lambda Sci-fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

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RIP Walter Koenig

1936-2026

Walter Koenig, best known for playing Pavel Chekov in the original "Star Trek" series and seven "Star Trek" feature films, died October 25 of natural causes. He was 90.

He also played the memorable role of the psi cop Alfred Bester in "Babylon 5."

In addition to acting, Koenig wrote episodes for television series including "Land of the Lost," "Family," and "The Incredible Hulk," and authored several books and memoirs such as *Warped Factors — A Neurotic's Guide to the Universe*.

He recently performed in the short film "Mr. Fleischmann," for which he received the Platinum Award for Best Actor at the 2026 Independent Shorts Awards — a fitting recognition of a lifetime devoted to his craft. ΛΨΦ



RIP Patrick Stewart

1940-2026

Patrick Stewart, best known for playing Captain Jean-Luc Picard in series "Star Trek: The Next Generation" the series "Star Trek: Picard" and four "Star Trek" feature films, died October 28 of Alzheimer's and Lewy body dementia. He was 86. He also played Professor X in eight Marvel "X-Men" movies.

Trained as a Shakespearean actor Stewart became a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1966 and stayed with them until 1982. While he became a movie star he continued to act on stage.

Outside of acting, Stewart was a philanthropist and activist for survivors of domestic violence and LGBTQ+ equality among other causes. ΛΨΦ

🕮 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 LGBTQ 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.

The Book Discussion Group usually meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW. The next book discussion will be held on October 22, 2026.

Here are the details for the next discussion:

Dec. 3 (combined Nov/Dec on the *first* Thursday in December) – *1632*, by Eric Flint; moderator: Jeff.

Jan 28: New Adventures in Space Opera anthology edited by Jonathan Strahan

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***** November 8, 2026 Meeting *****

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 8th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** The meeting will begin at 1:30 PM. Hope to see you there!

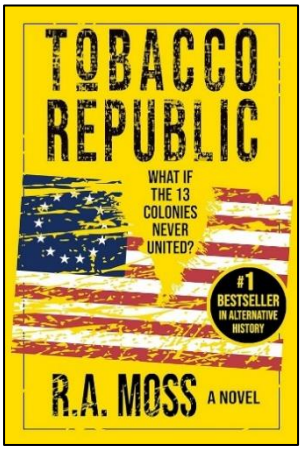
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Tobacco Republic by R.A. Moss (Beck & Branch Publishers, 2024) reviewed by Carl

Tobacco Republic is one of the three finalists for this year's Sidewise Award for Best Alternate History Novel. (It didn't win.) It was the only one of the three that I thought I might find interesting.

The point of departure from our timeline was Napoleon's victory at

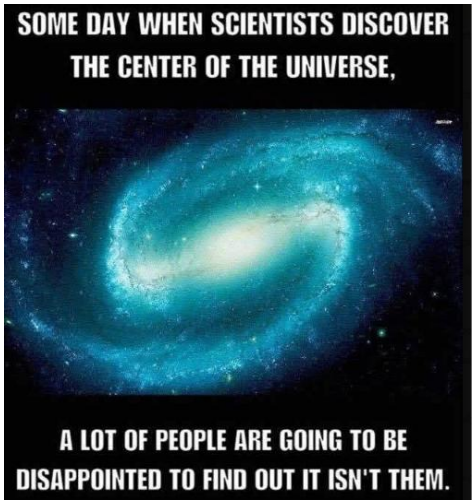


Waterloo. From there, he went on to conquer most of Europe (except Russia). Britain was forced to accept a humiliating truce in which it surrendered all of its North American holdings (Canada and its Caribbean islands) to France. Thus, the recently-independent former British colonies on the east coast of America were effectively surrounded by French territories. In addition, the thirteen "Britannic states" never formed a single national government and remained a collection of isolated and squabbling little nations. (Tobacco was the only cash crop they had to offer.) The Britannic states eventually found themselves pawns of the two rival superpowers: the USSR and Francia's world-spanning empire.

