



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044 - (301) 445-5650 - Issue #20 - November 1991

MINUTES OF THE 10/13/91 MEETING

-- minutes taken by Peter Knapp,
transcribed by Carl Cipra

This was one of the smallest meetings we've had in a long time -- only 16 people were present. It seems that a lot of the "old hands" were either out of town or attending other meetings. There were four first-timers in attendance; and one of them was an active member of Kindred Spirits in St. Louis before moving to D.C.! (Welcome, Wayne!) It was also quite a sedate meeting, with fewer cross conversations going on at the same time.

(Note: Noel and Wayne weren't wearing matching outfits this time; but they were wearing matching crewcuts!)

Scott R. (through Carl) provided us all with photocopies of a comicbook story that first appeared in a 1953 issue of "Weird Fantasy". It deals with racial-discrimination issues (which is amazing for 1953) and is entitled "Judgment Day!"

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The Gilda Stories, a Novel by Jewelle Gomez

Reviewed by
Loree Cook-Daniels

I'm not usually into vampire stories, but one that's about a Black lesbian vampire, well . . . I had to check it out.

The stories span Gilda's flight from Mississippi as a runaway slave child in 1850 through her flight to Peru as a hunted vampire in 2050. During this time, she witnesses changes in how Blacks and women are viewed by majority society, as well as technological and ecological evolutions. Her relationships with mortals -- and how

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REPORT ON OKTOBERTREK '91

by Carl Cipra

On the weekend of October 4 - 6, I attended OktoberTrek '91. Due to the efforts of one of our members, Jay DeSort, the con committee had agreed to host a discussion panel on the theme of "gays in the Star Trek universe;" and I was asked to participate as a panelist.

This was only the third Trek convention that I've ever attended. As a rule, I don't attend Star Trek conventions; my preference is for conventions that offer a wider range of SF interests and activities. I was,

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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS AT THE UPTOWN

by Sylvia Henderson

So, I finally go to a non-meeting club event and hardly anyone else shows! I was bummed! I did run into Jeff and family at the end of the movie outside. And you would have all gotten to meet Pat, finally. Well, she said she would put up with another sci-fi outing in December if we go as a group to see "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country."

On to the review . . . I really wasn't psyched to see "Close Encounters" at first, especially since it would only have been my fifth or sixth viewing! But I'm glad I went. I originally went just to see some of you whom I haven't seen in a couple of months since I haven't been able to make the meetings. I was disappointed that I didn't see you; but don't feel bad . . . the movie was far better than I had anticipated (smile).

First of all, the screen -- wonderfully wide, especially when one sits in row number 6! The scenes went from my left peripheral vision around to my right peripheral vision. It was great!

Secondly, the sound -- it wasn't the digital sound of the Bethesda Theatre (where I virtually felt Linda's taut body move lithely in "T2"), but it was one step away. You could FEEL the mothership as it cruised the skies. You could FEEL the rumbles and roars and explosions. It was wonderful!

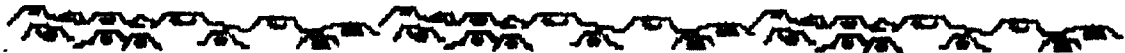
Thirdly, the added footage of film -- I saw parts at the end (and throughout the movie) that I know I didn't see before. The film was over 2 hours, 15 minutes long. At \$3.25 for the 4:30 show, what a bargain!

The movie held everyone spellbound, as old as it is and as many times as most of us have seen it. People (including two of us who shall remain nameless)

had tears in their eyes when the hatch of the mothership opened and the "other beings" stepped out. My fists were clenched; my body was tense; and I jumped with anticipation throughout scenes of the movie. In short, it was like (or better than) seeing it the first time.

If you haven't seen the movie at the Uptown, you haven't experienced the movie. The timing was great -- 4:30 PM on Sunday is AFTER all the Saturday day and night doings, and AFTER Sunday yard work and house things and church things most of us have to do. It's a time for chilling-out before preparing to face settling down for the night. Let's schedule another movie adventure for that timeframe. And the matinee price didn't hurt, either. And we need to set up some kind of calling chain so that one organizer does not have to make 60 phone calls. Okay. END OF REVIEW (and miscellaneous comments). Hopefully, I'll see you all at November's meeting.

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*****IMPORTANT NOTE*****

An Announcement from Al, Carl, and Peter

To all interested parties (LSF members, other Gaylaxian affiliates, etc.), please note that the official address for Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is the post office box in Washington, D.C. (as shown on this newsletter, for instance). Please do not send club business (correspondence, membership applications, etc.) to the former Maryland P.O. box. If you **do** send anything to the Maryland P.O. box, its processing will be unavoidably and regrettably delayed.

