



Ineffable Twaddle

"It is my business to know what other people don't know."

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

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The Sound of the Baskervilles
A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars • Since March 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington



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IRREGULAR VIEWS

Well summer (and Seafair, yo-ho-ho) is winding to its inevitable end. And as day follows night, Summer reruns on TV are followed by Fall's new offerings heaped wide and deep upon the altar of passive entertainment. I imagine that given the long and dismal track record of BBC shows "translated" for American audiences, you my fellow SOB's were wincing at what the Hollywood meat-grinder would do to the wonderful 21st century Cumberbatch "Sherlock" series once they got their blood stained hands on it.

But, by now we've all seen the first episode, and whatever else it may turn out to be, Lucy Lu and "Elementary" seem unlikely to simply be a "Sherlock" retread dumbed down for Americans who can't seem to understand their own language.

BUT WAIT, I hear you say! This column is supposed to be about graphic novels and comic books! Well hold on...I'll get there in the end. (I also refer you to the title of this column.) Though I do apologise for the extensive amount of green ink in this particular column.

At the root of all this hub-bub is—despite his international fame and appeal—Holmes' essential "Britishness." (A peculiar quality that, if you can exactly define it, you will be better than the Foreign Office and myself.) Holmes has strode the stages and screens, big and small all over the world. From Abu Dhabi to Zanzibar, operating out of Moscow, Tokyo or Washington D.C., even stripped of time and place, somehow the Great Detective has remained firmly rooted in Baker Street and his essential "Britishness."



Which brings us to the question: Can there be an "American" Sherlock Holmes? Surely his signature characteristics don't rule it out—a lone crusader for what he personal-

ly sees as justice, a genius of many disciplines, a puzzle-solving, gang-busting, occasional opponent of the official law.

No need to invent one! Turns out there is already an American Holmes: the Shadow. Like his nation, he was born later (43 years) and, like his fellows, maybe rougher, less refined but still at heart, we find Holmes having changed his deerstalker and Inverness for a black cape and snap-brim. If we choose to ignore his "power to cloud men's minds" (which was added much later), the only real difference between the Shadow and his Baker Street parent is that he never requires a Watson to do his shooting for him.

And now, at last, we get to the comic books, because on the shelves at your neighborhood comic shop, the Shadow once again wages his war on crime.

The Shadow Volume 1. Ennis and Campbell
Product Details: Paperback: 144 pages
Publisher: Dynamite Entertainment (Dec. 11, 2012)

The Words in Print: From **weekly comic book review.com** (review of issue #1): It's hard not to admire the pulp heroes of old. In the absence of superpowers, or alien DNA turning characters into demigods, the Pulps put themselves in harm's way and did what they could to fight the Good Fight using the means available to them. Writer Ennis has wisely kept that much intact here, Lamont Cranston was a man with one foot in the Real World and the other in something much darker that we'd be better off not asking too many questions about.

While artist Campbell has taken Ennis's penchant for violence and translated it perfectly into The Shadow's world. You look at Campbell's art, paired with Ennis's words, reimagining an eighty-year-old character, and you can't imagine The Shadow not being this violent or looking this menacing. **Conclusion:** Ennis and Campbell seem to have done the impossible and made an already iconic, terrifying masked avenger more menacing than ever. Ennis' dialogue is razor sharp, Campbell's art is wonderfully atmospheric, and The Shadow's justice is uncompromising and brutal. This could be the start of something very good.



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Library Donation

Thanks to the generosity of **SOB Ray De Groat, BSI**, the Club's Lending Library is now in possession of a large collection of humorous chapbooks by John Ruyle. Ruyle's Canonical parodies and collections of Sherlockian verse continue to be highly regarded and seriously sought after by Sherlockian and non-Sherlockian collectors alike.

If you like your Holmes with a laugh, please be sure to take advantage of this kind donation.

Thanks, Ray!





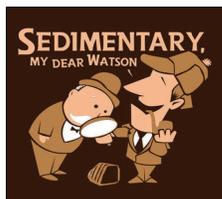
T.S. McHugh's Public House is at 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910. **Come early, order a meal, and catch up with the other SOBs!**

From SOB Margaret Nelson:

Being a family of geologists, our daughter Kate sent us

this cartoon. Get it yourself at:

<http://cheezburger.com/6550607360>.



A Tip from DC Smith

Next time you want or need a book, why order it over the web?



