



LAMBDA SCI-FI



DC Area Gaylaxians

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JANUARY LSF MEETING RE-SCHEDULED TO JAN. 11TH (SATURDAY) IN GEORGETOWN!
"VIDEO MADNESS," POT-LUCK SUPPER, BOOK EXCHANGE - LOTS TO DO!

"Video Madness" Strikes Without Warning!

Who knew? It sort'a just happened! All of a sudden, attendees at the December LSF meeting found themselves voting to reschedule the January meeting (to Saturday, Jan. 11th) and to hold it at Julian's home in Georgetown in conjunction with another "Video Madness" Party!

- When to Be There -

The Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will start at 2:00 PM, with the videos and the potluck dinner to begin as soon as we get the "business" out of the way. So, try to get there a little before 2:00 PM, especially if there's any last-minute fixin' you need to do on your potluck contribution. [Ed. note: I just got a call from Wayne #1 saying that LSFers are invited to drop by earlier - "high noon" - for coffee, tea, hot chocolate, etc. in order to get all warmed up and relaxed for the day's activities.]

- What to Bring -

This will be one of our typical "Video Madness" parties, so bring along your favorite genre videos (science-fiction, fantasy, horror). The attendees will vote on which videos to watch; and there'll be different "tracks" of programming shown on each of three screens throughout the

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😊 Feedback Sought 😊

At one point during the December meeting, Wayne #1 reported that he's been looking for interested individuals to give him feedback on his writing, anything from spelling and grammar corrections to critiques on form and content. [Ed. note: For a recent example of Wayne's work, see "Southern Trees Can Bear Strange Fruit" in the Nov. '96 LSF newsletter.] Wayne also wondered if anyone else was similarly seeking feedback and if the club could find some way of helping out.

After some discussion, it was decided to try out something new during the upcoming "Video Madness" Party. Budding writers who are interested in getting feedback on their work (preferably short fiction) should bring copies to the Jan. 11th party and set them out on the designated table. (If you wish, you need not add an author's by-line to your work.) During the party (i.e. in between - during? - all the videos and munchies, etc.), these manuscripts will be available for perusal by budding editors (critiquers, critics, reviewers, etc.), who will be asked to write their feedback, comments, and/or corrections directly thereupon.

Let's see how this works out.

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7th Annual LSF Book Exchange!



Here's a short reminder about Lambda Sci-Fi's *seventh* annual book exchange, which will occur at the upcoming Jan. 11th meeting! All LSF members - and visitors, guests, etc. - are invited to participate in this "blind book exchange."

In case you've never participated in one of these before (or in case you've forgotten), here's how it works: (1) Go out and purchase a copy of your "favorite" science-fiction, fantasy, or horror book. (Over the years, LSF has expanded the concept of "book" to include comics, videotapes, "books on tape," etc. If you want, you can even make it *several* favorite books or whatever.) (2) Insert a piece of paper (or a bookmark) with your name on it. (3) wrap up the exchange item, but don't put any identifying marks or anything on the wrapped package to say who it's from. (All of that leftover Holiday wrapping paper will come in handy here!) (4) At the meeting, add your wrapped exchange item to the pile with all the others; and you'll be assigned a number. (One exchange item per person, please!) (5) When your number is called, you pick one of the packages from the pile. See how easy?

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"Mysterious" Minutes of the December Meeting

by Rob



**Paris in the
20th Century**
by Jules Verne
a brief review by Carl Cipra

In keeping with the recent trend, these minutes will be short and semi-sweet (like chocolate chips...).

In important news and items, we had a report on recent **Network business**. Since the GNAPA has been delayed again, there was no real Network business to report (just rumors about upcoming Gaylaxicons); and we took this opportunity to discuss proposing some form of electronic communication to speed up Network business. This was a popular idea with the LSFers in attendance. Rob and Philip were given the task of coming up with an actual proposal (with proper wording and Network Charter references) in time for our January meeting, so that it can be submitted for consideration in the next GNAPA. A draft of our upcoming LSF Membership Directory was passed around and reviewed, as were two samples of potential new LSF Membership Forms. Peter says the new Directory should be out early in 1997.

We also discussed the recent proposal to add "mystery" to the list of genre categories identifying what Lambda Sci-Fi is all about. After much discussion (heated at times), it was decided by a vast majority that it would be best not to add additional items to the core list of items ("science fiction, fantasy, and horror"), because that might dilute our membership or bring in people who have little or no interest in those genres already included. It was agreed, however, that we certainly shouldn't keep people from discussing other genres or from listing them as personal interests in the Membership Directory.

