



# Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #224 - November 2008

E-MAIL: info@lambdasf.org WEBSITE: http://www.lambdasf.org/



## 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.

The LSF Book Discussion Group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW -- for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting will be held on December 4th.

Here are the details on the next several discussion meetings:

**Dec. 4th** (NOTE: This is a combined Nov./Dec. meeting): *Wicked Gentlemen*, by Ginn Hale; moderator: Carl.

**Jan. 22nd** (2009) - *Altered Carbon*, by Richard K. Morgan; moderator: Randy.

**Feb. 26th** (2009) - *Dead Until Dark*, by Charlaine Harris; moderator: Peter.

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## Gaming Party, Potluck Dinner, and Celebration of Mike Felder's Birthday

invitation from Peter



**When:** Saturday, November 8

**What:** A laid-back social gathering, to hang out and play board and card games, PS3 video games, and celebrate Mike Felder's birthday.

**Time:** 1:00 PM - Midnight

**Where:** Rob and Peter's Place - 1425 "S" Street, NW, Washington, DC

*Directions at:*

<http://lambdasf.org/lfsf/club/PeterRob.html>

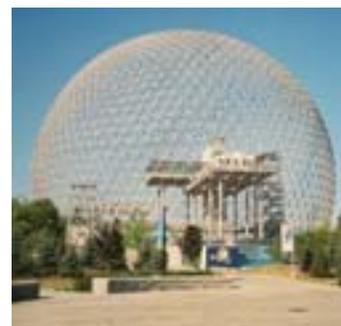
**What to Bring:** Games (card, board, PS3 video games, etc.) and snacks, dinner food, and/or drinks (soft or otherwise) to share. *Note:* There is one PS3 video game in the collection - *The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*. Bring other PS3 games or a Wii console and Wii video games for variety.

If you have any questions, please call Peter or Rob at 202-483-6369 or send email to:

[Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com](mailto:Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com)

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## Gaylaxicon in 2010!



The Biosphere, Montreal

It's official! At Gaylaxicon this year, the Gaylactic Network Board agreed to accept the bid of the Toronto Gaylaxians to host Gaylaxicon in 2010. Site: *Montreal!!* More details as they become available.

So, there you have it: at least two more years of Gaylaxicons to look forward to: Gaylaxicon 2009 in Minneapolis; and Gaylaxicon 2010 in Montreal! Whoo-hoo! Time to celebrate!



## November LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on the **Sunday, Nov. 9th**. The meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin (as usual) at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM.

Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

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## WHAT'S INSIDE?

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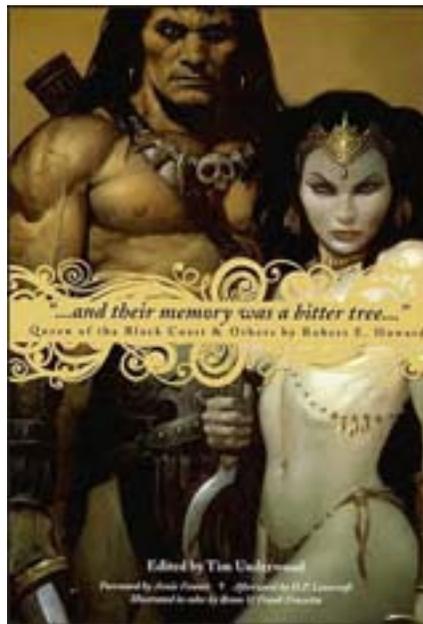
**"...And Their Memory Was a Bitter Tree..." - Queen of the Black Coast & Others**  
**by Robert E. Howard**  
 edited by Tim Underwood  
 (BlackBart Books, 2008)  
 reviewed by Carl

OK, I guess I need to start this short review off by saying that this particular book is only going to be of interest to big-time, die-hard fans of Robert E. Howard or Conan the Barbarian. It's got a hefty pricetag (\$25 in hardback); but the Conan fanatics (or "completists") will absolutely salivate all over this volume! (And there are a few special little treats in it that I'll mention later.)

First off, don't expect any "long lost" Conan tales in here. None of the stories are original to this collection - they've all appeared in probably dozens of previous REH collections or swords-and-sorcery anthologies. But the stories in this collection are all prime, Grade-A Conan-stuff! There's "Queen of the Black Coast" (from which the title quote is taken), "Shadows in the Moonlight," "A Witch Shall Be Born," "The Devil in Iron," "The People of the Black Circle," "Shadows in Zamboula" (which I think was the first Conan story I ever read), "Red Nails," and "Jewels of Gwahlur." (And I can imagine all the Conan fans in the audience are already nodding their heads and thinking: "Oh, yeah! That's the good stuff!") If you're looking for a collection of "Conan's Greatest Hits," then this book is a pretty good contender for the title.

The book opens with an introductory essay by Arnie Fenner (one of the folks behind the annual *Spectrum: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art* books). It's a really good summary of Howard's life and writing career, as well as of Conan's post-REH literary history and heritage.

