

Holmdel Science Fiction Discussion Group
Club Notice - 3/17/80

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

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

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
4/2/80	JUPITER THEFT by Donald Moffit, rm 4H-205
4/23/80	MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS by Robert Heinlein, rm 4H-205
5/14/80	MASTERS OF SOLITUDE by Kaye & Godwin
6/4/80	EYES OF THE OVERWORLD by Jack Vance
6/25/80	JEM by Frederik Pohl
7/16/80	THREE HEARTS AND THREE LIONS by Poul Anderson
8/6/80	PROTECTOR by Larry Niven

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

1. As you may notice from the schedule above, we have firmed up some tentative books on our schedule, based on what is now in print. In addition, we have added two books to the end so as to be able to place a reasonably sized interim order with the F&SF Book Company. Anyone wishing to order copies of discussion books (or books from the attached list of recommended novels from LOCUS, or any other books) should contact Evelyn Leeper by March 24. (She has all necessary information on cost, etc.)

2. The time has come (the Walrus said) to pick yet more books for our discussion meetings. The attached form should allow you to nominate books easily and quickly. Each member should nominate at most one (gee, we're generous!) book. If that book is available we will schedule it for a meeting. As a matter of etiquette, it would be desirable if members show up to the meeting to discuss the book they have recommended, if for no other reason than to defend the choosing of that book. Please get your selections to me by Friday, March 28 so we can decide on a schedule at our next meetings.

3. MESSAGE FROM THE CLUB'S RESIDENT WARGAMER: The national wargaming convention will be held on June 27 to 29, 1980 at Widener University, Chester Pa. There will be a number of tournaments and seminars of interest to science fiction fans. The subjects include Dungeons and Dragons (fantasy role playing), Traveller and Gamma World (SF role playing), SF games in progress, the new SF magazine ARES, Cosmic Encounters, Dune, Timptripper, Stellar Conquest, and others. Contact Alan Gopin (HO x2089) for information.

4. I haven't had time to write a full-blown review of SATURN 3, but be warned that this is a film of very limited appeal. The special

effects are mediocre at best, the story is dull and has been done before. About the best I can say is that Hector, the robot of the "Demigod series" is visually impressive and a rather clever design. If anything makes this film bearable, he does.

5. Attached are the usual set of miscellaneous items.

Mark Leeper
HO 2B-502A x7093

return to |Mark Leeper|
HO 2B-502A

Due date: March 28, 1980

novel: DISCUSSION BOOK NOMINATION

author:

Name _____ Location _____

THE TOP TEN FANTASTIC FILMS OF THE 70'S
A choice by Mark Leeper

Well, we are just beyond the end of a decade and CINEFANTASTIQUE magazine is polling its readers for the best science fiction/horror/fantasy films of the Seventies. It seems like a good opportunity for me to look over the films I have enjoyed most from the decade. I should put a disclaimer at the beginning, there is rumored to be a spectacularly good horror film called THE WICKER MAN, made in 1973. This film has been entangled in legal problems and has had only limited release. I suspect that this is one of the top ten, but I will not put it in my list on the basis of hearsay evidence alone. At any rate, based on what I have seen, these are the ten best.

- ⑥ CARRIE (1976) - This is a simple but haunting paranoid fantasy of the revenge of a social outcast. Sissy Spacek turns in an excellent performance as a stigmatized teenager whose vengeance carries justice with it. The real monster is not the wielder of the psychic power, but the callous and cruel though more appealing schoolmates who really bring about the killing. This film is the best thing to date from gifted director Brian DePalma.
- ⑥ DARK STAR (1975) - This film started as a college project for John Carpenter (who went on to do HALLOWEEN and THE FOG) and Dan O'Bannon (who scripted ALIEN). This comedy in space concerns an endless space mission to look for alien life forms and to explode "unstable" planets. The humor revolves around artificial intelligence, all too fallible machinery, an apathetic and listless crew, and an alien life form clearly intended to lampoon movie monsters. For a low-budget film the special effects are impressive and the script is a real tour de force.
- ⑥ FANTASTIC PLANET (1973) - FANTASTIC PLANET is a full-length animated science fantasy film. The story may not have been a particularly good one. Certainly it lacked an ending that had the required punch, but it opened up new possibilities for science fiction films. The film was packed with imaginative visual sequences that did not have to be constrained by special effects. Certainly the film amply demonstrated that impressive things are possible for science fantasy in animated films. Probably even more is possible than in live-action films because anything the mind can visualize can be put on film. Unfortunately, the idea has not caught on and perhaps this film was just ahead of its time.
- ⑥ LAST WAVE (1978) - This is a haunting and impressive film from Australia. The story deals with aborigine tribal magic, some imminent but undefinable climatic disaster, and

