

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 12/4/85 -- Vol. 4, No. 23

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>
12/11	LZ: BRING THE JUBILEE by Ward Moore (Alternate Histories)
12/18	HO: A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ by Walter Miller
01/08	LZ: PHOENIX WITHOUT ASHES by Edward Bryant (Generation Ships)
01/15	HO: "Hitchhiker's" Trilogy by Richard Adams
01/22	MT: Book Swap
01/29	LZ: STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS by Harry Harrison (Humor)
02/05	HO: THE EYE IN THE PYRAMID by Shea and Wilson
02/12	MT: ?
02/19	LZ: WORLDS by Joe Haldeman (Politics)

HO Chair is John Jetzt, HO 4F-528A (834-1563). LZ Chair is Rob Mitchell, LZ 1B-306 (576-6106). MT Chair is Mark Leeper, MT 3G-434 (957-5619). HO Librarian is Tim Schroeder, HO 2G-427A (949-5866). LZ Librarian is Lance Larsen, LZ 3C-219 (576-2668). Jill-of-all-trades is Evelyn Leeper, MT 1A-121 (957-2288).

1. The 12/11 meeting in LZ will be a discussion of BRING THE JUBILEE by Ward Moore, in specific, and alternate history stories in general. These are stories that say, if history had been just a bit different back then, how much different would the present be now? They ask pressing questions like:

- ⊗ If General Grant had been accidentally killed during the Civil War, would there be more uses for marmalade today?
- ⊗ If Judge Green had decided to not prosecute (persecute?) the phone company, how how much better would you feel today?
- ⊗ If the Big Bang had happened just ten seconds earlier, would kiwis have found a way to fly by now?
- ⊗ If the conquistadores had gone East instead of West would it be easier to find a parking space in Manhattan?

Now there are those who think that for every alternate history there is an alternate universe somewhere in which things happened the other way instead of, contrary-wise, the way it did happen when it happened in our universe. Do not, however, confuse alternate histories with alternate universes. While, as a trivial case,

*****Presorted*****
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every alternate universe has an alternate history -- though most are very alternate histories -- not every alternate history could possibly be an alternate universe. There are some alternate histories that are so far-fetched that no self-respecting universe could possibly correspond. This of course assumes that our concept of "far-fetched" is universal not just to our universe but universal to all universes.

However, if a concept is universal to all universes, are they really different universes or is there a larger sense to universal? Shouldn't The Universe be, in some sense, universal, hence encompassing all universes? Just because we can't go hopping from one universe to another as easily as we could cross a street, doesn't the concept of universe include everything everywhere, including everything that is in other universes? And if, in fact, it does, doesn't that mean that they were not really other universes but just oddly separated parts of our universe? In which case there is only one universe with one megalithic history. True histories of the various sub-universes would then be no more alternate histories than would a history of England be an alternate history to the history of China.

I have to go now, I just gave myself a headache.

2. When aggressive genes are outlawed, only outlaws will have aggressive genes.

Mark Leeper
MT 3G-434 957-5619
...mtgzz!leeper

SHE

A film review by Evelyn C. Leeper

Mark recently reviewed King Solomon's Mines and commented on how little it resembled the novel by H. Rider Haggard. Well, if you want to see a real abomination on a Haggard novel, see She, an Italian film made in 1983 and starring Sandahl Bergman.

Let me attempt to summarize the plot. (This might be termed a spoiler, but as someone said, "Some movies can't be spoiled any more than they already were.")

It is 23 years after the Cancellation. (The Cancellation of what? Logic, to judge by this film.) Our hero (Tom) and his side-kick (Dick) are wandering through a post-holocaust Renaissance-type fair where people are bartering for old boxes of Kellogg's Rice Krispies. (And just how good would they taste after 23 years? Well, never mind.) The bad guys show up and kidnap some women, including the hero's sister (Hari). (Get it--Tom, Dick, and Hari? Well, never mind.) Tom and Dick attempt to find her. They are drugged and Tom is brought before "She" (Sandahl Bergman), who forces him to run a gauntlet which he barely survives. (All this is to a rock score--with lyrics.) Left for dead (why isn't he killed outright--well, never mind), he is rescued and recovers to rescue Dick. She has a fight with some robot warriors in a warehouse, but defeats them. Wounded in the fight, She bathes in a pool that heals her wounds. Together Tom and Dick kidnap She and go looking for Hari. They are captured by mutants and put in a room whose walls start closing in on them, but they are rescued by She's Amazon warriors who have a swordfight with the mutants (who are armed with chain saws). (Oh, by the way, the mutants have arms that keep falling off.) She frees Tom and Dick, who go off and find a society that engages in intellectual repartee and dresses formally for dinner (where they play 1960's rock and roll music). Unfortunately, at night the people turn into cannibalistic vampire ghouls. Tom and Dick eventually escape (with the help of She and Shanda, one of She's Amazons, who have secretly followed them). They ride to the village Godan, the Man-God. Godan has the power to make his eyes glow green and levitate people. (His name is written with a hammer through the first letter so as to form a hammer and sickle.) Here we get a chance to see Bergman and Shanda shackled, whipped, racked, and threatened with burning irons. (See? You knew there had to be some redeeming feature to this movie.) They are rescued by Tom and Dick, and in the process, Godan is killed by a follower jealous of his interest in She. However, he kills the follower before he dies, so when all the guards come in it looks like She has killed him. His followers now accept She as their goddess since She killed their god. The four of them leave and capture a 250-pound man in a ballerina's tutu and a feather boa. But they are overcome by poisonous gas, and the ballerina takes them to a mad scientist (all except Tom, who gets away). There they are kept in Saran-wrap hanging cages.

