



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 378 – September 2021

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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 LGBT 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.

Before the COVID-19 shut-down orders, the LSF Book Discussion Group usually met on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home. *For at least the remainder of 2021, book discussions will continue to be held virtually (same "4th Thursday" schedule).* The next book discussion will be held on September 23rd via Zoom.

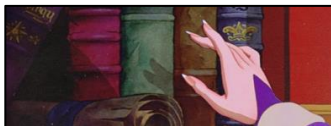
Here are the details for the next several discussions:

Sept. 23 – *A Song for a New Day*, by Sarah Pinsker (moderators: Rob & Carl).

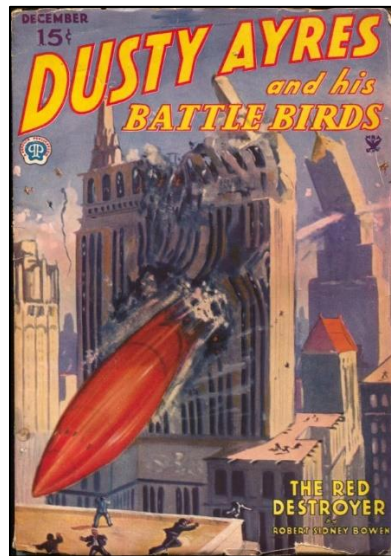
Oct. 28 – *Silver Moon*, by Catherine Lundoff (moderator: Bob A).

Dec. 2 (combined Nov/Dec discussion) – *Finder*, by Suzanne Palmer (moderators: Bob A & Carl).

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← ZOOM!!! →



A Frightful Premonition of September 11, 2001?
(pulp magazine cover illustration from December 1934)

** BREAKING NEWS! **

LSF Stays "Virtual" for the Rest of 2021 announced by Rob

Due to the resurgence of COVID, the rise of the Delta Variant, and DC's newly-reinstated masking regulations we have made the decision to remain virtual for our Second Sunday Social Gatherings and our Fourth Thursday LSF Book Discussions through the end of calendar year 2021. We'll continue to host those events virtually through Zoom and will send out Zoom login information for each event a few days beforehand.

Spock would be very disappointed in us humans right now, as this move is being forced on us because there are too many foolish and idiotic folks who ignored the fact that the needs of the many out-weigh the needs of the few. We encourage everyone to be like Spock... get vaccinated.... think of the many... and hopefully we'll be able to get back to in-person events again starting in 2022.

A decision on plans for January 2022 and beyond will be made around the beginning of December.

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> September 2021 LSF Meeting TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY <

Due to Coronavirus concerns, we plan to hold the September 12th LSF meeting virtually. Anyone who would like to participate can contact Rob for virtual meeting information at robgatesdc@gmail.com. Hope to "see" you there!



What's Inside?

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Page 4: Information About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians & Con Calendar.



To our ConFAB Friends,

Announcing ConFABulous 2021 on October 1-3, 2021. We are again in person at the Crown Plaza Aire, 3 Apple-tree Square in Bloomington, MN. We will have all of the gaming and programming you have come to expect from ConFABulous, including: panels of general interest, gaming and speculative fiction; two rooms for role-playing games; our large gaming room; and our Con Suite where you can pick up snacks.

That said, this year there will be some changes for the health and safety of everyone:

- All convention staff and attendees must be fully vaccinated;
- In line with current World Health Organization recommendations, all volunteers and attendees must wear a mask at all times in all convention spaces, except for eating and drinking;
- Gaming tables will be spaced 6 feet from each other, and at each table chairs will be spaced to strike a balance between distancing and playability;
- Our ConSuite will include a selection of pre-packaged snacks and individually packaged drinks (cans, bottles) instead of our usual wider regular selection.

For complete details of our Health and Safety policies, please check our webpage:

<http://confabulous.org/wordpress/covid-19-safety-and-policies/>

Check out our web site for a current list of the panels and RPG games being offered. If you would like to propose a panel or participate in one, please contact:

programming@ConFABulous.org

If you would like to propose or participate in one of our role-playing events, please contact: gaming@ConFABulous.org

While there you can register for the convention and book a room at the hotel so you can stay up late for gaming.

