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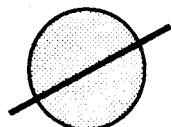
SEPT. MEETING NOTES

by Loree Cook-Daniels,
First Speaker

Lambda Sci-Fi reached a new plateau this meeting: we spent more time sharing papers than sharing gossip! Does this mean we've become more established?!? We also had our first visit from a Hologram (of Noel), who seemed to have had a run-in with anunfriendly entity.

SHOW AND TELL. Our show-and-tell included articles, magazines, flyers, ads, etc. on Star Trek (new and old), the new ST:TNG book *Q-in-Law*, dinosaurs, various conventions, "Red Dwarf", the Addams Family movie, Worlds of Wonder art gallery in Georgetown, other clubs' newsletters, pictures from the Guest Quarters Suites we'll be using for Gaylaxicon IV, pictures of us and friends at Gaylaxicon and Pride Day, a comic book called "Dog" (Did I get that right?) in which gay-bashers get blown up, and an article about Hugo and Nebula awards-winner Orson Scott Card's homophobic opinions about gay people.

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ST vs. ST:TNG: Which Is Better?

A Special Commentary by David Nicholas



"To Boldly Go Where Every TV Show Has Gone Before!" Perhaps that's a better warp-warming beginning to all ST/ST:TNG episodes.

Each week this intergalactic allegory/soap opera panders its dialithium-neutral gender/race/ethnic blend of socially acceptable synthahol to the PC technoids amongst us. And I'm feeling a bit out-of-phase over both shows. Does ST's pioneering social campaign against racism, global warfare, and loose-fitting breast/crotch-hiding uniforms win out over ST:TNG's pioneering social campaign against racism, global warfare, and loose-fitting breast/

crotch-hiding uniforms? So, I put the question to Ye Trexies and await Majel Barrett's computer voice-over to the question: "Which Is Better?"

Ah, ST: Sadly retro; pre-IL&M (That's Industrial Light and Magic for all you non-FX types.); pre-big budgets; target-locked onto the same sad Plain-Jane Paramount sound stage, sad stardate after sad stardate; with only guest-star quality big breasts to entertain the Captain (and certainly Mr. Roddenberry). What fired this show's Phasers? Why should ST continue to occupy sectors on our viewing screens?

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NOTE: Loree says this short story has a "games aspect" to it and it serves as a substitute for our usual "games column." Can you figure it out? Good luck! - The Editor

[Author's note: When a government decides to undertake a very uncharacteristic project, it's best to be both wary and prepared . . .]

1048.67.20

We have failed.

All those thousands and thousands of scientists and consultants planned for every eventuality. They studied everything, planned every detail, looked at every possibility. Every possibility, that is, except for one.

Raging insanity.

Oh, we had discussed what to do if one of us started showing signs of instability. Calm the person down, give them medications, do some talk and behavioral therapy. Even now, after all that has happened, I laugh at the prescription. As we got closer to our destination, all of us got more agitated and distracted. Not even I — who'd been watching Rthian from nearly the beginning — was able to separate from the excitement long enough to notice Rthian until it was too late.

See, I was brought up by an unstable father, and I feel sooner than most when someone around me is stoking a volcano. Early on I picked up Rthian's wariness and hostility. At first I just thought it was the natural defenses of a not-very-sociable man. Since all my suffering has been at the hands of introverts, however, I wasn't about to simply walk away from that assessment without a second thought.

I watched him. Carefully, so as not to arouse suspicion in him or in anyone else. Every day I watched how he acted, who he spoke to or didn't speak to, what he did and did not record about the experiments. By the time we were halfway here, I knew he did not want the mission to succeed. Every time someone spoke of a hopeful result, the silent volcano rumbled a little harder. Rthian, I finally decided, was simply one of those scientists who thought that it would reflect badly on science if the myths were proved correct after all.

God forgive me, it just never occurred to me until it was too late just how far he would go to ensure he was right.

1048.68.36

I finally disposed of all the bodies. Convincing myself to do that was unbearably hard. Every time I told myself there was no way I could keep the bodies without making the air in here unbreathable, another voice inside told me they had to be brought home. Crazy, isn't it? As though I could do that. Pilot us back home. Single-handedly.

1048.69.12

We — actually, I guess now it's just "I" — am now within actual, unaided sight of our destination. After all that has happened, I don't know which of my griefs is worse: the grief I feel for the deaths of all the rest of the crew, or the grief I feel for having finally made it here only to find that the myths were wrong. Verification still has to be done, of course, but I can say now that the stories that told of great bodies of liquid were wrong. Everywhere I look I see solid land. Silent, motionless land.

