

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 8/1/84 -- Vol. 3, No. 5

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all Lincroft meetings are on Wednesdays
in LZ 3A-206 (HO meetings temporarily suspended) at noon.

_D_A_T_E _T_O_P_I_C

08/22 TEA WITH THE BLACK DRAGON by R. A. MacAvoy
10/03 CIRCUS WORLD by Barry Longyear
11/14 THE TOMBS OF ATUAN by Ursula K. LeGuin
01/02 THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO by Charles G. Finney
02/13 SLAN by A. E. Van Vogt

LZ's library and librarian Lance Larsen (576-2668) are in LZ 3C-219.
Mark Leeper (576-2571, LZ 3E-215) and Evelyn Leeper (576-2378, LZ
1D-216) are co-chairpeople. HO's library and librarian Tim Schroeder
(949-5866) are in HO 2G-432. John Jetzt (577-5316) is HO-chairperson.

1. I have just been given some distressing news, but I know how to
patch things up. It seems that about a month and a half ago, when
it was time to re-register, I gave everyone two identical page
ones, the top one of which could be ripped off and used as a re-
registration form. I figured if I give everyone two page ones,
they could send me one and still have an unblemished issue. Well,
I figured wrong. I am told now that collectors are paying \$10 for
copies of that issue with two page ones (which seems to be the
going rate among collectors for back issues of this notice) but are
only willing to pay \$3 if there is only one page one. Apparently
the only mint copies of that issue are the ones with two copies of
page one. I told you that it would be okay to rip off that top
page, and now you who did it are out now \$7 in value for following
my instructions. That's hardly fair. So here is what I am going
to do. I will pay you each \$7. More accurately I will give you
each \$7 in credit. Credit for what, you ask. Well, since this
year we have an extraordinary expense, one that is not recompensed
by the company in any way, we have got to get some funds to pay off
these debts. As I figure it, if I charge everyone \$7 annual
membership, it will just about cover our expenses. I now owe you
each \$7 and you owe me \$7. That just cancels out. Wasn't that
convenient!

Oh, just one more thing. You out there who reregistered by some

other means than tearing off the first page of the notice, you still owe me \$7. Pay or get out. There, wasn't that fair?

2. I hear that someone is planning on returning the title of "World's Tallest Building" to New York City by building a 150-story skyscraper in lower Manhattan. Does this mean that another remake

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of KING KONG is just around the corner? -ecl

Mark Leeper
LZ 3E-215 x2571
...{houxn,hogpd,hocse}!lznv!mrl

Gemini Capsules - August 1, 1984

"Gemini Capsules": SF review column, edited by Rob Mitchell. Appears in the "Lincroft-Holmdel SF Club Notice".

A medium for quick reviews of anything of interest in the worlds of science fiction/fantasy, although the gimmick will be to relate pairs of interesting anythings. Unlike other columns, I'll pass along even the slanderous and scatological comments I receive. You can reach out and touch me at 576-6106, at LZ 1B-306, or via hogpd!jrrt.

Two recent novelizations of SF films

I generally don't read novels that are written straight from movie scripts; after seeing the film, what more can be said? Sure, a little padding in the characterization department, or some such, but probably nothing worth the \$2.50 or so. Well, there are exceptions, and on the basis of a friend's urging I went out and purchased S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k_I_I_I: T_h_e_S_e_a_r_c_h_f_o_r_S_p_o_c_k and T_h_e_L_a_s_t_S_t_a_r_f_i_g_h_t_e_r.

ST3 is written by Vonda McIntyre, who also wrote the novelization of the second STAR TREK movie. ST3 is a great book, if you like the STAR TREK universe. It's crammed with lots of plot embellishments and peripheral

details; the first 82 pages of the book set the stage for the opening scene in the movie. The Saavik/David Marcus relationship is fleshed out (pun intended), the Klingon mentality becomes more three-dimensional and hence understandable, significant characters appear (e.g. Spock's mother and Carol Marcus), and minor characters get more time on stage (for instance, we get a rare glimpse into Scotty's Earthside family life).

TLS is much more faithful to its exact movie script. A few key lines from the movie are not in the book, such as the Ko-Dan commander's last line at the end of the space battle, which leads me to believe Kahn used an early version of the script. Some detail is added in the novel, but most of it is gratuitous window-dressing; very little of the extra detail makes the characters more compelling or sympathetic. The key exception is for the only character in the movie I consider to be a real Hero -- the Beta unit. The novel lets us see into his (its?) head with the result that the Beta unit becomes one of the most interesting characters in the story.

