PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044 - (202) 232-3141 - Issue #67 - Oct. 1995



Site of Oct. 8th Meeting Changed! (Includes "Video Madness" Party, Too!)



That's right, gang! Don't expect to find the October LSF meeting at the usual place! For a change of pace, the Oct. 8th meeting has been moved to Jaime's wonderful home Georgetown! AND, to celebrate the 3-day weekend, we'll follow up immediately after the meeting with one of LSF's famous (infamous?) "Video Madness" Parties, including the usual potluck dinner! (Hint! Hint! Don't plan on a long business meeting! You know how we like our "Video Madness" Parties!)

Here are the details:

When to Be There

The Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will begin at the usual time: 2 PM. Immediately following the conclusion of the meeting (about an hour later?), the potluck dinner will begin, with the videos to begin as soon as everyone has a full place and we've voted on which videos we'd like to see. Try to get there on time, especially if there's any last-minute fixin' you need to do on your potluck contribution.

What to Bring

As with all LSF "Video Madness" Parties, bring along your favorite genre videos (science-fiction, fantasy, horror). Attendees will vote on which videos to watch; and there'll be different "tracks" of programming shown on each of three screens throughout the house.

And don't forget to bring along something scrumptious to eat for the potluck. We're not pre-assigning categories of what food to bring, so everyone should just bring something from one (or more) of the following "basic food groups": appetizers (veggies, chips, etc.); a main course (enough to serve at least 4-5 people); dessert (of course!); non-alcoholic drinks (both diet and regular).

How to Get There

The party will be held at Jaime's home in Georgetown (site of numerous "Video Madness" parties in the past). It's located at 1928 37th St., NW, several blocks west of Wisconsin Ave.

From the North: Going south on Wisconsin (from the direction of National Cathedral), you'll pass Mass. Ave. Just after Calvert St., 37th St. splits off to the right from Wisconsin (as Wisconsin swerves to the left). In about a half mile, 37th St. passes through Whitehaven Park and intersects White Haven Parkway. Jaime's place is just beyond White Haven Parkway, on your right.

From the South: Going north on Wisconsin (from the direction of "M" St.), you'll need to take a left on some street to get to 37th St. If you turn left on Reservoir Rd. or on "R" St., you'll need to turn right on 37th St., and Jaime's place will be a ways on your left. If you

IN MEMORIAM



John Brunner 1934 - 1995

A prolific British science fiction writer, noted for experimenting with form and his attention to contemporary social issues; an early exponent of "New Wave"science fiction. Won the Hugo in 1969 for his novel Stand on Zanzibar, other novels include The Squares of the City and The Days of March. Died Aug. 25 in Glasgow, on his way to this year's Worldcon.

go further up Wisconsin to White Haven Parkway (near the "social Safeway"), you'll turn left on White Haven Pkwy. and then left again on 37th St. Jaime's home will be on your right.

Where to Park: Your best bet for parking is either along White Haven Parkway or along "T" St. ΛΨΦ

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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$\Lambda\Psi\Phi$

Mutinous Minutes of the September Meeting

by Rob

As the meeting began, you could feel it in the air - the sharp taste of mutiny. All were restless, and the tension was thick enough to be cut by a knife.

We began with plans for our next "Video Madness" Party - or was that plans for our next meeting? Oh well, I can't remember, so it must have been both! Yes, indeed, after much (well, very little actually) cajoling, Jaime agreed to host our October meeting AND throw a "Video Madness" Party to boot! Since our next meeting falls during a holiday weekend, we decided that a "Video Madness" Party on Sunday was a fine idea. So, on October 8th at Jaime's, we will have our regular monthly meeting (starting at 2 PM), to be followed immediately by the start of wildness and mayhem (or, at the very least, by a few good and/ or bad movies)! [Ed. note: For details. see article on page 1 of this newsletter.]

