

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 4/24/86 -- Vol. 4, No. 40a

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.

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_T_O_P_I_C

- 04/30 HO: Discussion of the films QUATERMASS AND THE PIT (a.k.a. FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH) and THE QUATERMASS CONCLUSION
05/14 LZ: THE WEREWOLF PRINCIPLE by Clifford Simak (Biological Constructs)
05/21 HO: Is DR. WHO science fiction? (Specific discussion of THE CLAWS OF AXOS)
06/04 LZ: THIS PERFECT DAY by Ira Levin ("Utopias")
06/11 HO: ?
06/25 LZ: STAR GUARD by Andre Norton (Humans as underdogs)
07/16 LZ: SHADRACH IN THE FURNACE by Robert Silverberg (Ethics)
08/06 LZ: TUNNEL IN THE SKY by Robert Heinlein (Faster-Than-Light Travel)

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 1F-329 (957-2070).

1. Here are the (unofficial) Hugo nominations for 1986, courtesy of LAN'S LANTERN (and yes, joan hanke-woods is all lower-case):

NOVEL

- Greg Bear--BLOOD MUSIC
- David Brin--THE POSTMAN
- C. J. Cherryh--CUCKOO'S EGG
- Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle--FOOTFALL
- Orson Scott Card--ENDER'S GAME

NOVELLA

- C. J. Cherryh--"Scapegoat" (ALIEN STARS, ed. by Betsy Mitchell, Baen Books)
- Kim Stanley Robinson--"Green Mars" (IASFM Sep 85)
- Robert Silverberg--"Sailing to Byzantium" (IASFM Feb 85)

- James Tiptree, Jr.--"The Only Neat Thing To Do" (F&SF Oct 85)
- Roger Zelazny--"24 Views of Mt. Fuji, by Hokusai" (IASFM Jul 85)

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NOVELETTE

- Michael Bishop--"A Gift from the Graylanders" (IASFM Sep 85)
- Orson Scott Card--"The Fringe" (F&SF Oct 85)
- Harlan Ellison--"Paladin of the Lost Hour" (TWILIGHT ZONE Dec 85)
- William Gibson and Michael Swanwick--"Dogfight" (OMNI Jul 85)
- George R. R. Martin--"Portraits of His Children" (IASFM Nov 85)

SHORT STORY

- John Crowley--"Snow" (OMNI Nov 85)
- Frederik Pohl--"Fermi and Frost" (IASFM Jan 85)
- Bruce Sterling--"Dinner in Audoghost" (IASFM May 85)
- Howard Waldrop--"Flying Saucer Rock & Roll" (OMNI Jan 85)
- William F. Wu--"Hong's Bluff" (OMNI Mar 85)

NON-FICTION

- Brian Aldiss--THE PALE SHADOW OF SCIENCE
- Algis Budrys--BENCHMARKS: GALAXY BOOKSHELF
- Perry Chapdelaine--JOHN W. CAMPBELL LETTERS, Vol. I
- Harlan Ellison--AN EDGE IN MY VOICE
- Tom Weller--SCIENCE MADE STUPID
- Douglas E. Winter--FACES OF FEAR: ENCOUNTERS WITH CREATORS OF MODERN HORROR

DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

- BACK TO THE FUTURE
- BRAZIL
- COCOON
- ENEMY MINE

- LADYHAWKE

PRO EDITOR

- Terry Carr
- Judy-Lynn Del Rey
- Ed Ferman
- Shawna McCarthy
- Stanley Schmidt

PRO ARTIST

- Frank Kelly Freas
- Dom Maitz
- Rowena Morrell
- Barclay Shaw
- Michael Whelan

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FAN ARTIST

- Brad Foster
- Steve Fox
- joan hanke-woods
- Bill Rotsler
- Stu Shiffman

SEMI-PRO ZINE

- FANTASY REVIEW
- INTERZONE
- LOCUS
- SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE
- SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

FANZINE

- ANVIL (Charlotte Proctor)
- GREATER COLUMBIA FANTASY COSTUMERS GUILD NEWSLETTER (Bobby Gear)
- HOLIER THAN THOU (Robbi and Marty Cantor)

- LAN'S LANTERN (George "Lan" Laskowski)
- UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR (Susan Bridges) (not yet confirmed that 4 issues have been published)

FAN WRITER

- Richard Geis
- Mike Glyer
- Arthur Hlavaty
- Dave Langford
- Patrick Neilson-Hayden
- Don D'Amassa

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD

- Karen Joy Fowler
- Guy Gavriel Kay
- Carl Sagan
- Melissa Scott
- Tad Williams
- David Zindell

2. In addition to the Hugo nominations there were also a few reviews backlogged, so it seemed like a good time for a special issue. [-ecl]

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

OUT OF AFRICA A counter-review by Pat Palmer

Mark Leeper's 4/9 review of OUT OF AFRICA made a number of assertions I cannot agree with. The key points of Mark's review seem to be:

1. the film was mainly a fun but melodramatic love story
2. the central characters of the film were unaware of the value of

the native African culture

3. the film "did not deserve to beat out" THE COLOR PURPLE

Item 1: I don't regard the film as primarily a love story.

