



# Lambda Sci-fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 – Issue # 214 – October 2024

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### To our ConFAB friends,

ConFABulous 2024 is this month at the Crowne Plaza Suites MSP Airport – Mall of America (3 Appletree Square, Bloomington, MN) on October 11-13, 2024. To register:

<https://confabulous.org/wordpress/registration/>

Once again our programming space is all on the hotel's second floor, which is on the same level as the top floor of the parking garage and accessible via stairs and elevators from the main floor. We're dedicating three rooms to role-playing games, so the joyous shouts of the victors and the anguished screams of the vanquished will be less disturbing to the concentration of other dedicated gamers.

**Hotel:** If you want to stay late gaming or – shudder – start early, our room rates are only \$129; and you can book your room at:

<https://confabulous.org/wordpress/hotel/>

**Getting there/Parking:** As a reminder, you can park for free whether you have a room at the hotel or not and can also get to the hotel via light rail (and a very short walk). You'll be close to the Mall of America and the MSP airport.

**Food:** Once again in 2024 we will provide a selection of hot and cold foods catered by the hotel throughout the con-



vention, along with breakfasts, snacks and soda offerings from our ConSuite, including the Saturday Chocolate Symposium.

**Games:** You'll have access to a large selection of board and card games, and players that are willing to take you on whether you're a beginner or an expert. We also have a video gaming area, and three rooms for role-playing games. If you would like to request a game or would like to run a role-playing game contact us at:

[gaming@ConFABulous.org](mailto:gaming@ConFABulous.org)

**Panels:** We will offer a selection of panels of general interest to the speculative fiction and LGTBQA community. Volunteer to be on panels and send us your panel ideas

**COVID/Masking:** Due to the large uptick in the summer COVID wave this year, our policies for 2024 are the same as last year. Check out our website for the latest information on the con:

<https://confabulous.org>

We hope to see you at the con on October 11-13, 2024.

--- **Don Kaiser**, ConFAB Chair

ConFABulous is hosted by North Country Gaylaxians.



### 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 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. The next book discussion will be held on October 24th.

Here are the details for the next several discussions:

**Oct. 24** – *Camp Damascus*, by Chuck Tingle (moderator: Rob).

**Dec. 5** (combined Nov/Dec discussion) – *The Terraformers*, by Annalee Newitz (moderator: Zena).

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### \*\*\*\*\* October 13, 2024 Meeting \*\*\*\*\*

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 13th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC**. The meeting will begin at 1:30 PM. Hope to see you there!



### What's Inside?

Page 2: Strange Tales, Part 1 (book reviews); Minutes of the September LSF Meeting.

Page 3: James Earl Jones (obituary).

Page 4: Info About LSF: DC Area Gaylaxians; Con Calendar.

## Strange Tales, Part 1

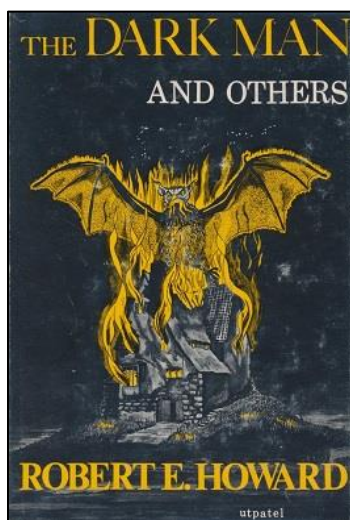
reviews by Carl

It's that time of year again – the nights are getting longer; Halloween and *Día de los Muertos* and the Winter Solstice are approaching – and I generally enjoy reading “weird,” “creepy,” “scary,” or “dark” books in honor of the season. This October has been no exception. Here are reviews of some of the books I've read.

### *The Dark Man and Others*

by Robert E. Howard

(Arkham House Publishers, 1963)



I decided to start with one of the “classic authors.” Robert E. Howard was the creator of Conan the Cimmerian; but he also wrote *lots* of stories with dark or creepy or Lovecraftian themes. In fact, he was a regular contributor to *Weird Tales Magazine* even before his famous Cimmerian first made it into print.

I've had this particular collection of Howard's “dark” tales sitting patiently on my “collectibles” shelf, and I finally decided to treat myself. (At least I don't *think* I've read this collection before.)

*The Dark Man and Others* collects fifteen stories that provide a fairly representative cross-section of Howard's “weird” tales. As August Derleth says in the Introduction: “...they represent a few hours of pleasant, exciting, and fearful entertainment in the domain of the ma-

## Minutes of the September

### LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

Jim provided a thorough review of his attendance at Dragon Con in Atlanta. He enjoyed the science track and the space track. He also loved the high-quality cosplay costumes. Jim also described a military SF con held in Chattanooga called Liberty Con:

<https://www.libertycon.org/>

David attended WorldCon in Glasgow. He noted that T. Kingfisher provided an amazing Hugo Novella Awards speech about sea cucumbers. He said that there was full disclosure about some ballot irregularities at this year's Hugo Awards, which were successfully addressed.

