



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #218 - May 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 LBGT 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 May 22nd.

Here are the details on the next couple of book discussion meetings: **May 22nd** - *Tithe*, by Holly Black; moderator: Samantha.

June 26th - *Bloodchild and Other Stories*, by Octavia Butler (especially the novella in the collection's title); moderator: Krista.

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Event Preview: Indiana Jones Triple Feature



LSF Video Potluck Party in May

announced by Peter



Hi! Just to let you know, Rob and I will be hosting an Indiana Jones Triple Feature LSF Video Potluck Party on Saturday, May 17, to celebrate the release of *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* on May 22.

Door open at 3:30 PM. The festivities will start 4:00 PM in the living room on the 50" plasma TV with a triple feature of: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, and *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

People are encouraged to bring other movies to watch. The usual video party rules apply for anything shown in the guest room (DVDs - no VHS videos please) - the popular vote wins.



Please bring food or (non-alcoholic) drink to share. We'll take a break between *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* for dinner.

Here are specific details:

What: Indiana Jones Triple Feature LSF Video Potluck Party

When: Saturday, May 17

Time: Doors open at 3:30 PM; movies start at 4:00 PM; dinner around 6:00 PM

Where: The home of Rob and Peter: 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

Link to directions:

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

What to Bring: DVDs (no VHS videos please), food or non-alcoholic drink to share

More Information: Call Peter and Rob at 202-483-6369, or e-mail Peter at:

PeterKnapp@wavelengthsonline.com

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May LSF Meeting (NOTE: Change of location!!!)



The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on the **Sunday, May 11th**. This month, however, we're changing from our usual 17th Street location. The May LSF meeting will be held at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW. 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?

April LSF Meeting Minutes (pg. 2); Gaylaxicon 2008 (pg. 2); News About Gaylaxicon 2009 (pg. 2); **Charlton Heston** (obituary - pg. 3); **Two Alternate History Collections** (book reviews - pg. 4); **About Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (pg. 6); **Con Calendar** (pg. 6)

April LSF Meeting Minutes
taken by Scott

Business Portion

It was noted that LSF will participate in both DC and Baltimore Pride events, on June 15th and June 22nd, respectively. The group decided that it would not spend the additional money to obtain a tent at Baltimore Pride.

Social Portion

Teresa passed around a pattern for a knitted Dalek. (Yes, it's true!) She also promoted this month's LSF book discussion book, *World War Z* by Max Brooks.

Peter passed around the current issue of *Sigma*, the SF newsletter of the Pittsburgh sci-fi club. He also distributed a current issue of *Starburst* magazine, which features *Doctor Who*.

The final season of *Battlestar Galactica* is receiving much praise. The new *Sarah Jane Smith Adventures* series (aimed at children) is well liked. The season finale of *Torchwood* was fantastic – except for the explosion scene. (Suspension of reality only stretches so far.)

Rob commented on the upcoming genre films, blockbusters and otherwise: *Iron Man*, *Speed Racer* (mixed feelings by meeting attendees), *Prince Caspian*, and *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*.

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Some LSF members attended an impromptu dinner with Joan Slonczewski, author of *Brain Plague* and *The Door into Ocean*. Rob mentioned that she has just published a biology textbook and is now getting back to writing SF again.

Previews of the new version of *D&D* are coming out. Rob reported on some new books that are coming out by Lynn Flewelling and Fiona Patton.

Some concern was expressed about the new "supernatural romances" that are now filling up the shelves in bookstores. A welcome sub-genre or an abomination?

Ken described HorrorCon, which he attended. He met George Romero of the *Living Dead* films fame, as well as other actors of the *Living Dead* films.

Carl mentioned that a boatload of "Indiana Jones" paperback books that have been released, to coincide with the upcoming "Indiana Jones" film.

Rob remarked that while traveling in Louisville, KY, he unexpectedly discovered the Hall of Justice! (But he didn't see the Wonder Twins.)

Keanu Reeves as Klaatu in the new version of *The Day the Earth Stood Still*???? Say it ain't so! It was noted that Guillermo DeToro will be directing *HellBoy II*.