Instead, stop in at Cinema Books, or Seattle Mystery Books, or Culpepper Books, or...! If they don't have it, they can sure get it for you!!

"This Reading Thing...!"

"Why didn't you tell me about this reading thing? This reading business, Dad, I really recommend it. Maybe you should give it a try."



Above is a quote from a youngster in Australia—in an opinion piece by his Dad in the

Sydney Morning Herald, July 28, 2012 written after his son saw the "Sherlock" mini-series and discovered that it was possible to **READ** stories about Sherlock Holmes.

Thanks, Peter Blau!

A Peppermint Stick Quiz!!

The **October 21, 2012** Business Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at **4:00 p.m.** at T.S. McHugh's Public House. **The social hour starts at 3:00 p.m.!**

This month, we'll make another digression from our current study of the Canon (*in order by publication date*) when **SOB Lauran Stevens** will conduct her "Peppermint Stick Quiz". There'll be 10 questions on Holmes, 10 on Doyle and 10 on London! Peppermint sticks—dipped in chocolate—will be awarded for each correct answer!! Then, 1st and 2nd prizes will be awarded to those with the most peppermint sticks! **Careful:** Some questions have more than one part; if you can answer only part of a question (or if someone else answers the rest of the question), no peppermint sticks will be awarded! And, Barbara Nelson will assist Lauran by acting as her "Alex Trebek", providing volume as questions are posed to you! Good luck! It should be a really sweet night!



Members Share

Reviewed by SOB Charlie Cook of Sumter, SC
The Yard by Alex Grecian, G. P. Putman's Sons,
New York, 2012. \$26.95

This isn't a Sherlock Holmes tale but it deals with the constables and detectives of Scotland Yard in Victorian London.

The Ripper Murders seem to have stopped but have not been solved and the London public is still very much afraid, convinced that the "Bluebottles" are useless. Yard detectives are being murdered and mutilated; and recently transferred Inspector Day has been put in charge of the investigation. Young and inexperienced, he must earn the respect of the Murder Squad, many of whose members question the sagacity of selecting a newcomer as their leader. (This is reminiscent of the first episode of the "White-

chapel" series recently seen on BBC America.)

Along with Walter Day, the main investigators are Constable Nevil Hammersmith and Dr. Bernard Kingsley. The latter is a Dr. Bell-type forensic pathologist who believes that the new-fangled science of fingerprints will aid in finding the killer.

But other crimes continue to haunt the Yard. Someone is killing chimney sweeps and someone else (perhaps) is killing men with beautiful beards!

Mr. Grecian presents a vivid, somewhat grim picture of Victorian London. One of Day's veteran colleagues tries to set the atmosphere for the disillusioned Day by stating, "We're in the dark here, utterly hated by the..."

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Librarian's Corner

"It is a great thing to start life with a small number of really good books which are your very own."—
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

A Study in Sherlock: Stories Inspired by the Holmes' Canon, edited by Laurie R. King and Leslie S. Klinger.

This book is the third one purchased for our Club library from Club funds—thanks, everyone. In January I reviewed Clive Groome's **Little Book of Steam**; coming next will be notes on Henry Zecher's **William Gillette, America's Sherlock Holmes**.

The King-Klinger book is different. It contains 16 pastiches by current authors. Don't Philip and Jerry Margolin's "The Adventure of the Purloined Paget," Lee Child's "The Bone-Headed League," and Laura Lippman's "The Last of Sheila-Locke Holmes" (I can't wait for this one!) sound fascinating? Is this a fiction collection? Are Holmes and Watson fictional characters? You decide. Here's a wonderful quote from the book's introduction: "Only true genius can produce...a hero that fills a gaping hole we never knew--never even suspected--was there...But one day in 1887 Arthur Conan Doyle sat down to write a tale of an odd young man with peculiar skills and changed the world." Isn't this a great encapsulation of why we are SOB Members? Happy reading!

Sheila Holtgrieve, SOB Librarian, sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com



Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

● **From SOB Jim Nagle:** Here is a link to a bunch of **old radio shows**, mostly involving Rathbone and Bruce but even including some from Gillette: www.dumb.com/oldtimeradio/radio/83/Detective/Sherlock_Holmes.html

● **From SOB Margie Deck:** I thought I was a fan...I'm not even in the ballpark. Put this URL in your browser to see the **Sherlock Fandom Glossary**: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BueXx9a4JmlpXGckaH_ODSPLGcRmw4AuxyT79UO6zLl/preview?pli=1&sle=true#heading=h.wm59a47iuf4.