the nature of dreams. But even better than the unusual plot was the photography. Throughout the film images of water are connected with dread and fear. This film was seen mostly in art houses and did not get the distribution it deserved, but I rather suspect that it will be back due to a strong word-of-mouth backing as well as critical acclaim.

- ④ PHASE IV (1974) - An entomologist and a mathematician are studying some new and disconcerting behavior of ants in a Southwestern U.S. desert. Slowly they come to realize they are embroiled in the first battle of a war for supremacy of the earth. This film is the only one I know of that convincingly portrays a war between human and completely nonhuman beings. The emphasis of this British film, however, is not so much on how the battle is waged but on how each side gathers and interprets intelligence about its enemy. Each side effectively exploits its physical differences from its opponent. The extensive insect photography, which is both frightening and beautiful, is done by the same team that photographed HELISTROM CHRONICLE.
- ④ QUEST FOR LOVE (1971) - John Wyndham's non-memorable short story, "Random Quest" was the basis for this tale of parallel universes. In fact, this is the only science fiction film I know of that deals with a parallel universe theme. A scientist working with an experimental particle accelerator finds that it catapults him into an alternate earth that split off from our own some time in the 1930s. He has, in fact, traded places with this alternate world's version of himself, a vain and selfish playwright. Our hero's attempts to make himself understood and believed are handled credibly and realistically. This is a film that functions equally well as a science fiction film, an adventure, and a love story.
- ④ STAR WARS (1977) - The most profitable film ever made has a storyline little better than comic book level. It is, however, the most spectacular and visually exciting film I have ever seen. This beautifully visualized space opera delivers more enjoyment than any other three films I can name. The score is superior; the special effects are a giant step forward; every minute of the film shows wit and imagination. The film has everything but a deep meaningful storyline. But how many films with meaningful storylines also function as swashbucklers?
- ④ TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER (1976) - After a dry spell in the Seventies, Hammer films of Britain looked back on THE DEVIL'S BRIDE, a previous success based on a Dennis Wheatley black magic novel and made this second one. Set in a modern setting, this film has a most unlikely hero and villain. The hero is the best-selling author of cheap exploitation books about Satanism. The villain is an excommunicate

Catholic priest attempting to save the world by creating an avatar. The film is flawed by one excessively bloody scene and the lack of a really exciting ending, but the black magic (I am told) is accurate, the pace of the film is tense, and the concepts are interesting. A well-acted and engaging thriller.

- WATERSHIP DOWN (1978) - Not since ANIMAL FARM has there been a fantasy that works on as many levels as WATERSHIP DOWN. Based on the Richard Adams novel, this animated film tells of a group of rabbits trying to find a safe place to live. The rabbits are believable either as rabbits or as humans. The animation meets or even surpasses Disney standards. Adams claims that the book was really based on his experiences trying to make his way from behind enemy lines to safety during the Second World War. But an equally good case could be made for this to be an allegorical history of other 20th Century events like the founding of Israel.
- ZARDOZ (1974) - John Boorman's films could hardly be said to pander to public tastes. He is best known for two good films that completely failed to become popular successes. His film EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC, in spite of public derision, was an impressive expansion of the ideas of THE EXORCIST rather than the expected remake with minor variations. ZARDOZ was only slightly more popular. Abstract in style and often hard to follow, this film presented an original view of the future shrouded in a mystical haze. This is a film that deserves multiple viewings and slowly grows on the viewer.

