

Librarian's Shelf by Karen Connell

Escape the Ordinary

The summer reading program at Columbus Public Library is underway, and participants of all ages are enjoying this year's hero theme: Every Hero has a Story for youth, Unmask for teens, and Escape the Ordinary for the adult summer reading program. People of all ages are invited to register and read for prizes, and attend events in the reading program applicable to them.

So families mark your calendars for June 27 at 2pm. UNL Physics and Astronomy Professor Daniel Claes will join us in the Library Auditorium for Comic Book Physics 101, presented by the UNL Speakers Bureau. We will explore topics inspired by iconic comic book characters, their superpowers, and significant events in their history. Listen as Daniel Claes explains the physical limits on giants, the possibility of new elements, and if SHIELD's helicarrier would actually fly. Then you will have the opportunity to ask questions about your favorite superheroes!

Daniel Claes received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University (1991). As a postdoc for S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, he worked at Fermi National Lab on the discovery of the top quark. Dan joined the University of Nebraska in 1996, and now searches for new, theoretically predicted particles at CERN (in Geneva) - where the announcement of the Higgs boson was recently made. He is a Principal Investigator on the Cosmic Ray Observatory Project (CROP), an ambitious outreach effort involving Nebraska high school science teachers and students in a large-scale study of cosmic ray air showers. Dan also serves as chair of the department. (Biography supplied by the UNL Speakers Bureau.)

In preparation for this educational and entertaining program, catch up on your favorite superheroes by reading their stories from our graphic novel collection, or by watching the movies in our DVD collection. There are also a number of books in our nonfiction collection about comic books and superheroes that explore their history, cultural impacts, and what they can teach us about ourselves.

"Marvel Comics: The Untold Story" by Sean Howe gives an in depth account of the Marvel company's history. In this well researched book, you can learn how Stan Lee and Jack Kirby created the modern superheroes, how staff changes and personalities of staff made Marvel a unique company, and how the appeal of profit made the company what it is now. The book looks at the American comic book industry as a whole, and how Marvel fits into that industry.

If you're interested in your fellow fans of comics and superheroes, check out "Cosplay World" by Brian Ashcraft and Luke Plunkett. Stuffed with photographs and biographies of cosplayers, inspiring words of photographers, and information on cosplay from historians, this book is fascinating to browse. Costume play, 'cosplay,' means dressing up as favorite characters from movies, TV, games, comics, and books. This has been around for over 100 years and for many, it is simply a casual hobby, but for others it is a way of life, and has become a global phenomenon as a way of self-expression.

For more titles like these or questions about Comic Book Physics 101 or other library events, call 402-564-7116, or visit our website at www.columbusne.us/library.