Although most of the reviews in this country focused on Streep/Redford, the story of that relationship occupies less than half the narrative.

What the film IS about, in my opinion, is how Karen Blixen reacts to a long series of major disappointments:

- father's violent suicide during her childhood
- rejection by a close lover/suitor before marriage
- her husband gives her syphilis and divorces her to marry money
- inability to bear children due to syphilis
- total loss of a farm and business after years of effort
- a lover wary of commitment
- death of lover and closest friend
- society's expectation of feminine passivity

The film begins with 3 repetitions of Streep's character chanting "I once had a farm in Africa." A key word in that statement is ONCE, implying "no longer have." In the initial seconds of the film, there is a strong hint that the theme is loss and a farm; there is no hint that it is love and a man, and the story bears well with this approach.

Item 2: The question in my mind is not whether the depiction of blacks in the film was degrading, but whether it was historically accurate, and whether it was relevant to the story meant to be told. Mark's statement "I find the political message of OUT OF AFRICA far more subtle and insidious than that of THE COLOR PURPLE" bothers me because I don't feel any need to compare the two movies at all in terms of "political statement." It's like saying a that a washing machine sure makes a terrible typewriter; such a statement is true, but...

Item 3: Everybody has their pet criteria for the scaled-value assessment from -4 to +4. Judging OUT OF AFRICA as a finely tuned character study centering on one cohesive theme (a way of dealing with repeated loss and protracted loneliness), it at least holds its own with COLOR PURPLE. The worst criticism I can level at OUT OF AFRICA is the unrelenting bleakness of its final 20 minutes (COLOR PURPLE did just the opposite). I give OUT OF AFRICA a +3 for well-rounded quality including story, acting, photography, and music; this is in contrast to Mark's +1.

LEGEND

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

Capsule review: Ridley Scott does a live-action fairy tale that visually matches the illustrations in classic books of fairy tales. The pacing occasionally flags but visually the film is all you expect from the man who made B_l_a_d_e_r_u_n_n_e_r. Tim Curry as the Prince of Darkness in make-up by Rob Bottin is particularly effective.

There is a style of traditional British fantasy--one I don't general care for--with the wood folk. There are faerie and wood sprites, unicorns and goblins. Their stories are recounted in the Blue Fairy Book _o_r_t_h_e_C_r_i_m_s_o_n_F_a_i_r_y_B_o_o_k or one of those. This kind of fantasy rarely makes it into live-action except perhaps in an occasional film of M_i_d_s_u_m_m_e_r_N_i_g_h't's_D_r_e_a_m. More often this faerie world shows up in animated film for the obvious reason that it is a lot easier to put into film in animation. L_e_g_e_n_d is the first film to create the enchanted faerie world in live-action.

Lili is a princess, but she loves to run through an enchanted forest where she meets her platonic love, Jack, a boy of the forest. Jack knows the secrets of the forest and takes Lili to see the last two unicorns. Lili cannot resist petting the unicorns and in doing so makes them vulnerable to the Prince of Darkness. These unicorns, it seems, were all that kept the world out of eternal darkness and unending winter. Jack must go off in search of the horn of the slain unicorn. It is a common fairy story and is often less than enthralling.

Scott's sets in L_e_g_e_n_d are almost as detailed as his sets were for B_l_a_d_e_r_u_n_n_e_r, though in most cases the sets are somewhat easier to create here. If anything the sets are over-cluttered with fantasy touches. Every scene looks like it could be an illustration from a book of fairy tales, with one exception. Scott's unicorns are horses with horns. Scott has either given in to the popular misconception of bad modern fantasy artists or has never bothered to look up "unicorn" in the dictionary. (A unicorn is supposed to have the tail of a lion and the hindquarters of a stag.)

The make-up effects were done by Rob Bottin, who did an excellent job with the werewolves in T_h_e_H_o_w_l_i_n_g. Some of the make-up effects work well in L_e_g_e_n_d, particularly in the make-up for some of the elves and in most scenes of the Prince of Darkness. However, our first scene of the Prince of Darkness has him in the dark but painted with glowing black-light paint and that effect is most unconvincing, as are some of the witch make-up jobs early in the film.