The following films deserve honorable mention:

- FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE (1974) - Amicus Films of Britain made a series of anthology films of which this is the best. Five stories of the horror writer R. Chetwynd Hayes are drawn together by a framing sequence starring Peter Cushing. In none of the other anthology films are the humorous sequences as funny, nor the serious sequences more startling. This is probably the best horror-anthology film yet made, including its inspiration, DEAD OF NIGHT.
- LAND THAT TIME FORGOT (1975) - This was the first attempt to adapt a non-Tarzan work of Edgar Rice Burroughs to the screen. It was a fairly faithful adaptation of the novel of the same name. In fact, the only changes in the script (co-authored by Michael Moorcock) from the novel were improvements that made the story more intelligent. An example of the improvements that were made was to change a one-dimensional craven villain, the U-boat Captain, into a three-dimensional and rather interesting character. The mechanical dinosaur models are often an embarrassment, but some of the special effects in the early part of the film

are quite good.

- ⑥ LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE (1973) - One does not usually see a ghost story handled as a science fiction film (or maybe it is a science fiction film handled as a ghost story). A small group of people spend a week in "the Mt. Everest of haunted houses" using scientific methods to find real evidence on the survival of personality after death. The script, and the novel on which it was based, are by Richard Matheson, and it is probably his best work on film. This is a taut, yet rational, ghost story.
- ⑥ STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE (1979) This was one of the most anxiously awaited science fiction films ever made. It also was a rather large disappointment as most people seem to agree. The film lacks action and has a rather dry plot. Still, the special effects are impressive and immense. The story was not up to its pretensions, but it did toy with several interesting ideas. Even if it did fall short of expectations, this film set standards that will not soon be surpassed.
- ⑥ TIME AFTER TIME (1979) - This film has a rather unpromising premise but in spite of that turned out to be an absolutely charming fantasy. The plot deals with H. G. Wells having to take his own time machine to the present to track down an old friend who, he discovers, is Jack-the-Ripper. It is not easy to create a portrayal of Wells that will please his fans. This one had just the right balance of bewilderment and curiosity to satisfy anyone who really likes Wells. The Wellsian view of our times is always penetrating and at the same time funny. The suspense elements are well-handled and at every stage the script demonstrated talent and care. A truly refreshing little fantasy.

While I am listing the best of the Seventies, I will mention that the best television series of the period. I might even say it is the best of any decade. Unfortunately, it is a British science fiction series that I saw on Canadian television and which may never be shown on American television. THE SURVIVORS (1975) is the sort of limited-length tv-series that is common in Britain. It is thirteen one-hour episodes that tell a well-defined story, though each episode stands on its own. In this series a germ-warfare weapon is accidentally released by what appears to be the Chinese and is carried via air travelers to all parts of the world. [That is really the sequence we see under the titles at the beginning of each episode.] The first episode shows life in England slowing down, much like the way it does here when there is a bad flu epidemic. Train service is getting worse, half of the people are staying out of their jobs sick, etc. Most people are unaware that people are dying from the sickness. Abby, the main character, is stricken with it, becomes sick, and sleeps for a week. She wakes up to find that the disease has come and gone.

There are now only a handful of people left in England. Several little societies spring up with different forms of government. There is fighting for the grocery stores. Four or five groups form, each undeservedly calling themselves the government and is ready to use force to grab up resources like food, gasoline, and guns. Along the way we really see what makes societies tick. We see what makes various forms of government work and not work. We see how mores and justice must be different in a society where the loss of just two or three people may make that society too small to survive. SURVIVORS is the most adult and intelligently written science fiction series I have seen.