OCTOBER MINUTES

(continued from page 1)

Carl reported that the "Worlds of Wonder" art store/gallery (located in Georgetown) is featuring a "horror art show" through Halloween.

Carl and Noel reported on their experiences at Oktober-Trek. Carl enjoyed the con, although it was generally limited in scope to Star Trek and ST:TNG themes. He also reported that the panel on gays in the Star Trek universe went quite well but that consensus seemed to be that Paramount is too chicken to feature a gay character on ST:TNG. Noel definitely did not enjoy the con; he cited poor organization, poor programming, and inability to gain access to the guest speaker programs rooms.

Surprising news about the television show "Quantum Leap": An episode has been filmed which deals with the subject of gay teen suicide; but the Network doesn't want to air it! The Network has also informed the producers of the show that if the episode is run, the Network will hold the producers financially responsible for any lost advertising revenue due to withdrawal of advertisers!

Sylvia has suggested (through Brian S.) that Lambda Sci-Fi members get together for a group outing for the premiere of "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" on Friday, De-

ember 13th. [*Let's get this organized at the November meeting!* - Ed.]

Before he left D.C. for his new job in The Big Apple, Carroll D. cleaned out his library and dropped off a couple of boxes of books to be sold as a fund-raiser for the club. (The proceeds came to \$11.50. Thanks, Carroll, wherever you are!)

Eventually, the meeting broke up to graze on all the munchies, gossip, and watch a "bloopers tape" (for both Star Trek and ST:TNG) that Noel bought at OktoberTrek.

NOTES ON UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Next month's meeting will be held on November 10th at Jim C.'s ("the usual place").

Just before everyone left, it was decided that the **December meeting** will be held on SATURDAY, December 7th, at Jaime's. **It will be a "video madness" meeting!** [*More details at the November meeting and in the next newsletter.* - Ed.]

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A BRIEF REPORT ON CHICON V, THE 49TH WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

by Carl Cipra

I realize that this information has probably passed from "news" to "history," but I thought I'd just pass it along anyway. You may have heard me bubbling about Chicon at the September and October meetings---what a great time it was, how nice it was to see all the Gaylaxians and Tleilaxu and Kindred Spirits folks who were there, etc., etc. Well, everything I said was true!

The Tleilaxu and the Great Lakes Gaylaxians threw wonderful parties every night of the con. Robert McGowan (Transitional Director of the Gaylactic Network) chaired a friendly little panel/meeting to introduce attendees to the various gay fandom organizations (with representatives from Tleilaxu, Kindred Spirits, and all the affiliates of the Gaylactic Network except the Krewe of Gaylaxia). All the "alternate
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KEY TO LOREE'S STORY-PUZZLE (FROM LAST MONTH'S NEWSLETTER)

The message encoded within the story can be found by taking the first letter of every sentence. Now try it out for yourself!

[NOTE: Loree told me that Randy Hagan was the first to contact her with the correct solution. - Ed.]

OKTÖBERTREK

(continued from page 1)

therefore, quite pleased to see just how much there was to do at this con. There were, of course, the Big Name Stars: Robert Justman (producer), Marc Okrand (author of *The Klingon Dictionary*), Nichelle Nichols, LeVar Burton, and Jonathan Frakes. But there were also three rooms of movies/videos, an absolutely immense dealers' area, filking, a Masquerade, a dance ("Ten Forward"), a small art show, a computer room, children's workshops, a couple of dramatic/comedic presentations, and over a dozen different discussion panels. Much more than I expected.

I had a pleasant time at the con; but the primary reason I'd come was to participate on the Sunday morning discussion panel "In the Spirit of IDIC." [Just in case you're not familiar with the term, IDIC is the acronym for the Vulcan philosophy of "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations".] The Program Book described the panel as follows: "A panel of interested fans discuss the feasibility of a gay character being featured on Next Generation." Three other people sat on the panel with me: Jay DeSort (who'd negotiated the panel with the con committee), Martha Bonds (a con staffmember and K/S fan who works at an HIV counselling center), and Betsy Ramsey (who described herself as "an ordinary fan" and was

familiar with all the discussion going on about this in the computer networks).

