

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 8/17/83 -- Vol. 2, No. 7

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> |
|-------------|---|
| 8/30 (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 |
| 9/21 | HO: ??? |
| 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. For those with insomnia, the NESFA bylaws and related documents
are now on file in the LZ SF Club library.

2. Waldenbooks has started a "science fiction club" (called
"Otherworlds Club"). Members get a 10% discount on purchases
between \$5 and \$15, and a 20% discount on purchases over \$15 (only
applies to paperback books and games from Ace, Avon, Ballantine-Del
Rey, Bantam, Berkley, Donning-Starblaze, Dungeons & Dragons, NAL-
DAW, Pocket-Timescape, and Tor). Members can also pick up the bi-
monthly newsletter at Waldenbooks by showing their membership card.
Surprisingly, the newsletter is not patronizing. The first issue
is sixteen pages and contains a lengthy article on Lunacon, an
interview with John Varley, book reviews and announcements, and
film news. Not up to LOCUS perhaps, but it's free and LOCUS isn't.
You can sign up at your local Waldenbooks. (The preceding is for
information only and does not constitute an endorsement of
"Otherworlds Club".)

3. According to reliable sources, STAR TREK III (a.k.a. "In Search
of Spock") has started shooting this week. A spring 1984 release
is planned. All of the original TV show cast has been signed
except Walter Koenig.

4. The New Jersey Science Fiction Society (NJSFS) claims in their
newsletter to be the largest science fiction club in New Jersey.
According to Lance the Librarian, who is a NJSFS member, they have
between 60 and 70 members. We have 138 (plus two affiliate

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

members). Such vile calumnies against us should not go unnoticed. Would all LZSFC (LSFC) members (and if you get this, you are a LZSFC (LSFC) member) who attend the "Hobokon in '86" parties (Thursday and Saturday nights) at Constellation be sure and tell the NJSFS folk running it that we outnumber them 2 to 1? (You don't have to tell Lance the Librarian; he knows.)

5. Attached is a list of the LZSFC (LSFC) library holdings.

Evelyn Leeper
LZ 1D-216 x2378

Mercury Capsules - 18 August 1983

"Mercury Capsules": SF review column, edited by Paul S R Chisholm. Appears in the "Lincroft-Holmdel SF Club Notice". A medium for quick reviews of anything of interest in the world of science fiction. I'll pass along anything (not slanderous or scatological) without nasty comments. I prefer to get reviews by electronic mail: send to mhtsa!lznv!psc or houxal!mhtsa!lznv!psc from the Holmdel Computer Center, or nv!psc from the Lincroft Computer Center. If that's impossible, I'm at LZ 1D-212, 576-2374.

Mostly novels this time, including a real classic.

Courtship Rite: novel, Donald Kingsbury. Hugo nominee.

Is there anyone who didn't vote for this one? A saga in the best Dune tradition. This story takes place on a world colonized long ago (by humans), a near desert world where the native life is sparse and poisonous, and metal is scarce. The colonists have lost most of their technology (except, oddly enough, some genetic engineering); different cultures on the planet find different strengths within themselves to survive.

Kingsbury has carefully worked out the history and evolution of these different cultures. Better, he's used them as threads in an interesting, exciting story.

Paul S R Chisholm

Tales of the Vulgar Unicorn: anthology, edited by Robert Asprin.

More stories from Thieves' World. Some of these stories were a little contrived, to place them (at least momentarily) in the Vulgar Unicorn. Some of the previous characters develop, some newer ones are introduced. One such is Tempus, a powerful character at the center of the last three stories. He seems a little schizophrenic, emerging from the typewriters of three writers, but he's worth watching. (This starts a pattern that continues in the third and fourth books. Some of the writers stitch here and there in the great tapestry that is Sanctuary. Others work together to build a large, continuous tale that sets the background and tone of the next book.)

Paul S R Chisholm

Oath of Fealty: novel, Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle.