SCIENCE FICTION CLUB LIBRARY HOLDINGS

1. Anderson, P., "Brain Wave", no cover, (1).
2. Anderson, P., "Three Hearts and Three Lions", no cover, (1).
3. Asimov, I., "The End of Eternity", (2).
4. Asimov, I., "The Foundation Trilogy", 3 volumes, (1) each.
5. Bester, A., "The Stars My Destination", (2).
6. Brunner, J. "Stand on Zanzibar", (1).
7. Cherryh, C. J., "Gate of Ivrel", (2).
8. Cherryh, C. J., "The Faded Sun: Kesrith", (1).
9. Clarke, A. C., "Imperial Earth", (2).
10. Clarke, A. C., "Childhood's End", (2).
11. Cooper, E., "A Far Sunset", (2).
12. del Rey, J., "Stellar 1", no cover, (1).
13. Ellison, H., "Again, Dangerous Visions, Vol. 1", no cover, (1).
14. Endore, G., "The Werewolf of Paris", no cover, (1).
15. Farmer, P., "The Book of ...", no cover, (1).
16. Farmer, P. J., "To Your Scattered Bodies Go", (2).
17. Farmer, P. J., "The Fabulous Riverboat", (1).
18. Farmer, P. J., "The Dark Design", (1).
19. Finney, C., "The Circus of Dr. Lao", no cover, (1).
20. Haldeman, J., "The Forever War", (1).
21. Hamilton, E., "The Best of ...", no cover, (1).
22. Harrison, H., "The Adventures of the Stainless Steel Rat", (2).
23. Heinlein, R., "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress", (2).
24. Heinlein, R. A., "Starship Troopers", (1).

25. Herbert, F., "Dune", (2).
26. Kaye, M. & P. Godwin, "The Masters of Solitude", (2).
27. Laumer, K. "Dinosaur Beach", (2).
28. Le Guin, U. K., "The Dispossessed", (1).
29. Leiber, F., "Conjure Wife", no cover, (1).
30. MacLean, K., "Missing Man", no cover, (1).
31. Mc Caffrey, A., "Dragonflight", (2).
32. Mc Caffrey, A., "Dragonquest", (1).
33. Mc Caffrey, A., "The White Dragon", (1).
34. McIntyre, V., "Dreamsnake", (2).
35. Moffitt, D., "The Jupiter Theft", (2).
36. Niven, L. & Pournelle, J., "The Mote in God's Eye", no cover, (1).
37. Pohl, F. "Gateway", (2).
38. Pohl, F. & Kornbluth, C. M., "The Space Merchants", (1).
39. Reamy, T., "Blind Voices", (2).
40. Saberhagen, F., "Berserker", (2).
41. Silverberg, R., "Up the Line", (2).
42. Silverberg, R., "Other Dimensions", no cover, (1).
43. Simak, C., "The Goblin Reservation", no cover, (1).
44. Stapledon, O., "Last and First Men"/"Star Maker", (2).
45. Tiptree, Jr., J., "Up the Walls of the World", (1).
46. Tuck, D. H., "The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction and Fantasy", Volumes 1 and 2, hardcover.
47. Vance, J., "The Eyes of the Overworld", (1).
48. Wilhelm, K., "Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang", no cover, (1).
49. Wilson, C., "The Mind Parasites", (1).

50. Wylie, P., "Gladiator", harcover, (1).
51. Zelazny, R., "Lord of Light", (1).
52. Wolfe, Le Guin, Tiptree, Silverberg, "The New Atlantis", no cover, (1).
53. ---, "The Science Fiction Hall of Fame", Volumes I, IIa, and IIb, (1) each.

CHEKOV'S ENTERPRISE, by walter Koenig. Pocket Books, New York, 1980, 222p, Paper, Non-fiction, \$2.25. ISBN 0-671-83286-7.