About two dozen interested fans showed up for the panel; and everyone was intent on discussing the topic in a friendly and reasonable manner. Various methods for "painlessly" introducing a gay character or theme into ST:TNG were discussed. Jay talked about David Gerrold's rejected script which would have had Ryker briefly ask one crewmember during a shuttle trip: "How long have you two been together?" (The "you two" he was asking about were both men.) Various "background scene" possibilities were mentioned (for example, two crewmembers of the same sex touching or holding hands somewhere in Ten Forward). One member of the audience even brought up the possibility of introducing the concept of homosexuality via an alien race of some sort. (I thought this was a novel angle for this discussion, even though it's certainly been a tried-and-true tactic for SF writers when dealing with topics that are "too hot to handle".)

The final consensus of the panel (and audience) seemed to be, however, that Paramount was too chicken to deal with the issue of homosexuality. It was roundly agreed that the letter-writing campaign should continue; and there followed a brief discussion of the "do's and don't's" of letter-writing. Ev-

everyone also seemed to agree that the panel was a success; and I, for one, was certainly glad that we didn't face any of the homophobic flak that Frank Hummel has been getting of late.

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EDITOR'S CORNER

by Carl Cipra

Well, here it is---my **second** issue! Thanks again, Peter, for giving me this opportunity! There's certainly lots'a neat stuff in this issue! In fact, so much was submitted that I had to hold off on a couple of items: a book review from me and a fascinating *Book World* article that Sylvia sent in, entitled "Modern SF: A Reader's Guide." Look for 'em in next month's newsletter.

By the way, do any of you readers have any questions you'd like answered by our crack LSF staff (?), or any ideas about what you'd like to see in this newsletter, or any suggestions as to how the newsletter can be improved? If so, just write 'em up and send 'em in to us at the DC Post Office Box address---along with a check for \$25,000 made out to "Carl's Secret Slush Fund". Seriously, we'd like to hear from y'all. (The \$25,000 isn't really necessary, although I certainly wouldn't turn it down!)

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The Gilda Stories

(continued from page 1)

she supports herself financially -- are molded by the mores of the various times, making this an interesting historical and sociological study.

It also has a large psychological and moral development strand. Through the centuries, Gilda has to learn what it is to be "one of her kind;" and it seems to be a slow process. Little of the development takes place because of her interaction with mortals, although this is how Gilda attempts to learn. Instead, the lessons come through dealings with her own kind: Bird, who is her first teacher; Anthony and Sorel, who are always there to guide her; and Eleanor and Samuel, who teach her evil. This is an interesting philosophical question: if vampires appeal to lesbians and gay men because of their outsider status, is Gomez trying to say that although we may try to be like heterosexuals (mortals), our true path is to learn from our own kind?

I had some problems with other aspects of the book. Gomez tells Gilda's story through chapters, which show her in different places at different times. Some chapters cover only a few days' chronological time, while others cover a few years. Each chapter, though, is separated in time by decades. While it's probably impossible to write about 200 years without

using such a hit-and-miss method, I was disturbed by the fact that everything important that happened to Gilda happened within the time frame covered by the chapters. It was almost as though she went into stasis in the 10 to 50 years between chapters. About the only thing that happens "off-stage" is that she changes professions and, sometimes, place of residence. She meets no one new, and has no significant experiences, during these time periods. This may seem unremarkable to some readers and a necessary evil to others, but I kept wondering: can the course of our lives really be summed up by a few incidents from widely disparate years?

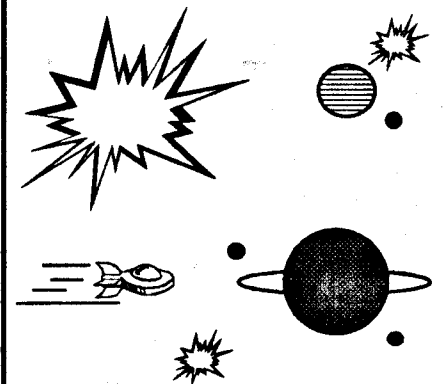
As for the specifically vampire-related parts of the story, I have little to compare Gomez's approach with. There are a few in-jokes about garlic and mirrors that I vaguely understood; and it's clear that while vampires who kill exist in Gilda's world, they are viewed by "her kind" as evil. Instead, "her kind" make "exchanges," giving the mortals they take blood from gifts of dreams, hopes, or ideas that they will find useful. When it is necessary to kill -- or when killing is done accidentally -- Gilda's kind are required to memorize the faces of the dead and so keep them "alive." Gilda's kind can tolerate some light and some water by keeping their native soil on them at all times; I don't know if these are Gomez's

inventions or a shared part of the vampire mythology. If they're not part of the general mythology, and if you're a purist, be forewarned.

