



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians



PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044



(202) 232-3141 - Issue #247 - October 2010

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



Guinness Book of World Records – Superheroes –

info passed along by Carl



Just in time for Halloween, a new Guinness World Record has been set or “the most people wearing superhero costumes in one place.” On October 2nd, an army of 1,580 people dressed as superheroes gathered in Nokia Plaza in downtown Los Angeles. It was part of a promotional event hosted by DreamWorks Animation to advertise the upcoming release (Nov. 5th) of their new animated superhero film, *Megamind*. Master of Ceremonies for the event was actor Will Ferrell (the voice of Megamind in the film). The *previous* record in this category was established on May 29, 2010, when 1,245 people dressed as superheroes gathered in Federation Square in Melbourne, Australia, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the release of the first DC comic book.

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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.

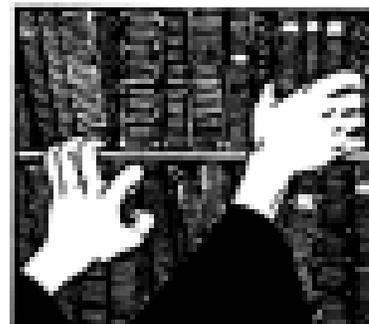
The LSF Book Discussion Group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW – for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting will be held on October 28th.

Here are the details for the next couple of book discussions:

Oct. 28th - *Soulless*, by Gail Carriger; moderator: Adrienne.

Dec. 2nd (combined Nov./Dec. meeting) - *Super Sad True Love Story*, by Gary Shteyngart; moderator: Peter

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October LSF Meeting



The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 10th**. 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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**"Elementary,
My Dear
Watson!"
Sherlock Holmes
in F&SF
reviews by Carl**

Yes, I'm quite the fan of Sherlock Holmes, whether in the canonical tales written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle or the pastiches of various modern authors or the various screen (either Silver or small) incarnations. (Let's have a round of applause for Basil Rathbone and Jeremy Brett – and, yes, even for Robert Downey Jr.) Unfortunately, I don't get much of a chance to indulge in that particular predilection here in LSF; Sherlockiana tends to fall into the "M" (um, Mystery) genre rather than into the SF/F/H genres.

Ah, but every now and then the Great Detective has found himself investigating cases of a *very* SF/F/H nature. Over the years, there have been several anthologies of Holmes-based F&SF tales: *Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Space* (St. Martin's Press, 1986), edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin H. Greenberg, and Charles G. Waugh; *Sherlock Holmes in Orbit* (MJF Books, 1997), edited by Mike Resnick and Martin H. Greenberg; and *Shadows Over Baker Street* (Del Rey, 2003), edited by Michael Reaves and John Pelan. And the May 2006 issue of *Analog* featured an not-yet-anthologized Holmes alternate history story by Harry Turtledove entitled "The Scarlet Band."

"But," you ask, "how about more recently?" I'm glad you asked.

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The War of the Worlds
by Manly W. Wellman and Wade Wellman (Titan Books, 2009)

Titan Books has recently issued a whole series of "The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." The one that immediately caught my eye was the *TFAOSH: The War of the Worlds*. How could I resist that mixture of A.C.

Doyle and H.G. Wells? And one of the authors' names immediately caught my eye as well: Manly W. (Wade) Wellman. Wellman is one of my favorite F&SF authors, particularly his "Silver John" (or "John the Balladeer") stories. Well, subject matter *and* author: it was a combination I simply could not resist! (FYI – Wade Wellman is Manly Wade Wellman's son.)



TFAOSH: The War of the Worlds is actually a collection of five linked stories: "The Adventure of the Crystal Egg," "Sherlock Holmes Versus Mars," "George E. Challenger Versus Mars," "The Adventure of the Martian Client," and "Venus, Mars, and Baker Street." The first four stories were purportedly written by "Edward Dunn Malone." (You may remember Malone as the newspaper reporter who accompanied Professor Challenger to *The Lost World*.) And the fifth story was penned by Dr. Watson. (There's also a *delightful* Appendix: "A Letter from Dr. Watson," in which the good doctor challenges H.G. Wells to set the record straight.)

As you can tell from the titles, Holmes and Watson find themselves frequently interacting with Professor George Edward Challenger. The *un*-emotional, egotistical Holmes and the *over*-emotional, egotistical Challenger – quite a volatile combination! "The Adventure of the Crystal Egg" is, of course, based on Wells's short story "The Crystal Egg," a mysterious device which gives those who peer into it a view of life on Mars *before* the Invasion. In several of the stories, the experiences of Holmes

and Watson and Challenger cleverly re-interpret the experiences of the unknown narrator in Wells's original *War of the Worlds*. And the Wellmans throw in an unexpected twist: seems as how the "Martians" aren't really from Mars after all. ("How do you know?" "Elementary, my dear Watson!") I found all the stories in the book to be very enjoyable.

I haven't yet bought any of the other "Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" books issued by Titan. I can't say as I recognize many of the authors. However, *two* of the other TFAOSH titles/authors intrigue me. There's *Séance for a Vampire*, in which Holmes disappears and Watson turns to the immortal Count for assistance; it's written by Fred Saberhagen, another favorite F/SF/H author of mine. The other one is *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Holmes*, written by Loren D. Estleman, a well-known Mystery author whose works I've enjoyed. I'll keep you posted...

