

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club  
Club Notice - 10/3/84 -- Vol. 3, No. 12

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

- 10/23 Video meeting
- 10/24 Video meeting
- 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 (834-4674, HO  
1B-437A) 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. The following are the top 10 films for US & Canada rental as of  
a couple of weeks ago.

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|-----------------------------------|--------|
| 1. E.T.                           | \$210M |
| 2. STAR WARS                      | \$194M |
| 3. RETURN OF THE JEDI             | \$166M |
| 4. EMPIRE STRIKES BACK            | \$142M |
| 5. JAWS                           | \$133M |
| 6. RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK        | \$116M |
| 7. GHOSTBUSTERS                   | \$110M |
| 8. INDIANA JONES & TEMPLE OF DOOM | \$100M |
| 9. GREASE                         | \$96M  |
| 10. TOOTSIE                       | \$95M  |

2. From my mail box:

From daemon Thu Sep 27 15:38:36 1984  
>From cja Thu Sep 27 15:37:41 1984 remote from lzla  
FROM: cejackson, notorious jill johnson admirer  
TO: wi!psc  
SUBJECT: Notice  
Would you mind putting just a brief note in the next notice  
that the stuff I submitted was based on my notes of two ALL  
THINGS CONSIDERED broadcast?  
I feel a little funny not citing the source.

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

THE NEW JERSEY SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY PROUDLY PRESENTS

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\*\*\*\*\* A One-Day Mini-Con \*\*\*\*\*

GOH: L. Sprague De Camp  
Lin Carter

Also: Films      Video      Art      Dealers  
      Discussions    FUN

When: Saturday, October 20, Noon ---> Midnight  
The Bad News: \$4.00 Admission  
Where: Belleville Masonic Temple  
126 Joralemon Street  
Belleville, NJ

How to Get There:  
Temple is at 126 Joralemon St., near Washington Ave, in Belleville.  
From NY, take De Camp #44 bus (sorry, I'm just relaying these  
directions!)  
From NJ, take TNJ #13 bus ( " )

Driving, take Rt. 3 to Rt. 21S, get off 21 at Main St. exit.

Turn left, drive to Joralemon (crossing railroad tracks, then main drag on hill), turn right. Temple on right, big concrete pillars, can't be mistaken for anything but what it is.

For Information:

Randolph Fritz (201) 641-2170 (phone)

New Jersey SF Society  
PO Box 65  
Paramus NJ 07653

\*\*\*\*\* DEALER SPACE FREE IF WE HAVE ANY LEFT \*\*\*\*\*

Art Show Info:

Robert Hepperle (201) 434-8857

{BTL}!charm!mam

Two Not-so-new Films  
Film reviews by Mark R. Leeper

## IMPULSE

This is not a new idea. George Romero did the same idea in a film known as C\_o\_d\_e\_N\_a\_m\_e\_T\_r\_i\_x\_i\_e or T\_h\_e\_C\_r\_a\_z\_i\_e\_s. It shows up on WOR-TV every now and again. The idea is that some chemical "stuff" gets loose in a town and the people who ingest it are mentally altered so that they are prone to violence. Not surprisingly, I\_m\_p\_u\_l\_s\_e, which was a theatrical co-production of Twentieth Century Fox and ABC Pictures (so it was made with an eye toward TV) is less violent and more subtle than C\_o\_d\_e\_N\_a\_m\_e\_T\_r\_i\_x\_i\_e. The Romero film starts with half the town going crazy. I\_m\_p\_u\_l\_s\_e has a much slower build and a somewhat more engaging premise. A chemical contaminant destroys people's inhibitions. They don't do completely weird things, but start doing the sort of things they really want to do but would normally be inhibited from doing when they evaluate the results. A broad range of desires is exhibited by the townspeople who slowly become less and less able to control themselves. Children's mischief turns homicidal, parents become child beaters, doctors turn to murderers. Ironically, a soda jerk gives away ice cream to a child who cannot pay for it. Still, I\_m\_p\_u\_l\_s\_e allows itself to

disintegrate into a mindless action film and never really lives up to the implications of the promise. Rate it a mediocre 0.