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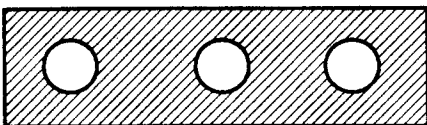
ST vs. ST:TNG: Which Is Better?

(continued from page 1)



Technically, the show's in "Sesame Street's" quadrant. There's the hilarious scene in Spock's Spawn/Return to Vulcan (No, I'm not necessarily going to reference by show title.) where the camera angle tilts at various 45 degree angles, as if to show Spock's mad/burning/out-of-control desire to jump into the loins of that conniving Vulcanesse. (Labia truly triumphs over logic.) Then there's the B-movie backdrops at the O.K Corral . . . Do mind-controlling aliens have budget deficits, too? I heard that Sulu once mistook the fishing line holding up the Enterprise for another Tholian Web.

But I've got to credit the ingenuity of ST, given its limited resources. ST knew its limitations and embraced them. The no-dollars special effects propelled effective story lines. They enhanced already strong underpinnings in plotline, acting, and script writing. ST didn't need better effects to make its message more believable or to divert our attention from other glaring deficiencies. But most importantly, the characters took their surroundings seriously and integrated themselves into those sets with such aplomb that even the Klingons would have warped around those fishing lines.



By contrast, ST:TNG's a technomarmy, flashy, all-too-politely self-assured shell, taking a Pollyanna approach to every graphic *trompe-l'oeil* holographed its way. It's sparkly zirconium pretending to be a diamond, a big special effects millstone around Picard's modest Shakespearian neck. What sensor could detect special-guest-star overacting confronted with all the highfalutin' graphics? What could possibly upstage this "Return of Tron"? Does Wesley really need more trips to the holodeck to discover his manhood? (Where's the computer override? Exit and disgrace that program!) Only rarely do the effects add anything in particular to the plot, action, or believability of those voyages. I already have to suspend my belief everytime I see Deanna Troi taking oblique peeks at Riker's basket. Oh, for an alien chorus of "Shut Up And Show Us Your Tits!"

ST:TNG has singular-thought plots, shamelessly interlaced with artificial no-action soap opera leanings, while usually taking aim at the childless. Take the brilliantly manipulative Lal, guiltling all childless yuppies into positronic shortcircuit, while nothing happens on any interstellar plane, save some free face- suck for the director. (If only Lal had been on her knees at the time.)

Cunnilingual aliens get quickly birthed (the affects of Betazed Stainmaster nylon stuck between its teeth from the dive in . . . "Hey, Tasha, can I borrow some dental floss?"), and again nothing of interest happens while galaxies collide, except for a totally unrelated plot of sinister multiplying microbes (Yawn, yawn!) or crying Betazeds going for the DINK jugular.

And the worst is Aldair, stealing kids from all the bored crew, who screwed rather go berserk watching reruns of the first ST movie. (Maybe that's what hid in the box that drove Spock insane.) Feel the guilt, the heartpangs of guilt, for stealing children. Feel guilty for not having children to boost ST:TNG's rerun ratings. But the idyllic Aldarians clearly weren't so smart . . . no guilt over taking Wesssssssly Crusher!

In fact, only a couple monumental ST:TNGs reach soap opera escape velocity: The first part of the Borg duo and Yesterday's Enterprise. We're talking honest-to-goodness action here, the kind that Jim Kirk could occasionally encounter . . . Plus real mystery, intrigue, plausible yet delicately interconnected plots, suspense, meaningful but tastefully plot-related romance, and significant moral/philosophical issues of a scientific

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Sept. Minutes

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Tidbits that were offered during this flurry of paper: Star Wars plates have doubled in value; there will be a Star Trek exhibit at the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum beginning in early January; and Frank Hummel reports that since he has received nothing from Paramount confirming rumors of a gay ST:TNG character, he recommends we keep writing.

GAYLAXICON IV. More than 100 people have already signed up for Gaylaxicon IV! Jaime and Jed recently met to go over things, and Jaime reports that all plans are proceeding well. Mercedes Lackey has not yet responded to our request that she be GOH, probably because we used an outdated address. A new invitation is going out pronto. [Editor's note: Yes, that was the problem. Ms. Lackey has now responded politely in the negative. A new invitation has gone out to Octavia Butler as of this writing.]