Next Month!!!

Next month's newsletter will feature an article on LSF's "field trip" to attend the Dec. 13th premiere of Tim Burton's *Mars Attacks!*, as well as reviews of the film itself. (Thank you, Philip for promptly sending in your re-

Much material was passed around, including some movie mini-posters from *Star Trek: First Contact*, a *Babylon 5* Fan Club newsletter, a recent Library of Congress Newsletter focusing on science fiction (and various other) magazines, and articles and materials received in the LSF post office box. Recent movies and books were discussed, including (on the movie front) *Star Trek: First Contact*, *Space Jam*, *101 Dalmations*, as well as the "new" Jules Verne novel that has just been translated into English. In addition, a sign-up sheet was passed around for a group outing to see *Mars Attacks!* on opening night.

Finally, a reminder about the upcoming *Gateways* submission deadline (Dec. 31st) was made. Following that, Wayne #1 proposed that our next "Video Madness" Party should include an "editing corner," where aspiring writers could deposit stories/works for those in attendance to read and critique. After making sure that everyone knew that this "editing corner" was unrelated to *Gayteways*, someone suggested that if a "Video Madness" Party host wished to do so, it would happen. Julian (*fka* Jaime) immediately volunteered his home for a January "Video Madness" Party. The date was set as Jan. 11th, and the party will include: the monthly LSF meeting, the 7th annual LSF book exchange, and the "editing corner." Rumor has it that there will be two TV/VCR combos at Julian's with capacity for one more if anyone can supply the equipment. See page 1 of this newsletter for directions and details.



view, but there wasn't enough room to include it in *this* issue.) So, you've got a month to go out and see it before we give away all the secrets - and to send in *your* views on either the LSF "field trip" or the film! (Hint! Hint!) See you next month!

-- Y^e Olde Editor

About a year ago, Wayne #1 reported on a *Washington Post* article recounting the discovery of an authentic, unpublished manuscript by Jules Verne: *Paris au XX^e Siècle*. Finally, just this year, an English edition of this novel has been published by Random House, entitled *Paris in the 20th Century*.

Verne wrote this "lost" novel in 1863, right after the success of his first novel, *Five Weeks in a Balloon*; but it was never published. His publisher, Pierre-Jules Hetzel, rejected it, citing at one point: "No one today will believe your prophecy." (Over the next 30 or 40 years, however, his avid readers were apparently able to accept such concepts as submarines, flying machines, gigantic ocean liners, and capsules shot to the Moon from massive guns!)

Paris in the 20th Century takes place in 1960. It is the story of one Michel Duffrénoy, a recent graduate of "The Academic Credit Union." It is, in fact, an account of his less-than-successful attempts to earn a living; and the ending is (alas) not a happy one. For, you see, young Michel is a liberal arts major who lives in a France where business and technology have triumphed.

Verne depicts a rather strange version of "dystopia" here. He does not preach about the dangers of technology, as such. In fact, throughout the novel, he proudly displays the marvels of modern applied science and how they benefit humanity: telephones, computers, automobiles, elevated transport systems that run on compressed air, computers, electric lights, etc. The reader will also look in vain for dire warnings against the horrors of pollution and overpopulation. No, Verne instead warns against Twentieth Century society's obsession with science and technology to the exclusion of literature and the arts. He bemoans the development of a techno-

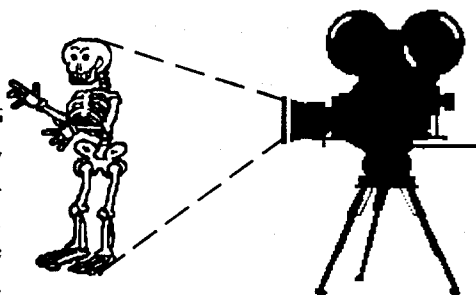
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Thinner (Anorexic)

a film review by Joseph Parra

You may recall that a few years ago, horror's most prolific author, Stephen King, released several stories and a novel or two under the pseudonym Richard Bachman. (In fact, he recently resurrected his alter ego for a new novel - however, this is in conjunction with a new release in his own name.) *Thinner* was one of the novels under the Bachman moniker. I remember thinking at the time of its release that he either had an incredible backlog of previously-unpublished material or maybe was just unsure of these tales, so adopted a pen name. Well, *Thinner* was fine as Grade B horror novels go and certainly was well-received by the horror genre reading public.

