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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society
Club Notice - 07/31/92 -- Vol. 11, No. 5

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.

__ D _ A _ T _ E __ T _ O _ P _ I _ C

- 08/05 HO: Hugo-Nominated Short Stories (HO 1N-410)
- 08/26 HO: BONE DANCE by Emma Bull (Hugo nominee) (HO 1N-410)
- 09/16 HO: THE SILMARILLION by J.R.R. Tolkien (Alternate Mythologies)
(HO 4N-509)

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- 08/08 SFABC: Science Fiction Association of Bergen County: Multi-media
astronomical presentation (phone 201-933-2724 for details)
(Saturday)
- 08/15 NJSFS: New Jersey Science Fiction Society: TBA
(phone 201-432-5965 for details) (Saturday)

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 908-834-1563 hocpb!jetzt
 LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell HO 1D-505A 908-834-1267 hocpb!jrrt
 MT Chair: Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 908-957-5619 mtgzy!leeper
 HO Librarian: Nick Sauer HO 4F-427 908-949-7076 homxc!11366ns
 LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 3L-312 908-576-3346 mtfme!lfl
 MT Librarian: Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 908-957-5619 mtgzy!leeper
 Factotum: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 908-957-2070 mtgzy!ecl

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1. Well, for the August 5 discussion no one will have the excuse that they couldn't find the works being discussed. Why not? Because the discussion will be about the seven Hugo-nominated short stories, and these are available _ f _ r _ e _ e to anyone who requests them. (Instructions were in the July 10 and July 17 issues of the MT VOID [Vol. 11, Nos. 2 and 3], so I won't repeat them here.)

The stories are: Terry Bisson's "Press Ann" (a light-hearted look

at the possible future of money machines), John Kessel's "Buffalo" (not science fiction, strictly speaking, about a fictional meeting between the narrator's father and H. G. Wells), Geoffrey A. Landis's "A Walk in the Sun" (hard science fiction of the "solve-this-problem" variety, with some characterization and retrospection thrown in), Mike Resnick's "One Perfect Morning, With

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Jackals" (another Kirinyaga story, and the prequel to them all), Mike Resnick's "Winter Solstice" (a tale of Merlin and his burden), Martha Soukup's "Dog's Life" (an interesting look at animal rights), and Connie Willis's "In the Late Cretaceous" (again, not science fiction, strictly speaking, but quintessential Willis).

Come and vote for what _ y_ o_ u think should win. Results of the balloting will be announced in next week's MT VOID. [-ecl]

2. Well, guys, I think the jig is just about up. Here for years we've loved science fiction without telling the non-fans what is was _ r_ e_ a_ l_ l_ y all about. I think lots of us may have kidded ourselves what we were reading about, but deep inside we knew. But now that the world knows what science is really all about, I think we will be a target in the very near future.

It was someone named Elizabeth Fee who wrote her "Critiques of Modern Science" for the New Jersey Curriculum Transformation Project. She is quoted on page 29 of the June 22, 1992, _ U. _ S. _ N_ e_ w_ s & _ W_ o_ r_ l_ d_ R_ e_ p_ o_ r_ t:

"Mind was male. Nature was female, and [scientific] knowledge was created as an act of aggression--a passive nature had to be interrogated, unclothed, penetrated, and compelled by man to reveal her secrets."

And now that I know what science is all about, I realize that my science fiction fandom has just been egging scientists on from the sidelines. Now I understand why so many science fiction books have cylindrical rockets headed for the craters of the moon. But that was old science fiction. These days the rockets head for black holes or worm holes. No, I can't go on. I'm gonna be sick. Oh, I feel so tainted and tawdry.

How wonderful that it is my own state that is leading the way to the new understanding. I do hope my tax money helped to put the "fund" in this "fundamental" new understanding of the aggressive nature of science.

I think I would like to contribute to Elizabeth Fee's cause. I wonder if she would be willing to accept from me an animal skin and a sharp stone. Or maybe that is too aggressive. How about a large leaf and a nice, shiny crystal?

3. And congrats go out to one of our members, Avi Hauser: "Avi Hauser, a research physicist at Holmdel, served as one of two coaches of the U.S. team competing in the International Physics Olympiad in Helsinki, Finland. For the first time ever, all U.S. team members won prizes, including two gold medals, in the rigorous competition against students from Asia and Europe. This was the best performance by the U.S. since it began participating in 1985. AT&T co-sponsored the team along with IBM." [from "Bell Labs E*News," 7/29/92]

Mark Leeper
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...mtgzy!leeper

THE KING by Donald Barthelme
Penguin, 1992 (1990c), ISBN 0-14-014992-9, \$8.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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The Nazis are bombing London, but King Arthur also has to contend with Lord Haw-Haw's broadcasts accusing Guinevere of infidelities. If this sounds just a little "off"--well, that what's it is. It's the "transhistorical party" (described by Brian McHale in P_o_s_t_m_o_d_e_r_n_i_s_t_F_i_c_t_i_o_n and perhaps made most popular by Steve Allen in his "Meeting of the Minds" television series)--the meeting of people of different historical eras and different "ontological statuses" (Lord Haw-Haw was real; King Arthur may have had a real existence but the King Arthur we know from story and legend bears little resemblance to that; the Black Knight was purely a literary creation).

Maybe I just don't get it. It was amusing enough, seeing the

old ideas of chivalry contrasted with the realities of the modern world, but there's only enough there for a short story, and this is a 30,000-word novella. (And though it may be heresy, I think Howard Waldrop would have done it better.) I know that Donald Barthelme is well-respected in literary circles; it's just that from this book I can't tell why. (I did like Moser's illustrations, perhaps even more than the text.)

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