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**News About
Gaylaxicon 2009**
passed along by Carl

OK, so they haven't exactly made their announcements with great fanfare or updated their Gaylaxicon website yet (www.gaylacticnetwork.org/gaylaxicon2009); but there is information now available about Gaylaxicon 2008. Here's the info I found on their yahoo group site:

Dates:

October 9 - 11, 2009

Site:

Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN)

Guests of Honor:

Margaret Weis

(co-author of the original "Dragonlance" stories and collaborator with Tracy Hickman on several other F&SF series)

Andy Mangels

(author, journalist, editor)

Lawrence Schimel

(Lambda Literary Award-winning author)

Membership:

\$60 until 09/01/2009;
then \$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

Register on-line at:

<http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org>



Gaylaxicon 2008

"Twenty years of fun!"

October 10-13, 2008

Hyatt Regency - Bethesda, MD

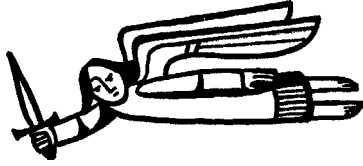
See Con Calendar on page 6 for details.



Author Guest of Honor: Geoff Ryman



Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin



Charlton Heston 1923 - 2008

Charlton Heston died on April 5th. Whether or not you agreed with his politics or his stance on gun control, he was definitely one of the great ones in Hollywood history.

Heston was primarily noted for his role in the such cinema spectaculars as *Ben-Hur*, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, *El Cid*, *The Ten Commandments*, *55 Days in Peking*, and *Khartoum*. He won the Academy Award for Best Actor in 1959 for his title role in *Ben-Hur*.

He earned star billing from his first Hollywood movie, *Dark City* (a 1950 film noir). Cecil B. DeMille next cast him as the circus manager in the all-star *The Greatest Show On Earth*, named by the Motion Picture Academy as the best picture of 1952.

With his strong presence and sonorous voice, Heston was the ideal star during the period when Hollywood was filling movie screens with panoramas depicting the religious and historical past. He liked to cite the number of historical figures he had portrayed: Andrew Jackson (*The President's Lady*, and *The Buccaneer*), Moses (*The Ten Commandments*), El Cid (from the film of the same name), John the Baptist (*The Greatest Story Ever Told*), Michelangelo (*The Agony and the Ecstasy*), General Gordon (*Khartoum*), Marc Antony (*Julius Caesar*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*), Cardinal Richelieu (*The Three Musketeers*), and Henry VIII (*The Prince and the Pauper*).

Heston served as president of the Screen Actors Guild and chairman of the American Film Institute; and he marched in the civil rights movement of the 1950s. With age, he grew more conservative and campaigned for conservative candidates. In June 1998,



**Taylor (Heston) & Zera
Planet of the Apes (1968)**

Heston was elected president of the National Rifle Association, the organization for which he had posed for ads holding a rifle; and he held that position until 2003. In 2002, Heston revealed that he had symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's disease.

And, lest we forget, Charlton Heston had a long history of roles in F&SF films and TV:

- 1958** - *Shirley Temple's Storybook* (television), as the Beast in "Beauty and the Beast"
- 1968** - *Planet of the Apes*, as Taylor
- 1970** - *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, once again as Taylor
- 1971** - *The Omega Man* (based on the Richard Matheson story *I Am Legend*), as "the last man"
- 1973** - *Soylent Green* (based on Harry Harrison's *Make Room, Make Room*), as Detective Thorn
- 1994** - *Seaquest DSV* (television), as the title character in the episode "Abalon"
- 1995** - *In the Mouth of Madness*, as Jackson Harlow
- 2000** - *The New Outer Limits* (television), as Chief Justice Wainright in "Final Appeal"
- 2001** - *Planet of the Apes*, as Zaius (uncredited)
- 2001** - *Cats & Dogs*, the voice of "the Mastiff"



Evil Henchmen Guide

excerpted from
How to Be a Villain
by Neil Zawacki
(Chronicle Books, 2003)

Unfortunately, most evil-doers cannot accomplish their schemes on their own. There is simply too much to do and too many people to terrorize. To stay on top of your evil plan, you will need to recruit henchmen or mindless slaves to carry out menial tasks. There are as many kinds of evil henchmen as there are evil overlords. Which kind is right for you?