To put these books in perspective: as stand-alone SF literature, ST3 rates a +1 on the Leeper -4/+4 scale, while TLS rates a mediocre 0. As books within very narrow genres (STAR TREK and space opera, respectively), ST3 merits a +3 and TLS merits a +1.

Rob Mitchell

_N_O_T_E_S_F_R_O_M_T_H_E_N_E_T

Contributed by Rob Mitchell & Dale Skran

>From ihnp4!vax135!cornell!uw-beaver!tektronix!orca!iddic!rickc

Wed Jul 25 13:51:10 1984

Subject: Re: Demon

Re: Demon review recently posted:

I was bothered by some of the "magic" used, since it seemed to be rather non-scientific, and since Gaea had never shown such abilities before.

I agree! Furthermore, there were no rules apparent for the magic.

Someone (Larry Niven in one of his collections, I think) wrote about the necessity of having rules for events not possible with our current knowledge. Varley did a good job with the genetic engineering - I can believe asphalt producing critters. But if one is going to bring in causality violations (time travel) all bets are off. The reader is left with

a dissatisfied feeling, like saying 'it was all a dream'. The defense is that ordinary mortals can not understand what is going on - but that sure makes a poor story. I would bring in more specific points, but would probably be a spoiler.

Varley had some of this problem with the 'Ophiuchi (sp?) Hotline' stories. The Jovian beings were completely beyond our understanding, but it played better since they were disinterested in humans.

I thought that 'Demon' was weak - but still enjoyed it. Varley has a knack (like Heinlein) of writing very readable stories, even if one doesn't agree with the politics or science involved.

Rick Coates

>From ihnp4!inuxc!pur-ee!CS-Mordred!Pucc-H:ab3 Wed Jul 25 12:44:58 1984
Subject: Re: The Two Faces of Tomorrow by Hogan

This book also includes a blocks-style world, with a small character (Horace?) who is animated by the computer and directed using a natural-language interface...and the kinds of problems that arise when trying to get a simple task completed (frying an egg, for instance) are typical of some AI problems.

Rsk the Wombat

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>From ihnp4!zehntel!dual!amd!decwrl!decvax!dartvax!karl Sun Jul 22 11:20:38 1984
Subject: Constructed worldlets.

The original contributor's postscript, about "it wasn't built with a wrench", reminded me of a story of Stanislaw Lem's, in which Trurl builds a whole kingdom in miniature [a couple of square feet, as I recall] for some wretched king -- and then had second thoughts when Klapaucius reminded him that those people in there were suffering. I read it in The Cyberiad, but I forget which Sally it was.

That might be the smallest constructed world. Shadow must be largest, Terry Pratchett notwithstanding, since by definition it contains all other worlds, as I recall.

karl@dartmouth, dartvax!karl

>From ihnp4!decwrl!dec-rhea!dec-akov68!boyajian Tue Jul 24 08:43:44 1984
Subject: re: BLADE RUNNER

Whether Blade Runner was a good movie or not, it's a typically bad adaptation of a book, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep. It's as if someone reduced the plot to 3 sentences, then handed it to someone else to expand back into a full length script. Not only did they leave out some of the nice things in the book, but the elements they left in had no relevance to the movie plot. Example: the empathy test that involves showing photos to the suspected android. The whole point in the book was that all the pictures showed death or mistreatment of animals, and with nearly all animals on the verge of extinction, any human would have great empathy for the animals. In the movie, the picture of the nude woman is emphasized, but not because she's lying on a bearskin rug, as in the book. If you didn't read the book, the whole scene doesn't make any sense.

Bill Kelly

It certainly **does** make sense if you haven't read the book, because **I** haven't read it (I tried, but I found the first three pages unreadable, so I gave up), but I understood perfectly what was going on in the movie. Some of the details may have changed, but the point of the test was to judge **the emotional reaction of the subject**. The fact that some of the scenarios given had nothing to do with mistreatment of animals doesn't change that fact. Is this a really major point? Does it change the outcome or the focus of the whole movie? No.