We hope to see you at the con.

--- Don Kaiser, ConFABulous Chair 

Minutes of the August LSF Meeting
taken by Scott

TV News

Carl and Wayne expressed interest in the non-F&SF German neo-noir television series *Babylon Berlin* on Net-Flix. David said he'll check it out.

Rob watched on YouTube the one and only episode of *Heil, Honey, I'm Home*, a BBC sitcom (1990.) The storyline focuses upon on Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun, who live next door to a Jewish couple. It was cancelled after one episode. Can you even imagine?

Do you recall *The Phoenix*, a genre TV series from the 1970's? "The plot revolved around an ancient extraterrestrial named Bennu of the Golden Light, who is discovered in a sarcophagus in Peru and awakened in the 20th Century." I must have missed this one.

There was a long discussion on *Motherland: Fort Salem*, which premiered on Freeform, but is now being shown on Disney. The series has three main characters who are witches conscripted into the U.S. Army. It is a women-dominated world where the USA ended persecution of witches 300 years ago during the Salem witch trials.

Teresa watched all three seasons of *Colony*, starring Josh Holloway of *Lost* fame. The third season was weak. The third season of *The Orville* has been moved from Fox to Hulu. The animated series *What If* will be shown on Disney+.

Jodi Whitaker (the current Doctor Who) is scheduled to do a new special and a full-length movie. The new showrunner and new Doctor have not yet been announced.

Wayne talked about the more recent *Rick and Morty* episodes. Rob shared the following link to a 15-minute Rick and Morty short, "Summer Meets God" from Takashi Sano:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtgFmpkWA10>

No news about *Umbrella Academy*. The new season of *Lower Decks* is starting up this week. Bob enjoyed the two seasons of *Ragnarök*, a Norwegian TV series being shown on Net-Flix. (Thor comes back as a high-school kid.)

The new *Star Trek: Prodigy* series will feature Kate Mulgrew. The series follows a group of non-Star Fleet teenagers who use an abandoned starship to search for adventure. Kate Mulgrew reprises her role as Kathryn Janeway – as an Emergency Training Hologram.

Movie News

There were cheers for the current *Suicide Squad* movie. Quite gruesome, but it worked. Rob liked the dialogue. Producer James Gunn has been re-hired by Disney to direct the third *Guardians of the Galaxy* movie.

Scarlett Johansen has sued Disney for simultaneously releasing *Black Widow* in theaters and via live-streaming. The change in distribution was not renegotiated with her, and the livestreaming release will cut into her income from theater box office receipts. The movie itself has been well received.

Everyone hates *Tenet*. Is it the worst movie of 2020?

Teresa mentioned a new 2021 film called *The Green Knight*. Rob described it as a fantasy movie starring Dev Patel – based upon the 14th-century poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Rob also enjoyed the fantastical new *Jungle Cruise* (starring Dwayne Johnson and Emily Blunt). A movie based upon *The Three-Body Problem* by Liu Cixin is in pre-production status.

Book News

Carl is currently reading KM Szpara's *Docile*. Szpara is a trans author who lives in Baltimore. The North Country Gaylaxians will be discussing Naomi Kritzer's *Chaos on Cat Net* on Tuesday (August 10). The author has been invited to participate. Carl highly enjoyed and recommends *Troy: The Greek Myths Reimagined*, the third book on Greek mythology by Queer author and actor Steven Fry.

(continued on page 4)



Lunar Orbital Outpost

info passed along by
Wayne #1 and Carl

In a short info article in the July 10 issue of *The Washington Post*, it was reported that Northrup Grumman had won a \$935 million NASA contract to develop living quarters for a planned outpost orbiting the Moon. Astronauts will live and conduct research in the Habitation and Logistics Outpost (HALO) made by Northrup for the lunar orbiter named The Gateway. HALO will be managed out of NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

An orbital lunar outpost? Yes, indeed. Make a quick check of the NASA website (www.nasa.gov) and you'll find out that the planned orbital outpost will provide vital support for a sustainable, long-term human return to the surface of the Moon.