Computer Programmers:

Not available until recently, the computer programmer is a new type of henchman, one that can help you control the information superhighway. Whether you need to hack the strategic defense computer, destroy the economy of Brazil, or just slash an innocent bystander's credit rating, these tech-savvy individuals are the ones to make it happen. After years at the keyboard, many computer programmers develop additional skills to leverage in support of your evil cause, such as blinding attackers with their sunstarved pallors and sending opposing ninjas reeling with one crack of their frighteningly oversized torsos.



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How to Merchandise Your Own Image

excerpted from
The Superhero Handbook
by Michael Powell
(Sterling Publishing, 2005)

Years after retirement, many superheroes are able to generate considerable interest and financial rewards by exploiting their merchandising appeal.

Children and certain adults love to play with action figures, and collect memorabilia associated with them. Licensed products make up over one-third of the toy industry, and the market share just keeps on growing. Superhero spin-offs and products are dominant players in this area, and a canny silver-haired super can get a piece of this action and cash in on a big earner. Learning to fly was easy; knowing how to fly off store shelves is a bigger challenge.

...you've got to associate yourself with a large reproducible object, so that whoever buys your action figure will feel compelled to have the shark tank, siege tower, supermobile, or secret lair that is an inseparable part of your identity. If you live on an island or an elaborate space station you've hit the jackpot: that's five pounds of plastic and six months worth of pocket money right there.

Above all you've got to be keyed into the compelling lifestyle choices that you represent. What is it about you (and them) which makes them want to be you? How do you tap into their wants, needs, and desires? How do you achieve that delicate balance of ensuring that supply is woefully insufficient to meet demand? Don't give them what they don't really want, and they'll be lining up around the block to have what they can't get.

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Two Alternate History Collections

reviewed by Carl

Serendipity rides again! Mike Resnick and Harry Turtledove are two of my favorite authors. I own (literally) piles of books by each of them. And – wha'd'ya know? – this year *both* of them have had collections of “alternate history” short fiction published! Almost simultaneous publication of two volumes of one of my favorite F&SF sub-genres, one from each of two of my favorite authors! Somebody pinch me; I must be dreaming!



The Other Teddy Roosevelts by Mike Resnick

(Subterranean Press, 2008)

Mike Resnick has long been fascinated with Theodore; and for almost 20 years, he's been writing “alternate history” stories about our 26th President. (Most of these stories first appeared in *Asimov's*.) Now, for the first time, all of Resnick's “alternate TR” stories have been collected in *The Other Teddy Roosevelts*. And what a collection it is!

Most of the stories are straightforward “alternate history” tales, where plausible “what if” situations are based on TR's actual life. For example, there's “Bully!” – where, in 1910, TR (ex-President, now a Great White Hunter) accepts the challenge of his ivory-hunting guide to oust the Belgians from the Congo and set up a native democracy. (Things don't go as well as TR hoped they would.) And there's “Over

There” – where, in 1917, TR persuades President Woodrow Wilson to allow him to re-form the Rough Riders and take them to Europe during WWI. (And TR learns the horrors of a whole new kind of warfare.) Perhaps the most poignant and powerful piece, however, is “The Light that Blinds, The Claws that Catch.” In this story, Alice Roosevelt, TR's sickly first wife, did *not* die in 1884; and TR spends the rest of his life foregoing all the challenges and adventures of his “real” life in order to care for the woman he loved and adored above all others. (His devotion to Alice, when juxtaposed with his “might have been” visions and dreams, is really rather moving.)