Thinner is the story of an overweight attorney who is given the opportunity to lose weight by the most horrifically unconventional method imaginable. While driving home from a successful evening out on the town, the corpulent attorney is receiving fellatio from his wife. Because of this, his attention is elsewhere; and so he doesn't see the unfortunate elderly gypsy woman who has walked from between two parked cars. Needless to say, he smashes her to pulp. Being of influence in his town, he receives a slap on the wrist from the police and the court. This does not sit well with the elderly woman's 106-year-old father, king of their gypsy tribe. He touches the lawyer's face, says one word - "thinner" - and departs, smiling like



Dracula. Suddenly, the poundage disappears rather quickly. In fact, in three short months, the lawyer has lost about 150 pounds! Initially, he weighed about 300 pounds, so this isn't too bad - except that losing weight that rapidly is bad for your health. Another month, another 80 pounds. Obviously, the situation is becoming quite dangerous. Suddenly a believer in gypsy curses, the attorney contacts the gypsy king, who refuses to remove the curse, which (according to custom) must be done by the old man. Caught between a rock and a hard place, the lawyer contacts a gangster crony of his who takes his friend's plight to heart. This hood does not take such things lightly and goes to war with the gypsy tribe. Add to this an infidelitous relationship between the attorney's wife and his doctor, and you have the meat of both the novel and the film.

As stated earlier, *Thinner* is a fine Grade B horror novel. Last year, famed TV and movie czar Aaron Spelling bought both Republic Pictures and Laurel Entertainment. He absorbed Laurel, production company of the famous *Night of the Living Dead* as well as of several Stephen King properties, including *The Tommyknockers*, *The Stand*, *The Langoliers*, and others.

Laurel also held the rights to producing *Thinner* as a motion picture. Spelling Films now undertook the production of *Thinner*, with Paramount Pictures handling distribution.

Unfortunately, as Stephen King has often said about the film versions of his tales, there are his books and then there are his movies. What this means is that you cannot compare the two and still be able to enjoy the latter. This theory works well if the film, no matter how deviant from the novel, has some merit on its own. In the case of *Thinner*, someone bit off more than they could chew. Like most diets, this one also has spotty results. The film chooses to ignore some of the finer points of the book, including the gypsy name of the curse. As we all know, details often are put aside - but here they were outright shunted. Performances in the film are good. Robert Burke is quite effective as the repentant lawyer-turned-vigilante. He conveys the horror well. Michael Constantine is also effective as the gypsy chief, as is Joe Mantegna as the attorney's gangster pal (a wonderful mixture of loyalty and cold efficiency). Unfortunately, the direction is at times amateurish; thus, the pacing is deadly. The editing seems to have been done with a trowel, telegraphing what is to come instead of hinting at it. The make-up effects by Kevin Yeagher are very effective.

So, *Thinner* is better, right? Take it from a chubbo: no, it isn't! Not much to enjoy. Enjoy? Feh!

Rating: 1½ out of 4

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Paris in the 20th Century

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logical society which lacks a cultural soul.

This definitely isn't one of Verne's best works. It's not a "timeless" work either, as it contains far too many references to obscure (to us) French Nineteenth Century artists, thinkers, and writers to remain "fresh" for a modern audience. (Thank you,

Random House, for those explanatory footnotes!) It is, however, a fascinating study in technological "prediction," one of the earliest "scientific romances;" and science fiction fans will undoubtedly enjoy reading a hitherto unknown work by one of the Great Names of the genre. (If he'd known about this novel, I have no doubt that Hugo Gernsbach would have loved it!)

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Contemporary
caricature
of Verne

from
*The Science
Fiction Book,
An Illustrated
History*
(Seabury
Press, 1975)

Gaylaxicon Forever!
 (or at least for
 the next 3 years!)
 reported by Carl Cipra

GAYLAXICONS VIII - IX - X



Extra! Extra! News flash!
 Just a day after the LSF December meeting, we received the latest issue of GNAPA (the official communication organ of the Gaylactic Network reps), and it looks like there's a *real* good chance there'll be Gaylaxicons in 1977, 1998, and 1999! Huzzah!

