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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society
 Club Notice - 12/25/87 -- Vol. 6, No. 26

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.
 LZ meetings are in LZ 3A-206; MT meetings are in the cafeteria.

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

- 12/30 LZ: FUTUROLOGICAL CONGRESS by Stanislaw Lem
 (Foreign-Language Authors)
- 01/06 MT: Religious SF (Blish's CASE OF CONSCIENCE, Boucher's
 "Quest for St. Aquin")
- 01/20 LZ: 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA by Jules Verne (Classics)
- 01/27 MT: TBD
- 02/10 LZ: DRAGON WAITING by John Ford (Recent Fantasy)

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 834-1563 mtuxo!jetzt
 LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell LZ 1B-306 576-6106 mtuxo!jrrt
 MT Chair: Mark Leeper MT 3E-433 957-5619 mtgzz!leeper
 HO Librarian: Tim Schroeder HO 3M-420 949-5866 homxb!tps
 LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 3L-312 576-6142 lzfme!lfl
 MT Librarian: Will Harmon MT 3C-406 957-5128 mtgzz!wch
 Factotum: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070 mtgzy!ecl
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1. Stanislaw Lem's THE FUTUROLOGICAL CONGRESS will be the topic of
 the next Lincroft discussion meeting on December 30. Of it, Rob
 Mitchell says:

Define reality. Give three examples.

In Stanislaw Lem's THE FUTUROLOGICAL CONGRESS,
 narrator Ijon Tichy is a visitor at the Eighth
 Futurological Congress -- a meeting of the
 intellectual giants (in an unspecified, but not-
 too-distant, future), debating the future of
 humanity. Lem takes diabolical pleasure in painting
 a cynical picture of humanity gone far down the road

to collective insanity. The striking imagery of the scientists at the Congress, the demonstrators, the hospital technicians who "repair" Tichy after a run-in with terrorists; these are the details that show the cynical side of Lem in a way that is

artistically pleasing but emotionally disturbing. His images are plausible, yet horrific.

In the second half of the novel, Tichy has had an accident that has left him unconscious for 30-odd years. In his absence, the world has become a Utopia, thanks to the concept of "psychochem." Biochemical knowledge has developed to the point where drugs are available to deal with every situation. The "old cerebralness," inherited from our animal ancestors, has been tamed by drugs that soothe, and subdue, those animal urges. Instead, the "new cerebralness" harnesses one's higher, more intellectual powers. By going to a Psychedeli one can acquire drugs such as algebrine (enhances mathematical ability), yogart (gives insight into Eastern religions), and even authenium (creates synthetic recollections of things that never happened). Unlike Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD, Lem's society is not a chemically-managed dictatorship of the pure. Everyone regularly indulges in these drugs, although eventually it occurs to Tichy to ask how could one distinguish drug-induced fancy from hard fact....

THE FUTUROLOGICAL CONGRESS is a sardonic nightmare. The reader is simultaneously engrossed in Lem's clever wordplay and repulsed by the hideous implications of the society. The book is full of fresh ideas and images, and is one of Lem's best. Recommended.

2. This is for Elizabeth Eades, who apparently is the only person who reads item 2. Hi, Elizabeth! [-ecl]

3. This was supposed to be a clever, witty, comment on how much time and effort went into the Christmas decorations at Middletown this year. They were were incredibly ornate and garish this year, and motorized no less. I was going to compare them to the one little Chanukah menorah that was put up just on the days of the holiday and that nobody even bothered to put the candles in straight. And how much better that was than what Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and other employees got. After about three rewrites I could never tone down the piece to anything less than vitriolic. Sorry.

Mark Leeper
MT 3E-433 957-5619
...mtgzz!leeper

An Unashamed Defense of Steven Spielberg
Film comment by Mark R. Leeper
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There are a lot of people who seem to dislike Steven Spielberg. I have to admit that when I think of films like G_o_o_n_i_e_s, G_r_e_m_l_i_n_s, and I_n_d_i_a_n_a_J_o_n_e_s_a_n_d_t_h_e_T_e_m_p_l_e_o_f_D_o_o_m I am less than pleased with the man. But there are a lot of filmmakers out there making much worse films, many of the films really lucrative, who do not seem to garner the hatred that Spielberg gets.