● **From PFL David:**

⇒ Roger Johnson encourages all Sherlockians to buy a copy of **Sherlock's Home: The Empty House**, as the proceeds go to the "Save Under-shaw" campaign.



⇒ In the September 14/21 double issue of Entertainment Weekly—its fall TV preview—Ken Tucker discusses the "Best 5 New Shows". Believe it or not, one of them is "**Elementary**". In part it reads, "You say this is probably another CBS-brand procedural? Honey, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle practically

invented the procedural: What do you think all that rapid clue-gathering, quick deduction, and 'Elementary, my dear Watson' stuff was all about...If there's one sure-shot ratings hit this season, my bet is on this series."

⇒ **Dangerous Work: Diary of an Arctic Adventure By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**, ed. by Jon Lellenberg and Daniel Stashower (The British Library, £25; University of Chicago Press, \$35) offers a look at some of Doyle's earliest writing: the illustrated journal that he kept on the whaler Hope. It's full of detail on what that sort of adventure was like. There's much humor, directed at himself as well as others, and is reproduced in facsimile, with a transcript and later articles and stories that reflect his experiences on the ship. *Thanks to Peter Blau, and our own SOB Terry Burns who referred me to an article at guardian.co.uk which includes one of Doyle's drawings from the journal.*

⇒ Per Sherlockology.com: Just revealed at the Sherlock Masterclass at the Media Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival, the **three words that describe each episode of the upcoming 3rd series of "Sherlock"**: Rat, wedding, and bow. 

Irregular Views

DC sez: *I admit I'm a big Shadow fan. This book is beautifully drawn and tightly written. I can't ask for anything more. The crime's afoot! I've signed up for the whole run. But no need to wait for the trade paperback; you can go out right now and get it in real comic book form. So run, don't walk.*

While you're in comics land, ask after the 1980's "Shadows & Light" inked by the great Bill Sienkiewicz. And don't miss the reprints of the Shadow pulp novellas published by Nostalgia Ventures (two original stories in each volume!) **Until next time, DC** 

Members Share

...people we're trying to protect and blindly seeking things we'll absolutely never find." He later notes, "Saucy Jack never stopped with those five women. Or started with them. Jack was London itself and London had always been a killer." Even the killer notes that "The city swallows ten thousand people a year. Ten thousand simply disappear."

Another Yard man notes, "Murderers, thieves, whores, and swindlers were all pressed together alongside the rarest of species, the honest citizen...I could spend an afternoon studying the crowds at Euston Station and never sort the decent from the damned."

Dr. Kingsley has been assisted by his young daughter who he feels shouldn't be witness to the horrible autopsies he performs, but she

insists on helping and he needs her skill as an artist to draw details of his work. He tells her that "this city gets worse every day". But with the optimism of youth she retorts that she likes the city and "for all the bad, you've shown me how to look for the good."

This is a stark, well-written, adroitly plotted, tense and exciting adventure with even the minor characters well-developed and portrayed with interesting and (sometimes) quirky personalities. There are no cardboard characters here. Villains as well as Yard personnel are multidimensional. Most Sherlockians should find this a fascinating, entertaining and informative read, well worth the time it takes to read this 422 page novel—the last 100 pages of which move at lightning speed. 

From SOB Bill Mosteller of Falls Church, VA

A toast I made at the July 30 Meeting of Watson's Tin Box:

As many of you know, when I encounter a new Sherlock Holmes pastiche or adaptation, I don't focus on Canonical relevance. Instead, I ask what the new production teaches me about Sherlock Holmes.

This toast to "the woman" is based on Irene Adler as she appears in the PBS Sherlock episode "A Scandal in Belgravia."

She first meets Sherlock in the nude, a cunning ploy as it thwarts many of Sherlock's usual deductions, based as they are on people's clothing, but does perhaps inadvertently reveal her wall safe's combination. She changes the ring tone on Sherlock's phone, and he can't change it back.

Or maybe he doesn't want to? Arguably, she captivates Sherlock.



She fakes her own death, as Sherlock originally did at Reichenbach Falls. But in the end, she discovers that it's better to have Sherlock as a friend than adversary.

I give you "the woman!"