The Improbable Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
edited by John Joseph Adams
(Night Shade Books, 2009)

This is another of those big "Sherlock Holmes" anthologies, like the ones I mentioned at the beginning of this article. And it *is* big: 449 pages in trade paperback format; 28 stories (plus an Introduction and a "Sherlockiana Primer"). Only a couple of the stories are original to this anthology – most of them are reprints from many different sources, including several from *Sherlock Holmes in Orbit* and *Shadows Over Baker Street*. The list of contributing authors includes quite a number of really well-known SF/F/H/M authors. Here are some of 'em: Stephen King, Tim Lebbon, Anne Perry, Vonda McIntyre, Darrell Schweitzer, Anthony Burgess, Stephen Baxter, Geoffrey Landis, Sharyn McCrumb, Michael Moorcock, Barbara Hambly, Naomi Novik, Tanith Lee, and Neil Gaiman.

The stated purpose of the volume is "to showcase the best Holmes pastiches of the last thirty years, mixing the best straight-up mystery stories with

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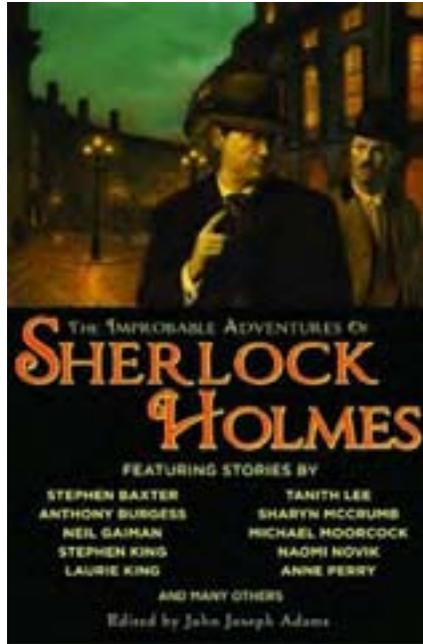
Sherlock Holmes in F&SF

continued from page 2

the best of those tales tinged with the fantastic.” So if you *only* want to read Holmes stories involving F&SF themes, you might be disappointed: this anthology includes quite a few “straight-up” (*i.e.* non-F&SF) Holmes mystery stories. The funny thing is, however, that you can never *assume* you’ve figured out the nature of any given story. As the editor says in his Introduction:

Don't let the bylines fool you into thinking you know which way—mystery or fantasy—a story will resolve; although some of the fantasy authors here do deliver fantasy tales, some of those tales are merely improbable rather than impossible, and some of the leading lights of the mystery genre may have some surprises for you as well. So, as Sherlock Holmes would surely advise, don't make too many assumptions.

Tim Lebbon’s “The Horror of the Many Faces” is just the kind of creepy horror story you’d expect from him – one involving mysterious mutilations and monstrous creatures loose in the streets of London. And SF writer Geoffrey Landis has penned a creepy little UFO story – “The Singular Habits of Wasps” – which involves mysterious mutilations and monstrous *aliens* loose in the streets of London. On the other hand, Tanith Lee (2-time winner of the World Fantasy Award) unexpectedly includes nothing of an F&SF nature in her story, “The Human Mystery” – it’s an ever-so-satisfying exploration of the human psyche. (“Although crime is often solvable, there can be no greater mystery than that of the human heart.”) Ms. Lee also dedicated this story to “the late, unique Jeremy Brett, a fine actor, and a definitive Sherlock Holmes.” Likewise, “The Adventure of the Dorset Street Lodger,” written by Michael Moorcock (author of the “Elric of Meliboné” stories), is another “straight-up” Holmes story, involving the theft of The Fellini Silver. The anthology also includes a particular favorite of mine: a



really cool Lovecraftian story by Neil Gaiman, entitled “A Study in Emerald.” It originally appeared in *Shadows Over Baker Street*, and I quite agree that this anthology of “the best” would have been incomplete without it.

And there you have it. If you don’t mind having some M mixed in with your F&SF, then I think you’ll be delighted with every story in *The Improbable Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. And even if you’re not a particular fan of M, I think there’s enough F&SF content – and plenty of really good writing – to make it worth your while.

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Nothing has been more difficult than to be curious about an object or a person, without being obstructed by preconceived ideas. Occasionally the veil is lifted, and the one who lifts it is called a genius.

-- Theodore Zeldin --

quoted in
If Ignorance Is Bliss, Why Aren't There More Happy People?

by John Lloyd & John Mitchinson
(Harmony Books, 2008)

Happy
Halloween from
all the gang at
Lambda Sci-Fi!!!



**** 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, October 10th**, 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. 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

October 22-24, 2010 **CAPCLAVE 2010**. Hilton Hotel & Executive Meeting Center (Rockville, MD). Guests of Honor: Connie Willis, Ann Vandermeer, Jeff Vandermeer. Membership: \$60 from 10/1 to 10/17. Make checks payable to "Capclave 2010" and send to: Capclave 2010, PO Box 53, Ashton, MD 20861. On-line registration also available.

Website: www.capclave.org

For information: info@capclave.org

Nov. 26-28, 2010 **DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL 33**. *Avery*gay-friendly convention. Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guest of Honor: Elizabeth Bear; Special Guest: Katherine Kurtz; Musical GoH: Clam Chowder. Membership: \$45 until Nov. 1st: \$50 thereafter. Make checks payable to "Armida Council" and send to: Armida Council, PO Box 7203, Silver Spring, MD 20907

Website: www.darkovercon.org

May 13-15, 2011 **GAYLAXICON 2011** (held in conjunction with OutlantaCon 2011). Holiday Inn Select Chamblee-Dunwoody (Dunwoody, GA). Guest: Melissa Carter. More information as it becomes available.

Website: www.outlantacon.org

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

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 from 9/7/2010 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