Heaven knows that Niven has fallen from the heights he used to write from, and that the worst of his most recent disasters have been collaborations. Oath of Fealty shows the best of both writers, their creativity, imagination, and attention to detail. The story is straightforward and well paced, the characters slightly stereotyped but reasonably individual and realistic. Todos Santos, the archology outside Los Angeles, is a remarkably described imperfect utopia; the writers go to great lengths to show its strengths and its weaknesses, to show why some flock there and others stay away.

Paul S R Chisholm

Krull: movie.

On the Cinefantastique scale of -4 to +4, this is a clear 0. Reasonable effects (most of the time), well paced (ditto), weak story.

The main thing about this movie is that it's a careful ripoff of "the last six", as one person put it. It's a careful mix of Star Wars, The Dark Crystal, Excalibur, and even E.T. It's got some nice, original bits, but they're few and far between. This is a good movie for the five to fifteen year olds.

Paul S R Chisholm

Orion's Sword, Spear of Mars, and Thor's Hammer: anthologies, edited by Reginald Bretnor.

This trilogy of anthologies is devoted to future war: the first concerns wars on or near Earth, the second wars within the solar system, and the third interstellar wars. Each volume has a mix of fact and fiction and the fiction covers a broad spectrum of styles. All in all, an interesting assortment. (Note: I have only read volumes 1 and 3, but have no reason to believe that volume 2 is grossly different.)

Evelyn C Leeper

Best of Randall Garrett: collection, Randall Garrett (edited by Robert Silverberg).

Nine stories, two reviews (of other people's novels) in verse, and a song, along with twelve reminiscences by other authors make a motley assortment. The reminiscences tend to be boring ("Oh-it-was-such-fun-but-I-guess-you-had-to-have-been-there" type), and the song loses a lot if you can't read music (it is set to an original tune which is reproduced in the book). On the other hand, it does contain two Lord Darcy stories (including the first Lord Darcy story), and a mix of serious and humorous items. I don't know the whole of Garrett's work to judge if this is a representative sample or not, but it is nevertheless an enjoyable book.

Evelyn C Leeper

Saint-Germain Chronicles: collection, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro.

Most of Yarbro's writings about the Comte de Saint-Germain (the five novels) suffer from a somewhat overly flowery style and an inordinate amount of time spent describing people's clothes. The medium of the short story (or novelette) helps keep these tendencies in check and makes this the best volume of the series to start with.

Evelyn C Leeper

Death-Coach, Death-Angel, Death-School, Death-Doctor: novels, J. N. Williamson. Four novels about Lamia Zacharias, a female vampire, which lean heavily on obscure Greek legends (NOT Greek mythology per se). They also lean heavily on sex, in many varieties. For vampire completists only.

Evelyn C Leeper

Moby Dick: novel, Herman Melville. Correction: The first line is "Call me Ishmael." not "Call me Ahab." That's what I get for writing this stuff when I'm half asleep. Thanks to Paul Chisholm, Carol Jackson, and Paul Kay for pointing this out.

Evelyn C Leeper

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CUJO

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

If you think about classic horror stories they all have one thing in common. They all have a distancing effect which separates the reader from the events of the story. Most are set in faraway places. Even those that are set in close identifiable locales involve improbable threats like werewolves and vampires. Effectively the author is saying, "Here are some frightening things that could happen to some people. Identify with my characters and be frightened yourself." Richard Matheson, it has been noted, created a sort of a breakthrough in horror stories by setting them in suburbia and having the threat come from perfectly ordinary sources. For example, one of his stories concerns a suburbanite who comes out of a movie thirsty from popcorn only to find the water fountain out of order. As he returns home he finds the water company has shut off the water to his house. As attempt after attempt to find water fails, he goes from frustration, to hysteria, to panic. This is a horror story that the reader feels could happen to him and it is made up of common events and items.