From Dwight and Duane Holmes

For those with reading challenges, you could have watched a 47-minute video of "The Adventure of Black Peter" prior to the September Meeting at YouTube by "MrJackbiz". The URL is <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deBocn8t2K4>

Or, as we did on the way down from LaConner, you could have listened to a reading at: <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/178/the-return-of-sherlock-holmes/3232/chapter-vi-the-adventure-of-black-peter/>





The Sound
of the
Baskervilles

By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

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The Sound of the Baskervilles is a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, serving the greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington, U.S.A., and has met monthly since March 31, 1980.

\$20 per year brings Members the monthly newsletter "Ineffable Twaddle", a copy of Beaten's Christmas Annual, and the incalculable benefits of association with a group of certifiable Holmes aficionados.

Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of each month. Location of the meetings may vary. Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: "The Master's Dinner" celebrating Holmes' birthday (January), "The Annual Wreath Throw" commemorating Holmes' loss at Reichenbach Falls (May), "The Dr. John H. Watson Picnic" (July), and "The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification" (December). Other activities—book crawls, teas, plays and gaming events—are as announced.

To join, send your check for dues—\$20 for individuals, \$30 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left.



Member News & Updates

SOBs attending the September Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

Stephen Adkins	Al Nelson	John Nelson
Barbara Nelson	Margaret Nelson	DC Smith
Lauran Stevens	James Romnes	Ed Funk
Ginie Romnes	Emily Romnes	Joyce Funk
Bryan Romnes	Ann Stevens	Pat McIntosh
Sheila Holtgrieve	Dwight Holmes	Lloyd Hedberg
Peter Chelemedos	Kay Chelemedos	Ann Milam

News & Notes:

- The Brothers Holmes were there: Not Sherlock & Mycroft but **Dwight & Duane!** **Ann** brought daughter **Kat** and Kat's pal **Perry**, who helped deliver the PFL's anniversary cake—yes, 29 years!—to the hungry hoards. ☆ **Sheila** took 1st place in the quiz on BLAC, but **Bryan** and **Margaret** tied for 2nd, and **Barbara** and **Ginie** tied for 3rd! Pretty smart group! ☆ PFL David reminded all that **Beaten's submissions are due** by November 18!! ☆ And, everyone voted to **combine the December Meeting and the Jollification into a single event** on Saturday, December 8!! Watch for further details!
- "Standing Room Only for Sherlock Holmes & the Case of the Christmas Carol". That headline says it all for this year's presentation of John Longenbaugh's play at the Taproot Theatre! But their website says tickets will be on sale October 2! Rita Harris of SITU is trying to arrange a group ticket buy and says SOBs may call to join that group (1-888-589-6283).

- **From Stu Shiffman's** partner Andi Schecter, September 15: "Stu is back at Harborview. Almost every scary thing has been ruled out. He's not where he was. He has good days, and both the hospital staff and friends agree with me that he seems to be making slow progress returning to his best, but he's far from it right now."

- **From PFL David:** Eight SOBs joined Australian Sherlockian **Bill Barnes, BSI** for dinner and conversation at Ivar's Salmon House on September 14. (He had earlier in his trip stayed with SOB Sonia Fetherston.) He was a delightful guest, wonderfully representing The Sydney Passengers—of which he has been Captain ("President") since 1996. He moved around the table during the evening so we all had a chance to speak with him personally.

- **From SOB Lloyd Hedberg:** "A year ago, daughter JC announced her plan to go into the Navy's Reserves program in Aviation Technician training (learning everything needed to fly a plane or helicopter, plus how to maintain the beast, but not to actually fly.) Her '6-month crash course' has turned into what will be, when she's done, over a year. She's been in Florida since joining the Navy in September 2011. During schooling, she was her typical 'achiever' self... she outran, outswam, out-scored all the other females entering the program and, in February, her entire Division 972 voted her 'Honour Recruit of Division 972', for which she received a Letter of Commendation. She was much appreciated by her two employers before she left—Highline Public Schools and the Hi-Liners acting club/guild—who both cleared the way for her to have her jobs back, so she has no concerns about employment when she returns."

Dates of Interest

- **SUNDAY, Oct. 21**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 3:00 p.m.;
Business = 4:00 at T.S. McHugh's
- **SUNDAY, Nov. 18**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 3:00 p.m.;
Business = 4:00 at T.S. McHugh's
- **SATURDAY, Dec. 8**
Combined Will Crakes Memorial Jollification and Study of BLUE;
1:00 p.m.
- **SATURDAY, Jan. 5**
Master's Dinner;
1:00 p.m.

