



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians

PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044

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E-MAIL: info@lambdascifi.org WEBSITE: www.lambdascifi.org



New Year's Eve Video Potluck Party

announced by Peter
Knapp

Come celebrate New Year's Eve LSF at Rob and Peter's home in DC. Here are the details on how to join the fun!

Where: The home of Rob & Peter: 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009. For directions, see:

<http://www.lambdascifi.org/lssf/club/PeterRob.html>

Date: Fri., Dec. 31, 2010

Time: The doors will open at 2:00 PM. The potluck dinner and the videos will begin in the 3:00 – 3:30 PM range. We'll toast in the New Year with champagne, sparkling wine, and/or sparkling cider.

What to Bring: Bring your favorite genre Blu-rays, DVDs, and/or digital AVI files on a USB drive (science fiction, fantasy, horror). Attendees will vote on which movies will be shown at the party. (There will be different concurrent "tracks.")

It's a potluck meal, so bring along something scrumptious to eat. Feel free to bring some appetizers (vegies, chips, etc.), a main course item (enough to serve at least 4-5 people), dessert (of course!), and/or nonalcoholic drinks (both regular and diet). For the New Year's toast only, it's okay to indulge. So bring some sparkling wine or sparkling cider (or champagne, if you're feeling generous) to toast the New Year. The hosts request that no one drink

Reminder: Annual LSF Book Exchange Set for Jan. 9th Meeting



(and other
stuff, too!)

That's right, gang, the Holiday Season is almost upon us again; and it's time for a short reminder about Lambda Sci-Fi's upcoming *twenty-first* annual book (*et al*) exchange, which will occur at the January 9th meeting! All LSF members are invited to participate in this "blind exchange" — and visitors are invited to join in the fun, too!

Briefly, this will be an opportunity for LSFers to exchange copies of their favorite science-fiction, fantasy, or horror books/videos/etc. and, thus, get to know each other a little better.

For those of you unfamiliar with the process, here's how it works: You won't be assigned to exchange with any *particular* person — it's a "blind" exchange, where participants will get their pick from a pile of anonymous wrapped packages. **Full details on the exchange in the next (January) LSF newsletter.**

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alcohol during the party other than at midnight.

For more information, call 202-483-6369 or send email to:

Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com

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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 roundtable discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF 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 — for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting is Jan. 27th.

Here are the details for the next several book discussions:

Jan. 27th - *The Steel Remains*, by Richard K. Morgan; moderator: Rob.

Feb. 24th - *The Book of Lost Things*, by John Connolly; moderator: Teresa.

March 24th - *Galileo's Dream*, by Kim Stanley Robinson; moderator: Claire.

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December LSF Meeting ** Location Change!! **

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 12th**. This month, the meeting will be held at **Rob-and-Peter's home** (1425 "S" St., NW) — for directions, call 202-483-6369. 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!

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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In Praise (Mostly) of Recent Anthologies [Part 1]

short reviews by Carl

Warriors (TOR, 2010) edited by George R.R. Martin and Gardner Dozois

This first one is kind of a problematical. Yes, it comes from TOR (a noted F&SF publisher); and, yes, it's also available through the Science Fiction Book Club. But there are quite a number of stories in it that definitely aren't F&SF – and that's the way the editors designed it. George R.R. Martin explains it quite well in his Introduction, "Stories from the Spinner Rack." He takes the reader back to "those thrilling days of yesteryear" (my choice of words, not his) when he was a kid:

There were no bookstores in Bayonne, New Jersey, when I was a kid. Which is not to say there was no place to buy a book. There were plenty of places to buy books, so long as what you wanted was a paperback... The "book section" was a wire spinner rack, taller than I was, that stood right next to the comics... The comic book racks and the paperback spinner had more in common than mere proximity. Neither one recognized the existence of genre... Mysteries, westerns, gothics, ghost stories, classics of English literature, the latest contemporary "literary" novels, and, of course, SF and fantasy and horror—you could find it all on that spinner rack in the little candy store at First Street and Kelly Parkway.