"These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise...", or at least Koenig's interpretation of them insofar as they pertain to the making of STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE. (Walter Koenig, for those of you who have spent the last fourteen years in a cave atop the Himalayas, and hence have never seen "Star Trek", played Lieutenant Pavel Chekov, the weapons officer aboard the Enterprise.) In short, this is Koenig's diary, which he claims to have kept during the filming. (One has the feeling, though, that the book did not reach final form at that time, but was re-written later from notes. For one thing, the style is too consistent throughout; a genuine diary tends to be wordy in parts, and very brief in others.) Unfortunately, as Koenig himself points out, he is one of the character actors, rather than one of the stars. This means that there will be many meetings, decisions, etc., that he is left out of, which in turn means that the book is a very limited picture of what went on during the filming. Also, I am suspicious of books such as this which never have anything bad to say about anyone. According to Koenig, everyone who worked on STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE was wonderful, except for those who were more than wonderful. You will not find any new information here, nor any details about the effects, plot, or general production of STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE. (THE MAKING OF STAR TREK by Susan Sackett, due out soon, will supposedly cover these items.) For hardcore Trekkies only.

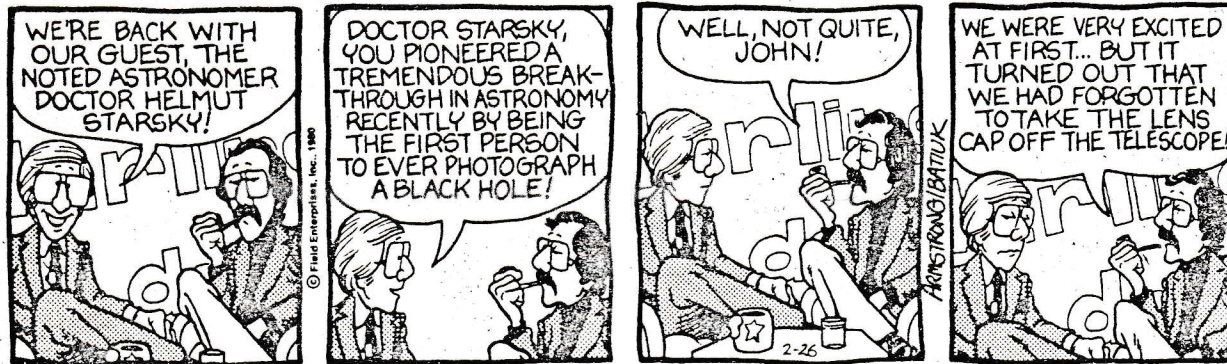
Evelyn C. Leeper

14 OFFICIAL BLUEPRINTS; STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE, by David Kimble. Wallaby Books, New York, 1980, Plastic Case, Art, \$0.95. ISBN 0-671-79106-0.

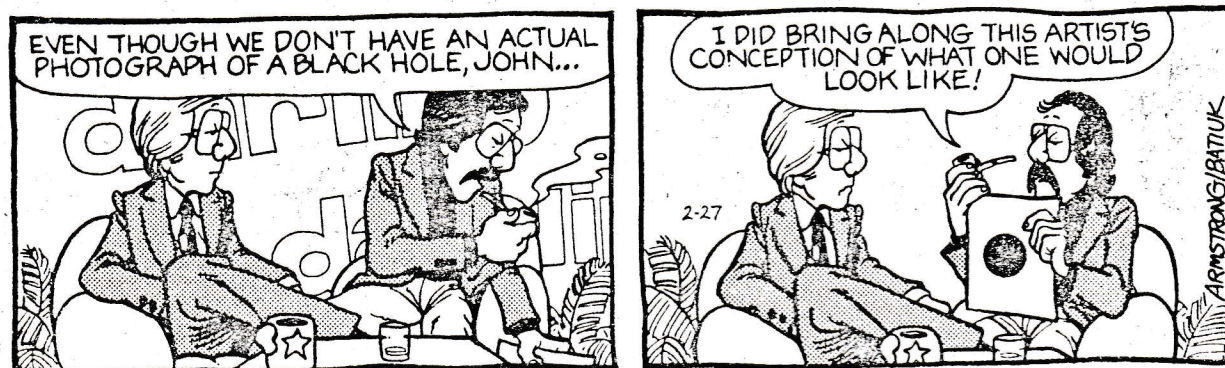
I have heard that the blueprints for the TV version of STAR TREK were quite good; these are a rip-off. The drawings have very little detail and a lot of cutesy-poo labels ("bolognium engines", indeed!). They cover a range of craft (the Enterprise, the Klingon ship, the Vulcan shuttlecraft, and various smaller craft), but the incompleteness of the drawings makes them almost worthless. Of interest to (the younger) Trekkies only.