## THE FINAL OPTION

Somewhere way back somebody must have made a really good British film about a police siege on a building held by criminals. Now they take all kinds of films on all sorts of premises and turn them into remakes. A few seasons back a British film, V\_e\_n\_o\_m, got a wide release. It was supposed to be a horror film about a very dangerous snake. In fact, the snake was only a minor part of the story. It was really about a kidnapping and a police siege.

T\_h\_e\_F\_i\_n\_a\_l\_O\_p\_t\_i\_o\_n is supposed to be a film about an anti-nuclear group in Britain that turns to terrorism. The film builds up tension in the first half as the terrorists plan their act and the military tries to counter it. The military fails to find out what the act is until it is too late. American officials are held and will be killed if the British government doesn't explode a nuclear device on the plains of Scotland. As soon as the terrorists' plans are clear, the film becomes just another police siege film. This is an entertaining film and has some good suspense, but it fails to live up to the originality of its premise. Look in small roles for Edward Woodward of W\_i\_c\_k\_e\_r\_M\_a\_n and B\_r\_e\_a\_k\_e\_r\_M\_o\_r\_a\_n\_t, Ingrid Pitt of W\_i\_c\_k\_e\_r\_M\_a\_n and C\_o\_u\_n\_t\_e\_s\_s\_D\_r\_a\_c\_u\_l\_a, Robert Webber of many films going back to T\_w\_e\_l\_v\_e\_A\_n\_g\_r\_y\_M\_e\_n, and a more obvious Richard Widmark.

## FLIGHT OF DRAGONS

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

This is a feature-length animated film that was made for TV by Rankin and Bass. They previously did T\_h\_e\_H\_o\_b\_b\_i\_t for TV the same way. I am pretty sure it never played in the New York area though in some parts of the country I am told it did air on network TV. It is loosely based on the

pseudo-non-fiction study of dragons by Peter Dickinson. That book did not tell a story, but this is a story set in his world. It also credits "St. Dragon and the George" by Gordon R. Dickson.

The film makes the same error that T\_h\_e\_H\_o\_b\_b\_i\_t made: it chooses overly familiar actors to do the voices, and their voices then don't really go with the characters. The voice of the wise old wizard is done by Harry Morgan. He is as unwizardly as just about anyone I can imagine and it rubs off onto his character. The hero is played by John Ritter. The character is supposed to be Peter Dickinson himself who by a strange set of affairs was writing the truth when he wrote his fantasies...shades of a storyline in the old DC comics.

The premise of the story is oddly self-contradictory. Apparently technology is wiping out magic and the hero must stop it from being wiped out completely. Why? Because technology will stagnate without magic. It is magic like flying fairies that makes man want to learn to fly also, so he invents the airplane. Magic crystal balls were the inspiration for the invention of television (it is claimed). So technology is both the monster and the maiden in distress. This one gets points for being pro-technology in the long run. Most film fantasy is of the W\_i\_z\_a\_r\_d\_s variety, claiming that technology is unnatural and wrong. Not a great film, but as good as a lot of films released to theaters this summer. Catch it on cassette.

## BOOK REVIEWS by Nigel

It has been written, by other people, that book reviewers serve their reading public by allowing their readers to concentrate on books that they believe they will like, and therefore finish. I hope that this is true. If it is true, I would appreciate some feedback about the range of books, the format, the references to books they cannot be easily bought or even borrowed. Mail can be sent to lznv!nrh or to hi::nrh and it will be read and thought about. Feel free to stop by and disrupt my day. The continued silence from you lot makes me feel unwanted and will encourage me to take up another hobby.

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### THE LAND BEYOND THE GATE by Lloyd Arthur Eshbach

Best described as a Gaelic Fantasy. The tale starts in some unspecified part of Scotland which seems odd considering the predominately Irish base for the rest of the story. One of the better points of the book is the capsule history myth of Ireland. The addition of Christian (Judaic?) myth is curious and out of place. There is none of the Welsh myth except for the coincidences with the Irish. The presence of Taliesin is also curious and out of place. Unfortunately I do not know of any Scottish myth cycle so I cannot comment on its presence or absence. However such a myth cycle would have to be of Pictish origin not Gaelic. For the ignorant among you, the Scots came to Scotland and took over around 1100 AD when they married into the ruling families of Picts.