Carl passed around a couple of *Washington Post* articles. One article was about DC Comics making its coveted Style Guide publicly available this past July. (Back in 1982, the Style Guide only existed as a three-ring binder.) The second article was about George R.R. Martin complaining about how the new series *House of Dragon* was diverging from the timeline in his series. The fan community appears to have little patience with his complaints, preferring that he spend his energy on completing his book series.

Jim described his visit to the National Museum of Computing located in Bletchley Park in the UK, which in-

cludes a recreation of the Colossus computer.

cludes a recreation of the Colossus computer.

David read off a list of a few upcoming genre-adjacent TV series, including: *Watson, Sherlock & Daughter*, *Superman & Lois*, *Kaos*, and *Brilliant Minds* (starring Zachary Quinto).

Rob announced that the *Dungeons & Dragons 20-Sided Tavern* theatrical experience is coming to the Kennedy Center in July/August 2025.

There have been mixed reviews for *Slingshot*, the 2024 genre movie starring Casey Affleck and Laurence Fishburne. Jim described Francis Ford Coppola's *Megalopolis* as “self-indulgent.”

Sam conducted a brief discussion of the Sea Peoples, naval raiders who ravaged the Mediterranean region around 1177 BCE and are considered one of the major contributing causes to the Bronze Age Collapse.

The first two episodes of *Agatha All Along* will premiere this week. This miniseries is from Jac Schaeffer and stars Kathryn Hahn.

Rob provided info about the three upcoming LSF book discussions: *When the Angels Left the Old Country* by Sacha Lamb (September), *Camp Damascus* by Chuck Tingle (October), and *The Terraformers* by Annalee Newitz (combined November/December discussion on Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>).

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cabre in which Robert E. Howard always wrote with a sure hand.”

The title story – “The Dark Man” (1931) – is a classic swords-and-sorcery tale, featuring one of Howard's Conan-like heroes. Turlough Dubh (“Black Turlough”) is a wandering Irish warrior who had been exiled from Clan O'Brien. In this story, set during the era of the Viking raids, Turlough has been hired to save an Irish princess who'd been carried off by Norse raiders, but he becomes accidentally involved in a battle between the Viking raiders and an army of Picts. The Picts will kill anyone who gets in their way as they seek to retrieve a supernaturally-endowed idol (a statue of the “dark man” of the story's title).

Three of the stories rely on one of Howard's favorite tropes: a modern man's consciousness is transported (for one reason or another) into the body of an ancient warrior. [FYI, Howard wasn't the first author to use this trope. It's also the basis for Jack London's *The Star Rover* (1915) and, of course, *A Princess of Mars* (1912) and other novels by Edgar Rice Burroughs.] In “The Children of the Night” (1931), Aryara is a Neolithic warrior of the Sword People, fighting alone against a horde of semi-human, faintly reptilian creatures. In “People of the Dark” (1932), “Conan of the [Gaelic] reavers” seeks to save a maiden from her abductor and a “distinctly inhuman” underground race. In

(continued on page 4)



## James Earl Jones 1931 – 2024

Fandom knows him as the voice of Darth Vader in the *Star Wars* franchise. Beyond that, however, Jones has been described as “one of America’s most distinguished and versatile” actors (both stage and screen) and “one of the greatest actors in American history.” His deep voice was praised as a “stirring *basso profundo* that has lent gravel and gravitas” to his roles.

Jones was born in Arkabutla, Mississippi, in 1931. He had a stutter since childhood and said that poetry and acting helped him overcome the challenges of his disability. He was a pre-med major in college and served in the United States Army during the Korean War before pursuing a career in acting. He had his Broadway debut in 1957 in *Sunrise at Campobello* (originating the featured role of “Edward the butler”) and gained prominence for acting in numerous “Shakespeare in the Park” productions (including *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Coriolanus*, *King Lear*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*). He made his film debut in Stanley Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), appearing as the young Lt. Lothar Zogg, the B-52 bombardier.

In December 1967, Jones starred alongside Jane Alexander in Howard Sackler’s play, *The Great White Hope*, at the Arena Stage in Washington DC. Jones took the role of the talented but troubled boxer “Jack Jefferson”

(based on the real champion Jack Johnson). The play was a huge success when it moved to Broadway on October 3, 1968. The play was well received and won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Jones himself won the 1969 Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play, and the Drama Desk Award for his performance. In 1970, Jones reunited with Jane Alexander in the film adaptation of *The Great White Hope*. This would be Jones’ first leading film role. His performance was acclaimed by critics and earned him an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor – the second African-American male performer (after Sidney Poitier) to be nominated for this award. In *The Man* (1972), Jones starred as a senator who unexpectedly becomes the first African-American president of the United States.

His stage and screen roles are simply too many to list in this article. Here are just a few of Jones’s notable screen appearances: *The Man* (1972), *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), *Matewan* (1987), *Coming to America* (1988), *Field of Dreams* (1989), *The Hunt for Red October* (1990), *Patriot Dreams* (1992), *Sneakers* (1992), *The Sandlot* (1993), *The Lion King* (1994), *Clear and Present Danger* (1994), and *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1995).