CUJO is an effective horror/suspense film made up of props no more exotic than a few bats we see at the beginning of the film. When these common elements come together in just the right combination they create a life-and-death situation. CUJO is, of course, based on the novel by Stephen King. The first half of the film constructs an inexorable chain of events leading to a frightening situation: a woman and her son trapped in a car while a mad dog rampages outside. When we see a car that keeps breaking down and a dog that is bitten by a bat, the end situation is as inevitable as when in another film Laurel and Hardy are carrying a plate glass window and we see a baby drop a rattle on the sidewalk.

There are a dozen reasons why the end situation is unlikely at the outset and one at a time each falls away, creating suspense and pushing the events toward the entrapment of the ill-fated characters. For the first half of the film the situation builds a little too slowly to be truly suspenseful, though there are uncomfortable moments watching the progression of the dog's condition. Once all the pieces fall into place, the film adds familiarity to predictability. Survival for the mother and son becomes a sort of game: Can the dog break into the car? Can the victims get out of the car to find weapons before they are discovered?

As far as the story is concerned, this is a very unambitious little film. The plot seems better suited to a made-for-TV film than it does to the wide screen. Still, given that, director Lewis Teague has executed the story

suspensefully. It sets out to frighten the audience and audiences do seem to be frightened. More interestingly, it makes a point that in our seemingly well-civilized, well-protected society, we are surrounded by things that have the potential to be as dangerous as anything that Bram Stoker or Mary Shelley fancifully wrote about. CUJO is a see-once-and-forget film, but under the right conditions some audiences will find it a most effective little horror film.

Article from The Net on Civilian Space Shuttle Seats

Contributed to The Net by Ron Goldman

Contributed to The Newsletter by Dale L. Skran

Report Recommends Free Space Shuttle Seats for Some Civilians

By HOWARD BENEDICT

AP Aerospace Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Want to fly in space as a private citizen? Your chances of reaching this dream are better if you are a writer, broadcaster or educator.

There will be seats for non-astronauts on the space shuttle in three or four years, and a special task force recommended on Wednesday that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration make them available to civilians at no charge.

Those selected for early flights, it said, should be professional observers able to provide the public with insights into space flight and the role of humans in space.

The first, the task force said, should be communicators, such as reporters and authors, who "could provide a comprehensive visual mission history as well as real-time reports." This group also could include poets, artists or photographers.

Technical writers should be among the early travelers, to "provide a written and interpretive history that also covers the science, technical and institutional achievements that make the space program feasible," the group's report said.

High priority, it said, also should be given to educators who could later instruct students "on the science, engineering and biological principles integral to manned space flight."

Other professions would follow, but none of the citizen passengers should be permitted to profit from the experience and there should be a provision that any money earned be donated to charity, it said. Whether foreigners should be included would be a NASA decision.

The report was presented to the NASA Advisory Council by Dr. John E. Naugle, a scientist who heads the Task Force for the Study of Private Citizens on the Shuttle. Naugle, a former NASA official, is an executive of the Fairchild Space and Electronic Corp.

"We sought the views of a wide cross section of people," Naugle said. "We concluded that we are ready to take another step to open up space travel. ..."

"I feel humans eventually will work and live in space and this program would help NASA build toward that goal," he said.

Naugle said Congress would have to pass legislation allowing citizens to fly because NASA's charter does not permit it to carry passengers.

The report concluded that shuttle flight is not particularly stressful, that medical requirements would not be stringent and that outsiders would not pose an undue safety or mission risk as long as they were carefully selected and trained.

Citizen candidates would train for five or six months and during that time would be carefully evaluated for compatibility with the astronauts who would fly with them.

"By and large, most astronauts are in favor of this and feel it is the next logical step," Naugle stated.

Naugle said the candidate selection process should focus on the probable productivity of the observer and the widest dissemination of the resulting information.

He said candidates would have to submit proposals on why he or she wanted to fly.

Some council members suggested provision should be made to fly NASA managers and those who helped design the shuttle so they could provide technical expertise that might improve the spaceship. Naugle said he assumed the agency would make such a provision.

NASA will be operating four shuttles in 1985 and expects to launch 24 flights a year by 1987. Each ship can carry seven people, but many missions will require only four working astronauts.