It's that experience that Martin says he and Dozois were trying to recreate: "*Warriors* is our own spinner rack." Yes, all the stories (in one sense or another) are about "warriors" – but this anthology is really a mix of genres: historical, fantasy, SF, *noir*, sports, adventure, and more. And it has one heck of an impressive list of contributors! Look at some of the names: Cecelia Holland, Joe Haldeman, Robin Hobb, Lawrence Block, Tad Williams, Joe Lansdale, Peter S. Beagle, Diana Gabaldon, Naomi Novik, Steven Saylor, David Weber, S.M. Stirling, Robert Silverberg – each of the editors even contributed a story! (Yes, it's a HUGE anthology – 736 pages in hardback!)

Minutes of the Nov. 11th LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

Business portion

Annual LSF elections are coming up. David indicated that he would run for Speaker or Co-Speaker.

Rob announced that he and Peter will host an LSF video party at their home on New Year's Eve.

Social portion

Carl passed around an article about the *Spiderman* musical on Broadway. He also passed around a review of William Gibson's new novel, *Zero History*.

Rob enthusiastically reported on the "Harry Potter Experience" – both the rides and the retail – at Universal Florida. He said that there were even long lines for the Harry Potter breakfast.

The reviews for the *Megamind* film are favorable. A three-hour director's cut of *Avatar* is being released on Blu-Ray and DVD. Part 2 of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* is being considered for rendering in 3-D.

Look forward to an e-mail announcing a LSF movie outing to see the Part 1 of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. How does Rotten Tomatoes rate the new *Skyline* movie? It looks fairly horrible.

Michael Strazynski, who is currently writing *Wonder Woman* for DC, is also believed to be rewriting the new *Superman* movie.

Peter noted that the new BBC series on Sherlock Holmes has a current-

Some of the authors chose to write within the genre for which they're best known – but others "decided to try something different." And all of the stories are new (copyright 2010, not previously published).

As with any anthology, I'm sure you'll find that you like some of these 20 stories better than others – that was certainly my experience with *Warriors*. But, you know, I can't say as there's a clunker in the bunch. Here are a few of my favorites:

In "The King of Norway," historical-fiction writer Cecelia Holland



day setting. Some of the characters who interact with Holmes and Watson seem to assume that they are "partners" or perhaps dating. Ha!

Most everyone enjoyed the "Rocky Horror Picture Show" episode of *Glee*.

Hottie Ryan Reynolds will be playing the title role in the new *Green Lantern* film. His costume will be CGI'd, which should be, ummm, interesting.

Barrett thought that the ending of *Monsters* was weak.

Rob reported that SyFy's *Caprica* series is dead. The last five episodes are currently being shown in Canada.

Jim reported that George Takei's YouTube video (commenting negatively on the school superintendent with who made unkind GLBT comments) is excellent.

It was mentioned that the *Call of Duty* video game took in money in sales in a day that the biggest blockbuster movie took in during a week's time.

Trekmovie.com reports that the story for the next *Star Trek* movie is now written. Meanwhile, Zachary Quinto has reportedly said that his sexuality is irrelevant.

Jim opined that the aliens in *The Event* should have known the current state of Earth technology before they landed on Earth.

Everyone enjoyed eating Julian's lemon squares!

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tells of an Irish raider fighting in the 10th-century Viking wars – it certainly reminded me of one of Robert E. Howard's "Conan" stories. Lawrence Block's "Clean Slate" is a creepy little tale of a woman who has a really twisted reason for hunting up all of her previous lovers and boyfriends. Joe Lansdale – as good as ever! – tells a story about black U.S. Cavalry units fighting Indians after the Civil War ("Soldierin"). Robin Hobb's "The Triumph" starts out as pretty much a piece of historical fiction from the time

(continued on page 3)