Jones also guest-starred in many television shows over the years, including NBC’s *Law & Order* and *Frasier*, ABC’s *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*, Fox’s *House, M.D.*, and CBS’s *The Big Bang Theory* and *Two and a Half Men*. Jones also performed voice work for *The Simpsons* in the 1990 “Treehouse of Horror” Halloween special and two other episodes.

And, of course, Jones gained international fame for his voice role as Darth Vader in the *Star Wars* franchise, beginning with the original 1977 film. Darth Vader was physically portrayed in costume by David Prowse in the film trilogy, with Jones dubbing Vader’s dialogue in post-production because George Lucas felt Prowse’s strong West Country accent was unsuitable for the role. At his own request, Jones was uncredited for the release of



the first two *Star Wars* films, though he would be credited for the third film and eventually also for the first film’s 1997 “Special Edition” re-release. In 2022, Jones’s voice was used via Respeecher software for Darth Vader in the Disney+ miniseries *Obi-Wan Kenobi*. During production, Jones signed a deal with Lucasfilm authorizing archival recordings of his voice to be used in the future to artificially generate the voice of Darth Vader. In September 2022, Jones announced that he would retire from the role of voicing Darth Vader with future voice roles for Vader being created by that means.

In a career of just over half a century, Jones won a long list of honors. Here are just a few of them: Tony Awards for Best Actor in a Play (1968, 1987); Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word (1977); inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame (1985); National Medal of Arts (1992); Kennedy Center Honoree (2002); Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award (2009); Honorary Academy Award (2011); Special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement (2017). And in 1996 Jones was awarded the Golden Palm Star on the Palm Springs CA Walk of Stars.





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

**Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians** (LSF) is an organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and trans-gendered (LGBT) 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.

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, **October 13th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** We 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

Oct. 11-13, 2024 **CONFABULOUS 2024**. Crowne Plaza Suites MSP Airport/Mall of America, previously Crowne Plaza AiRE (Bloomington MN). A fan-fun LGBTQ+ convention with a relaxed feel (gaming & discussion panels). Full Membership: \$60. Website: <https://confabulous.org>

Nov. 22-24, 2024 **PHILCON 2024**. DoubleTree by Hilton (Cherry Hill NJ). Guests: Max Gladstone; Matthew Stewart & Gina Matarazzo, Nghi Vo. On-line registration: <https://reg.philcon.org> For more info: [www.philcon.org](http://www.philcon.org)

June 5, 2025 **HANACON**. "Anime, Art, & Asian Pop culture Convention." Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza (Silver Spring MD). "Early bird special" membership: \$40 (offer expires 1/1/25). For more information: [www.HanaConAnime.com](http://www.HanaConAnime.com)

August 13-17, 2025 **SEATTLE WORLDCON 2025**. Seattle Convention Center (Seattle WA). Guests of Honor: Martha Wells, Donato Giancola, Bridget Landry, K. Tempest Bradford, Nisi Shawl. Full attending membership: currently \$200 (will go up). For more information & on-line registration: <https://seattlein2025.org>

August 27-31, 2026 **LACON V**. (2026 World Science Fiction Convention) Anaheim Convention Center, Hilton Anaheim & Anaheim Marriott Hotels (Anaheim CA). Guests of Honor: Barbara Hambly, Ronald D. Moore, Colleen Duran, Dr. Anita Sengupta, Tim Kirk, Geri Sullivan (Fan GoH), Stan Sakai, Ursula Vernon (aka T Kingfisher). Full attending membership: currently \$200 (will go up). For more information & on-line registration: <https://www.lacon.org/>

**Strange Tales**

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"The Garden of Fear" (1934), the warrior Hunwulf the Wanderer is a part of the great Northern migrations during the unsettled millenia following the cataclysmic end of the Hyborian Age (the era of Conan of Cimmeria). After being exiled by their tribe, Hunwulf and his beloved Gudrun encounter the horrific sole survivor of a pre-human race and his garden of carnivorous plants.

Other stories include various other "weird" themes, including: a "lost civilization" in Darkest Africa that possesses a horrific artifact ("The Voice of El-Lil," 1930); family curses ("Pigeons from Hell," 1938; "The Dead Remember," 1936; "The Thing on the

Roof," 1932; "Dig Me No Grave," 1937; "In the Forest of Villefère," 1925); native curses ("The Dream Snake," 1928; "The Hyena, 1928); and more.

I quite enjoyed this collection of Howard's "weird" tales. If you want your own copy, it's going to be expensive. The 1963 Arkham House edition can now cost a couple of hundred dollars. Lancer Books published a paperback version in 1971, but even that costs rather more than you might expect. On the other hand, the stories in this collection can individually be found in any number of anthologies.

To Be Continued  
Next Issue



Happy Halloween Wishes to  
Everyone at Lambda Sci-fi  
and Their Friends!!