And if you've never read any of REH's poetry, the volume closes with three examples: "The Singer in the Mist," "Lines Written in the Realization That I Must Die," and "Recompense." OK, so maybe REH wasn't exactly Poet Laureate material; but I've always enjoyed the



content and the meter and the feel of his poems. Here's a stanza excerpted from "Recompense":

*I have not seen the horseman fall before  
 the hurtling host,  
 But I have paced a silent hall where  
 each step waked a ghost.  
 I have not kissed the tiger-feet of a  
 strange-eyed golden god,  
 But I have walked a city's street where  
 no man else had trod.*

OK, now here's one of those "special little treats" I mentioned earlier: an Afterword entitled "In Memoriam: Robert Ervin Howard" - written by H.P. Lovecraft!! This short eulogy by Howard's longtime pen-pal originally appeared in the 1936 issue of *Weird Tales* (the year of Howard's death); but I'd never read it before. Fascinating!!

The other "special little treat" in this book is purely visual in nature. The book is filled with eye-popping artwork (both full color plates and line drawings) by Brom and Frank Frazetta. Truth to tell, it's the Brom cover (illustrating "Queen of the Black Coast") that instantly made me decide to buy it. None of the Frazetta artwork is new - I've seen it all in other collections of his work - but it's still good stuff! The Brom illustrations might just be original to this volume, however. (His art is "copyright 2008" - and I'd never seen any of it before.) And the endpapers display a map of "The Hyborian

**Minutes (??) of the October LSF Meeting**  
 taken (??) by Carl

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Well, there aren't really any minutes for this meeting. As you may remember, the October (post-Gaylaxicon) LSF meeting was scheduled in conjunction with a video party at Julian's home. Such as it was, the actual business meeting only lasted a few "minutes" - just long enough, in fact, to announce upcoming LSF activities. (For details of these upcoming activities, see page 1 of this newsletter.) And then we dove into the yummy pot-luck repast, decided which videos to watch - and the festivities were under way! (Needless to say, fun was had by all.)

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**Thanks from the Gaylaxicon 2008 AGoH**



Amongst the flurry of thank-you notes and e-mails from various Gaylaxicon 2008 attendees, we received the following from Alicia Austin, our delightful Artist Guest of Honor:

*I didn't get a chance to thank you for a wonderful experience as the convention artist GoH. I had a truly great time at the Con and really enjoyed meeting everyone. Y'all were so friendly and helpful; couldn't have asked for better. Please pass my thanks along to everyone who helped with my convention needs/wishes. They sure did go above and beyond !! Thanks again.*

*Much love, Alicia.*

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Age" (vintage 1977, by George Bar - very nice).

"...And Their Memory Was a Bitter Tree..." gets a big thumbs-up from me!!

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## Tangential Sci-Fi Incidents

by Carl

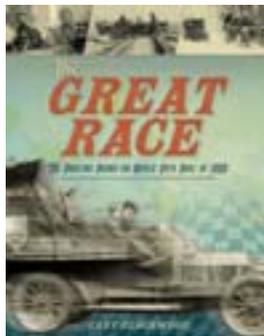
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I can just hear you now: “*Tangential* sci-fi?! What the heck does *that* mean?” OK, fair enough. I’m talking about a couple of recent incidents that *relate* to science fiction (kind’a, sort’a) or that happened within or related to a science fiction context. Not much better, is it? OK, let me try again...

The first incident involves Denvention 3, this year’s World Science Fiction Convention, as well as one of my favorite sci-fi (kind’a) movies. Denvention was held in (of course) Denver, Colorado; and Denver just happens to be the location of one of my favorite bookstores, The Tattered Cover. And, of course, even though I had *plenty* of opportunities to buy *lots* of books in the Dealers Room at Worldcon (which *I did*, of course), I also couldn’t miss out on an opportunity to make a pilgrimage to The Tattered Cover (which, of course, *I also did*). With me so far? Whilst wandering blissfully around the bookstore, I ran across a YA (young adult) book by Gary Blackwood. Gary Blackwood has also written a YA alternate history book I quite enjoyed, *The Year of the Hangman* (Puffin, 2004) - *another* sci-fi link. Still with me? Finally, one of my favorite movies is the Blake Edwards slapstick comedy *The Great Race* (Warner Bros., 1965). I consider *The Great Race* to be “sort’a sci-fi” because it’s reminiscent of the Jules Verne classic *Around the World in 80 Days* and because it contains definite steampunk elements (all the wacky, improbable inventions concocted by the mustache-twirling villain, Professor Fate).



OK now, here’s how it all ties together. The title of the Blackwood book I discovered at the Tattered Cover is (drumroll, please!) *The Great Race: The Amazing Round-the-World Auto Race of 1908* (Abrams Books, 2008).



Who’d’a thunk it? There really *was* a round-the-world automobile race! Granted, the original Great Race didn’t pit The Great Leslie (Tony Curtis) against Professor Fate (Jack Lemmon) and his henchman Max (Peter Falk), but there certainly are a lot of similarities between the film version and the real thing. Blake Edwards surely must have crafted his film with the original in mind. Both races take place during the presidency of Teddy Roosevelt. Both start in New York City and end in Paris. In both races, an American newspaper reporter occasionally rode along with one of the contestants, although certainly none of them would have been a match for the film’s suffragette *Sentinel* reporter, Maggie DuBois (Natalie Wood). Both races are filled with thrills, chills, accidents, bandits, breakdowns, mishaps, perils, and mistakes galore, with many of the hilarious incidents in the film having direct parallels (often *not* so hilarious) in the original race. And, in both cases, the “winner” isn’t exactly clear. Suffice it to say, I was all giggly-happy to have picked up the Blackwood book (filled with pictures from the original race) and to have read about the reality-behind-the-fantasy.