Anthologies [Part 1]

continued from page 2

of the Roman-Carthaginian Wars – but then some fascinating F&SF elements creep into the tale. Romance writer Diana Gabaldon’s “The Custom of the Army” is a new “Lord John Grey” story set during the Siege of Quebec (1759). Naomi Novik takes a giant leap away from her popular “Temeraire” Fantasy series to show what happens when a human agent provocateur “goes native” to help the alien inhabitants of a distant planet in “Seven Years from Home.” S.M. Stirling’s “Ancient Ways” takes place in the same universe as his “Emberverse tetralogy of the Change” (when all the machines stop) – but it instantly brought to mind for me the Cossack adventure stories of Harold Lamb (one of my favorite pulp writers). David Morrell (creator of “Rambo”) presents an historical adventure story that recounts a WWII incident when elements of the French Foreign Legion found themselves on opposite sides (Free French vs. Vichy) during the attack on Damascus in 1941. In the concluding story, “The Mystery Knight: A Tale of the Seven Kingdoms,” George R.R. Martin relates another of the delightful adventures of the wandering Ser Duncan the Tall and his bald squire “Egg.”

Good stuff throughout! But a word of warning: If you *only* want F&SF, this isn’t the anthology you’re looking for!

***Swords & Dark Magic: The New
Sword and Sorcery
(Harper EOS, 2010)
edited by Jonathan Strahan
and Lou Anders***

This is another anthology of all original stories. It’s rather shorter than *Warriors* – only 17 short stories and a mere 517 pages in trade paperback format – and all the stories in *Swords & Dark Magic* are clearly within the F&SF genre. This anthology also features an impressive array of F&SF authors, including such “big names” as Steven Erikson, Glen Cook, Gene Wolfe, C.J. Cherryh, Michael Moorcock, Robert Silverberg, and Tanith Lee. As the title implies, this anthology deals with the Fantasy sub-

genre known as “Swords and Sorcery.” Or, as the editors say it: “Action meets magic.”

Swords & Dark Magic begins with a fascinating Introduction: “Check Your Dark Lord at the Door.” It includes a quick-and-dirty definition of the sub-genre, explaining how it differs from High Fantasy (such as *The Lord of the Rings*). Then it goes on to describe the origins and history of the Swords-and-Sorcery sub-genre. It’s a good overview. I was, however, surprised to find one small (but IMHO, egregious) error. While describing the seminal works of Robert E. Howard, the editors mention Howard’s “imagined prehistoric land, Hyperborea.” Whoops! Yes, the world of Conan does indeed include a northern, barbaric country known as “Hyperborea” – but the “Conan” stories are set in the Hyborian Age, an era of prehistory when the Hyborian tribes and people came down out of the North and established their kingdoms. (In fact, I don’t think any of REH’s “Conan” stories actually take place within the borders of snowbound Hyperborea.)

And there’s some really good stuff in this anthology, too. I haven’t read a lot of Steven Erikson’s “Malazan Empire” stories – but, based on “Goats of Glory,” I think I probably should; it tells about some working soldiers out on a demon-extermination assignment, with a cunning little twist at the end. James Enge’s delightful “The Singing Spear” is one of his many stories about Morlock Ambrosius, a remorseful (frequently drunk) ex-wizard who’s taken up the occupation of wandering mercenary (which, it turns out, he’s pretty good at). In this adventure, Morlock needs to sober up long enough to deal with a particularly nasty magical threat he inadvertently unleashed some years ago. Garth Nix tells a clever little tale about Sir Hereward and his “constant companion, comrade-in-arms, and onetime nanny,” Mister Fitz, a sorcerous puppet made of papier-mâché and wood. This oddly-matched pair works for the Council of the Treaty for the Safety of the World as wandering exorcists of some sort; they’re charged with eliminating supernatural entities prescribed by the Treaty.

In “A Suitable Present for a Sorcerous Puppet,” Sir Hereward is temporarily laid up with a bad foot in a remote tower dedicated to the kindly deity Narhalet-Narhalit (aka “Nar-Nar”), where they unexpectedly run into a case of demonic possession involving a book, a slip of paper, and a stringed musical instrument. The contribution of the-one-and-only Michael Moorcock is a brand-new story about Elric of Melniboné, the albino sorcerer-swordsman. In “Red Pearls”, the reader gets to see what happens when Elric and his companion Moonglum sail over The Edge and discover a fabulous city in the World Below (the underside of their flat world) ruled by previously-unknown Melnibonéan relatives.