The book is well written and very readable and has a reasonable ending. On the other hand the 'About the Author' section on the last page states that this is the first of a series of four books.

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### MOONHEART by Charles de Lint

This book is very interesting and certainly the most absorbing tale that I have read this year. It is a magical fantasy of sorts. It also has elements of a spy thriller. Despite all of the things it has going for it, it left me a little disappointed in retrospect.

It also has chunks of the Taliesin history, a probably accurate picture of Manitou and associated Indian lore, an image of the problems of an immortal, a magic ring and a, presumably new, method of rune casting that is unlike anything I have come across before.

I strongly recommend the book to anyone with an interest in any of these subjects and I will buy a coffee, or equivalent, for anyone who, having read

the book, will take the time to talk about it with me.

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THE ALIEN TRACE  
by H. M. Major

The most memorable feature of this book is its explicit sex scenes. It is also the first book of yet another series which I am unlikely to buy.

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NATIVE TONGUE  
by Suzette Haden Elgin

This book is extremely male chauvinist in its treatment of women. It also contains a number of ideas worth exploiting at length. However the denouement is unrelated to and does not follow from the development. I am quiet prepared to accept improbable ideas for the sake of the story but I am not prepared for stories which contradict themselves.

For those of you who read the netnews, I was surprized at the vocal enthusiasm for this book. The flaw in this book is greater than the flaw in T\_h\_e\_G\_a\_m\_e\_p\_l\_a\_y\_e\_r\_s\_o\_f\_Z\_a\_n by M. A. Foster which was referred to recently and which was criticized in every review I saw. My criticism was that given a ship which takes generations to build and must be flown constantly to stay on the ground while it is being built and that the builders are more than average intelligent, you do not abort the breeding program for pilots before you use the ship.

I will comment on the flaw in N\_a\_t\_i\_v\_e\_T\_o\_n\_g\_u\_e to anyone who wants to hear it but I cannot recommend the book for the story.

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THE WINDSINGERS  
THE LIMBRETH GATE  
by Megan Lindholm

There is a prequel that I has not been able to find called H\_a\_r\_p\_y'\_s\_F\_l\_i\_g\_h\_t. This is a fantasy series with some neat ideas. It is well worth the money assuming that you like fantasy to begin with.

The stories are well written and only loosely tied so that the absence of one book does not detract from the reading of another.

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ONCE THERE WAS A GIANT  
by Keith Laumer

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More serious than the average Laumer. Well written but easily forgettable.

The book also contains an instantly forgettable novelette.

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VOYAGE TO THE CITY OF THE DEAD  
by Alan Dean Foster

Another tale in the Humanx Commonwealth. It has none of the known characters or environments.

Basically another of his readable SF books. Nine tenths of the book is a travelogue through a strange world. The other tenth might have made a reasonable short story.

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RALESTONE LUCK  
by Andre Norton

Here we have a typical Norton tale, fun, lightweight and having little to do with the picture on the cover.

This is one her gothic stories. This review is a public service.



ICE PROPHET  
FLAME ON THE ICE  
by William R. Forstchen

This pair of books is impressive but gloomy. I felt much the same about Moorcock's I c e S c h o o n e r. There seems to be something about ice schooners that brings out authors' most dismal pictures.

Not recommended for reading in a depressed state of mind.

O n a P a l e H o r s e  
by Piers Anthony  
Reviewed by Dale Skran

Until now I had read a total of two books by Piers Anthony: M a c r o s c o p e and O r n. Both books are full of excellent ideas strung together rather poorly. As Damon Knight would have said, Anthony is a "half-bad writer." Now comes Anthony's latest novel O n a P a l e H o r s e.

