

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 1/25/84 -- Vol. 2, No. 30

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

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

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
02/15	Audio/visual meeting
03/07	NOR CRYSTAL TEARS by Alan Dean Foster
03/28	Audio/visual meeting
04/18	DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS by John Wyndham
05/09	Audio/visual meeting
05/30	1984 by George Orwell

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 (577-5316) is
HO-chairperson.

1. The Thursday Night Film Festival continues on February 2, 7:00
PM, with

Dinosaurs in Modern Cities
BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS (1953) dir. by Eugene Lourie
GIANT BEHEMOTH (1959) dir. by Eugene Lourie
GORG0 (1961) dir. by Eugene Lourie

I can think of four English language films that show dinosaurs
attacking major cities. Three are directed by the same man, oddly
enough. [Trivia: what is the fourth, are there others? I will
publish the name of the first person to name a fourth]. As usual,
I have maps to my house for anyone who doesn't know how to get
there.

2. Well, folks. It was just announced that the current national
number one best-selling book is a science fiction book. It took
this particular book 36 years to make it to the top of the list.
Three guesses what it is.

3. BLAST FROM THE PAST DEPARTMENT: This issue features a book
review by Rich Ditch. Long-time readers will remember that in the
very limited context of this notice and meetings Rich and I can't
stand each other and enjoyed a long-standing feud of thought-
provoking arguments and razor-sharp invective. In actual fact,
this club owes a great deal to Mr. Ditch and we welcome the return
of his writing to these pages very much, no matter how
insignificant his contribution may seem to readers. Okay, Rich,
you get the next shot.

(THIS NOTICE IS PRINTED ON BOTH SIDES -- TURN THE PAGES OVER)

4. Several club members have been asked by friends to suggest some basic science fiction for people who want to get started reading it. While the following are not necessarily the BEST in the field, they do represent a consensus of what the BASIC works are (i.e., everyone will assume you have read these):

Asimov, Isaac	FOUNDATION Trilogy
Clarke, Arthur C.	CHILDHOOD'S END
Heinlein, Robert A.	THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS
Herbert, Frank	DUNE
Keyes, Daniel	FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON
Le Guin, Ursula K.	LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS

and one of the following anthologies:

Asimov, Isaac, ed.	HUGO WINNERS (3 volumes)
Healy & McComes, eds.	ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE
Silverberg, R., ed.	SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME, V. 1

5. CLASSIFIED ADS: Anyone wishing to carpool to Boskone from the Holmdel/Keyport/Lincroft/etc area, please contact Susan DeFelice (739-4741), as she is looking for riders to share expenses and scintillating conversation.

6. Ads place by the "Nominate Mark Leeper for Hugo for Best Fan Writer" committee are placed by Evelyn Leeper. Our chairperson would never be so immodest as to suggest such a (well-deserved) honor. --Evelyn Leeper

Mark Leeper
LZ 3E-215 x2571
hocse!lznv!mrl
houxa!mhtsa!lznv!mrl
hogpd!lznv!mrl

Mercury Capsules - January 25, 1984

"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 mhntsa!lznv!psc, houxa!mhntsa!lznv!psc, or hocse!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.

+ Automan: television series, ABC, produced by Glen Larson.

Once upon a time, Glen Larson saw Star Wars, and created Battlestar Galactica. More recently, he saw Tron, a lesser movie. The result is Automan, a series about a mostly-bumbling programmer working for the LAPD, and his creation. The title character is a "hologram", who is invulnerable, can control machines by force of mind, and who is trying all too hard to be human.

I never appreciated how good Battlestar Galactica was . . .

Paul S R Chisholm

+ The Right Stuff: non-fiction book, by Tom Wolfe.

This is the proverbial book that fills a much-needed gap: that of books to cut national heroes down to size. I didn't particularly idolize the astronauts, but I think there was a positive effect from people who did. I think deep down everybody knows our heroes are just human beings who are in the right place at the right time. The book shows us that the seven Mercury astronauts were just regular guys. On the positive side this is a highly detailed and deeply involving look at eight men: seven astronauts and a test pilot. Wolfe writes with an air of authenticity and detail and with no apparent axe to grind, so his history of the Mercury program will probably be the one remembered and believed. This in spite of Gordon Cooper's protest at ConStellation that Wolfe's account didn't always square with Cooper's memories. Still, The Right Stuff is remarkably detailed whether or not the detail is authentic. Curiously, while the book seems to tear down heroes (with the exception of Chuck Yeager), the film builds them up again.

Mark R Leeper

+ Robin Hood and the Sorcerer: film, directed by Ian Sharp.

The ads on Showtime say that this is from the people who brought you Gandhi and Chariots of Fire. After seeing the credits, I can only conclude that they mean "the British" since none of the names in production seem familiar. The title seems to be a cross between Robin Hood and The Sword and the Sorcerer; so is the film. This retelling of the legend of Robin Hood as a sword and sorcery film plays fast and loose with the original story (as did Excalibur with the legend of Arthur) but occasionally achieves an a moody atmosphere. It is actually the first of a television series from Britain to be shown on Showtime. Not as bad as the first few minutes make it seem but not good enough to bring me back to see it each month.

Mark R Leeper

+ Wizards and Warriors: television series, CBS. In response to various queries regarding Hugo nominations, the episodes of Wizards and Warriors, in order, are: "Unicorn of Death," "Kidnap" (first half of the original two-part pilot), "Rescue" (second half of the original two-part pilot), "Night of Terror," "Skies of Death," "Caverns of Chaos," "Dungeon of Death," and "Vulkar's Revenge."

Evelyn C Leeper

The Book of the New Sun Tetralogy:

- Volume 1: "The Shadow of the Torturer"
- Volume 2: "The Claw of the Conciliator"
- Volume 3: "The Sword of the Lictor"
- Volume 4: "The Citadel of the Autarch"

by Gene Wolfe

Since I dislike waiting long intervals between reading installments of a single story, I followed my normal procedure of awaiting the publication of the final volume before beginning the complete work. As a result, I wound up with over 1100 pages to read, which took me over a month to finish. I suspect that much of the impact and possible enjoyment of the story could be lost if the four volumes were read as each was published, as Wolfe expects the reader to remember numerous events from all preceding volumes.

Although I found the story above average, I had expected more from it, as I consider Wolfe's "Fifth Head of Cerberus" to be a masterpiece of story telling. The work is strongest when Wolfe shows the reader life inside the torturers' guild, and continues in a strong vein as Severian is exposed to new facets of his world throughout the first volume. Much of this flavor is again captured in the second and third volumes, especially in the descriptions of the fortress-town of Thrax.

As the final volume had less of the flavor of the first three volumes (certainly Severian's status and self image had changed markedly by then), I found it somewhat disappointing. Other weak areas of the story, as when Severian turned his mind to existential philosophizing, seemed to increase in the final volume, also.

I also found the extensive amount of seeming coincidence (which Wolfe partially explains) to be a bit overdone. I would have preferred a looser resolution of the story and the character relationships.

Finally, I was disturbed that Severian's captors did not employ a drug and procedure well defined at an earlier point in the story to extract critical information from him.

A warning: Wolfe has employed an incredible number of arcane terms throughout the four volumes. Often they can be puzzled out from context or assumed routes, at other times an unabridged (read "large") dictionary may be required for understanding. Some readers may be intrigued by Wolfe's erudition; others may be distracted or annoyed. Be prepared to take extensive notes.

---- Richard Ditch

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(This ad placed by the "Nominate Mark Leeper for Hugo for Best Fan Writer" committee. This is NOT a hoax candidate! If you are a member of LACon II, please support your chairperson!)