There are some who think that what an author puts into a book is sacred, and that it is sacrilege for a filmmaker to change anything. I don't. As long as the central point is preserved, and major details, I have no objections.

And BTW, it so happens that Dick was generally pleased with what material he saw from the film before he died. He felt that the feel of the book remained intact.

--- jayembee (Jerry Boyajian, DEC, Maynard, MA)

>From ihnp4!hplabs!hao!seismo!brl-tgr!wmartin Tue Jul 31 16:56:02 1984
Subject: Matter Transmission

We had a long discussion involving matter transmission a few years back on the SF-Lovers Digest, inspired mainly by a posting I made about possible forms of transportation in future societies. Not to rehash that, but because I happened to be thinking a bit more on the subject, I thought I'd send in this submission for what it is worth...

I think that few SF authors who happen to use matter transmission as an ingredient or background in their work recognize all the implications of the technology. I speak here of electro-mechanical methods, not of psi powers like teleportation. I contend that, if you have matter transmission, you also have matter duplication. People offer arguments against that, speculating that it might be impossible to store the information necessary to reconstruct complex things like living organisms or the like, but it seems doubtful that such restrictions would last long if they existed at all.

Matter duplication has profound implications for every aspect of life and social structure. The idea that you feed dirt, garbage, radioactive waste, or whatever in one end of the device, and at the other end take out diamonds, steak dinners, the Mona Lisa, more matter duplicators, pets, or people destroys all concepts of "wealth", "status", or "value", and not only grants immortality but also simultaneously makes life, human or otherwise, value-less. (What difference does it make if you kill somebody if he can be re-created from the last recorded pattern? You maybe made him lose an hour or a day of time; nothing more.)

It grants immortality by "editing in the mix", as it were -- when you pass through the matter transmitter to go out for dinner, at the same time as it zips you to the restaurant on Tahiti or on Cygnus 4, it recreates you without crud in your arteries, stones in your kidneys, excess fat cells, cancer cells, dirt on your skin, or waste in your intestines or bladder; it can even bring you out with your hair combed (and more or less of it, as you wish!) and dressed in a tuxedo. We have just eliminated the need for clothes closets and bathrooms, among other facilities, like hospitals.

Would you like to make a ringworld or a Dyson sphere? Just feed in dust, plasma, or gas giants into one end of a BIG matter duplicator, and get out a stream of ringworld material at the other end. Or get out Earth-like planets in an endless row -- could our orbit hold a few hundred Earths, equidistantly spaced far enough to minimize excess tides on each? Churn out

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as many as you want -- you could create them with the proper motion necessary to slip right into orbit as desired.

Is your universe dying down? Feed in old, feeble stars and put out bright young main-sequence stars, chock-full of unburned hydrogen, complete with fresh planetary systems. To hell with entropy!

Talk about science indistinguishable from magic!

Anyway, what I am getting at, besides all the purple prose (*), is that a writer who throws in matter transport but leaves the rest of the fictional society exactly like ours, or medieval Europe, or whatever, is being inconsistent. Anyone like to nominate writers and works where the implications of the technology are taken to the fullest (at least as far as a book or series can go)?

Will

(*) If you poured a bottle of Burgundy over several members of the SFWA, would they be "purple pro's"? [Evil chuckle....]

>From ihnp4!vax135!cornell!uw-beaver!tektronix!hplabs!sri-unix
!boyajian%akov68.DEC@decwrl.ARPA Tue Jul 24 11:07:02 1984
Subject: re: DUNE: Welles and Floyd

Back a few years, rumor had it that Orson Welles would be in DUNE. It did not mention his part, but I would guess he would play Baron "I will sell no spice before its time" Harkonnen. (To show the inaccuracy of the source, it said that Pink Floyd would be doing the music. [The Dark Side Of Arrakis? with green pyramids?])

Steve Kovner

That source was not so innacurate as you believe. There have been a few attempts before the current production to film DUNE. In one such, being produced and directed by Alexandro Jodorowsky, Orson Welles was indeed picked to play the Baron (and Salvador Dali --- yes, that one! --- was to play the Emperor). Pink Floyd was signed on to do the soundtrack for one of the productions, but I think it wasn't for Jodorowsky, but for a previous

attempt by DiLaurentiis. *That* production was to be directed by Ridley Scott, from a script by Frank Herbert himself, and with production designs by H. R. Giger.