Following this decision, the mutinous fiends moved in! Mike ("the Red Queen") slew Carl ("the Tyrant Speaker") and assumed leadership of the crew. All agreed that we could always throw Mike out when we got sick of him. (And we're sure Mike knows we meant it after he got a look at what happened to the EX-Speaker Carl.) Now, with Third Speaker Michael C. firmly entrenched in power, the business moved on. The gruesome carcass of our ex-leader was left to rot in the middle of the room. (Well, OK, so he didn't rot; but many folks commented on how little of him was covered by his shorts!)

Michael proceeded to tell us about the ongoing Scarlet Street battles between the open-minded publishers of that magazine and the homophobes. In fact, Michael's very own letter will be appearing in an upcoming issue! This good news was followed by the sad news of the passing of author John Brunner. It truly has

been a sad time for the "old masters" of the field, who seem to be dropping like flies.

We then began the horrid task of trying to agree on dates for some LSF "field trips." After much whining (and little actual debate), we settled on: Sept. 23rd for a trip to see "Barbie in Space" at the Air & Space Museum and the exhibits at the new Gallery of Cartoon Art; and Oct. 1st for the Maryland Renaissance Festival (meeting there at 10 AM). The most important part of the discussion came when we learned that "Grow-Up Skipper (with Retractable Breasts)" exists and is much more fun than Barbie.

In other business, we received another thank-you letter from SMYAL for our book donations. Rob regaled us with the latest from the Gaylaxian Awards Committee - still no firm decisions yet and looking for input. The committee is leaning towards having a small number of awards given on a regular basis. The big debate is over whether the awards should be "open voting" for all Gaylaxians (popular voting, like the Hugos) or "open nominating with a committee voting to pick winners" (similar to the Lammies or the Tiptree Awards). In his Network Rep report, Philip told us LSF continues to gain support for our efforts to deal with the "freedom of speech" limitations we have perceived in the Network Charter. We also decided to subscribe (as a club) to Space-Time Continuum, a magazine with lots of good information about the genre and about fandom.

In miscellaneous news: Both this year's World Fantasy Convention and the 1998 Worldcon will be held in Baltimore! Entertainment Weekly recently had a special "Gay 90s" issue (which was passed around). And many great (and some horrid) Universal genre films will be available on video in the next few months. Many other film companies will also be increasing their

The Cap'n's Riposte! by Carl ("I am NOT a tyrant!") Cipra



Avast there, ye verminous mutineers! An' ye think ye've seen the last of me, then think again! Har, I'll be watchin' the Red Queen real close like -- and, the first sign of a false step in the heat of battle, then quick as a marlin I'll be back to skewer his smarmy liver with me cutlass! And then woe betide the rest of you mutinous scum! "Petty revenge?" says you. "No, sweet revenge!" says I. Yo ho ho, and a bottle of Dr. Pepper!

Betimes, I'll be a-lurkin' hereabouts in the pages of this here newsletter. So, watch yer step, me buckos!

[Ed. note: Roughly translated, I think that means something like: "Congratulations, Mike, on being elected Speaker. I'm sure you'll do a great job. My thanks to all the rest of you for making my term as Speaker so enjoyable."]

The drawback with super strength is that your intelligence <u>must</u> decrease in direct proportion to your prowess, so that the more muscles you have, the more stupid you become--or what is commonly referred to, in the medical world, as the Dolph Lundgren Syndrome.

excerpted from
How to Be a Superhero
by Mark Leigh & Mike Lepine
(NBM Publishing, 1992)

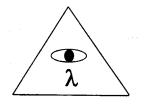
available video lists - good news for collectors, and bad news for those of us on a budget!

Michael did a fine job during his first stint as Speaker, so we decided to let him live and come back next time...



"I Don't Think We're in Indiana Anymore, Dr. Jones!"

two books reviewed by Carl Cipra



Recently, I finished reading The Alexandrian Drachma and The Adjuster, a couple of small press gay novels that reminded me somewhat of the adventures of Indiana Jones. (No, I don't mean that they're "gay Indy" pastiches along the lines of all those racy K/S Star Trek stories out there; so you can stop salivating about steamy love scenes between Harrison Ford and another man. Well, on second thought, go ahead and salivate about that, but it's not what you'll find in these two books.)