MOVING ON. Two of our members have moved or are moving: Brian K. moved to Norfolk and would love to hear from us (Jaime has his address); and Carroll D. is moving to New York to take a new job with Columbia University. Noel and Wayne announced they are moving closer, to Greenbelt. Some of these changes are reflected in our new members' directory, which we put together

and distributed at the meeting.

WORLDCON. Carl reported on WorldCon, noting that all the Gaylaxicon clubs except New Orleans were represented, and that there was a large number of gay panels. The next three WorldCons will be in Orlando - '92, San Francisco - '93 (They've already put out a call for as much gay programming as possible.), and Winnipeg - '94 ("Prairie, prairie, prairie, Winnipeg, prairie, prairie, prairie!").

CYBERPUNK. Someone requested a good introduction to Cyberpunk, and William Gibson's *Neuromancer* was the recommendation of several club members.

COMICS. Pied Piper has come out to Flash, and that comic has introduced the new term "head-cheese." (I'm afraid this may be gaymale slang I don't understand. Anyone want to help out the First Speaker?!) Also, the New Guardians' El Strango is an openly gay superhero, it was reported.

BOOK SALES. By a completely innocent coincidence, both Carl and Loree & Marcelle cleaned out their bookcases this week and brought in boxes and bags of books. At Carl's suggestion, people were asked to donate 50 cents per book to the club. Although we had to take lots of the books back home, I understand we made over \$40 from this impromptu fundraiser! Let's do this again!

ST vs. ST:TNG: Which Is Better?

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bent. And a high honorable mention to Q's only decent episode — the first Borg contact — where Q practically seduces Picard and nearly licks his ear. (Their physical romance surely takes place off the set.) Yum!!

So, what's better? ST's moralistic panderings, wonderful action, and lack of special effects, or ST:TNG's moralistic panderings, lack of action, and wonderful special effects? Just as matter balances anti-matter, maybe ST balances ST:TNG. Or perhaps they annihilate each other in a burst of cataclysmic energy, creating "ST VI: The Undeniably Commonplace."

Live Long And Prosper!

DID YOU KNOW?

by Carl Cipra

Did you know that our very own First Speaker, Loree Cook-Daniels, is now writing a monthly series of articles for *The Washington Blade*? She wrote an article entitled "Building Trust Among Lesbians" for the August 23rd issue; and the folks at *The Blade* liked it so much that they asked for more! The series is entitled "Common Ground"; and the first article in the series appeared in the September 13th issue of *The Blade*.



1048.70.12

Round and round and round this little planet I go. I continued to run the experiments simply because I haven't known what else to do. Verification, though, has now been completed. Every reading, every experiment, confirms that there is only solid matter here, nothing liquid.

Realistically, I suppose this should make me happy. Several billions of our people have died over the millenia fighting over the myths of the liquid planet. Leaving behind, for the moment, the question of how I will get this information home, proving the Scriptures false once and for all should end the fighting. And it may heal, finally, the rifts between our scientific and political leaders and the masses of people who have, up until now at least, still believed.

Keeping my spirits up is becoming increasingly hard. Every time I try to sleep, I dream of the passages in Rthian's diary that explain what he intended to do, and why. Screaming at myself for not having found the diary until all the damage had been done, I wake drenched in sweat.

EDITOR'S CORNER

by Carl Cipra

Well, I finally got my shot at putting out an issue of the club newsletter! My deepest thanks to Peter for giving me this opportunity!

This issue is somewhat different from previous ones-- there are only a couple of articles in it. I am delighted, however, to be able to feature a complete short story by our own Loree Cook-Daniels! She says it has a "games" aspect to it. (I haven't figured it out yet!)

Personal plug: Yours truly will be appearing October 6th (Sunday, 11 AM) as a guest panelist at Oktober-Trek. The panel is entitled "In the Spirit of IDIC" and will feature a discussion on the topic of gays in the Star Trek universe! See you there!(?)

1048.73.59

Sanity. The question is, do I still have it? Reality is becoming increasingly slippery; I sit for hours trying to categorize it as being this and not that. Each time I have a thought, an opposite one (or two, or three, or ten) pops into my mind. At issue is: Which is the one that makes sense. Which one reflects reality and logic? Most of the time I can't tell. Scary.

1048.78.01

Really went off the deep end this time. After spending days curled up trying to figure out Rthian, his diary, the deaths, the myths, my beloved Trillian and our friends and comrades, I took the shuttle and landed. I am on the surface now. Nothing much of interest.