And, so, on to the *second* tangential sci-fi incident. I am an avid reader of the scholarly/literary publication *Parabola: Tradition, Myth, and the Search for Meaning*. Each quarterly issue of the magazine has a theme; the current issue, “Man & Machine,”

explores the spiritual, ethical, and mythical relationships between humans and their creations. And, Land’o’Goshen, sci-fi pops up again! In an article entitled “The Machine of the Mind,” freelance writer and folklorist Nan Runde explores the implications of “[sharing] the cosmos with mechanical entities that are nearly indistinguishable from us.” And she does it with lots and lots of references to *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Battlestar Galactica*!!



Imagine the combination: citing philosophers such as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and E.F. Schumacher while referencing such TV episodes as “I, Borg” (*ST:TNG*) and “Flight of the Phoenix” (*BSG*)! The article also includes a number of full-color pictures of Borg and Cylons and such. My favorite is captioned “Cast of *Battlestar Galactica* - Six humans, three Cylons. Which is which?” Talk about a fascinating article!



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Reading makes immigrants of us all—it takes us away from home, but more important, it finds homes for us everywhere.

– Hazel Rochman –

quoted in *The Quotable Book Lover*, edited by Ben Jacobs & Helena Hjalmarsson (Barnes & Noble Books, 2002)

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

**Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered (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 this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. (Hard copies of the newsletter cost an additional \$15 per year.) 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 the **Sunday, Nov. 9th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. 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



Nov. 21-23, 2008 **PHILCON 2008**. Crowne Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). Principal Speaker: Tim Powers; Artist GoH: John Picacio. Membership: \$60 after 10/31 and at the door. Make checks payable to "Philcon 2008" and send to: Philcon Registration, PO Box 8303, 30th Street Station, Philadelphia, PA 19101-8303. (Online registration is also available.)  
Website: [www.philcon.org/2008](http://www.philcon.org/2008)

Nov. 28-30, 2008 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING XXXI**. Holiday Inn Select Baltimore-North (Timonium, MD). Guest of Honor: Patricia Briggs; Artist Guest of Honor: Ruth Lampi; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz. Membership: \$45 until Nov. 1st; \$50 after that and at the door. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Darkover Grand Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907. "It's a mini-Gaylaxicon within a con!"  
Website: [www.darkovercon.org](http://www.darkovercon.org)

Feb. 13-15, 2009 **KATSUCON 15**. Hyatt Regency Crystal City (Crystal City, VA). Washington's Premiere Japanese Animation and Manga Festival. Membership: \$45 until Dec. 31, 2008; \$50 at the door. Make checks payable to "Katsucon Entertainment" and send to: Katsucon Entertainment Inc., PO Box 3354, Crofton, MD 21114  
Website: [www.katsucon.org](http://www.katsucon.org)

Feb. 13-15, 2009 **FARPOINT 2009**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Guests: Harve Bennett, Marc Okrand, Peter David, and more. Membership: \$60 pre-registration; daily rates available at the door. Make checks payable to "Farpoint 2009" and send to: Farpoint Enterprises, Inc., 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601. You can also register online.  
Website: [www.farpointcon.com](http://www.farpointcon.com) E-mail: [trekcontact@comcast.net](mailto:trekcontact@comcast.net)

April 24-26, 2009 **RAVENCON 2009**. Crowne Plaza Richmond West (Richmond, VA). Author Guest of Honor: Jack McDevitt. Membership: \$30 until 12/31/2008; then \$35 until 4/1/2009; \$40 at the door. Make checks payable to "Ravencon 2009" and send to: RavenCon, 43031 Elk Place, Chantilly, VA 20152  
Info on-line at: [www.ravencon.com](http://www.ravencon.com)

May 1-4, 1009 **COSTUME-CON 27**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore North (Timonium, MD). Theme: "Vampires, Villains & Vixens." Membership: \$80 until 12/31/2008; then \$90 until 4/1/2009; \$100 after 4/1/2009 and at the door. Make checks payable to "Costume-Con 27" and send to: Costume-Con 27, PO Box 207, Beallsville, PA 15313. "Open to all who love costume in all its forms."  
Info on-line at: [castleb@pulsenet.com](mailto:castleb@pulsenet.com) or [www.costume-con.com](http://www.costume-con.com)

October 9-11, 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). GoHs: Margaret Weis, Andy Mangels, Lawrence Schimel. Membership: \$70 until 10/01/2009; \$80 at the door. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2009" and send to: Gaylaxicon 2009, P.O. Box 2412, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402  
Website: [www.gaylaxicon2009](http://www.gaylaxicon2009) Register on-line at: <http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org/index.php/registration>