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1. Space stations, once the stuff of fiction, are now a reality.
How accurate have past fictional depictions of space stations and

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colonies been? How likely are the ones we see in today's stories?
On Wednesday, January 18, we will be showing a videotape of a
talk on "Space Colonies in Fact and Fiction" (originally given
at a science fiction convention).

2. I have recently heard someone complain (on the radio) that Jews
call themselves "The Chosen People" and what a dangerous notion
that is. And it certainly is if one considers the historic results
of Catholics claiming non-Catholics are damned. (At times, like
the Inquisition, they have been damned in this life also.) Many
Protestant denominations have made the same claim for themselves.
I understand Born-Again Christians consider themselves the only
true Christians and that others are not really Christians. I am
told the Islamic hell for infidels is a particularly nasty one.
The French consider themselves the epitome of all that is cultural.
Americans have often felt that God wanted them to own the Americas.
Many armies have gone to war certain that "God is on our side."
The British have talked of the "White Man's Burden." And the Jews
called themselves "The Chosen People," an idea they got in Old
Testament Biblical time when most peoples now rankled by the phrase
lived in barbarity. It seems rather common for peoples to consider
themselves somehow special. The difference is that this kind of
"chosen" seems not always to be such a good thing. The joke from
_ F _ i _ d _ d _ l _ e _ r _ o _ n _ t _ h _ e _ R _ o _ o _ f is, "Why can't God choose someone else
for
once?" If the notion is dangerous it is because it is so often
used against the Jews and so rarely for.

3. The following books have been graciously donated to the
Middletown branch of the Science Fiction Club Library by Binayak
Banerjee (who was told to get them out of his old office before
they were thrown out, but that's a minor detail):

Anderson, Poul CORRIDORS OF TIME, THE

Anthony, Piers SPLIT INFINITY (A01)
Anthony, Piers BLUE ADEPT (A02)
Anthony, Piers JUXTAPOSITION (A03)
Anthony, Piers STEPPE
Anthony, P./Margroff, R. RING, THE
Asimov, Issac FOUNDATION'S EDGE (F04)
Bradley, Marion Zimmer WARRIOR WOMAN
Drew, Wayland GAIAN EXPERIMENT, THE
Farmer, Philip Jose GATES OF CREATION, THE
Heinlein, Robert A. MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON, THE
Lynn, Elizabeth A. SARDONYX NET
Niven, L./Pournelle, J. LUCIFER'S HAMMER
Reynolds, Alfred KITEMAN
Vance, Jack DRAGON MASTERS, THE
Vance, Jack LAST CASTLE, THE

4. The following is the description of the next Bell Labs Star Trek in the 20th Century Club meeting:

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We call for this special meeting to find solutions to one of the biggest, pressing problems in the 20th century: Terrorism.

In light of the recent sabotage of the Pan Am 747 Flight 103 that resulted in the deaths of over 258 innocent people, we all understand the danger of terrorism and sympathize with the friends and relatives of the victims.

To counter terrorism, we must first know our enemies. Then we must search for ways to stop terrorism.

Many radicals consider terrorism a powerful weapon because:

1. It obtains worldwide, national, or local recognition.
2. It offers monetary or political gains.
3. It defies a government of its ability to protect its citizens and to maintain law and order.

4. It discourages foreign investment and political influence.
5. It ignites the enthusiasm of the members of a radical political or social group.
6. It is a quick and violent method of revenge.

What should we do about it? Families, schools, companies, governments, news media, and the United Nations are all responsible. The question is how to fight against terrorism effectively. Come to the meeting and tell us your opinions.

For further information, e-mail to mtund!newton or call 576-3541.

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The most certain test by which we judge whether a country is really free is the amount of security enjoyed by minorities.

THE ACCIDENTAL TOURIST
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: Slow adaptation of the Anne Tyler best-selling novel is good viewing for those already

familiar with the story but may seem lethargic and perhaps a little pointless to the casual viewer. Kasdan re-unites Turner and Hurt. Rating: +2.

Macon Leary is a man who never gets out of his easy chair. Physically perhaps he does, but mentally and emotionally he cannot face the world of the unexpected. His philosophy of life is always to follow the path of least resistance. Macon has all the character of a wet washrag. His occupation is helping others to share the same numbed existence. He writes travel books for people forced to travel but who are anxious to avoid any new experiences. Macon, who advises his readers never to carry anything they would be devastated to lose, brings that same philosophy to everything he does in life. But new experiences are coming to Macon. A year ago his son died in a senseless murder. Now his wife Sarah is leaving him. And soon he will meet Muriel, a very kookie dog trainer who has designs on both Macon's dog Edward and Macon himself. For over two slow hours we watch Macon buffeted by the tides of those around him until finally he is ready to leave his easy chair and make a real decision.