Shanda is sent back with the ballerina to get the Uric crystal, and She and Dick escape by setting fire to the laboratory. They follow Tom's trail. Meanwhile, Tom meets a guard at a river crossing who quotes old Marx Brothers movies and sings the theme song from Green Acres. Tom fights with him but discovers that whenever he cuts off a head or an arm, the two pieces each grow into a full person. Eventually he escapes the eight of them. She and Dick get to the Norc city, where they sneak in disguised in the garments of the last two members of a group that's entering (shades of The Wizard of Oz?). They end up in a free-for-all battle with ten other applicants for the position of Norc warrior, from which only two will survive. Just coincidentally, Hari is brought in as the leader's slave. She and Dick defeat all but one other warrior who reveals himself to be Tom. The three of them escape with Hari (the leader lets them, for some inexplicable reason), and there's a big battle at the bridge with the four of them against the Norc warriors who want to attack She's kingdom. Just as things look their darkest, Shanda returns with the Amazon warriors and they are saved. Dick decides to stay with Shanda, but Tom and She realize they must go their separate ways (sob!).

How do I know it's supposed to be based on She? They say so in the credits at the end!

KING ARTHUR: THE YOUNG WARLORD
A film review by Mark R. Leeper

Capsule review: Occasionally interesting, episodic story of King Arthur treats him as an historical figure rather than as a legend. Often it feels a little sugary, like a children's TV series.

To start with, I am not sure this is even a movie in the usual sense. It may be just episodes of a British TV series cobbled together for the videocassette market. It is not about the legendary Arthur. There is no witchcraft or wizardry. Instead, it is about a chieftain who wants to unite his neighbors against common enemies. To some extent it does try to explain how the legends got started. As an object lesson, he has four neighboring chieftains each push with one hand on a rock and it moves enough that he can pull out a sword on which the rock was resting. None had been able to withdraw the sword himself. When they allowed Arthur to organize them, Arthur could withdraw the sword. This could easily be a de-embellishment of the story of the sword in the stone.

The film itself is very episodic and could easily be edited from episodes of a good TV series (does anyone know if Oliver Tobias starred in a British TV series about King Arthur around 1975?). Actually the show was stolen by Brian Blessed as Mark of Cornwall, a dangerous and troublesome ally of Arthur's. Of course Blessed has never been in a role in which he didn't steal the show. As a film, rate this a 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.

THE ZOMBIE

A dinner theater review by Mark R. Leeper

For some time I'd been planning to see what the local dinner theaters in my area were like. When the Dam Site Theater in Tinton Falls, New Jersey, had a horror-comedy called The Zombie right around Evelyn's birthday, the combination seemed unbeatable.

The play itself was the creation of Tim Kelly, who has done quite a number of stage plays tinged with horror, including a version of The Uninvited, Terror by Gaslight, a non-musical Sweeney Todd, and Frankenstein. The Zombie is itself an enjoyable stage play with a story that would have made a bad horror film.

Dr. Samedi lives on the edge of Florida's Okefenokee Swamp and makes a modest living turning locals into zombies to be used on local farms as cheap labor. The audience seemed to think that this was a comic touch, to use zombies as slaves. In fact, this is the traditional use to which zombies were put. The plot itself is more tightly written than it at first would seem and some of what initially seem like absurd coincidences seem a little less so by the end of the film.

The local production was fun but a little less than professional. The chief villain was played by Jack Ryan, who uses the stage name of Jake de Fayke. The name is funnier than the actor, who projects better than he acts. In fact, the most interesting acting was in two of the lesser roles. Kaye Ernst was the best of the lot with a marvelous range of comic facial expressions. Bob Koerner had a most undemanding role as a catatonic zombie, and was too young for the role he played, but as the chief horror element he was not too shabby. One thing that did bother me was that nobody in the production seemed to know the subject matter. As playwright Kelly knew, one of the central figures of a voodoo cult was Baron Samedi. But the name is pronounced SOM-i-DEE or SOM-DEE. (It is the French word for "Saturday.") The cast insisted on pronouncing the name sa-MEE-dee, which is entirely wrong.

The Zombie was a pleasant evening and Dam Site serves a good meal, but the story could have been better. Rate the play a 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.