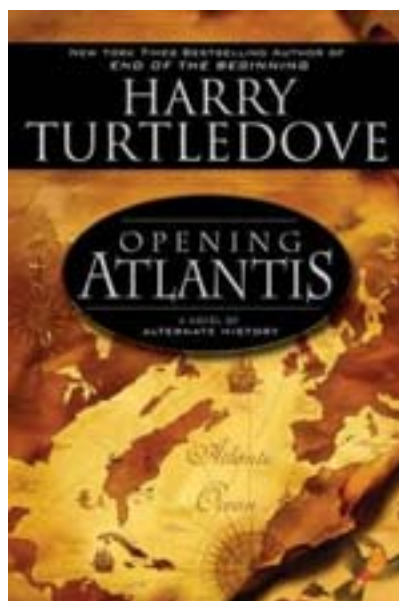
And then there are those other three stories! They're out-and-out F&SF romps! In “Redchapel,” TR visits London in 1888 and helps to track down Jack the Ripper. (Actually, Resnick had his own theories about the Ripper's identity; and he figured the only way he'd get anyone to listen to him was to write a story about it.) “Two Hunters in Manhattan” takes place in NYC in 1897, during TR's stint as Police Commissioner (1895 - 1897); TR makes a rather unique deal with a vampire-kingpin (“Big D”) and eventually has to figure a way to put the bloodsucker down. And for you H.G. Wells fans, there's “The Roosevelt Dispatches” – it's 1898, and Rough Rider TR runs across a Cuban infestation of Wells's Martian invaders.

All the stories in this slim volume are an absolute joy! And it's really nice to have *all* Resnick's “alternate TR” stories gathered into one place, too!

(continued on pg. 5)

Two Alternate History Collections

continued from page 4



Opening Atlantis
by Harry Turtledove
(ROC/Penguin, 2008)

When I saw this book, I mistakenly thought it to be a collection containing some favorite Turtledove stories I'd already read. (Two of his "Atlantis" stories appeared in *Analog* a few years ago; and I think I even wrote reviews for the LSF newsletter.) But – nay, nay, nay – seems as how *Opening Atlantis* has all *new* content. (Ah, but never, fear... According to the Uchronia website, Turtledove's two earlier stories – "Audubon in Atlantis" and "The Scarlet Band" – will appear in the *next* volume, *The United States of Atlantis*.)

The "timeline divergence" for Turtledove's "Atlantis" stories is rather unique for the alternate history sub-genre. Rather than basing this timeline on alternate military victories (such as "what if the South had won the Civil War"), the "Atlantis" stories are an example of that most rare of alternate

history premises: "geological alternate history" (for lack of a better term).^{*} In this case, tens-of-millions of years ago, much of eastern North America (east of the Mississippi and south of the St. Lawrence) split off as a separate island continent – and continental drift (or whatever) moved it about halfway out into the Atlantic.

The ecology of Atlantis (the name given the continent by its discoverers) is, thus, rather different from anywhere else on Earth. (Think of other isolated island ecologies – say Australia or the Galapagos Islands, or even South America before the Central American connection was established.) The plant life includes lots of conifers (even giant redwoods) and cycads, but no grasses. There are no native mammals – just lots and lots of birds, including several species of giant flightless "honkers" (think of geese of steroids – big, stupid geese) and giant flying predatory eagles. There are also lots of reptiles, including huge alligators (in the warmer southern areas, of course). But there aren't any human inhabitants – the "copper-skins" never traveled over from "Terranova" (the North American mainland).

Opening Atlantis tells the story of the discovery and colonization of Atlantis by Western Europeans. But it wasn't an Italian adventurer in the pay of Their Catholic Majesties who discovers Atlantis. It's discovered by Basque cod-fishermen in the early 1450s, during their mid-Atlantic forays in search of their finny prey; and the Basques are soon joined by their English and Breton friends and competitors.