The Gateway is a vital part of NASA's Artemis Program, along with the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket, the Orion spacecraft, and a human landing system that will bring astronauts to the Moon. The Gateway will also function as a staging point for deep space exploration. HALO will be the initial crew cabin for astronauts visiting The Gateway and will provide basic life support needs for visiting astronauts after they arrive in the Orion spacecraft and prepare for their trip to the surface of the Moon. The Gateway will provide command, control, data handling capabilities, energy storage and power distribution, thermal control, communications and tracking capabilities, and environmental control and life support systems to augment the Orion spacecraft and support crew members. It will also have several docking ports for visiting vehicles, and future modules for science and stowage. The long-term presence on and around the Moon will prepare NASA for sending the first humans to Mars; and The Gateway will be a port for deep space transportation, such as landers heading down to the Moon or spacecraft embarking to destinations beyond the Moon.

Currently, NASA is focusing on development of critical Gateway elements required to support a Moon landing in 2024: the Power and Propulsion Element (PPE), the Habitation and Logistics Outpost (HALO), and logistics capabilities.



Artist's rendition of The Gateway

The PPE is a high-power, 60-kilowatt solar electric propulsion spacecraft that will provide power, high-rate communications, attitude control, and orbital transfer capabilities for The Gateway. In 2019, NASA selected Maxar Technologies (Westminster, CO) to develop, build, and support an in-space demonstration of the PPE. The PPE project is managed out of NASA's Glenn Research Center in Ohio.

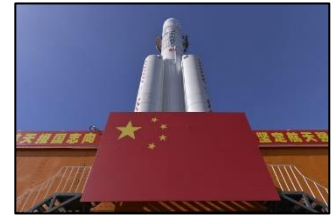
In February of this year, NASA selected SpaceX to provide launch services for PPE and HALO. Both elements will be "integrated" on Earth and launched together no earlier than November 2024 on a Falcon Heavy rocket from Cape Kennedy (Launch Complex 39A).

In 2020, NASA announced SpaceX as the first US commercial provider to deliver cargo and other supplies to The Gateway, under the Gateway Logistics Services contract. As astronauts prepare for missions to the Moon's surface, they will need deliveries of critical pressurized and unpressurized cargo, science experiments and supplies. One logistics services delivery is anticipated for each crewed Artemis mission to The Gateway. Gateway Logistics is based at the Kennedy Space Center.

International partners will also provide important contributions to The Gateway. Canada will contribute advanced external robotics, such as the Canadarm3 (for Artemis deep-space missions). Japan will contribute habitation components and logistics resupply. The



European Space Agency will contribute habitation and refueling modules, enhanced lunar communications components, and two additional European Service Modules for NASA's Orion spacecraft.



NOTE: The same brief July 10 *Washington Post* article also mentioned that China has plans for the Moon, including setting up a base on its South Pole. Although the target site for *Chang'e-6* (a sample return mission) has not been revealed, planetary scientists at the National Space Science Center (Chinese Academy of Sciences) are pushing for the Aitken Basin at the Moon's South Pole. Samples from the Aitken Basin could provide clues to questions about the lunar mantle and the early history of the Moon.

According to other sources, *Chang'e-6* is expected to launch in 2024, to investigate the topography, composition, and subsurface structure of the Aitken Basin and to return samples to Earth. *Chang'e-7* is also expected to launch in 2024. It will include an orbiter, a lander, a rover, and a mini flying probe; and its mission will be to explore the lunar South Pole for resources. *Chang'e-8* (expected to launch in 2027) really sounds fascinating. Its mission will be to verify the utilization and development of lunar natural resources. In addition to a lander, a rover, and a flying detector, *Chang'e-8* will include a 3-D printing experiment, which will use lunar resources to test-build a structure. It will also transport a small sealed ecosystem experiment and test the technology needed to construct a lunar science base.

