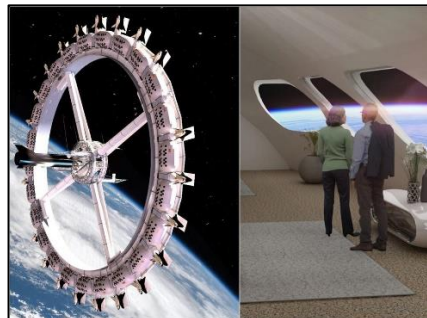


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Space Hotel Construction to Start in 2026?

info passed along by Wayne #1 and Carl



Anybody want a vacation in orbit? Orbital Assembly (a space construction company) announced in March that it was “on track” to begin construction of the world’s first space hotel by 2026. The announcement was made in a virtual event via Orbital Assembly’s YouTube channel. Shades of Ben Bova’s space-faring rogue Sam Gunn! (Refer to the book review of *The Sam Gunn Omnibus* in the April 2020 newsletter.)

John Blicow (Orbital Assembly’s chief executive) believes the coronavirus pandemic might delay the construction start date from its original 2025 projections; but he believes it could take just a year or two to assemble Voyager Station (the commercial space station that will house the hotel). He also said: “It’s going to happen fast when it starts. And we believe it’s going to happen a lot, too, even before we finish the first one. We have buyers for other stations because they’re very, very lucrative.”

For you prospective space tourists, there are some things to keep in mind. You’ll need to undergo both safety and physical training before boarding your SpaceX Starship shuttle to Voyager Station. The station is designed to accommodate 288 guests and 112 crew members. That includes space tourists, scientists conducting low-gravity research, and service industry professionals. Plans are to include world-renowned chefs on board who will have a chance to build out electric and fire-free kitchens for the station.

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Minutes of the March 2021 LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

TV News: Rob and Peter are enjoying the SyFy series *Resident Alien*, starring Alan Tudyk. Carl is enjoying the new series *Debris*. (He wondered where he’d seen Jonathan Tucker, the main male actor, before; and he was informed that Jonathan Tucker has also appeared in such shows as *Westworld*, *American Gods*, and *Justified*.) Rob and Peter finished watching *WandaVision*: “It was wonderful!” (Rob noted the changes in aspect ratio on various episodes.) The new series *Falcon and the Winter Soldier* starts this Friday. As reported by Wayne #1, the Netflix series *Tribes of Europa* looks promising. (“In

the wake of a mysterious global disaster, war rages between the Tribes that have emerged from the wreckage of Europe. Three siblings from the peaceful Origine tribe are separated and forced to forge their own paths.”) Peter is watching the animated series *Pacific Rim: The Black* – it is violent, bloody, and dark. (But is it YA?) David reported that this is the final season of *Supergirl*.

Movie News: Is everyone excited about the upcoming release of Zack Snyder’s “director’s cut” of *Justice League*? (It’s four hours long!) The release date of *Black Widow* has not been changed. (Will it get pushed back again? And when we will all be ready to go see a movie in a movie theater?) No one is excited about *Chaos Walking* (with Tom Holland, Daisy Ridley and Nick Jonas) – from IMDB: “A dystopian world where there are no women and all living creatures can hear each other’s thoughts in a stream of images, words, and sounds called Noise.” Randy disliked the new *Tom & Jerry* movie – a mix of animation and live action.

Other Discussions: There was discussion about actors who pursue “superhero jack bodies”, including Hugh Jackman and Kumail Nanjiani. Bob reviewed his participation in the “Rainbow Space Magic” virtual con on a panel titled “Aging in Queer Spec Fic.” Bob rattled off a set of genre book titles with older queer characters, including *The Glass Inferno* by Frank M. Robinson & Thomas N. Scortia. David mentioned the Kessler Syndrome (which I had to look up): “The Kessler syndrome is a theoretical scenario in which the density of objects in low Earth orbit due to space pollution is high enough that collisions between objects could cause a cascade in which each collision generates space debris that increases the likelihood of further collisions.” David talked about the Just-Watch app (“the streaming guide for movies and shows”).

Upcoming LSF book discussions: *Enter the Aardvark* by Jessica Anthony (March); *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera (April); *Too Like the Lightning* by Ada Palmer (May); *Water-ship Down* by Richard Adams (June); *The Alteration* by Kinsley Amis (July). ΛΨΦ

My 2020 Hugo Nominees by Peter Knapp

As an attending member of the year’s Worldcon, DisCon III (discon3.org) I can nominate works for Hugos. Since I don’t read (much), I limit my nominations to the two best dramatic presentation categories. Here are my nominations for works that premiered in 2020.

Best Dramatic Presentation Long Form Nominees (For mini-reviews of the movies I saw last year, please see the February 2021 LSF newsletter - Issue #371.)

Birds of Prey
The Midnight Sky
Onward
Soul
Wonder Woman 1984

Best Dramatic Presentation Short Form Nominees (Next month’s newsletter will include mini-reviews of the TV shows I saw last year.)

Doctor Who – “Fugitive of the Judoon”
The Expanse – “Down and Out”
The Mandalorian – “The Tragedy”
Star Trek: Discovery – “There is a Tide...”
The Umbrella Academy – “The End of Something”

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Space Hotel

continued from page 2

Oh, and there's a hefty price tag. A trip to the first space hotel will cost \$5 million for about 3½ days in Earth orbit. For cost comparison, Axiom Space charged private citizens \$55 million each for a trip to the International Space Station and 8 days in orbit.