--- jayembee (Jerry Boyajian, DEC, Maynard, MA)

>From ihnp4!ucla-cs!reiher Sun Jul 22 15:02:14 1984
Subject: report from Filmex

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The Los Angeles International Film Exhibition (Filmex) just ended. I saw 15 or 20 of the 180 films shown. I will give a brief description/ review of each. Also, for what it's worth, a rating on a scale of 1-10.

"Seventeen" - A controversial cinema verite documentary about teenagers in Muncie, Indiana. Full of insights into contemporary youth. It would be a little better if it was fifteen minutes shorter and the sound was clearer. Proves that real life really is more interesting than most movies. 8.5

"The Census Taker" - A black comedy of murder, made independently in America. A good start, but the writer didn't seem to know where to take it.
4

"The Company of Wolves" - Stylish British fantasy/horror, a retelling of Little Red Riding Hood with sexuality and psychology added. With Angela Lansbury (very good as Grandma) and David Warner. 7.5

"The Gold Diggers" - A tedious, repetitious, pretentious British semi-experimental film. With Julie Christie. 1.5

"Uforia" - American comedy about an opportunistic drifter, an avaricious preacher, and an otherwise normal young woman who is convinced that she is receiving messages from UFOs. Slight, but amusing. With Cindy Williams, Fred Ward, and Harry Dean Stanton. 5.5

"Balkan Express" - Yugoslavian film set during WWII. A group of pickpockets try to keep themselves out of trouble, but only get in deeper and deeper. A conventional ending somewhat compromises a good film. 6.5

"Those Glory, Glory Days" - British film about a bunch of soccer-mad girls who will do anything to get tickets to an important match. Not much inspiration involved. 3

"The Hit" - Terrence Stamp is unusually calm when John Hurt, a hit man, comes to make him pay for squealing on his associates years ago. This film apparently was very popular at Cannes, but it didn't quite come off, for me. Good performances. 6

"Ghost Dance" - Another bizarre, semi-experimental British film about a whole lot of things, but I'm not sure quite what they are. Interesting photography. 2.5

"Eyes of Fire" - Independently made American horror/fantasy set in 1750 on the American wilderness. A group of outcasts settle in a haunted valley, to their regret. Fine photography and imaginative effects belie the apx \$1 million budget. Less gory than most recent horror films. 6.5

"Science Fiction Omnibus" - Five short sf/fantasy films.

1). "The Plant" - concerns a plant that takes over a man's house. A one joke film, but the joke's well told. 6

2). "Quest" - Saul Bass film based on an original Ray Bradbury story, which

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is rather thin. Visually stunning, though. 7

3). "Renescence" - Repulsive film about nasty fellow who keeps killing and reviving a girl. It's not often you actually hear a film booed. 1

4) "Strange Tangents" - Incompetent writing, directing, and especially acting mars the splendid homemade special effects. Really a demo reel for the latter. 4

5). "The Final Hour" - Ho hum sf film which would like to emulate "The Twilight Zone" without a good story or director. 3

"Pessi and Illusia" - Finnish fairy tale which juxtaposes Scandinavian fantasy creatures with modern war. Pretty and entertaining, but it doesn't pack much of a punch. Some will find it treacly. 6

"Beauty and the Beast" - Danish film from Nils Malmros about a father who disapproves of his teenaged daughter's new boyfriend, and overreacts. Really fantastic insights into parental and filial love, and love in

general. Not as good as Malmros' "Tree of Knowledge", but still the best new film I've seen this year. 9

"The Plague Dogs" - An animated version of a Richard Adam's novel, concerning two dogs who escape from an experimental facility. Quite grim, particularly for animation. The animation quality is fairly good, and the film doesn't back off from the unpleasant moments. The basic economic limits of animation and fundamental weaknesses in the story mar it. 6

"Ring of Power" - Animated fantasy/sf/rock and roll story. Background and effect animation are good, but nothing else is very strong. Mick Jagger may have grounds to sue over the appearance of the main villain. 5

"Firebird" - Korean film about the debilitating effects of superstition. Professionally made, but I've seen this kind of thing before, done much better. No firebirds anywhere in site in the film. 5

Where to see them: "The Company of Wolves", "The Hit", and "Eyes of Fire" can be expected to get general releases in the next few months to half year.