There are, however, some thematic similarities between these stories and the "Indiana Jones Chronicles." In both these novels. explorers discover ancient artifacts from "the Mysterious Orient" which lead the protagonists into a series of fantastic adventures. Sound familiar so far, Dr. Jones? But now for the gay part: in each novel, the adventures serve as background for the growing love between an older, more experienced man and a younger, somewhat innocent man. And, after a series of difficulties, mysteries, and perils, both novels end "happily ever after," with the happy couple spending the rest of their lives in some sort of safe, secluded Shangri-La.

The Alexandrian Drachma (Knights Press, 1984) is the work of Don Harrison, a writer of gay historical novels (such as The Spartan) and painter of steamy male erotica. I think it's the better of the two novels I'm reviewing here; it tells a good story and does it well, clearly evoking the atmosphere of Egypt in the early Nineteenth Century. The story takes place in 1831. Edward, Earl of Caerleon, is the typical English gentleman-archeologist wintering in Egypt. He is accompanied by Alexander Saint-Hilaire, his youthful ward, with whom Edward is se-

cretly and deeply infatuated. Lord Caerleon is negotiating with the Pasha for an obelisk to take back to his ancestral estate, while young Alex dreams of finding the lost tomb of Alexander the Great (and all the fabulous treasures therein). Together, they discover a rare coin from the time of Alexander and are rocketed into a series of adventures in Cairo, along the Nile, and into the Egyptian deserts. Edward and Alex face desert brigands, ancient curses, competing archeologists, secret cults, libidinous Turks, and powerful ancient Spirits - and, through it all, they fall deeply in love. This book will probably be hard to find nowadays (it's been sitting on a back shelf in my library for years); but I think it's worth the search.

The Adjuster (Avant Garde Books, 1994) is by Gerald Libonati; I picked it up at Lambda Rising recently. I'm afraid I don't know anything about this particular author; but the blurb on the back of the book mentions "Reunion," an occult short story of his which was included in Finale, a Lammynominated mystery anthology. Adjuster is a sort of an occult timetravel story. Jack Winston is a selfassured, talented freelance artist living in modern-day San Francisco. On the advice of a dying, venerable old Chinese sage, Jack travels up to a small private art gallery in Oregon, where he receives a package that has been waiting there for him since before he was



born. The package contains (among other things) a powerful talisman stolen some seventy years ago from a mysterious Tibetan temple hidden away in the Himalayas. In an effort to find out what's going on, Jack uses the talisman to time-travel back to 1928 to meet Alec Proust, source of the mysterious package. Jack does indeed meet up with young Alec Proust and (of course) falls in love. A series of adventures ensues - an angry parent, a murderous young thief, homophobic intolerance, and mysterious Asiatic cultists lurking about - but eventually the mysteries of the Tibetan talisman and the packagefrom-the-past (as well the difficulties surrounding Jack-and-Alec's romance) are solved. I think any aficionado of time-travel stories will find the concepts in The Adjuster pretty much "old hat." I also don't think that Libonati is overly successful at evoking the "feel" of the 1920's, especially since Jack Winston occasionally gets (to my mind) overly preachy about the psychosexual intolerances of the period. I often got the impression he was giving a "pep talk" for those readers who were having doubts about the validity of their own homosexuality. Perhaps Libonati is not too different from Mercedes Lackey in this respect; and there will probably be readers out there who will be more appreciative of this kind of discussion.

Both The Alexandrian Drachma and The Adjuster feature a number of "racy" little sex scenes; but they're not primarily intended as "f--k/s--k" books. It's perhaps more accurate to classify them both as "fantasy/romances" (with an occasional dose of polemics in The Adjuster). Neither one is great literature -- and not especially great F&SF either -- but they're fun -- interesting variations on the "Indiana Jones" sub-genre.

Species and The Prophecy

two film reviews by Joseph Parra



Species (Rare!)