With the people that I have talked to, a lot of the hatred seems to stem from E._T. Spielberg is a filmmaker who is able to affect his audiences deeply. He did it with E._T. He made a lot of people sympathize deeply with something that was basically a piece of plastic. Now, feeling sorry for plastic is silly and people seem to resent Spielberg the way they would resent a stage hypnotist who made them do something silly and embarrassing in a trance. But E._T. is a children's film. It never tried to be anything more. It tried to make children

feel sorry for something in a time when most films children watch make them want to blow something up or beat someone up or drive a car into something. All these films are manipulative. But if you are going to manipulate children, is it better to manipulate them to be more humane or to be more vicious?

Ah, but people say that Spielberg films are too manipulative--as if the great films of the past are not. People seem to love D_r.

S_t_r_a_n_g_e_l_o_v_e or P_a_t_h_s_o_f_G_l_o_r_y or T_w_e_l_v_e_A_n_g_r_y_M_e_n. What great films have not been manipulative? Even porno films are manipulative (or they are if they're doing it right, to paraphrase Woody Allen). The question is not whether the audience is being manipulated, but is that manipulation gratuitous or is it there for a good purpose (the same question you have to ask about a special effect or Sensurround or anything else that affects the audience). E_T. was an exercise in getting children to feel sympathy. It worked fine on its target audience. Its effect on adults was widely varied.

I watched the first part of T_h_e_C_o_l_o_r_P_u_r_p_l_e this morning for the first time since its original release. Yes, I am being manipulated.

But in good purpose. The effects I am feeling further the plot and

enhance the film. And this is not a simplistic story. This is not just another rehash of bad whites and good blacks. This is a film in which most people of either race are out for themselves. That has been done

before, but usually it is in a depressing film like P_o_p_e_o_f_G_r_e_e_n_w_i_c_h

V_i_l_l_a_g_e. But T_h_e_C_o_l_o_r_P_u_r_p_l_e is a story of

triumph too. There is pain and ugliness in a world where people are out for themselves, but the pain can be overcome. When a film is done this well, it is not called "manipulative," you call it "moving."

Spielberg

December 20, 1987

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Both T_h_e_C_o_l_o_r_P_u_r_p_l_e and E_m_p_i_r_e_o_f_t_h_e_S_u_n_a_r_e moving tributes to

the human spirit. They are films that stand up well in comparison to

films of any period in the past. I may not think much of Spielberg when

I see films he has produced like T_h_e_M_o_n_e_y_P_i_t or T_h_e_G_o_o_n_i_e_s, but like

it or not, I have to admit that in T_h_e_C_o_l_o_r_P_u_r_p_l_e and

_ E _ m _ p _ i _ r _ e _ o _ f _ t _ h _ e

_ S _ u _ n he has made two films that I consider to be among the very best of
the decade.

Star Trek Funnies IV
Anonymous
Provided by Seth Meyer and William Chao

Star Trek: The Next Generation

Episode XIX: Peace Restored

Scene 1:

Picard: Captain's log, supple...

Troi: Pain! Oh the pain!!

Picard: ...mental. Troi has been yelling too long now. After 18 episodes she has not changed. Neither has that obnoxious kid Wesley. We were on route to Starbase Ten (or was it One?) but instead, I've ordered Geordi to bring us around the sun and try the slingshot effect, to bring us back in time. My purpose: to finally rid ourselves of Troi and the kid.

Wesley: [floating over Picard and tickling his bald head with a feather]
Up here, baldy!

Picard: Wes! How many times must you be told to stay off the bridge?!

Wesley: But I am technically not "on" the bridge! I invented this device which I like to call the Wesley Lifter, which makes me capable of levitating *over* the bridge. How's the air down there, Pic?

