

Lincroft-Holmdel Science Fiction Club
Club Notice - 3/13/87 -- Vol. 5, No. 35

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.

LZ meetings are in LZ 3A-206; MT meetings are in MT 4A-235.

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

- 03/18 MT: BABEL-17 by Samuel R. Delaney Linguistics and SF
04/01 LZ: THE LINCOLN HUNTERS by Alternate Histories
 John Wilkes Booth
04/22 LZ: MURMURS OF EARTH by Carl Sagan SF-related Non-Fiction
05/13 LZ: TO YOUR SCATTERED BODIES GO by Reincarnation
 Phillip Jose Farmer

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 834-1563
LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell LZ 1B-306 576-6106
MT Chair: Mark Leeper MT 3E-433 957-5619
HO Librarian: Tim Schroeder HO 3M-420 949-5866
LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 1C-117 576-2068
MT Librarian: Bruce Szablak MT 4C-418 957-5868
Jill-of-all-trades: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070
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1. Of BABEL-17, Arthur Kaletsky writes:

Rydra Wong may be regarded as a 60's feminist superheroine - starship captain, master cryptologist, superlative linguist and the Galaxy's greatest living poet. She is the central figure in Samuel R. Delany's 1966 novel Babel-17, a terse, poetic meditation on the nature of language, war, and a lot of other matters. We will discuss it on 18MAR87.

2. At the request of certain people at the insurance companies who provide AT&T benefits, we are moving the science fiction club notice to Friday, rather than Wednesday. It seems that there is concern that some people in the club are not taking the precautions necessary to avoid Mondays altogether. Every week, there are AT&T employees who suddenly come to the realization that it really is Monday and that they have a whole week of stressful work in front of them. Mondays have been attributed to stress, heart attack, suicide, colitis, Ostran's Disease, and in-grown fingernails. It has been considered to move Monday later in the week so that it would not be so stressful, but that suggestion was dropped after

one very high AT&T official labelled the idea "dumb-ass." More popular with management has been the idea of encouraging people to work their normal hours on weekends as well as during the week so that Mondays would be no more stressful than any other day. This proposal was expected to go the way of the moved Monday, in spite

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of being for the good health of the general employee population, for the simple reason that it was expected that some of the employees, not knowing what was good for them, might balk at the abolition of days off. Then, one of the bright young executives in the board room came up with a suggestion worthy of this innovative company. It was simple and elegant. He suggested increasing the work pressure on employees so they would voluntarily work on weekends. The rest is history.

However until the plan reaches its final phases, there is the problem that there are still some employees who participate in the unhealthy practice of not working weekends. For these it is feared that the shock of discovering that it is Monday could be disastrous. To counteract this danger we are arranging that notice arrive later to make it more convenient to be read on Monday. It is hoped that reading the notice and seeing how bad my writing is should make anyone feel better and perhaps downright superior. Please, then, if you get the notice on Friday -- and some locations do -- don't read it right away. Scientists have determined that you need very little cheering up on Fridays. That need peaks for almost everyone at 8:37 AM on Monday as the realization of just how far away a weekend is dawns on the average employee. The need then diminishes as the week wears on. Save the notice and we can all read it on Monday. Jumping the gun or postponing could be a serious health hazard.

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

BELIZAIRE THE CAJUN
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: Mark Twain-esque tale of murder and bigotry set in 1859 in Louisiana. Armand Assante plays a clever Cajun healer trying to protect his cousin and the whole Cajun community from local rednecks. This is an engrossing and enjoyable film that tells its story without any wrong moves. Recommended.

Every once in a while, one of the cable stations runs what they call a "find." That is, they run a little-known film that got almost no theatrical play but is a good film anyway. Actually, "little-known" may not be quite accurate, since almost always the cable "finds" have been previously reviewed--usually favorably--on one or the other of TV's review programs. Well, I guess in the same sense I can claim B_e_l_i_z_a_i_r_e _t_h_e_C_a_j_u_n as a find of sorts. It seems to me that I had heard it recommended but it sounded kind of artsy and dull. The last thing I was expecting was a fun film. It takes about five minutes to get into the

southern and Cajun accents and the occasional lapsing into French. (What can I say? I'm slow!) After that I was enjoying the film too much to let any of that get in my way.