For several years, our Government had in operation a program called the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Life (SETI). Species proposes contact with an alien intelligence which provides our ter-

restrial "chefs" with a "recipe" for combining artificially-created alien DNA with human DNA. Upon combining said DNA, however, the scientists find they have created a monster.

Sil, as the creature is known, is the "Jekyll & Hyde" result - the main difference here being that "Jekyll" is evil as well. Even as a child, Sil is already a threat to human life; and the head of the SETI program is about to kill her with cyanide gas when she goes berserk and escapes. Sil's incredible gene pool enables her to provide the ultimate disguise: she metamorphoses into an adult. Sil's travels lead her to Los Angeles, where she views people enjoying each other's company and, most importantly, procreating. Sil's need to have a child to further her existence is of utmost importance; so she tries to find a human male with which to couple. She murders several candidates before finding a mate (a la black widow spider). Tracking the monster is a team of scientists and a Government hit man - all specialists in psychology, macrobiology, empathy, and (of course) ultimate solutions. But for every one step the team takes. Sil takes two...

MGM and producer Frank Mancuso, Jr. (Friday the 13th, the TV series) have fashioned a good, old-fashioned science fiction story with horrific twists. If there is a major problem with this film, it's that possibly the ample budget does the tale an "overabun-

dant" dis-service. Perhaps the film would work better if it were smaller. The scope of the film is quite large, while the story is actually quite claustrophobic. This aside, however, the film is rich in imagery and sumptuous special effects. The monstrous side of Sil was designed by the great beastmaker, H.R. Giger; he's outdone himself with this softer version of Alien. Lighting helps tremendously, as we rarely get a good look at the fully-transformed Sil and a lot is left up to our imaginations. Roger Donaldson does a good job directing the piece, especially considering this is his first science fiction film.

The performances are wonderful, with everyone taking his/her surroundings seriously, with just the proper grain of salt. Henstridge, a newcomer to performing, does a credible job as Sil - exploring her identifies and cooly selecting her prey. Ben Kingsley is wonderful as Xavier Fitch, leader of SETI and the kill team. Michael Madsen is perfectly cold, with a slight bit of passion, as the Government sanctioneer. Whitaker, Marg Helgenberger, and Alfred Molina all do lovely work as the pyschic empath, the macrobiologist. and the pyschiatrist.

No, this film is not another Alien; but then it doesn't try to be, either. After all, it is a hybrid... Enjoy!
Rating: 2½ out of a possible 4.



The Prophecy (Hello, Angel!)

Judeo-Christian tradition tells us that there was once a war in Heaven, between God and His band of angels versus Lucifer and his. Lucifer was cast out, etc., etc. Now, in this film, we

are told of a second war, unrecorded but for a 2nd-Century handwritten bible. In this war, the archangel Gabriel led his followers in a battle of recognition, in that Gabriel felt that angels should be higher on the Great Ladder than mankind. But God felt otherwise: angels have always been mere messengers and guardians, with mankind as the recipient of angelic labors. The result of this second war was that Gabriel and his minions were also cast out - and the war is still being fought to this very day.

The angel Simon is a loyal angel who realizes that Gabriel has a terrible, cunning plan up his sleeve for one final assault on Heaven. Simon travels to a desolate spot in New Mexico in an attempt to thwart Gabriel. Gabriel disposes of Simon, but not before Simon imparts a great secret to the child that befriended him. Gabriel, who is ruthless beyond imagination, will stop at nothing to retrieve this information. Ah, but along comes Satan, to throw in a wild card... Also involved is a human police detective, a failed priest whose visions caused him to lose his faith. Well, there's nothing like a healthy dose of angelic powers coming at you to make you regain your faith!

The most enjoyable thing about this movie is that it's certainly exploring "virgin territory" - warring angels! The proceedings are played out nicely, with not a lot of over-the-top histrionics, but with a generally interesting layering of facts with fiction. Fused with this are some excellent character traits attributed to angels. For example, when angels sit, they perch like birds; and they all seem to have an absolutely wonderful sense of (Even the Devil is macabrely witty.) In addition, angels can sniff one another out; and an angel can only be destroyed by another angel. Put it all together, and you have a most wonderful race of supernatural beings to enjoy.