Gilda's lesbianism is muted, to say the least. She actually only has sex, in the way mortal lesbians understand sex, once or twice. And the people from whom she takes blood are primarily men. But she is clearly an "emotional" lesbian, generally preferring female companions. Anthony and Sorel are a male couple that go through time together; and other vampires span the range of sexualities. The concept of "family," though, is clearly lesbian/gay: all the vampires of "her kind" talk about creating families, which are "chosen" families of loved ones bound by affection or the exchange of blood or both.

In the end, I recommend *The Gilda Stories*. It's entertaining; and I think Gomez is trying to say some interesting things about the lesbian/gay community and its true path.

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STAR TREK POLLS

by Carl Cipra

Star Trek and ST:TNG have been the objects of a couple of viewer polls lately. Just in case you hadn't heard, here's what happened:

TV Guide began its viewer poll in its special "Star Trek issue" (Aug. 31, 1991). They asked:

"Evil forces are threatening to wipe out the Earth. The planet's only hope--the voyagers of the starship Enterprise. All they need is the right captain to lead them on the mission. But who should that captain be? Kirk? Or Picard? If the Earth were really in jeopardy, who do you think is the better man to save it?"

They then gave a "900" number for a phone-in poll and set a deadline of September 6th.

The results were shown in the Sept. 21st issue. There were 31,491 responses---60% voted for Kirk and 40% voted for Picard!

Unfortunately, *TV Guide* didn't offer any real analysis of the results. They only quoted one pro-Kirk "Bronx reader" (Kirk is "brash but he is also compassionate and he would not kill unnecessarily.") and one pro-Picard "fan from Massachusetts" ("Picard opts to delegate his authority rather than handle each situation himself."). Go figure.

The "Letters" column in the Sept. 28th *TV Guide* featured four letters from fans that offered only a little more insight. My favorite was the one from James Lynch (Lake Worth, Florida):

"My vote goes to Capt. Kirk, if only because he's much more interesting. Picard is bland and dull. No one could ever accuse

James Kirk of that. He's a hero in every sense of the word---butt-headedness and pomposity included. Ideally, I'd have Picard be second-in-command, the guy who really runs the ship, freeing Kirk to save the galaxy, scoot across the Neutral Zone, violate the Prime Directive and seduce the Simpson-haired green alien priestess with the sewn-in falsies."

* * *

The second viewer poll was sponsored by WDCA Channel 20, the local DC television station that runs classic Trek and TNG episodes. To celebrate 25 years of Trek, they asked viewers to vote for their 10 favorite classic Star Trek episodes. The winning episodes were aired by WDCA in a Star Trek marathon on Sept. 28th (along with the season premiere of TNG and the two-hour ST special). Here are the results (from #10 to #1):

10. "Balance of Terror" (by Paul Schneider)
9. "A Piece of the Action" (by David P. Harmon)
8. "The Menagerie, Part I" (by Gene Roddenberry)
7. "The Menagerie, Part II" (ditto)
6. "Space Seed" (by Gene L. Coon and Carey Wilbur)
5. "Amok Time" (by Theodore Sturgeon)
4. "The Doomsday Machine" (by Norman Spinrad)
3. "Mirror, Mirror" (by Jerome Bixby)
2. "The City on the Edge of Forever" (by Harlan Ellison)
1. "The Trouble with Tribbles" (by David Gerrold)

Interesting choices: a couple of space-opera episodes, a time-travel story, an alternate-universe story, the original ST episode (re-worked into a two-parter), a Spock story, the precursor to "Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan", and a couple

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CHICON V REPORT

(continued from page 3)

sexuality" panels went quite well, too! In fact, the "Gay Speculative Fiction" panel that I was a part of was very well attended. (Even Forrest J. Ackerman, "Mr. Fandom," attended it!)

And here's the details on the 1991 winners of the Hugo Awards:

BEST NOVEL - *The Vor Game*, by Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen Books)

BEST NOVELLA - "The Hemmingway Hoax", by Joe Halderman (*IASFM*, Apr 1990)

BEST NOVELETTE - "The Manamouki", by Mike Resnick (*IASFM*, Jul 1990)

BEST SHORT STORY - "Bears Discover Fire", by Terry Bisson (*IASFM*, July 1990)

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK

- *How to Write Science Fiction and Fantasy*, by Orson Scott Card (Writer's Digest Books)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

- "Edward Scissorhands" (20th Century Fox)

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR

- Gardner Dozois

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

- Michael Whelan

BEST SEMIPROZINE

- *Locus*, Charles N. Brown

BEST FANZINE

- *Lan's Lantern*, George "Lan" Laskowski

BEST FAN WRITER

- David Langford

BEST FAN ARTIST

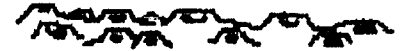
- Teddy Harvia

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

- Julia Ecklar

And FINALLY, here's the news on the 1994 Worldcon vote held at Chicon: for 1994, the 52nd Worldcon will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, and will be called "Conadian." (Winnipeg beat out Louisville, Kentucky.)

