

# MT VOID 11/17/23 -- Vol. 42, No. 20, Whole Number 2302



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Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, [mleeper@optonline.net](mailto:mleeper@optonline.net)  
 Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, [eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net)  
 Sending Address: [evelynchimisleeper@gmail.com](mailto:evelynchimisleeper@gmail.com)  
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### Mini Reviews, Part 10 (film reviews by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper):

This is the tenth batch of mini-reviews.

**NOT QUITE HOLLYWOOD: THE WILD, UNTOLD STORY OF OZPLOITATION!** (2008): NOT QUITE HOLLYWOOD is a documentary about the "Ozploitation" films of the 1970s and beyond. I started noting down the films they mentioned, but soon realized that was hopeless. (It's something like a hundred films. The IMDb has a list under the "Connections" category for this film.)

The Ozploitation wave seemed to start with sex in films (including full frontal nudity). It isn't clear whether these films were shown in mainstream cinemas, or cinemas of the old Times Square variety. One film from this era, ALVIN PURPLE was one of these, patterned on ALFIE, but with the women chasing Alvin, rather than vice versa. It made Graeme Blundell a megastar in Australia, and made A\$5,000,000 on a budget of A\$200,000.

After these films kick-started the Australian film industry, "class" directors such as Peter Weir and other started making historical dramas about Australian history, but would have nothing to do with genre films. (Peter Weir did dip his toes into genre in 1978 with THE PLUMBER, though it's more arty than graphic.)

There are a lot of interviewees, including Quentin Tarantino (who was apparently one of the people who encouraged this

documentary), Jamie Lee Curtis, and Dennis Hopper. Tarantino is a real enthusiast for these films, and is always colorful in his speech. (He describes LONG WEEKEND as a "Mother Nature goes apesh\*t kind of movie.")

The producers and directors are also covered (producer Tony Ginnane, for example, is called "Australia's Roger Corman").

Just as WOODLANDS DARK AND DAYS BEWITCHED was the definitive documentary on folk horror in the movies, this is definitive documentary on Ozploitation. (There is apparently documentary on Filipino horror films, MACHETE MAIDENS UNLEASHED, which I assume is definitive in the sense that it is probably the only one.)

Released theatrically 31 July 2009; available on Tubi streaming. Rating: +3 (-4 to +4), or 9/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0996966/reference>

What others are saying: [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/not\\_quite\\_hollywood](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/not_quite_hollywood)

SHARE? (2023): In SHARE? a man wakes up in an empty concrete cell. There is apparently a keyboard and monitor with which he can communicate--using a very limited text interface--with whatever is running it. This is outdated, but it is what people expect to see in a film with computers, (Well, either that or a really fancy interface like in MINORITY REPORT, but the budget for SHARE? probably wouldn't pay the catering on MINORITY REPORT.) SHARE? is also shot from a single fixed angle, making the set-ups easy.

One problem is that because the camera angle is from \*behind\* the computer screen, the viewer needs the ability to read the text backwards, while the text is not quite in focus.

There are no real clues to the mystery of how he got there; his main concern is that he has to feed the dog. So there is a certain irony in his being treated as a dog, rewarded for doing tricks. When he needs supplies such as food or clothing, the room provides him with them, if he has earned credits by amusing... someone (or as it turns out, multiple someones). He can also lose credits for doing anti-social things.

We eventually discover that there are other rooms like this one and each has a different person being watched.

This might have worked as a short film, but even at just 80 minutes, this becomes repetitive and simply goes on too slowly. [-mrl/ec1]

Released streaming 10 November 2023. Rating: 0 (-4 to +4), or 4/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12348910/reference>

What others are saying: [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/share\\_2023](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/share_2023)

**Two Thoughts on Fantastic Voyage** (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

Why are their wristwatches running slow? They were also in the miniaturization field as well.

If they inject miniaturized water, even a little bit, with the sub, isn't that going to expand at the end of the hour? The ratio seems to be 1:3000, so even 1/4 teaspoon would expand to 750 teaspoons, or 250 tablespoons, or more than 15 cups of water that would suddenly appear in Banes's system. [-ecl]

**This Week's Reading** (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

[We have a brief respite from Raymond Chandler and Philip Marlowe, who will probably return next week.]

In A HISTORY OF HISTORIES: EPICS, CHRONICLES, ROMANCES AND INQUIRIES FROM HERODOTUS AND THUCYDIDES TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY by John Burrow (Vintage, ISBN 978-0-375-72767-2), Burrow talks about how much of the writings of the ancient historians was lost. The two sections of the ANNALS of Tacitus that did survive each survived in a single manuscript. Only half of the work of Ammianus survives, and that only from a single ninth century manuscript. (And in literature, BEOWULF is famous for surviving in a single manuscript, which itself was almost lost in a fire in 1731 but was so tightly bound that only the edges were singed.)

Burrow also sometimes assumes the reader possesses an extensive theological vocabulary: he refers to symbolic and typological readings of the Bible, and to providentialism, all in one paragraph.

Alas, I kept finding errors--small errors, but errors nonetheless. Burrow says of Josephus's account of Masada, "The other set piece is the fall of the rock fortress of Masada, in AD 73, with the mass suicide of its defenders; no one seems to have played the role of Josephus (after the siege of Jerusalem) and survived." I am not going to fault him for writing in 2007 about the traditional Masada story of mass suicide, even though archaeological evidence found since then has cast doubt on this story. But his claim that no one survived was incorrect even by the 2007 standards; two women and five children survived in a cistern, which is supposedly how Josephus heard the story.

In the chapter on Gregory of Tours, and again in the chapter on Bede, he seems to credit Bede with beginning the practice of dating events from "the Incarnation", that is, B.C. and A.D., rather than from the founding of Rome, or by the name of the consuls of that year, or who was emperor and which year of his reign it was. But the B.C./A.D. system was created by Dionysius Exiguus (a.k.a. "Dionysius the Short") in 525. Bede used in around 735, but it didn't come into widespread use for another hundred years or so. (One wishes Dionysius was more familiar with the concept of zero, since his dates go from 1 B.C. to A.D. 1, with no year 0.)

Still, there are nuggets. In the chapter on Eusebius he says, "Hence he may be less of a historian than his classical predecessors, but he is more of a scholar--though certainly not a disinterested one." The distinction between historian and scholar is not often noted; but it appears to be a combination of first-hand sources versus books (which presumably include first-hand accounts, but without the possibility of actually asking follow-up questions of the participants), and writing for entertainment versus proof and accuracy.

Reading THE HISTORY OF HISTORIES is not always straightforward. Burrow seems to love nested phrases:

"The Scottish focus on civil society, rather than, as was still to some extent true of Montesquieu, on forms of political constitution, was understandable."

which I will "diagram" as:

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The Scottish focus on civil society,
  rather than,
    as was still to some extent true of Montesquieu,
      on forms of political constitution,
        was understandable.
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And this is often combined with long sentences:

"After three introductory survey chapters, and with frequent excursions to the provinces, almost all of Gibbon's first volume (of six), before its conclusion with two notorious chapters on early Christianity (XV,XVI), is focused on Rome itself and the failure to solve the problem of peaceful imperial succession, bedevilled by the indiscipline and veniality of the standing army and especially the Praetorian Guard, which at one point puts the empire up for auction,"

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After three introductory survey chapters,
and with frequent excursions to the provinces,
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  which at one point puts the empire up for auction,
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[-ecl]

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Mark Leeper  
mleeper@optonline.net

Quote of the Week:

Books had an instant replay long before televised sports.

--Bert Williams

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