The performances are quite nice. Christopher Walken has a field day as Gabriel. He plays the archangel

(continued on page 5)

Species & The Prophecy continued from page 4

so matter-of-factly and gives him such a catlike, taciturn nature that you cannot help but like him (somewhat), despite his horrific misdeeds. The secret to Walken's performance is that he never truly makes Gabriel an evil presence. Eric Stolz gives a lovely, restrained portrayal as Simon, keeping the angel soft in comparison to Gabriel's bombastic nature. Elias Kotseas plays the human detective; he provides the only sour note in the symphony by playing his character on one dull, monotonous level. Virginia Madsen (who found Candyman a couple of years ago) does a credible job as the teacher to a small Native American community which gets caught up in the battle. Viggo Mortensen does a nice turn as a "fey" Satan. He's a hoot!

Other stellar aspects of this movie are the photography and light special effects. The cinematographer makes the most of the modest B-movie budget with excellent lighting. The direction is kept to a minimum, which works nicely (except for the detective). While not a great film, The Prophey is quite a good one (which, when you're discussing angels, is nice). Remember: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." But you need have no fears here! Enjoy!

Rating: 3 out of a possible 4.

ΛΨΦ

Classic Sci-Fi on Video

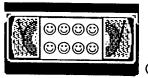
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- "Itty-Bitties" -

by Joseph Parra



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We'll now take a *little* time and discuss the most *minute* details of the silver screen. Technically, these are not *short* subjects - even though they are! Let's not be *small* about all this, however. A wee good time is to be had by all.

Next time you go to the video store, take this little list along with you and see if you can find any of these "little gems" (or "little stinkers"). I've marked them with my opinion of whether they're good (G) or bad (B). And, remember, little things can mean a lot!!

The Andromeda Strain (G -

Talk about deadly small stuff!)

The Beast With 5 Fingers (G)

The Bees (G/B)

Ben (G/B)

The Birds (G)

The Boogens (B)

Bug (B)

The Crawling Hand (extremely B)

Curse of the Doll People (B)

Darby O'Gill and the Little People (G)

Day of the Animals (B/G)

The Devil Doll (G)

Dr. Cyclops (G)

The Fantastic Puppet People (B/G)

Fantastic Voyage (G)

Fiend Without a Face (G)

The Flesh Eaters (gross, but G)

The Fly (G)

Frogs (B/G)

Girl in My Pocket (G)

Gulliver's Travels (G)

Honey, I Shrunk the Kids (G)

The Incredible Shrinking Man (G)

The Incredible Shrinking Woman (G)

It's Alive (G) (2 sequels available - G/B)

Jack the Giant Killer (G)

Leprechaun (B)

The Naked Jungle (G)

The Phantom Planet (B)

Phase IV (G)

Return of the Fly (G)

The Satan Bug (G)

The Thing, 1982 (B/G)

The 3 Worlds of Gulliver (G)

Tom Thumb (G)

Top o' the Morning (G)

Troll (B)

Willard (G)

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Next month, we'll start looking at "Classic Horror" for home videos!

ΛΨΦ

SOME IMPORTANT ADVICE FOR ASPIRING SUPERHEROES:

As a superhero, you must quickly decide which supervillain has the greatest chance of seizing power and becoming Master of the World:

Supervillains who pose a serious threat will:

- -- hold the world to ransom with an Omega Bomb.
- -- enlist the aid of merciless star mercenaries from the Andromeda Spiral.
- -- replace all the world leaders with obedient robot duplicates.

- -- paralyze the world in a Stasis Ray.
- -- seize control of America's tactical nuclear strike force by hacking into their computer system.

Supervillains who don't pose much of a threat of becoming Master of the World will:

- -- ask politely.
- -- run for head office in Papua New Guinea.
- -- find a steady job and hope to work their way up through the ranks to Master of the World.
- -- try to take over the world when there's nobody looking.

