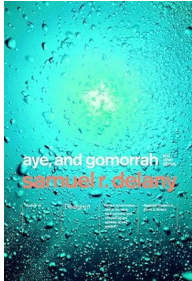




Lambda Sci-Fi
DC Area Gaylaxians



Aye, and Gomorrah
By Samuel Delany
Discussed March 2010

Discussion Questions

1. An easy question: which was your favorite or least favorite short story? Why? What drew you to like a certain story? What elements did you not like about Delany's writing?
2. Deeper: Since these stories were all written in the 1960's, how do they stand up to modern short SF? How do they stand up to SF of that era? (I am looking right at "Cage of Brass" as I write this question.) Yes, Delany failed to realize email, but what might he be getting right?
3. It could be argued that in "The Star Pit", "Corona", "We in Some Strange Powers", and "aye, and gomorrah", etc. humans can only reach beyond our world (or galaxy) by either giving up part of what makes us organically human OR by being specifically selected for not having something that makes a human. How does this compare to stereotypical pathways to super-humanity such as pulling a sword from a stone (Camelot), being a good hacker (Matrix), or just being a good athlete (Flash Gordon)?
4. A common theme among these short stories is a character or characters who have come far from home, yet often seem almost adolescent in their mannerisms. How well does this connect to the epigraph of *aye, and gomorrah*? A homeland destroyed, now a wanderer...
5. Are Delany's futures dystopic? Better than our own? Worse?
6. Delany's afterward talks about the mechanics of writing. Do you think he follows his own rules? I particularly loved his commentary on the role that doubt plays when writing. How useful is "doubt" in other contexts?