1048.78.15

Stable temperatures here. Little, really, to remark upon. Everywhere I look there is plant life; but it is not dissimilar to our own. Experiments onboard indicated the atmosphere was similar to our own: this appears to be borne out. Temperatures also similar; still stable.

1048.78.49

Since there does not appear to be much of interest here, I doubt that I will stay long. Not much animal life has appeared. Of the little I have seen, most clearly have close relatives on our own planet. Without extensive biological training, however - - Jinan was our biologist — I cannot make very definitive judgements.

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1048.78.66

Walking around, I am getting homesick. Amazing to me how I am simultaneously bored and made homesick by this planet. There is much that I should be doing here as the sole remaining scientific representative of our planet, I am sure; but I seem to have little drive to do much except make the grossest of observations. Everything seems somewhat pointless, I guess. Rthian's actions have practically guaranteed that I will not make it home. For what it's worth, however, I will do my best to transmit this diary back home. At your end, I beg you to pass it on in its entirety to Trillian. Lover, I am truly, truly sorry that all you will have left of me is a few incoherent words. Little did we know that the mission might end this way: in total, utter failure.

1048.79.32

Darkness descended slowly last night. Even though I was slightly frightened by the prospect, I slept outside the shuttle to see what might happen in the night. Woke this morning after a completely uninterrupted sleep — my first since Rthian began his killings.

1048.80.50

Since, even in my diminished capacity, I know that making judgements about a planet based on investigation of one area is poor science, I re-entered the shuttle yesterday and moved it several thousand tithians. Perhaps I need not have done that. Really, there hardly seems to be any difference between where I am now and where I was yesterday. I can't say I'm surprised. Nothing in our observations of the planet indicated that it had anything like different climate or vegetation zones. Going solely on distant scientific experiments, however, is always poor science.

1048.81.11

Boredom, perhaps brought on by grief and despair, is causing me to do strange things. About five minutes is as long as I can keep my mind focused on one thing. Yesterday I moved the shuttle to about eight different places. There still has been nothing to catch my interest and bring back the focused mind that was my pride and joy and the reason I was brought on board this mission. I feel so adrift, so without moorings. Drifting along like an autumn leaf in a playful breeze. Everything I have worked so hard for is gone, swept away by a madman.

1048.81.43

My mind, flighty as it is, keeps flitting back to you, Trillian. I remember how pained you have always been at how much hatred and violence our peoples have directed at each other. So many deaths, so much repression over such a small matter as the fabled existence of a planet we all knew must be far, far away. Trillian, I also remember how thrilled we both were when we learned that the government had finally decided to mount a mission to find the planet and bring back the definitive answer. But that thrill was nothing compared to our exhilaration when we learned that I was to be part of the mission. Remember how we dreamed together what it would mean to, finally, after all these millenia, have the final answer? Our hearts swelled with thankfulness for the farsighted people in government who finally agreed that the believers needed to be taken seriously enough to have their theory tested. Our hearts swelled with the thought of what this decision portended for the healing of the rifts between the government and its people. Kind-hearted Trillian, who always believed that once the truth were known, peace could be restored.

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1048.81.79

Peace. Over and over I pray for peace, both for my peoples and for me. No matter how hard I have tried, I have not been able to figure out how I can get the ship back home by myself. Damn Rthian!

1048.83.22

Finally. On about my fiftieth attempt, I have figured out (I hope) how to transmit this diary back home. God must be blessing me.

My emotions careen around more wildly than my mind. Although I so desperately want to go home, I know that my life is not nearly so important as bringing truth and peace to my peoples. Rthian's actions, though, have made the chances of that happening much slimmer. Still, I must try. Hopefully you will receive the diary and it will finally settle the issue of the truth of the Scriptures and end the fighting.


 The logo consists of the Greek letters Lambda (Λ), Psi (Ψ), and Phi (Φ) in a stylized, bold font, enclosed within a rectangular border.

1048.84.76

I am finding it difficult to end the diary and transmit it. Though I know that just because I transmit the diary once does not mean I cannot continue to transmit other entries, I still feel that this may be my only chance. I want it to be complete. Something inside says that this will be my only chance to get the message through.

Trillian, there is so much that I wish I could say to you. Realizing that I will not be there to carry out all of our carefully-laid plans is a burden that I almost cannot bear. Uncounted times we sat up late at night and tried to understand the incomprehensible behavior of our peoples. Even if this diary does make it home and is believed, I will not be with you, Trillian, to enjoy the sweet fruits. We had such sweet dreams, Trillian, such plans. All of them will now have to be carried out by you, lover, without me. Through the betrayal of just one man, you have been left alone to carry on. Even though it pains me beyond words to know that you must do it alone, I know beyond a doubt that you can and will. Remember always, Trillian, our lovers' pledge: keep the faith.