The novel deals with a man, Zane, who attempts to commit suicide and kills Death instead. He discovers he must now take death's place and fulfill death's role in the universe, scurrying hither and yon, collecting and judging souls nearly balanced between good and evil. Anthony uses this

idea for a springboard into an allegory-like tale that delves into the deep things in life.

I found the first half of the book fascinating and the "technology" of death interesting. Just as things seem to be building up to a climactic battle with the devil, the book peters out in an unsatisfying conclusion. Perhaps the greatest problem with \_ P \_ a \_ l \_ e \_ H \_ o \_ r \_ s \_ e is admitted by Anthony in an afterword: he has been having trouble selling his non-fantasy to mainline publishing houses, and instead has expanded his fantasy to consider more serious issues. Indeed, he has done this, and \_ P \_ a \_ l \_ e \_ H \_ o \_ r \_ s \_ e provides much food for thought. Alas, the plot and the underlying world have both been sorely neglected. Anthony constantly refers to a world with both magic and science, where what you believe determines what happens (i.e., a true atheist's soul crumbles to dust rather than go to heaven or hell), yet never fleshs things out for the reader.

It is really quite sad. Another couple of months of work, a few more characters, 20000 more words or so, and Anthony at last might have produced a memorable novel and moved out into the first rank of science fiction/fantasy writers. I guess he was too busy thinking about the REST of the books he intends to write concerning Nature, Chronos, War, and Fate, the other "incarnations" in this odd but thinly populated cosmos to really do justice to the theme of \_ O \_ n \_ a \_ P \_ a \_ l \_ e \_ H \_ o \_ r \_ s \_ e.

\_ \_ N \_ O \_ T \_ E \_ S \_ F \_ R \_ O \_ M \_ T \_ H \_ E \_ N \_ E \_ T

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Subject: Bearing an Hourglass (Book Two of the Incarnations of Immortality)  
Path: ihnp4!zehntel!hplabs!sri-unix!mrose@uci-750a  
Date: Thu, 27-Sep-84 19:55:48 EDT

The second of the series focuses on Chronos, the incarnation who controls time. Time is around to ensure that "cause and effect" works. To do this, Chronos, like Merlin, lives his life backwards, so it's "effect and cause" to him. Hence, the person who assumes the office of time leaves office when he's born which is before (after) he took the office later (earlier) in life. Needless to say, this gives Chronos a lot of advantages towards the end (beginning) of his term. Unfortunately, Chronos is most vulnerable that the beginning (end) of this term, when he knows virtually nothing and all the other incarnations know everything that already happened. Needless to say, the Father of Lies, takes subtle advantage of this several times to win his dominion over creation.

The book is a \*lot\* of fun. Anthony spends a lot of time discussing the paradoxes that can happen when Time (and others Time designates) move about in time (with his hourglass, Time can do all kinds of nifty temporal hocus-pocus). There's also a lot of humorous shenanigan's that Chronos gets himself into when learning about the hourglass. A few scenes were so funny I had to put the book down until I could stop giggling.

I have one complaint about the book and one about the series: for the book, some of the constraints placed on the use of the hourglass seem to be artificial (i.e., inserted only to prevent the protagonist from easily working things out). Perhaps not. for the series: you'd think that the incarnations would have a manual telling them all about their new powers and so on. It'd save a lot of times and mistakes (and make the Father of Lies' job a lot harder).

/mtr

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Subject: It's getting harder to be super.  
Path: ihnp4!zehntel!hplabs!sri-unix!Poskanzer.PA@XEROX.ARPA  
Date: Tue, 25-Sep-84 19:08:48 EDT

[from Technology Review, February/March 1981, page 87]

Superheroes from throughout the galaxy recently met in Metropolis for the First Joint Conference of Superheroes. This important event was staged in an effort to give new direction to the ailing superhero business: superheroes are falling by the wayside because of advances in technology. Conference chairperson Green Lantern summed up the problem in his opening

address: "The fact is," he remarked, "it's getting harder to be a superhero."