Worf: Captain, permission to fry his brains with a disrupter?

Picard: Easy Worf, he'll get his soon enough.

Yar: Saucer separation complete, sir.

Picard: I thought I had asked Data to do that.

Yar: Well, Data is kind of tired after last night's...err...activities.

Wes: [To Picard] Hey, speaking of which, have you done my mom yet? She really wants you badly! Though I really don't see what she sees in you. Bald and all. I could invent a pill which would cure your

baldness.

Picard: Engage stardrive warp engines. Maneuver: slingshot 48.

Geordi: Engaged.

Star Trek Funnies 4 December 25, 1987

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Troi: The pain!!

Scene 2:

[Aboard a familiar Constitution Class Enterprise]

Spock: I am picking up an energy boost from the Kappa-Sol region, Captain.

<BWOOOOSH HHH>

Kirk: On viewer. [After studying it for a few seconds] It looks like an duck. Analysis, Mr. Spock.

Spock: Well, Captain, it is Federation vessel, USS Enterprise, NCC 1701-D. Approximately five times our size. However, we have no record of it ever being constructed.

Kirk: My God! But where is the bridge?

McCoy: [Entering bridge through turbo-lift] Dammit Jim, I'm a...[suddenly noticing view screen] ...what's that?

Spock: If they do have a saucer section, they could well be eight times our size.

Kirk: Open hailing frequencies...[Uhura does and nods to Kirk] This is Captain James T. Kirk of the USS Enterprise. Identify yourselves.

Picard: [Speaking as he appears on the viewscreen] This is Federation Galaxy Starship Enterprise Captain Jean-Luc Picard. We need your help.

Kirk: How may we help?

Picard: We first have a couple of people we'd like you to keep...er I mean meet.

Kirk: Sure, we will prepare to beam them [A flash of light, as Troi and Wes materialize on the bridge] ...aboard!?

Troi: Oh! The pain!!

McCoy: [Aside to Troi] I don't blame you! I don't like my molecules scrambled either!

Chekov: Captain! The other wessel has just warped out of our galaxy at maximum warp!

Wes: [Looking about the bridge] Oh how primitive!

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Troi: Ohhhhh!

McCoy: That really does sound bad. Hmm...[Nurse Chapel enters bridge through the turbolift doors] Nurse Chapel will escort you to sickbay.

Troi: Mom!!!!

Kirk: Mom?

McCoy: Mom?

Chapel: Mom!?

[Everyone else on bridge replies in shock, "Mom?"]

McCoy: [Aside to Nurse Chapel] Ya better strap her down.

Scene 3:

Ryker: I kinda feel bad about tricking Wes and especially Troi that way.
She may of been annoying, but she was great in bed.

Data: I agree.

Yar: Data!!

Data: No, no. I-I mean agree that it was bad to trick Troi and Wesley like that.

Picard: I know you might feel bad now, but it had to be done. It's okay now though. Things are already starting to look up. Ahead warp one to Starbase..er..One. (...or was it Starbase 10??) If you need me, Bev and I are celebrating tonight in her quarters.

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To be continued....

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This episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation, has been created, thanks to the following older episodes:

Trek Classic (old series) Diet Trek (cartoons) {Same old ST
===== with a little
Charlie X Yesteryear less Trek than
The Squire of Gothos usual}

Tomorrow is Yesterday
The City on the Edge of Forever
Assignment: Earth
The Changeling
The Empath
And the Children Shall Lead

Cherry Trek (Movies) {Trek with a little extra}

ST: The Motion Picture

ST IV: The Voyage Home

New on the Vulcan market!!

Vulcan Finger Trojans (So Vulcans can have *safe* pon-far)
Computer Center (Now with three terminals!)

Sponsors: Pepsi - The Choice of the Next Generation

Phaser Tag - The Game That Moves Faster Than the Speed of
Light (From Universe Of Wonder)