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**** 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 \$10, for which you will receive this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are 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 13th, at Jim C.'s apartment: 1414 17th Street, NW #14. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks if you can. 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 Noel



October 4-6, 1991 **OKTOBERTREK '91**: Marriott Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD); Guests: Nichelle Nichols, Jonathan Frakes, Robert Justman. Cost is \$40 for the weekend or \$20 per day. Rooms are \$72/night (single, double, triple or quad). [NOTE: I'm on a panel on Sunday, Oct. 6th: "In the Spirit of IDIC". - Carl]

October 4-6, 1991 **ROVACON 16**: Salem Civic Center, Roanoke, VA; Guests: Don Mathison ("Land of the Giants"), Roger Zelazny, Hal Clement, Spice Williams (the muscular Klingon woman from "Star Trek V"). Cost: \$20 at the door. Call 703/389-9400 after 5:00 PM (no collect calls) for information.

November 15-17, 1991 **PHILCON '91**, the 55th Annual Philadelphia Science Fiction Conference: Adam's Mark Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Guest of Honor: David Brin; Artist Guest of Honor: Moebius (Jean Giraud). Cost is \$17 until September 15, more at the door. Send checks to Philcon '91, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303.

November 8-10, 1991 **SCI-CON 13**: Holiday Inn Executive Center (Virginia Beach, VA). Guest of Honor: Lois McMasterBujold (1991 Hugo for Best Novel); Artist Guest of Honor: Vincent DiFate; Special Guests: Gordon R. Dickson, Frank Kelly-Freas. The cost is \$20 until October 1, 1991, and \$25 at the door. Room rates are \$56 (plus tax), single or double. Make checks payable to "Sci-Con" and send to: SCI-CON, c/o HaRoSFA, PO Box 9434, Hampton, VA 23670.

November 29-December 1, 1991 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XIV**: Holiday Inn, Timonium (Timonium, MD). Special Guests: Marion Zimmer Bradley (health permitting) and Katherine Kurtz. Cost is \$24 until November 1 and \$28 after that. Room rate is \$59/night for up to four people. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. [NOTE: This convention typically has very high gay/lesbian/bisexual participation; and all the straights are friendly. - Carl]

January 3-5, 1992 **EVECON 9**: Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza National Airport (Arlington, VA). Features gaming (including live action games), workshops, and panels. Cost is \$15 until October 12, 1991, and \$20 until December 14, 1991. Make checks payable to "FanTek" and send to: FanTek, 1607 Thomas Road, Ft. Washington, MD 20744.

April 17-19, 1992 **BALTICON 26**: Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Guests: Donald Kingsbury, Christopher Rowley, David R. Palmer, Shiela Finch, Thomas T. Thomas, Christopher Hinz, Elizabeth Moon, Josepha Sherman, Michael F. Flynn (the past nine Compton Crook Award winners for the "best new novelist of the year"). For information, write to: Balticon 26, Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203.

July 17-19, 1992 **GAYLAXICON IV**: Guest Quarters Hotel, Philadelphia, PA. Guest of Honor TBA; Artist Guest of Honor: Tristan Alexander. Cost is \$15 through December 31, 1991, \$20 through April 30, 1992, \$25 through June 30, 1992, \$30 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon IV" and send to: Gaylaxicon IV, PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044.

September 3-7, 1992 **MAGICON**, the 50th World Science Fiction Convention: Orange County Convention and Civic Center and Peabody, Clarion, and Quality Inn Plaza Hotels (Orlando, FL). Guests of Honor: Jack Vance and Vincent DiFate. Cost (attending) is \$85 until September 30, 1991; and cost will rise after that. Make checks payable to "MagiCon" and send to: MagiCon, PO Box 621992, Orlando, FL 32862-1992.

September 2-6, 1993 **CONFRANCISCO**, the 51st World Science Fiction Convention: Moscone Convention Center (San Francisco, CA). Guest of Honor: Larry Niven; Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin. Cost (attending) is \$70 through December 31, 1991, \$85 after December 31, 1991; and cost will rise appreciably after that. Hotels will be announced in upcoming progress reports. Make checks payable to "ConFrancisco" and send to: ConFrancisco Registration, 712 Bancroft Road, Ste. 1993, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.