Superman gave substance to some of the problems addressed at the conference. "Leaping tall buildings at a single bound is one thing when the building is only 20 stories tall. But modern skyscrapers - some over 100 stories high - are causing me serious concern about future job security. Why, with the speed of some modern elevators, even old Perry White can get to the top of some buildings as fast as I can. Recently, I had to take four bounds to reach the top of the Sears tower in Chicago."

Superman continued, "And as for being faster than a speeding bullet, the new generation of military rifles, including the M-16 and the AK-47, already gives me a close race. I wouldn't be surprised if, in five years, I just won't be able to compete."

The overwhelming concerns of the other superheroes echoed Superman's worries about forthcoming obsolescence. The Flash, for example, proposed that the conferees form a joint committee to look into pension options for superheroes forced out of work. This was adopted by the conference, and the Flash was named as chairsuperhero. Also on the pension committee are Bruce Wayne of the dynamic duo, Batman and Robin. Wayne favors adoption of a plan similar to Social Security in which earnings of all superheroes are taxed to form a general fund.

Aquaman, whose ability to talk to fish is not yet in technological jeopardy and whose skills are increasingly in demand as offshore drilling, shipping, fishing, and ocean-mining activities increase, had sharp words against such a plan. "If Batman and Robin don't have the skills to remain competitive in the superhero business, they should get out. They can always get work as a comedy act, like Jerry Mahoney and Knucklehead Smith. If the free market doesn't require their services, then they should find another market - not leech an existence from those who have remained competitive in changing times. Why should I subsidize people who offer nothing in return? Sure, Superman, Flash, and some of the others want a free ride. But I have my own row to hoe. Let them take care of themselves."

Scientist Bruce Banner, whose research efforts led to the development of his superstrength alter ego, the Hulk, had a different view. "A pension plan is treating the symptoms and not the causes," he said. "What we need is a concerted research effort to keep up with developing technology. Aquaman feels confident about his future now, but it won't be long before he is in the same boat as the others."

Banner proposed a two-pronged research effort. One branch would look into

advanced applications for super-talents already possessed. For instance, Superman could use his x-ray vision to evaluate stresses in bridges, dams, and buildings.

A second and even more important research area is the development of new superpowers. "As my own work has proven," he said, "superpowers can be

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developed scientifically. We must strive for innovations that will keep us ahead of new developments in crime. For example, with the upsurge in electronic bank robberies, there is a serious need for someone to oversee data-processing operations around the world. communications networks to lead them to the culprits. And 'Memoryman' or 'Memorywoman' could preclude the consequences of common computer failures that erase memory banks. The ramifications of these data loses are both costly and, when involving defense or crime-fighting files, dangerous."

Banner's comments were met both with interest and skepticism. Remarked fellow scientist Braniac 5, "While the superheroes generally possess above-average intelligence, many are still skeptical of pursuing scientific solutions. They tend to see science as their enemy - the force that is creating their obsolescence. It is therefore hard for them to support research."

But Banner's proposal did garner enough interest that Lantern also created a committee to investigate the feasibility or research-oriented solutions. And although a date has not been finalized, the conferees agreed to meet again this winter in Gotham City to review the reports of the two special committees.

The conference ended on a humorous note with an annoying appearance by the imp from the fifth dimension, Mr. Mxyzptlk. However, John Jones, Martian Man Hunter, was able to induce the imp to say his name backwards, thus sending him back to his own dimension.

-- Jeff Stollman

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Subject: Re: Re: "Red Dawn" - (nf)  
Path: ihnp4!inexc!pur-ee!uiucdcsb!thielges

Date: Sat, 29-Sep-84 14:19:00 EDT

i too saw "Red Dawn" and I thought that the scenario was entirely plausible. Any more Communist takeovers in Cen. Amer. and they will have a strong foothold. While I don't wish to sound hawkish, I think we have to keep an eye on the situation down there. Just so you won't think that I don't know what the hell I'm talking about, I spent 5 years in the Navy and took part in the invasion of Grenada (which was done to prevent USSR/Cuba from building an airstrip that was in range of the Panama Canal).