China is also reviewing preliminary studies for a crewed lunar landing mission in the 2030s – and possibly building an outpost near the Moon's South Pole with international cooperation.

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

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

Annual membership fees are \$10, for which you will receive an e-mailed copy of this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. Due to Coronavirus concerns, the Lambda Sci-Fi meeting for Sunday, Sept. 12th, will be held virtually. We'll keep you informed of the status of future meetings.

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

Oct 1-3, 2001 **CONFABULOUS 2021**. Crowne Plaza Aire (Bloomington MN) – Hosted by North Country Gaylaxians. “All convention staff and attendees must be fully vaccinated.” Includes: panels of general interest, gaming and speculative fiction; two rooms for role-playing games; our large gaming room; and a Con Suite where you can pick up snacks. On-line registration through the convention's website: Website: <http://confabulous.org/>

Dec. 15-19, 2021 **WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION (DisCon III)**. Omni Shoreham Hotel (Washington DC) – hotel information: <https://discon3.org/location/accommodations> Incorporating virtual and on-site/face-to-face programming. “We are committed to having a masking and health policy which complies with local legal requirements and CDC recommendations. As the situation is still fluid, we will be updating you with our requirements to be in-person as we get closer to December.” Author GoH: Nancy Kress; Artist GoH: John Harris. Adult attending membership = \$200; virtual membership (to access on-line programming) = \$75.

Website: <https://discon3.org/> Purchase memberships on-line at: <https://discon3.org/membership/membership-information/>

April 29 – May 1, 2022 **RAVENCON 15**. Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center (Richmond VA). GoH: Terry Brooks; Music GoH: Rhiannon's Lark. Membership: \$35 before 12/31/2021; \$40 before 4/5/2022; \$50 at the door; day badges available. On-line registration at: <https://ravencon.com/store/Registration-c23522469> Webpage: <https://ravencon.com>

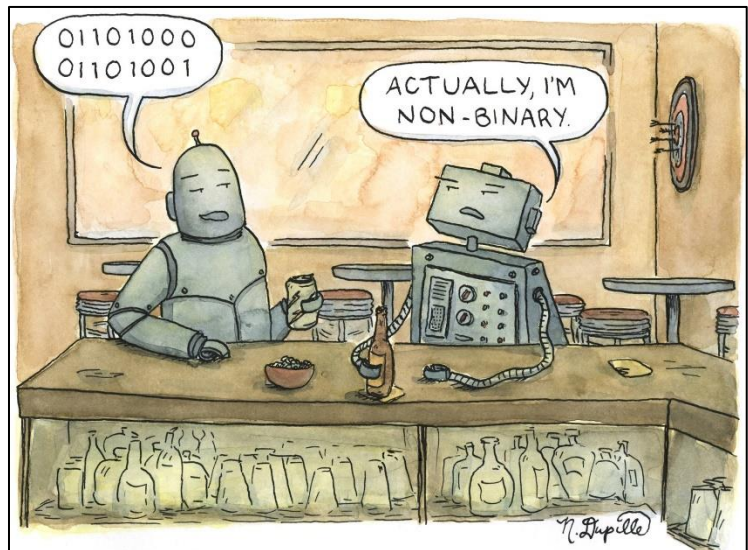
August LSF Minutes

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Upcoming LSF book discussions: *Cemetery Boys* by Aiden Thomas (August), *A Song for a New Day* by Sarah Pinsker (September), *Silver Moon* by Catherine Lundoff (October), *Finder* by Suzanne Palmer (November/December).

There was also some discussion about potential future Gaylaxicons. Rob commented that he would not anticipate another Gaylaxicon in DC because it is not financially feasible. The North Country Gaylaxians and the Atlanta-based Gaylaxians have run the most recent Gaylaxicons jointly with other local F&SF conventions run by their groups.

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[Ed. Note: I couldn't pass up this cool May 2020 cartoon by Natalie Dupille.]