And plans are for Voyager Station to be rather more comfortable than the ISS. Voyager Station's rotating ring structure will feature artificial gravity equivalent to the Moon's (approx. one-fifth Earth gravity). This will allow guests to feel more comfortable as they sleep, eat, shower, and use other (ahem) restroom facilities. There will be a gymnasium area where tourists can work out or play games; and Blincow says the gymnasium will also be an entertainment venue for rock stars and talk-show hosts. ("There'll be two shows every night... That's part of the entertainment package.")

Believe it or not, more than 600 people have placed deposits (totaling about \$80 million) with Virgin Galactic; and there are reportedly thousands more on the wait-list.

Here's a link to Gateway Foundation's 8-minute video about current and future plans for orbital stations. It includes some footage from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. (The similarities are quite obvious.) It's not a completely rose-colored review, however, as it discusses some of the potential problems involved with the endeavor. Take a look:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QI7z46LWLY>

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For comparison, here's a poster featuring 2001's space station.



Rowena Morrill
1944 - 2021

Rowena Morrill passed away in February 2021, following years of poor health. She was a prominent artist in the F&SF field, with an active career that spanned decades. Her work was credited under such names as Rowena, Rowena Morrill, and Rowina Morrill.

Morrill graduated with an art degree from the University of Delaware in 1971. She subsequently entered the Tyler School of Arts MFA program but left before completing her Masters degree. She moved to NYC and worked for an advertising agency. After showing her portfolio to Charles Volpe at Ace Books, she was commissioned to illustrate a Romance cover. This began her long career as a cover artist. Her first genre-related cover was for a horror novel: Jane Parkhurst's *Isobel* (1977). Morrill continued to work in the Horror field, producing cover art for HP Lovecraft collections, and then turned to F&SF. Her output was prolific during the 1970s and 1980s. She painted covers for books by such authors as Philip K. Dick, Isaac Asimov, Harry Harrison, George RR Martin, Anne McCaffrey, Madeleine L'Engle, Samuel R. Delany, Robert Sheckley, Theodore Sturgeon, and James Blish. Her paintings have also appeared in calendars, portfolios, and such magazines as *Playboy*, *Heavy Metal*, *Omni*, *Art Scene International*, and *Print Magazine*.

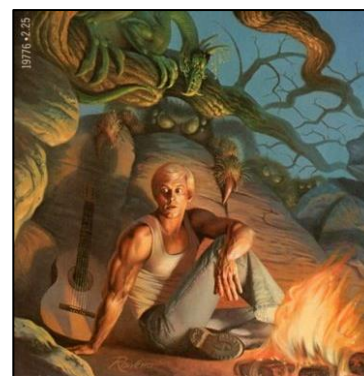
Morrill received nominations for the Hugo Best Professional Artist award in 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1986. In 1983, her book *The Fantastic Art of Rowena*

was nominated for both the Locus Award for Best Nonfiction Reference and the Hugo Award for Best Nonfiction Book. Morrill won the British Fantasy Award for Best Artist in 1984. She received the Chesley Award for her cover on Victoria Strauss's *The Garden of Stone* (1999). She was named Artist Guest of Honor for the 70th World Science Fiction Convention (Chicon 7, in 2012) but was unable to attend because of health problems. She was also Artist Guest of Honor for the 2017 World Fantasy Convention (San Antonio) and received a World Fantasy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020.

Interesting side note: After the fall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, a couple of paintings were found hanging in one of his houses that appeared to be her work (*King Dragon* and *Shadows Out of Hell*). However, according to Morrill, they were copies – she had sold the originals to a Japanese collector.



Star Trek: The Motion Picture
illustration by Rowena



Rowena cover illustration for
Who Fears the Devil?
by Manley Wade Wellman
[Ed. note: One of my favorites!]

**** INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS ****

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and trans-gendered (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. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. Due to Coronavirus concerns, the Lambda Sci-Fi meeting for Sunday, April 11th, will be held virtually. We'll keep you informed of the status of future meetings.

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

April 16-18, 2021 **RAVENCON 15**. "We have cancelled the 2021 convention for safety reasons and have rescheduled for April 29-May 2, 2022, at Virginia Crossings hotel in Richmond, VA. Terry Brooks and Rhiannon's Lark are still our GOHs."

Website: <https://www.ravencon.com/>

July 9-11, 2021 **SHORE LEAVE 42** (rescheduled from July 2020). Delta Hotels Marriott Baltimore Hunt Valley (Hunt Valley MD). Actor GoH: Denis Lawson (*Star Wars* "Wedge Antilles"); Brandon Routh (Superman & The Atom); Robert Duncan McNeill (Lt. Tom Paris); Brent Spiner (Data); Alex Kingston (River Song). Membership: \$105 for the weekend (\$120 at the door); daily rates available. Printable registration forms & on-line registration available through the Registration Page.

Website: <https://www.shore-leave.com/info/update-2020-04-25.htm>



**Plans to
Disband LSF
by the End
of 2021?**

You are SO
gullible!
What a
maroon!



APRIL FOOL!