The book is composed of three "parts" (novellas? novelettes?), which follow the settlement of Atlantis through the adventures of various members of a single English family, the Radcliffes. "New Hastings" tells how cod-fisherman Edward Radcliffe learns about Atlantis from some Basques. As the story pro-

gresses, he eventually brings his family and friends from Hastings across the sea to settle in the new land and escape the inequities and tumult of England during the Wars of the Roses. "Avalon" takes place in the 1600s, with Radcliffes (and Radcliffs) living on both the eastern and western coasts of Atlantis. Avalon (on the west coast) is a notorious pirate base (an analog for Tortuga or Barataria); and it's the home port of Red Rodney Radcliffe, scourge of both the Atlantic Ocean and the Hesperian Gulf (between Atlantis and mainland Terranova). This is also the story of William Radcliff, a wealthy merchant of the town of Stuart (on the east coast), who leads an expedition to cleanse Atlantis of this "wretched hive of scum and villainy" (to use a phrase from *Star Wars*) and rid the seas of his distant cousin, Red Rodney. The last story, "Nouveau Redon," takes place in the mid-1700s. It's pretty much a re-telling (in Atlantean terms) of the French and Indian War from our timeline (1753 - 1764). And now it's Victor Radcliff who leads his green-coated Atlantean contingent alongside the British redcoats in defense of English Atlantis.

As with all good alternate history stories, *Opening Atlantis* gives its readers a fresh new perspective on "our history" – in this case, the settlement of the New World by English (and other) colonists and the development of a distinctive "Atlantean" society. Turtledove also has a lot to say about the *ecological* effects of Atlantean colonization and the hideous nature of slavery – and he does all this in a series of rollicking, entertaining adventures. I'm quite looking forward to the next two volumes in this series.

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^{*} In fact, I can only think of two other instances of alternate history stories based on "geologic divergences" – both from the mid-to-late 1980s. There's Harry Harrison's "Eden Trilogy" (*West of Eden*, *Winter in Eden*, *Return to Eden*), in which the Cretaceous-Tertiary dinosaur extinction never occurred. Intelligent dinosaurs evolved, with humans evolving in an isolated North America. And there's *another* series of short stories by Harry Turtledove (later collected into a single volume, *A Different Flesh*), in which European explorers discovered a North American continent inhabited by *Pithecanthropus erectus* rather than by Amerindian humans.

****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, May 11th**, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW. 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

May 23-26, 2008 **BALTICON 42**. Baltimore Marriott Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). GoH: Connie Willis; Artist GoH: June Palencar. Membership: \$59 after 3/31 & at door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 42" and send to: Balticon 42, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686 (On-line registration also available.) Website: www.balticon.org

August 6-10, 2008 **DENVENTION 3 (The 66th WorldCon)**. Colorado Convention Center & nearby hotels (Denver, CO). Guest of Honor: Lois McMaster Bujold; Artist GoH: Rick Sternback. Membership: ~~were~~ \$175 thru 05/31/2007 (has gone UP since then!). Make checks payable to "Denvention 3" and send to: Denvention 3, PO Box 1349, Denver, CO 80201
Website: <http://denvention.org> Information at: info@denvention.org

October 10-13, 2008 **GAYLAXICON 2008**. Hyatt Regency - Bethesda (Bethesda, MD). Guest of Honor: Geoff Ryman. Artist Guest of Honor: Alicia Austin. Download PDF membership form from the website. Membership: \$65 from 01/01/2008; \$70 after 09/30/2008. Make checks payable to "Gaylaxicon 2008" & send to: Gaylaxicon 2008, c/o Lambda Sci-Fi, PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044-0656. Membership can also be purchased on-line via PayPal. Information at: www.gaylaxicon2008.org

October 17-19, 2008 **CAPCLAVE 2008**. Rockville Hilton (Rockville, MD). Writer GoH: James Morrow; Critic GoH: Michael Dirda. Membership: \$35 through the end of 2007 (will go up after that). Download the form from their website, with check payable to "Capclave 2008," and send to: Capclave 2008, c/o Barry Newton, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861. (On-line payment options also available.) Online at: www.capclave.org

Nov. 21-23, 2008 **PHILCON 2008**. Crowne Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). Principal Speaker: TBA; Artist GoH: John Picacio. Membership: \$40 thru 5/31; \$45 thru 9/30; \$50 thru 10/31; \$60 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

October 9-11, 2009 **GAYLAXICON 2009**. Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). GoHs: Margaret Weis, Andy Mangels, Lawrence Schimel. Membership: \$60 until 09/01/2009; then \$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.gaylacticnetwork.org/gaylaxicon2009 Register on-line at: <http://www.gaylaxicon2009.org>

