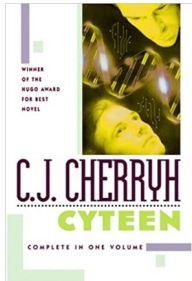




Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians



Cyteen
By C.J. Cherryh
Discussed July 2004

Discussion Questions

1. One of the major themes in this book is "cloning." How does Cherryh present the topic? How does she deal with such concepts as the uses of cloning, genetic engineering, "nature vs. nurture," the methodology of artificial birthing, etc. If possible, offer comparisons to other cloning novels you might have read (such as Ira Levin's *The Boys from Brazil* or Lois McMaster Bujold's *Spartan Planet* or Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*).
2. Another theme in this book is "sociological prediction." How do Cherryh's sociologists and psychologists compare with the "psychohistorians" of Asimov's *Foundation* novels? How would you compare Ariane Emory (the original) with Hari Seldon (founder of "psychohistory")?
3. Discuss the social status of the "azi" - slaves? serfs? a manufactured underclass? - especially as it relates to the American experience of slavery and the treatment of slaves.
4. *Cyteen* includes a lot of discussion contrasting the mental abilities of humans and "azi" and detailing the learning/teaching strategies developed for each of them. Is there a real difference?
5. Ari's speech on terrorism (Chapter 14, Section X) was written about 7 years before the Oklahoma City bombing and about 13 years before the incidents of "9/11." In the light of those historical terrorist acts, what do you think of Ari's analysis of the causes and uses of terrorism?
6. How well do you think Cherryh handles the gay relationships in the story?
7. With all the cloning and genetic engineering in the novel, does Cherryh have anything to contribute to the "nature-vs.-nurture" arguments regarding homosexuality or alternative sexuality or sexuality in general?