"The Plague Dogs" will appear on HBO and videocassette, probably not in theaters. "Ring of Power", "The Census Taker", and "Uforia" look like good bets for short, limited releases, then cable TV. "Beauty and the Beast" deserves, but may not get, the kind of release the best foreign films see. ("Tree of Knowledge" still hasn't been released. If you see it advertised at a revival house, university, or film festival, do your best to see it.)

"Balkan Express", "Pessi and Illusia", and "Firebird" will probably be almost impossible to find. I can't picture anyone wanting to release "The Gold Diggers", "Ghost Dance", or "These Glory, Glory Days". "Seventeen" looks like it might become a staple of revival houses; it also might be shown at the art theaters in large cities.

I have posted more detailed reviews of those of the above films with sf/fantasy tie-ins to net.sf-lovers. If you have any questions about any of the films or want further information, send me mail.

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Peter Reiher

>From ihnp4!zehntel!dual!amd!fortune!hpda!hplabs!sri-unix
!Sanchez.dlos@XEROX.ARPA Tue Jul 24 10:30:00 1984
Subject: JOE BOB GOES TO THE DRIVE-IN AFTER A TWO WEEK WAIT (7-20)

Our old friend Lucio Fulci, Big Lucy, the main man in Italy, just came out with a new flick called "House by the Cemetery." As we all know, Big Lucy has been doing the best Italian ripoffs since "Hercules," stuff like "Gates of Hell" last year and "Suspiria" and, well, you know, the classics. This one starts off with some fairly heavy symbolism. A teenage kid gets some scissors rammed through his heart and then his girlfriend has a knife stuck through the back of her head so it comes out her mouth. I know, I know, you've seen it before, but Big Lucy likes to hold that camera steady for a long time while the knife goes through and run up that Vomit Meter rating. I think Big Lucy is really trying to tell us something about teenage violence in America and I would encourage you to take the kids to this one.

"House by the Cemetery" is about this typical American family that is real happy except they can't understand why they look like Italians. They don't worry about it, though; they just pack up and move to New England and buy the house where the teenagers just got shis-ka-bobbed. Soon as they get there, their little blond-headed kid starts seeing visions of this spooky little Sissy Spacek girl who tells him not to go into the durn house. She makes her point by cutting the heads off her dolls and making blood pour out, but the symbolism is too heavy for the kid, he can't figure out what the heck she means by that.

So then the father goes off to study about this Dr. Freudstein character who used to live in the house, and while he's gone the babysitter comes over and hears a baby crying down in the cellar and she goes down there to check it out and gets attacked by a bat. Now maybe you don't think that sounds very disgusting. You han't seen this bat. We're talking a huge bloodsucker that keeps coming back and spewing slime all over the room and diving straight at the bimbo's face. The father has to gore the bat to death with a big ole set of scissors.

Next thing, the mother of the family is dusting and cleaning and she notices that in one of the rooms there's a grave in the floor. Course, she doesn't think anything about it. But then she starts hearing these noises down there.

When her husband Norman gets home, he has to give her a bunch of Valium. "It's bad enough living next to a cemetery," she says, "but do we have to live with a tomb in our hallway?"

He tells her yes they do and to get a hold of herself.

Then this zombie realtor comes by to check on the family and nobody's home, so she starts walking around in the house and the tomb cracks open and swallows up her leg and something with scales on it comes up out of the basement and goes to work with a crowbar; stomach first, then the chest, then the jugular, and I believe we may be talking more actual blood here than we've seen since "Nightmare."

Then there's some plot about Dr. Freudstein. And what ends up happening is this little spook girl keeps saying "Go away, do not go in," and the Family Stupid keeps saying, "Hey, how about we go down in the cellar and see if there's any more bats down there." And what we end up with is a new record: enough liquid to open a Plasma Center.

One throat-cutting, slow motion, ear-to-ear, three times on the same lady. Two heads roll. One head rolls down the stairs. Underground meatlocker scene, if you know what I mean and I think you do. Maggots in the throat. Great slime glopola lizard-face genetic-DNA creature attack. Nine dead bodies. An 82 on the Vomit Meter. Twelve gallons blood. One beast. Two breasts. No kung fu. No motor vehicle chases. One of Big Lucy's best. Three and a half stars.

Joe Bob says check it out.

