

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 8/3/83 -- Vol. 2, No. 5

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all Lincroft meetings are on Wednesdays
in LZ 3A-206 (HO meetings in HO 3N-418) at noon.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
8/10	Hugo nominees, prose and film
8/10	HO: TALES FROM THE WHITE HART by A. C. Clarke
8/30 (tue)	Video meeting: INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS ('78) pt. 1
8/31	Video meeting: INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS ('78) pt. 2
9/21	THIEVES' WORLD ed. by Robt. Asprin
10/12	Video meeting
11/2	TAU ZERO by Poul Anderson
11/23	Video meeting
12/14	WARLOCK IN SPITE OF HIMSELF by Christopher Stasheff

LZ's library and librarian Lance Larsen (576-2668) are in LZ 3C-219.
Mark Leeper (576-2571) is chairperson. HO's library and librarian
Mike Lukacs (949-4043) are in HO 4B-510. John Jetzt (834-3332) is
HO-chairperson.

1. Our Wednesday discussion will be on the various Hugo nominees.
The novels are 2010 by Arthur C. Clarke, FRIDAY by Robert
Heinlein, FOUNDATION'S EDGE by Isaac Asimov, PRIDE OF CHANUR by C.
J. Cherryh, COURTSHIP RITE by Donald Kingsbury, and SWORD OF THE
LICTOR by Gene Wolfe. The dramatic presentations are BLADERUNNER,
DARK CRYSTAL, E.T., ROAD WARRIOR, and STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF
KHAN.

2. The wall outside LZ 1D-216 (our secretary-treasurer's office)
serves as an SF bulletin board. In addition to copies of the
notice, she will post various book promotional flyers that she gets
(from Del Rey, DAW, etc.). Take a look when you pick up your
printouts in the Xerox room; it's right around the corner.
Contributions (articles from magazines, etc.) are welcome.

3. You realize, of course, we're never going to find out how it all
turns out. Is mankind going to reach the stars? Maybe yes, maybe
no. You and I will never know. Contact with intelligent extra-
terrestrials? It might yet happen. We will probably be long dead
when it happens -- if it happens. You like science fiction movies?
The best ones are going to be made long after we are dead. We
won't miss them, probably, but we aren't going to see them. That
is unless there is some better medium than film. The same goes for
science fiction books. Even if there is an atomic war or some
other holocaust in our lifetimes, there may be survivors and their
descendants may develop a means for faster than light travel. All

*****Presorted*****
* Leeper, Evelyn C. *
* LZ 1D-216 *

the most interesting computer software, the most fascinating hardware designs you are probably going to miss. Too bad. I bet it is really going to be something. But you and I will be pushing up daisies. Look at all the time we wasted before and in the primitive days of the space program. That time had its cost. There's lots of nifty stuff at the other end we are going to miss. Not that the people born in the seventies have it significantly better. They are going to miss the good stuff too. It's an immutable law of the universe. Everybody was born too early to find out how it all comes out in the end and they always will be. Oh well, so it goes.

4. Don Blosser, the lanky ex-Marine from Kansas has just donated a couple of big bags full of books to the library. I have no idea where he finds the time to read so much. Particularly since he reads them in that Kansas drawl. You would think that if anything would slow him down, that would. Claire Cirino, a true night-person, has donated a number of books to a science fiction library that is almost always closed when she is awake. She is one of those people who work the midnight to 8:30am shift. Ever come in at three in the morning and see them working down in the test lab? That'll scare the Bejeezus outa' ya, I'll tell you. You thought hacky-sack players were weird? Take a look at some of the night crew. They've got funny eyes that glow, just in case the lights go out. It's like something out of TIME MACHINE. Take my word for it, you would not want to go there twice.

Mark Leeper
LZ 3E-215 x2571

KRULL

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

Many a film starts well but falls apart in the second half. Writers of films like like THE BLACK STALLION and COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER seem to have vision when they start a script and lose it as the script progresses. KRULL is a film that starts sour and sweetens up in the second half. The first half is puerile, derivative fantasy, but suddenly in the second half the film starts exhibiting imagination and pacing that were missing to that point. Perhaps the main difference in the two halves is that in the first part of the story, the film introduces the simplest and most cliched set of characters in any recent film; the conclusion involves them with original and creative fantasy images.