_ T_ h_ e_ A_ c_ c_ i_ d_ e_ n_ t_ a_ l_ T_ o_ u_ r_ i_ s_ t is Lawrence Kasdan's film based on Anne Tyler's beautifully textured novel of the often odd people in Macon Leary's life. In _ T_ h_ e_ A_ c_ c_ i_ d_ e_ n_ t_ a_ l_ T_ o_ u_ r_ i_ s_ t, Kasdan re-unites William Hurt and Kathleen Turner, the stars of his _ B_ o_ d_ y_ H_ e_ a_ t, as Macon and Sarah. Having seen them together before gives a sort of pre-history to their relationship much like Tracy and Hepburn would have. Hurt and Turner may not be readers' images of the Learys but they certainly are one interpretation of the roles. Oddly enough, Geena Davis is too natural an actress for her role. Some of the things Muriel does in the book that seem really weird Davis does so naturally that they lose much of their strangeness. Yet Muriel, as only the third lead, is the character of most interest to the viewer. Macon and Sarah are too bland really to catch the audience's imagination the way Muriel does. Tyler could put some character into Macon but Hurt seems to be just sleepwalking through his role. I would rate _ T_ h_ e_ A_ c_ c_ i_ d_ e_ n_ t_ a_ l_ T_ o_ u_ r_ i_ s_ t a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale, but I recommend it only to people who are already familiar with the story. If I had not been, I might well have given the film a lower rating.

BEACHES

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

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Capsule review: Tear-jerking story of the life-long friendship of a low-brow New York Jewish singer/actress and a WASP lawyer who met at age eleven on the beach at Atlantic City. Soap opera all the way and the real acting honors so to Mayin Bialik as an eleven-year-old Bette Midler. Rating: high 0.

B_e_a_c_h_e_s is the latest (presumably) of a number of somewhat similar films about pairs of women who share each other's lives and develop together. They share each other's good times and bad. They share joys and tragedies. Usually there are scenes where they turn bitchy to each other and break up their friendship in hatred only to come back to each other. Usually there is emphasis on the women's sex lives. This sort of film is always, deep down, a tribute to friendship and platonic love.

Example include O_l_d_A_c_q_u_a_i_n_t_a_n_c_e, E_n_t_r_e_N_o_u_s, T_e_r_m_s_o_f_E_n_d_e_a_r_m_e_n_t, R_i_c_h_a_n_d_F_a_m_o_u_s, and perhaps T_h_e_T_u_r_n_i_n_g_P_o_i_n_t. Gary Marshall has directed a new film along these lines, B_e_a_c_h_e_s (is that title a pun perhaps?).

B_e_a_c_h_e_s is similar in a lot of ways to George Cukor's R_i_c_h_a_n_d_F_a_m_o_u_s, right down to a score by George Delerue. (Though not as good a score--I do not like R_i_c_h_a_n_d_F_a_m_o_u_s, but I confess I find the title theme a stunningly beautiful piece of music and very probably the best piece of music in Delerue's distinguished career.)

B_e_a_c_h_e_s is the story of two women and, of course, their long friendship. C. C. Bloom is a brash singer/actress who has lived her whole life in show business. Hilary Whitney is a very upperclass Anglo-Saxon Protestant from the "right kind" of family. This is a most unlikely friendship that begins when the two are each eleven. C.C. is played by Mayin Bialik as a child and by Bette Midler as an adult. In fact, of the two Bialik is the more memorable. Midler plays Bette Midler and does an okay job, but Bialik playing Bette Midler is a wonder to behold. It is hard to believe that Bialik herself is not going to grow up to be Bette Midler, so perfectly does she personify Midler's looks and mannerisms. On the other hand, Marcie Leeds as the young Hilary does not really resemble Barbara Hershey. But then even as an adult, Hilary looks only like Barbara Hershey with bad taste in lipstick.

Through most of the film Midler upstages Hershey and director Gary Marshall (who works for co-producer Midler) lets her do it. The result is that while Hershey is less noticeable than Midler, she also does a better job of acting. Midler is much more of a caricature. It is Midler who sings "You've got to give a little, take a little," the film's theme song and moral. B e a c h e s is a decent weepy film for those who like to cry in movies, but it is less than ideal as a piece of sincere filmmaking. Rate it a high 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.

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