Bart's friend Dave:

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Subject: "All of Me"

Path: ihnp4!ucla-cs!reiher

Date: Sun, 30-Sep-84 05:08:50 EDT

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It's taken Carl Reiner an awfully long time to figure out how to make Steve Martin's comic talents work on screen, but he's finally succeeded. What a unlikely secret it turned out to be: he needed to give Martin a vehicle with a good story. Sometimes it takes a while for people to learn what should have been obvious, but at least Reiner finally picked up on it. "All of Me" is a really good comedy, easily the best film Reiner has ever directed and the funniest Steve Martin has been since his classic appearances on "Saturday Night Live".

Martin plays a frustrated lawyer who is really a frustrated musician. He doesn't have the confidence to quit his law firm for music, his real love, and he is being given only insignificant cases by the head of the firm, who is, not coincidentally, the father of Martin's girlfriend. Martin can't seem to make it in either world. Finally, he gets a break: he's assigned to handle the will and estate of a fabulously wealthy woman (Lily Tomlin) who is about to die. Unfortunately, she has some rather odd ideas about how things are going to work out. She expects that, on her death, an Indian swami will catch her soul in a brass bowl and transfer it to the body of her stablemaster's daughter, Victoria Tennant, while Tennant's soul will become one with the universe. Since the will is to leave all of Tomlin's money to Tennant, this will leave the dying woman with a beautiful, healthy body and

a ton of money.

Well, this is all too weird for Martin (if you can imagine that), so he walks out on Tomlin. An unexpected set of circumstances cause her little experiment in the metaphysical to go awry, though, and, instead of a transfer to Tennant's body, Tomlin finds herself in Martin's body, and he's still there, too. Martin controls the left half of his body, Tomlin the right. Their instant hate for each other leads to hilarious complications, as does their attempts to sort the situation out.

Not only is this a fairly good story, but it is exactly suited to Steve Martin's talents. While Martin can tell a joke as well as the next comedian, his real comic talents are physical, not verbal. Martin is one of the few modern comics who could probably make a go of it in silent movies. "All of Me" gives him ample opportunity to use his abilities, as he lurches around, half of him a snooty upperclass lady, half a slightly strange man. His walk is priceless, as is a scene in which the coinhabitants of his body visit a public men's room.

Tomlin, on the other hand, is more adept with speech than with movements, which is just as well, since, after the first twenty minutes, we hear a lot of her voice, but only see her in mirrors. She does get an awful lot done with voice, alone, though, and we never forget that she is the film's other star, despite her lack of screentime. She is absolutely perfect for her role. Few other actresses could manage to show just how irritating her character is and still make us feel sympathy for her. Throw in her comic talents, and she was really the only choice.

Martin's part suits him very well, too. He's really a fairly normal guy in "All of Me", rather than playing a dunce or a crazy or a spoof character,

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and he works better that way. The restraint he shows in the early scenes builds the foundation for the hilarity later on. This is the kind of role which could make Steve Martin a major movie star.

Carl Reiner has never before given any real indication that he can direct a film, but he handles this one perfectly. The pace, the timing, the shot selection are all right on target. Reiner also has the sense to give several other characters the chance to shine, rather than focussing exclusively on Martin and Tomlin. Particularly good is Richard Libertini,

as the daft swami, who repeats the end of any sentence addressed to him, in a vacantly good-natured way. Dana Elcar, playing Martin's boss and prospective father-in-law, has some good moments when he selects Martin to handle his upcoming divorce, explaining how he became the "comforter" of his dead friends widows.

A special tip of the hat is due to the screenwriter, Phil Alden Robinson. Unlike most recent comedies, such as "Ghostbusters", the script is really the heart of "All of Me". For my money, a comedy with a good script and good comedians will beat a comedy with a mediocre script and good comedians. I preferred "All of Me" to "Ghostbusters", and, in fact, I think it's the best new comedy I've seen in some years. (Sorry, but it still doesn't measure up to the old classics, such as "His Girl Friday", which I saw again just last week. But then, what does?) I highly recommend "All of Me".

Peter Reiher



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