Ken Marshall, who was acceptable as TV's Marco Polo, was just short of acceptable as Colwyn, a callow Prince Charming type in a quest to rescue an over-permed Lysette Anthony playing a vacuous Princess Lyssa, who is a little too sweet to be true. On his quest Colwyn collects an Obi-Wan Kenobi retread named Ynyr, a small army of thieves, and a not-very-convincing-looking cyclops. Their adventures in the first half are pretty hum-drum, but by the second half of the film things start moving. One of the things that the producers did well is a beautifully executed crystal spider in a giant web. Another is a herd of "fire mares" whose thundering hooves leave trails of flame. Perhaps most impressive is the surrealistic interior of the Black Fortress, where Lyssa is held. It is ruled by a twenty-foot demon and guarded by automatons that look like Teutonic knights. Cracks open in floors, passageways turn soft as pillows and seal up, trapping the people using them, and in general it is neither a nice place to visit nor does Lyssa want to live there.

Perhaps the most interesting character of the film is a melancholy cyclops, one of a race of men who traded one of their eyes for the ability to see into the future, but who were given only the ability to see the times of their own deaths. The cyclops is a good fighter, but the concept of a fighter who knows the time of his death was not sufficiently developed. Presumably he would be fearless because he knows going into a fight whether he would survive it or not.

Despite a small effort at the beginning to make this a science fiction film, the film throughout is firmly planted in the fantasy genre. Columbia, who sank a reported \$27,000,000 into the production was obviously aware that science fiction does better in ticket sales than fantasy. Unfortunately, with so expensive a production they seem to have severely cut corners on the print quality of the prints distributed. An imitation STAR WARS scene set in space at

the beginning might have been considerably more impressive, but the entire effect was destroyed by film flaws that made the scene look like it was shot through pixie-dust. KRULL is highly flawed and word-of-mouth may kill it at the boxoffice, but the film is far from worthless and deserves a fair viewing from an audience willing to accept delayed gratification.

HIGH ROAD TO CHINA

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

It is always a pleasure to see a good film do well at the boxoffice; occasionally it is convenient when a good film does poorly. A film that did poorly will show up on cable and in the video rental shops much faster. Based on poor boxoffice and lukewarm reviews, but the recommendation of one friend, I rented HIGH ROAD TO CHINA. All but one opinion said that this was a lackluster imitation of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK.

HIGH ROAD TO CHINA is different in approach from RAIDERS, but those differences are by no means bad. Where RAIDERS has fast-paced, non-stop action, HIGH ROAD has credibility and a backdrop that is at least as interesting as the main story. The story concerns an heiress's race, by bi-plane, across a turbulent Asia in the 1920's. The 1920's was an interesting period of history even in our own country; Asia was a patchwork of small wars in which old ways were dying with the "help" of modern weapons. It is across this Asia that Eve Tozer (Bess Armstrong) must chase to find her father before his unscrupulous partner can have him declared legally dead. With her flies a burned-out World War I flying ace (Tom Selleck) and his mechanic (Jack Weston). The trail leads from Egypt, to Afghanistan, to Nepal, and finally to Northern China, involving the trio in two wars and a gang of hired killers.

Even if the script were terrible, which it certainly is not, the film would already have three points in its favor for me by being set in the 1920's, by being set in Asia, and by being concerned with flying. Armstrong is plucky as the heiress and Tom Selleck only slightly overplays his part. Fans of RAIDERS can get some idea of how he would have been as Indiana Jones had he not turned the part down for a TV series. The supporting cast runs the gamut from a hammy (in more ways than one) Robert Morley to the always excellent Brian Blessed. But the main attraction of the film is not the actors but two beautiful planes and the exotic scenery of a beautiful continent in conflict. The aerial photography is most enjoyable, with the flying surprisingly graceful and beautiful. The scenery (shot on location in Yugoslavia) and the costumes are worth seeing.

I think that HIGH ROAD lost out at the boxoffice because audiences were expecting the pace of a RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. Had this film been made a decade ago it would have been successful and would still be warmly remembered. Watch for this one on cable or rent the tape.