Perhaps my favorite story – and the only one with LGBT content – is Caitlin Kiernan’s “The Sea Troll’s Daughter.” It’s reminiscent of the Beowulf saga. In this case, Malmury (an itinerant swordswoman) was hired to rid a remote fishing village of a murderous Sea Troll. Well, she says she did it – but she just can’t prove it, bodily injuries notwithstanding – and the village elders won’t give her the promised reward without said proof. So Malmury, penniless and injured, sits in what passes for the village tavern, getting drunk off the mead the curious give her in exchange for her “tall tales.” Then a grizzled old witch comes down out of the sea-hills, saying that Malmury has upset some sort of cosmic balance, and that doom and destruction will soon fall upon Malmury and the entire village when the Sea Troll’s Daughter arrives. (Truth to tell, it was Kiernan’s name on the Table of Contents that first attracted my attention to this anthology.)

In all, *Swords & Dark Magic* is a terrific little collection of swords-and-sorcery tales. If you enjoy the swords-and-sorcery sub-genre, then this anthology is a must-read.

(Part 2 – next next month)



****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 **Sunday, December 12th**, at Peter-and-Rob's home (1425 "S" St., NW), 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. 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



Feb. 18-20, 2011 **FARPOINT 2011**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guests: John ("Dr. Phlox," *Enterprise*) Billingsley, Bonita ("Gen. Diane Beckman," *Chuck*) Friedricy, more TBA. Pre-registration for weekend: \$80 (daily rates available). Make checks payable to "Farpoint Enterprises" and send to: Farpoint Enterprises, Inc., 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601
Website: www.farpointcon.com E-mail: trekcontact@comcast.net

April 8-10, 2011 **RAVENCON 2011**. Holiday Inn Kroger Center (Richmond, VA). Author GoH: John Ringo; Artist GoH: Kurt Miller. Membership: \$30 until 12/31/2010; \$35 from 1/1/2011 to 4/1/2011; \$40 at the door (daily rates available). Download registration forms from their website; make checks payable to "Ravencon" and send to: Ravencon PO Box 36420, Richmond, VA 23235.
Website: www.ravencon.com

May 13-15, 2011 **GAYLAXICON 2011** (held in conjunction with OutlantaCon 2011). Holiday Inn Select Atlanta-Perimeter (Dunwoody, GA). Special Media Guest: Melissa Carter; Artist GoH: Steve Scott. Membership: \$45 thru 1/31/2011 (purchased on-line thru their website).
Website: www.outlantacon.org Information: info@outlantacon.org

May 27-30, 2011 **BALTICON 45**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Baltimore, MD). GoH: Ben Bova; Artist GoH: Vincent DiFate. Membership: \$55 until 4/30/2011; \$60 after that and at the door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 45" and send to: Balticon 45 Registration, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686. (Registration forms available on-line.)
Website: www.balticon.org Information: balticoninfo@balticon.org

May 27-29, 2011 **TIMEGATE** ("The Home of Doctor Who and Stargate Fandom in Atlanta!"). Holiday Inn Select (Atlanta, GA). Guests Sophie Aldred ("Ace," from the era of the 7th Doctor); Ben Aaronovitch (Dr. Who script writer); Melissa Scott (author); and more. Membership: \$35 to 5/1/2011; \$45 at the door. Make checks payable to "TimeGate" and send to: TimeGate, PO Box 500565, Atlanta, GA 31150. Or purchase membership on-line at: www.timegatecon.org/memb/htm
Website: www.timegatecon.org

Aug. 17-21, 2011 **RENOVATION** (69th World Science Fiction Convention). Reno-Sparks Convention Center (Reno, Nevada). Guests of Honor: Ellen Asher, Charles N. Brown, Tim Powers, Boris Vallejo. Membership: currently \$160 (will go up!).
Website: www.renovationsf.org Membership queries: memberships@renovationsf.org

