

Holmdel Science Fiction Discussion Group
Club Notice - 2/13/80

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

(Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.)

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
2/20/80	LAST AND FIRST MEN by Olaf Stapledon, rm 3H-506
3/12/80	DINOSAUR BEACH by Keith Laumer, rm 4H-305
4/2/80	JUPITER THEFT by Donald Moffit, rm 4H-305
4/23/80	MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS by Robert Heinlein, rm 4H-305

Our library is in HO 2D-634A. Rich Ditch (x3432) is librarian.
Evelyn Leeper (HO 1G-318A x6334) is Club book-buyer.

1. The Wednesday discussion on February 20 will be of LAST AND FIRST MEN by Olaf Stapledon. This is rather a different sort of science fiction, a type that has become rather uncommon today. The book is more in the form of an essay about the future as written from the very far future. The book is very nearly a solid packing of ideas. It is heavy going but is generally considered to be worth its classic status.

2. I am attaching a poll to ask our members how they want our budget spent. We can afford to spend about \$50 on materials other than library copies of discussion books. At this time it is unlikely that we will be spending more than half of that amount, just in case some superior reference book is published later this year. Still the wishes of the members will be our main guide in how our funds are spent.

3. Also attached is a review of KEEPING TIME by David Bear just in case someone runs across the book, as unlikely as that seems.

Mark Leeper
HO 2B-502A x7093

The following is a list of items suggested by the attendees of the last meeting for purchase by the Science Fiction Discussion Group. We have calculated that we can spend up to \$50 on reference works and magazines.

The following points were raised:

1. Since funds are limited, we may not want to purchase fiction magazines, since they are usually readily available elsewhere, and their value diminishes rapidly as the stories get reprinted elsewhere.
2. We do not plan (at this time) to maintain a routing list for magazines. We will, however, attempt to notify members of recent arrivals via the Club notice.
3. The books and magazines purchased should be those that supplement, rather than replace, a member's own purchases. In other words, we want to purchase items that members would be interested in, but would not purchase for themselves due to cost (for example).

Please check off any combination below totalling less than \$50, (write-ins are allowed), and send the results to Evelyn Leeper, HO 1G-318A by March 3. The "winners" will be announced in the notice for the March 12 meeting.

Cost	Item
---- 7.95	Ash--VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION (see reviews in notices of 4/25/79 and 10/25/79)
---- 12.95	Nicholls--ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION (see review in notice of 10/25/79)
---- 28.00	Contento--INDEX TO SF ANTHOLOGIES AND COLLECTIONS (index by author, title, and book of all SF anthologies and single-author collections)
---- 10.00	ANALOG (1 yr = 12 issues) (fiction magazine edited by Stanley Schmidt)
---- 10.00	CINEFANTASTIQUE (1 yr = 4 issues) (film magazine edited by Fred Clarke)
---- 7.50	GALILEO (1 yr = 6 issues) (fiction/non-fiction magazine)
---- 12.00	LOCUS (1 yr = 12 issues) (news magazine edited by Charlie Brown)
---- 12.00	SF Commentary (1 yr = 12 issues) (news magazine edited by Andy Porter)
---- 6.00	SF REVIEW (1 yr = 4 issues) (non-fiction magazine edited by Richard geis)
---- 8.00	STARSHIP (formerly ALGOL) (1 yr = 4 issues) (non-fiction magazine edited by Andy Porter)

KEEPING TIME, by David Bear. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1979, 236p, Cloth, Novel, \$9.95. ISBN 0-312-45110-5.

David Bear, in his first novel, has followed where many have gone before in an attempt to meld science fiction and mystery. The result is a good, readable mystery, with minimal reliance on the science fictional aspects of the story.

Jack Hughes, the hero of this novel, is a lawyer-turned-private-investigator in New York City. The year is 1999, and society is slowly falling apart. The severe energy shortage has had a variety of effects (for example, without elevators, apartments become cheaper the higher up one goes). Various droughts and plaques have greatly changed people's eating habits (there are no more coffee plants in the world, and fresh vegetables are a luxury reserved only for the very rich). Hughes is approached by Ivory Wightman, a banker who deals in time rather than money. Wightman has developed a method whereby unused time (such as time spent waiting for appointments, etc.) can be stored up by a "transducer", and later regained when needed, but only by the owner. Five tapes containing time have been stolen from his vaults and he wants Hughes to recover them. These tapes belong to Gregory Darling (an all-but-forgotten movie star), Lea Dark (a wealthy invalid), Carlo Mountain (one of the richest men in the world), Victor Sieg (a powerful Senator), and Allison Bashcock (a novelist). Hughes must find the connection between all these people, and discover why anyone would want to steal their tapes.

The premise is interesting and original, and the pacing keeps the story moving along. On the way, we catch glimpses of life in the decaying New York of 1999. A lot is left unexplained, however, and this results in an overall not-quite-believable picture. Where does the food, meager as it is, come from? How is the remaining space program supported? One suspects that Bear did not work out a entire "world picture" before writing this novel. But these problems are incidental to the main thrust of the book, and perhaps excusable in a beginning author. Overall the novel is quite good, particularly for those who enjoy mysteries, and well worth reading.

Evelyn C. Leeper