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L_e_g_e_n_d has been embroiled in problems over its release. It was intended for 1985 release, but seemingly ran into problems, was re-edited and released in two versions. In Britain it had a score by Jerry Goldsmith and was a half an hour longer than the American version with a score by Tangerine Dream. Both film scores were played on a local radio station. The Goldsmith score was lighter and more dream-like while the Tangerine Dream score had more power and better built a dark mood for the scenes of the Prince of Darkness.

L_e_g_e_n_d comes as close as I have seen to being a live-action version of a Disney cartoon. At times its pacing flags but it is always a spectacle for the eye, much as a Disney cartoon. It rates a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

THE AYES OF TEXAS by Daniel da Cruz
Del Rey, 1982, \$2.95.
A book review by Mark R. Leeper

I thought the stereotyped Texan was a myth. You know, the guy who thinks the United States is composed of Texas and some insignificant periphery lands. The guy who thinks that Texans are ten feet tall and that heads eight feet or less off the ground needlessly complicate world politics. The guy who breaks world history into the piece before the Alamo and the piece after. Well, the guy seems to really exist and he is writing science fiction. The book is *The Ayes of Texas* by Daniel da Cruz. (Curiously enough, it is published by Del Rey and not Baen.)

In the late 1990's the deceitful Russians are about to execute the coup they have been planning for decades. By exploiting the American's fuzzy-thinking wish for peace they are going to turn us into an agricultural country ruled over by them. They have a plot so insidious and fiendish that only the President or a Texan can see through it. The President cannot oppose the takeover; that leaves the Texan.

So a Texan, Gwillam Forte, a three-way amputee, takes up the task of fixing up the rusty old U.S.S. Texas so it will look all right for a Texas celebration and instead secretly turns it into the super-scientific front line of the Free World's naval defenses.

da Cruz's credentials include having been an American embassy press

attache' in Baghdad, a foreign correspondent, the author of a history textbook, and thinking that the Soviets are called "the Russians." His book somehow lacks an air of authenticity for us Lilliputian non-Texans. Early on, da Cruz sets us straight about the complaints of certain Mexican-Americans, but just to prove how liberal he is toward minorities, he has positive minority images like the one with the slightly transparent name Modeljewski. That makes Charles Dickens's character naming subtle by comparison. Some statement should be made about the technology in T_h_e_A_y_e_s_o_f_T_e_x_a_s since it is a major part of the book. It probably is the best aspect and rings marginally truer than the rest of the book, but I cannot claim to be enough of a physicist to evaluate it.

There is no better way to sum up the feel of this rather strange book than to give you the following extended quote (from pages 162 and 163):

"It is for us, your representatives, to propose. It is for you, the people of Texas, to decide. At this moment, in geosynchronous orbit 38,000 kilometers above Texas, the lenses of TexComSat 23-LBJ are focused on us. In exactly five minutes"--he consulted his watch--"at 9:25 P.M., all power-generating equipment in the State of

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Texas, except for emergency facilities, will be cut. The state will be in total darkness.

"Those who favor Texas remaining in a union that submits to the Russian yoke--if any such there be--will step outside into the night and show a light. A match's flare, a flashlight, even the glow of a cigarette, will be picked up and registered by TexComSat 23-LBJ and relayed to Earth for instant tabulation. I say again: anyone who wishes to remain a citizen of a craven, misguided, gutless United States will step outside, and in his loneliness shows his feeble beam."

He paused.

"At 9:35 P.M.," he resumed, "just fourteen minutes

hence, all those in favor of a proud, independent Republic of Texas, ready to fight anybody and everybody who denies us the honor we will die to preserve, will step proudly out into the velvety blackness of the Texas night and light the lamp of freedom..."

At nine-twenty-five, there were brief, isolated flashes of light from one end of Texas to the other. More often than not, they were followed by even briefer flashes as indignant Texans, their firearms at the ready for such expressions of disloyalty, zeroed in on the dissidents and let fly. As a test of loyalty toward the United States, it was a candle snuffed out in a high wind.

At nine-thirty-five, firehouse sirens wailed in every city in the state, and people poured out of houses and apartment buildings. From the Rio Grande to the Oklahoma Panhandle, from the borders of Louisiana to the sands of New Mexico fifteen hundred kilometers away, the state was ablaze with the light of impending battle in twenty million defiant ayes of Texas.