Evelyn C. Leeper

John Darling



John Darling



John Darling



MAD MAX

A Review by Mark K. Leeper

Ever since FRENCH CONNECTION we have been inundated by films depicting violence with cars, trucks, motorcycles, Good Humor wagons, and anything else on wheels. MAD MAX is a feeble excuse for stringing together scenes of motorcycles hitting humans, cars hitting motorcycles, cars driving through recreational vehicles, et cetera, ad nauseum. The plot is the most standard of action film plots: "They killed his partner and he just cursed under his breath. But when they killed his wife, his child, and even (gasp!) his puppy dog, he decided it was time for revenge." with minor variations, there must be hundreds of films built around that plot. In this case, the "he" is a policeman and the "they" is a group of motorcycle enthusiasts led by a gentleman called "Toecutter".

Now the producers of the film had a minor problem, other than the fact that they knew nothing about filmmaking. If they showed how police actually would handle the bikers, the film would show a touch of restraint which the producers were definitely not aiming for. Usually police try to avoid mayhem, and that just did not fit in with the producers' goals. So how do they avoid this dilemma? Of course, science fiction to the rescue! The film is set in a near-future world in which order has broken down and the highways appear to have become the scenes of constant demolition derbies. The police work out of what looks like an old warehouse and do little more than soup up cars that

they can take out onto the roads and slam into fugitives. Be warned from this film specifically and sneak previews in general.

Recommended Novels of 1979 (from LOCUS)

(further info available from Evelyn C. Leeper)

Abbey, Lynn--DAUGHTER OF THE BRIGHT MOON
Anderson, Poul--MERMAN'S CHILDREN
Anthony, Piers--CASTLE FOGNA
Ballard, J.G.--UNLIMITED DREAM COMPANY
Bishop, Michael--CATACOMB YEARS
Bishop, Michael--TRANSFIGURATIONS
Bova, Ben--KINSMAN
Butler, Octavia--KINDRED
Cherryh, C.J.--FADED SUN: KUTATH
Cherryh, C.J.--FIRES OF AZEROTH
Clarke, Arthur C.--FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE
Compton, D.G.--WINDOWS
Cowper, Richard--ROAD TO CCRILAY
Crowley, John--ENGINE SUMMER
Deighton, Len--SS-GB
Delany, Samuel R.--TALES OF NEVERYON
Disch, Thomas M.--ON THE WINGS OF SONG
Foster, M.A.--DAY OF THE KLESH
King, Stephen--DEAD ZONE
Le Guin, Ursula K.--MALAFRENA
Lee, Tanith--DEATH'S MASTER
Lynn, Elizabeth--DANCERS OF ARUN
Lynn, Elizabeth--WATCHTOWER
McCaffrey, Anne--DRAGONDRUMS
McKillip, Patricia--HARPIST IN THE WIND
Monaco, Richard--GRAIL WAR
O'Donnell, Kevin, Jr.--MAYFLIES
Pohl, Frederik--JEM
Robinson, Spider & Jeanne--STARDANCE
Sheffield, Charles--WEB BETWEEN THE WORLDS
Stasheff, Christopher--WIZARD IN BEDLAM
Stewart, Mary--LAST ENCHANTMENT
Vance, Jack--FACE
Varley, John--TITAN
Wallace, Ian--HELLER'S LEAP
Wilhelm, Kate--JUNIPER TIME
Wrightson, Patricia--DARK BRIGHT WATER
Yarbro, Chelsea Quinn--PALACE
Zelazny, Roger--ROADMARKS