

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 8/14/85 -- Vol. 4, No. 7

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.
LZ meetings are in LZ 3A-206; HO meetings are in HO 2N-523.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
08/14	HO: THE FLIGHT OF THE DRAGONFLY by Robert Forward (11AM)
08/28	LZ: DINOSAUR BEACH by Keith Laumer (Time Travel)
09/04	HO: CODE OF THE LIFE-MAKER by James G. Hogan (2N-529)
09/18	LZ: THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES by Ray Bradbury (Near Future History)
09/24	HO: ? (*Tuesday*)
10/02	MT: Organizational Meeting (tentative)
10/09	LZ: THE SHEEP LOOK UP by John Brunner (Catastrophes)

HO Chair is Mark Leeper, HO 1E-412 (834-2657). LZ Chair is Rob Mitchell, LZ 1B-306 (576-6106). LZ Librarian is Lance Larsen, LZ 3C-219 (576-2668). HO Librarian is Tim Schroeder, HO 2G-427A (949-5866). Jill-of-all-trades is Evelyn Leeper, HO 1B-500A (834-4723).

1. The next film festival at the luxurious, crowded Leeperhouse cinema will be two films about small teams holding off unusual life forms. (Well it isn't easy to always come up with interesting thematic pairings!) That is Thursday, August 22, at 7:00pm. The films are:

THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN (1971) dir. by Robert Wise
PHASE IV (1974) dir. by Saul Bass

These are two very much above average science fiction films. The first film need little introduction. It is based on Michael Crichton's best-seller about a small group of scientists trying to find the cure for an epidemic of alien origin. Very high production values and a good script make this a very popular film.

PHASE IV is lesser known, but no less impressive. An entomologist and a mathematician are studying a peculiar biological imbalance in the Arizona desert. Various breeds of ants are cooperating rather than competing with each other. What starts out as a couple of weeks of "science in the sun" turns into a tactical battle of wits between two mutually very alien intelligences. The humans use their technology and physical size superiority against the ants and the ants use their physical differences against the humans. Saul Bass is a striking visualist and his film is well worth a look.

*****Presorted*****
* Leeper, Evelyn C. *
* 114A HO 1B-500A *

Mark Leeper
HO 1E-412 834-2657
...mtgzz!leeper

MY SCIENCE PROJECT
A film review by Mark R. Leeper

Capsule review: My Science Project gets a barely passing grade.

Back around 1960 Disney Studios made a couple of decent fantasy films: The Shaggy Dog and The Absent-Minded Professor. After that they hit a slump, making a series of films that traded off of the popularity of these films. They were mostly similar in content to these films; some were sequels. There was some market for these bland films, but Disney's lack of originality was sowing the seeds of audience contempt for the Disney name. My Science Project is the film that Disney should have made in 1962. Unfortunately, they did not, and now it is too late. Audiences have higher expectations from post-Star Wars fantasy films and My Science Project really does not hack it.

The story is of a high school car lover who is forced to do a science project. He wants to rebuild the engine of a World War II airplane which he was going to "borrow" from a local air base. Instead, he gets the engine from a UFO that the government has been hiding for years. It does weird things and in the finale--which seems hours into the film--it opens a hole in the space-time continuum and lets through a Whitman's Sampler of dangerous humans and animals from other points of space-time.

Back when audiences expected a lot of only vaguely amusing story and were willing to wait for a fantasy punch at the end, this sort of story would have cut the mustard. The film has other problems too. The characters all seem to know why they are doing what they are doing, but often it is not explained very well to the audience. At one point, the characters seem to be chasing some electrical something on power wires. First, it is the slowest thing that ever went over power lines, but even beyond that, the script never explains what it is they are chasing or what would happen if they lost the race. Often scenes seem to fail because the director has no idea how long a scene should take. At one point two characters have a two-minute conversation while holding up a line of cars. I can see the line waiting while the grease-monkey repairs the lead car, but the conversation went on long after he finished.

This film has problems with continuity, logic, and especially pacing. Rate it a low 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.