Most of this information was presented in a series of occasional short "flashback" chapters. The novel's main story is a Cold War-style espionage story. The main characters are operatives from competing Britannic states. Jody Linn is a very James Bond-esque spy working for the USSR-backed People's Republic of Pennsylvania; he's trying to confirm and disrupt Francia's secret shipment of "bloom" (a biologically-based explosive more powerful than C4) into Virginia. Olivia Braxton is a military liaison at Virginia's embassy in Paris; she's part of a secret cabal of Virginians trying to smuggle a massive shipment of C4 to the German underground in order to spark a German revolt and potentially free Virginia from French domination. Jody and Olivia cross paths in Paris – and things get very complicated. Neither of them wants their nation to continue as a pawn in a surrogate war managed by Paris and Moscow; but how do you trust an operative from a rival nation? To top it all off, Jody and Olivia also happen to fall in love.

I recommend Tobacco Republic. I found it to be fast-paced and a lotta fun; and the short "flashback" chapters provide just enough historical background when needed. (They feature appearances by such people as Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Napoleon Bonaparte.) The author also includes a fascinating afterword – "Tobacco Republic, Fact & Fiction" – to illustrate how the novel's alternate history differs from our timeline and explain why the author made the historical decisions that he did.

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Minutes of the October LSF Meeting taken by Scott

A smaller than usual crowd gathered for our October get together on a rainy Sunday afternoon. But what we lacked in numbers we made up for with enthusiasm.

Derrick brought not only his pumpkin squares, but also the first omnibus edition from the Steven Brust Vlad Taltos series, a favorite of Rob's it turns out. A short discussion of the book series followed.

Rob shared some details and impressions from his and Peter's recent visit to the Star Trek Set Tour in Ticonderoga, NY - a fan-created set of replica sets which are now authorized to serve as a museum by Paramount. A recent addition is a recreation of the shuttle bay and the Galileo shuttle craft exterior. The tour takes an hour and ends on the bridge where everyone gets to sit in the Captain's chair. A real eye opener for Rob was how *small* the sets actually were and how they were made to feel more spacious by clever filming angles.

A couple of attendees talked about the Avatar Aang: Last Air Bender animated series which has started on Paramount + with mixed reactions. Much discussion ensued about the various incarnations of the Last Airbender series and lore.

Rob noted that Marvel's MCU series VisionQuest was scheduled to premiere on Disney+ that week (note: it has indeed now premiered). Rob described it as the final installment following WandaVision and Agatha All Along. Another queer MCU character, Tommy Maximoff, will be introduced and central to the story of VisionQuest.

Speaking of Wandavision....it was noted that the showrunner for that show, Jac Schaeffer, has apparently been tapped to head up the reboot of Stargate via Amazon.

In other MCU news, Marvel's Zodiac series will apparently be a new 2027 MCU spy oriented show and looks like it may be tied to Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. lore.

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

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans-gendered (LGBT) 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 LGBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for LGBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of LGBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the LGBT community.

Newsletter submissions are always welcome

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 8th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC**. We hope to see you there.

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is an affiliate of the Gaylactic Network, an organization for gay people and their friends who are interested in science-fiction and fantasy.

* * Con Calendar * * by Carl

November 20-22, 2026 **PHILCON 2026** and **ERIC FLINT'S 1632 MINI-CON**. DoubleTree by Hilton (Cherry Hill NJ). Guests of Honor: Charlie Jane Anders, Donato Giancola (Artist), Sarah Pinsker (Musical). Membership: $70 for the weekend (higher at the door; one-day memberships available) – purchase memberships on-line. Website: https://philcon.org

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Rob also reported on a recent binge of the three movies (from the mid 2000s) and the entire first season of The Librarians (which ran from 2014 to 2018). A sequel titled The Librarians: The Next Chapter also came out in 2025 but Rob reported he hasn't gotten that far yet.



Robert mentioned two AI genre film groups titled AOI Films and Future Stories by AI. This led to significant conversation on AI as it relates to creative works and our future in general.

The concept of enmity came up and David remarked on how well the theme of enmity (villainy, conflict & rivalry) was handled in - of all places - Lego Batman.

Rob reminded everyone of upcoming LSF events including book discussions (The Starving Saints by Caitlin Starling for October, 1632 by Eric Flint for November/December, and New Adventures in Space Opera



edited by Jonathan Strahan) and November's Second Sunday gathering scheduled for November 8th.

Everyone enjoyed Rob's homemade sourdough crackers and Derrick's homemade pumpkin squares...and bid a fine adieu!

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