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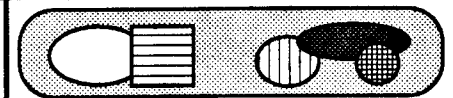
STAR TREK POLLS

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of light comedies.

I'll leave the analysis of this poll up to someone else. In closing, however, I offer two personal observations: I was interested to see that "Journey to Babel" was not included amongst the Big Ten; I was also quite pleased to note that the #1 episode for the DC area was written by a member of the gay community.

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

Lambda Sci-Fi is a Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror fan club for Gay people and their friends. Annual membership fees are \$10, for which you will receive this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held at 2:00 PM on Sunday, Nov. 10th, at Jim C.'s apartment: 1414 17th Street, NW #14. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks if you can. 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, Peter, and Noel



November 8-10, 1991 **SCI-CON 13**: Holiday Inn Executive Center (Virginia Beach, VA). Guest of Honor: Lois McMasterBujold (1991 Hugo for Best Novel); Artist Guest of Honor: Vincent DiFate; Special Guests: Gordon R. Dickson, Frank Kelly-Freas. The cost is \$20 until October 1, 1991, and \$25 at the door. Room rates are \$56 (plus tax), single or double. Make checks payable to "Sci-Con" and send to: SCI-CON, c/o HaRoSFA, PO Box 9434, Hampton, VA 23670.

November 15-17, 1991 **PHILCON '91**, the 55th Annual Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference: Adam's Mark Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Guest of Honor: David Brin; Artist Guest of Honor: Moebius (Jean Giraud). Cost is \$17 until September 15, more at the door. Send checks to Philcon '91, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303

November 29-December 1, 1991 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XIV**: Holiday Inn, Timonium (Timonium, MD). Special Guests: Marion Zimmer Bradley (health permitting) and Katherine Kurtz. Cost is \$24 until November 1 and \$28 after that. Room rate is \$59/night for up to four people. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. [NOTE: This convention typically has very high gay/lesbian/bisexual participation; and all the straights are friendly. - Carl]

January 3-5, 1992 **EVECON 9**: Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza National Airport (Arlington, VA). Features gaming (including live action games), workshops, and panels. Cost is \$15 until October 12, 1991, and \$20 until December 14, 1991. Make checks payable to "FanTek" and send to: FanTek, 1607 Thomas Road, Ft. Washington, MD 20744.

April 17-19, 1992 **BALTICON 26**: Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests: Donald Kingsbury, Christopher Rowley, David R. Palmer, Shiela Finch, Thomas T. Thomas, Christopher Hinz, Elizabeth Moon, Josepha Sherman, Michael F. Flynn (the past nine Compton Crook Award winners for the "best new novelist of the year"). For information, write to: Balticon 26, Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203.

July 17-19, 1992 **GAYLAXICON IV**: Guest Quarters Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Guest of Honor TBA; Artist Guest of Honor: Tristan Alexander. Cost is \$15 through December 31, 1991, \$20 through April 30, 1992, \$25 through June 30, 1992, \$30 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon IV" and send to: Gaylaxicon IV, PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044.

September 3-7, 1992 **MAGICON**, the 50th World Science Fiction Convention: Orange County Convention and Civic Center and Peabody, Clarion, and Quality Inn Plaza Hotels (Orlando, FL). Guests of Honor: Jack Vance and Vincent DiFate. Cost (attending) is \$85 until September 30, 1991; and cost will rise after that. Make checks payable to "MagiCon" and send to: MagiCon, PO Box 621992, Orlando, FL 32862-1992.

September 2-6, 1993 **CONFRANCISCO**, the 51st World Science Fiction Convention: Moscone Convention Center (San Francisco, CA). Guest of Honor: Larry Niven; Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin. Cost (attending) is \$70 through December 31, 1991, \$85 after December 31, 1991; and cost will rise appreciably after that. Hotels will be announced in upcoming progress reports. Make checks payable to "ConFrancisco" and send to: ConFrancisco Registration, 712 Bancroft Road, Ste. 1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.