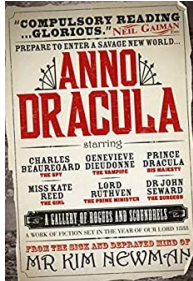




# Lambda Sci-Fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians



Anno Dracula  
By Kim Newman

*Scheduled but Never Discussed February 2001*

### Note

Anno Dracula was originally scheduled to be our February 2001 book. However due to some scheduling issues the book was replaced on the schedule – though questions had already been put together. Since the questions existed, we decided to keep them as part of our archive.

### Discussion Questions

1. For some time now, we've been trying to include a "horror" novel for discussion. Do you think we succeeded with this novel? In other words, do you consider Anno Dracula to be a "horror" novel? Why, or why not?
2. The author has thrown together quite a wild mix of historical personages/facts ("the Great Game", Sir Charles Warren, Bram Stoker, Insp. Abberline of CID, the Whitechapel murders, etc.) and completely fictional characters of his own and others' creation (Geneviève Dieudonné, Insp. Lestrade, Dr. Jekyll, Fu Manchu, etc.). How successful do you think Newman has been with this mix?
3. All the way back to Carmilla and Dracula, vampire literature is filled with inconsistencies and outright contradictions. Newman proposes to "reconcile" the various traditions by presenting the concept of different vampire "bloodlines" or "families", each with its own powers, habits, qualities, etc. What do you think about this aspect of the novel? Do you think Newman has been successful at this?
4. The novel is crammed full of oblique, inside, and sometimes passing or off-hand references to dozens of characters (both "living" and "undead") from Victorian and Edwardian literature. Some examples:
  - At one point Beauregard reminisces about the death of the assassin Ivan Dragomiloff on the premises the Diogenes Club. Ivan Dragomiloff is the main character in Jack London's Assassination Bureau Ltd.
  - Beauregard's unnamed abductor in Limehouse is none other than A.J. Raffles, the subject of E.W. Hornung's Raffles, the Amateur Cracksman and The Black Mask.
  - General Iorga's aide, "that arrogant devil Hentzau", is Rupert of Hentzau, from The Prisoner of Zenda and Rupert of Hentzau by Anthony Hope.

This leads to several related questions:

5. Did this game of "literary name-dropping" detract from or add to your enjoyment of the story itself?
6. What do you think this says about Newman's assumptions about his audience of readers?
7. Do you think this could have affected the popularity of the novel?

If, like me, you really enjoyed this novel, you'll be please to know that Kim Newman wrote two more related novels:

- *The Bloody Red Baron* (1995). Having failed in his first attempt to take over Britain from within, Dracula has moved to Germany and is attempting to conquer Britain during WWI as the head of the Kaiser's armies. Geneviève Dieudonné returns, once again attempting to foil Dracula's plans; and, as in *Anno-Dracula*, the novel is filled with a fascinating mix of historical and literary characters, including: Baron von Richthofen (the German air ace); Max Schreck (of *Nosferatu* fame); a young Bela Lugosi; Herbert West (Reanimator); and Corporal Adolf Hitler.
- *Judgment of Tears: Anno Dracula 1959* (1999). (I haven't read this one yet. I'm saving it for "a rainy day.") Dracula is in Rome to marry Princess Asa Vajda and is mysteriously beheaded. Is a well-known statue of the Virgin somehow involved? Geneviève Dieudonné is once again on the scene to keep an eye of the self-styled "King of the Vampires"; and this time she's accompanied by one "Haimish Bond".