- -- tell everyone they're Master of the World and hope folks believe them.
- -- threaten to have a temper tantrum until they get world power.
- -- make a cash offer for the world.
- -- disguise themselves as Master of the World and hope everyone will fall forit.
- -- attempt to win it in a lottery.

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excerpted (with slight alterations) from

How to Be a Superhero by Mark Leigh & Mike Lepine (NBM Publishing, 1992)

* * 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 \$15, for which you will receive this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are generally 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, October 8th, at Jaime I.'s Georgetown home: 1928 37th St., NW. The regular October meeting will be immediately followed by a "Video Madness" Party (see article on page 1 for details). 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 Jim C.



Nov. 17-19, 1995 **PHILCON '95**: Adam's Mark Hotel (Philadelphia, PA). Principal Speaker: (to be announced); Guest Artist: Bob Eggleton; Special Guest: Connie Willis. Cost: \$25. Make check payable to "PSFS" and send to: Philcon '95, P.O. Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101; Chairperson: Oz Fontecchio (ph. # 215-342-1672; Internet: kunga@netaxs.com).

Nov. 24-26, 1995 DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XVIII: Holiday Inn Timonium (Timonium, MD). GoH: Julia Ecklar; Special Guests: Marion Zimmer Bradley, Katherine Kurtz. Hotel: \$62/nite (up to 4 per room). Cost: \$25 until 11/1/95 (\$30 at door). Make check payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. A very les/bi/gay-friendly convention; often described as "a mini-Gaylaxicon within a con."

March 30-31, 1996 NOVACON IV: Westpark Hotel (Tysons Corner, VA). Guests: Robert ("the Doctor") Picardo, Grace Lee ("Yeoman Rand") Whitney. Cost: \$35 for the weekend (or \$20 for Sat. & \$20 for Sun.); \$5/day additional is purchased at the door. Make checks payable to "One Trek Mind Productions, Inc." and send to: One Trek Mind Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 3363 Merrifield, VA 22116. For additional info, call (703) 280-5373.

April 5-7, 1996 BALTICON XXX: Omni International Hotel (Baltimore, MD). GoH: Robert Jordan; Art GoH: Lubov; "Fang" GoH: Marty Gear. Cost: \$30 until 12/31/95; \$35 from 1/1 - 2/28/96; \$40 at the door. Make check payable to "Balticon XXX" and send to: Balticon XXX, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686. E-mail: bsfs@access.digex.net

July 5-7, 1996 GAYLAXICON VII: Burlington Marriot Hotel (Burlington, MA - about 10 mi. NW of Boston). Guests of Honor: "To be Announced." Cost: \$20 until 12/31/95; \$25 from 1/1/96 to 4/30/96; \$30 from 5/1/96 to 6/15/96; \$35 at the door. Make check payable to "Gaylaxicon VII" and send to: Gaylaxicon VII, P.O. Box 176, Somerville, MA 02143.

Aug. 29 - Sept. 1, 1996 L.A.CON III (the 54th World Science Fiction Convention). Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim Hilton & Towers, and Anaheim Marriott (Anaheim, CA). Writer GoH: James White; Media GoH: Roger Corman; Toastmaster: Connie Willis. Cost: \$110 until 12/31/95; "more" after 1/1/96. Make check payable to "L.A.Con III" and send to: L.A. Con III, c/o SCIFI, P.O. Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409. Email infobot: lacon3-info@netcom.com

Aug. 28 - Sept. 1, 1997 LONESTARCON 2 (the 55th World Science Fiction Convention). Both Marriott Riverwalk Hotels & San Antonio Convention Center (San Antonio, TX). Honored Guests: Algis Budrys & Michael Moorcock; Honored Artist Guest: Don Maitz. Cost: \$95 as of 8/16/95; "more" as time goes on. Make check payable to "LoneStarCon 2" and send to: LoneStarCon 2, P.O. Box 27277, Austin, TX 78755. For further info, call (512) 453-7446.