1997 - BOSTON, MASS.

The Gaylaxian Science Fiction Society (GSFS - the Boston Gaylaxians) have submitted a proposal to host "a small relaxacon in place of a full Gaylaxicon" next year (working title: "Gaylaxicon Lite '97"). They've proposed to host this "low-key, party-like event" over the 4th of July weekend (July 4/5/6, 1997) at the Burlington Marriott (same place as this year's Gaylaxicon VII). According to the proposal: "Programming will be focussed on getting friends together. Most programming will be social activities instead of panels." There would be no Guest of Honor, no dealers, and no art show. Activities would consist of "3 main low-key events" (not specified in the proposal) on Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon. Their plans also include a Saturday night dance, various gaming activities (both "parlour games and 'serious' gaming"), and a video track. They intend to "encourage professionals to attend both for free and without requiring them to work a panel" and "will do a pro mailing just to offer them a chance to promote their work in panel time, similar to the *Shadow Man* panel of '96."

GSFS's proposal only needs "phone approval" from the Gaylactic Network Board reps in order to use the "Gaylaxicon" title. (They're not asking for any Network funds for this minicon.) I certainly plan on going - it sounds like fun to me!

1998 - ANN ARBOR, MICH.

The Great Lakes Gaylaxians (GLG) have submitted a bid to host "a scaled-down version of Gaylaxicon - a

'mini-Gaylaxicon,' if you will." They too are shooting for the 4th of July weekend (July 3/4/5, 1998), probably in Ann Arbor, Michigan (the metropolitan Detroit area). As stated in their official bid (in the previous GNAPA): "Rather than having a full-fledged convention, we plan on hosting a 'family reunion.' We do not plan on having a dealer's room or an art show at this time. We do plan on showing the Network a great time, utilizing all that the metropolitan Detroit area has to offer..." They're also working to arrange the following "potential" Guests of Honor: Anne Harris (a local author) and Frank Gembeck (a local artist).

GLG's bid will be voted on by the Network Board by the end of the year. (There is no competing bid. If GLG's bid is not approved, the Network will seriously need to work on having a large Gaylaxian presence at the 1998 Worldcon in Baltimore, August 5th through 9th.) Once again, it sounds like fun to me! Gaylaxicon (Ann Arbor) in July and Worldcon in August? I think I can handle it!

NOTE: If you want to help out with Gaylaxicon in 1998, GLG says you should feel free to contact them. "We will accept help from anyone in the Network, providing they have access to electronic communication."

Their e-mail address is:
 glgaylaxan@aol.com

1999 - WASHINGTON, D.C.

And then there's *our* Gaylaxicon... Yes, the Network Board has indeed voted to accept Lambda Sci-

Fi's bid for Gaylaxicon in 1999. It'll be held over Columbus Day weekend, October 8/9/10/11, 1999 (when the weather's better!), just across the river in Crystal City (probably). We're planning on a "full-fledged Gaylaxicon" - discussion panels, art show, dealers' room, media programming, gaming, masquerade, a dance, "the works." We're also planning some sort of tie-in to National Coming Out Day, which will be observed that same weekend. Nancy Janda has accepted our invitation to be Artist Guest of Honor; and we have our hearts set on a *very* special Author Guest of Honor (to be officially announced if/when our invitation is accepted).

As you know, LSF strongly feels that Gaylaxicon will be most successful if it is supported by the entire Gaylactic Network. Accordingly, we have cordially invited participation from members of other chapters, too, to help out in the planning and execution of all aspects of Gaylaxicon 1999. We look forward to everyone's help in bringing about a truly memorable, enjoyable Gaylaxicon. Volunteers for the concomm who don't live in the metropolitan DC area must have access to electronic communication.

Our e-mail address is:
 LAMBDA SF@AOL.COM

* * * *

So, there's all the news so far. Take note of those dates and start marking your calendars. You wouldn't want to miss out on any of the fun, would you? We'll keep you posted on each of these events as more details become available.


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Every passing hour brings the solar system forty-three thousand miles closer to the Globular Cluster M13 in Hercules--and still there are some misfits who insist that there is no such thing as progress.

--- Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. ---

excerpted from *Science Fictionisms*
 (Gibbs Smith, 1995)

**Gaylaxicon
1999
Con-Committee
Needs You!**
by Rob
(for Rob and Jack)



Well, the bid is in, the voting is done, and now we have a convention to plan and run. With some of the ideas we have for this Gaylaxicon, it could be the biggest and best ever - but to make that happen, we're going to need a number of dedicated volunteers to fill some significant roles and positions. The co-chairs, Jack and Rob, have spent some time working on a structure for the Con-Committee and now we need volunteers to fill these positions. Our current structure has the following positions, some of which include responsibility for overseeing the work of subcommittee members. If you would like to volunteer for either a specific role - or if you just wish to be a member of the con-comm in whatever role we need filled - PLEASE let us know ASAP. After our volunteers step forward, we'll contact everyone and put together our Team. Our first meeting of the new Team will hopefully be in February or March. A few volunteers have already stepped forward for either con-comm or subcommittee roles, and I've marked those positions with a triple asterisk (***) - though no positions have been officially filled yet. If you have any questions about any of these positions, call us and we'll be happy to make them sound too wonderful to resist. Again, please contact Jack or me ASAP to volunteer!

Hotel Liaison (*)** - Deals with hotel communications; assists in site selection and contract arrangements; arranges for logistical needs on site; works with the hotel on room reservations; etc.

Treasurer (*)** - Deals with money; helps arrange and track budgets and finances; etc.

Public Relations - Deals with arranging for all publicity, including all ads and program books (possible subcommittee positions: Media Promos, Ads, WWW Promotions).

Registration (*)** - Deals with registrations issues, both pre- and at-con.

Miscellaneous Programming/Rooms - Coordinates all miscellaneous programming/rooms, such as the Game Room, Video Track, Con Suite, Green Room, etc. (possible subcommittee positions: Game Room, Video Room, Con Suite).

Special Events - Coordinates all special events, including parties, the Dance, the Masquerade (possible subcommittee positions: Masquerade, Parties/Dances).

Production - The graphic production team will be responsible for producing the Program Book, Badges, Schedules, a daily newsletter on site, etc.

Fund-raising - Works on getting sponsorships for events/rooms or for the Con itself, as well as handles ad sales for the Program Book.

Dealers' Room - Arranges for and supervises the dealers' room; coordinates with dealers on related issues (including room set-up, security).

Art Show (*)** - Arranges for and runs the art show; coordinates volunteer activities associated with the show; plans/runs auction; works with artists on show-related issues (including shipping, security); etc.

Logistics/General - Coordinates volunteers/gofers; runs security, offsite events (tours), etc. (possible subcommittee positions: Volunteers, Security, Offsite Events/Info).

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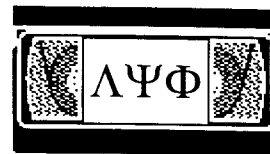
The future is up for grabs. It belongs to any and all who will take the risk and accept the responsibility of consciously creating the future they want.

--- Robert Anton Wilson ---

excerpted from *Science Fictionisms* (Gibbs Smith, 1995)

"Video Madness" Party

continued from page 1



house. As usual, the party will include our traditional pot-luck pig-out, so bring along something scrumptious to eat. We're not pre-assigning categories of what food to bring, so everyone should just bring something from one (or more) of the following "basic food groups": appetizers (veggies, chips, etc.); a main course (enough to serve at least 4-5 people); dessert (of course!) non-alcoholic drinks (both diet and regular).

- How to Get There -

The party will be held at Julian's home in Georgetown (*aka* Jaime's home, site of numerous "Video Madness" parties in the past). It's located at 1928 37th St., NW, several blocks west of Wisconsin Ave.

From the North: Going south on Wisconsin (from the direction of National Cathedral), you'll pass Mass. Ave. Just after Calvert St., 37th St. splits off to the right from Wisconsin (as Wisconsin swerves to the left). In about a half mile, 37th St. passes through Whitehaven Park and intersects White Haven Parkway. Julian's place is just beyond White Haven Parkway, on your right.

From the South: Going north on Wisconsin (from the direction of "M" St.), you'll need to take a left on some street to get to 37th St. If you turn left on Reservoir Rd. or on "R" St., you'll need to turn right on 37th St., and Julian's place will be a ways on your left. If you go further up Wisconsin to White Haven Parkway (near the "social Safeway"), you'll turn left on White Haven Pkwy. and then left again on 37th St. Julian's home will be on your right.

Where to Park: Your best bet for parking is either along White Haven Parkway or along "T" St.

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