In southwestern Louisiana in 1859 the men of the upper class are joining together in a vigilante "committee"--the forerunner of the Ku Klux Klan--to frighten the local Cajun population into leaving the territory. Not yet threatened and for now perhaps the best-liked of the Cajuns is Belizaire, a healer, a fast thinker, and a real character. But Belizaire's cousin has been given a writ of exile by the vigilantes and Belizaire is quickly being pulled into the fray.

In a story worthy of Mark Twain--in fact, reminiscent in some ways of P u d d i n' H e a d W i l s o n--we have a story about an ethnic group rarely seen in films, yet a story that will be meaningful to every minority and should be enjoyable by just about anyone.

Admittedly I do not know much about Cajun culture, but a viewer can generally tell when a film seems authentic and this one seems to have been very well researched. Perhaps that is partially due to having Robert Duvall as creative consultant. Duvall (who, incidentally, appears in a cameo) has an extremely good ear for accents and is reputed to be a real stickler for accuracy. With a feel of accuracy and a good piece of story-telling, B e l i z a i r e t h e C a j u n is a "find" worth looking for at your local video store. Rate it +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

THE BEDROOM WINDOW
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
Copyright 1987 Mark R. Leeper

Capsule review: In the best film thriller I have seen in a while, Steve Guttenberg pretends to have

witnessed a crime his paramour actually saw. Before long, he is swept into an ever-worsening vortex of trouble and danger.

I recently gave a fairly negative review to an attempted nightmarish thriller, T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r. The plot of that is one of a teenager driving cross-country who picks up a psychotic hitchhiker and spends the rest of the movie fighting this creep who always does just the right thing, who has super-human strength, and who apparently has the ability to cloud the minds of officers of the law. Several people commented that they found it a very tense film and one asked me what more I wanted from a thriller. I just saw a film that has some superficial similarities to T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r but does just about everything right that I thought T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r did wrong. The film is T_h_e_B_e_d_r_o_o_m_W_i_n_d_o_w and it does right nearly everything that I thought T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r did wrong.

Steve Guttenberg plays a young executive at a Baltimore construction company who has a short affair with his boss's wife. From his bedroom window she witnesses an assault on a woman on the street below. Later that evening another woman is murdered nearby. Sylvia, the boss's wife, cannot report what she saw to the police without her husband finding out about the affair so she describes the assailant to Guttenberg and he tells the police that it was he who saw the crime. This begins a chain of events that start out simply inconvenient for Guttenberg but get worse and worse, eventually achieving truly nightmarish proportions.

T_h_e_B_e_d_r_o_o_m_W_i_n_d_o_w, unlike T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r, has genuine characters with motivation and personalities. The killer, when finally discovered, is far more exciting as a character than is Rutger Hauer in T_h_e_H_i_t_c_h_e_r because he is real and makes mistakes. Guttenberg's desperation is also effective and believable because, while he rarely does the smartest thing he could do, the character always has good reasons for what he does. As a side note, the action of the film takes Guttenberg to the Fells Point Saloon, which might well be a tip of the hat to Guttenberg's first major role in D_i_n_e_r. That film took place at the Fells Point Diner.

T_h_e_B_e_d_r_o_o_m_W_i_n_d_o_w has characters the audience cares about getting into believable messes. I rate it a +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

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Subject: Review of BEYOND THERAPY

Path: mtuxo!houxm!ihnp4!ptsfa!lll-lcc!seismo!sundc!rlgvax!jsf

Date: 1 Mar 87 18:07:09 GMT

Set in the offices of two psychoanalysts, and in a very bad French restaurant, BEYOND THERAPY is a love story about two very confused people.

Bruce (Jeff Goldblum) and Prudence (Julie Haggarty) meet through one of many personal ads Bruce has placed. They have a disastrous lunch, and leave expecting never to see one another again. Of course, they do meet again.

During the course of their relationship we are introduced to Bruce's homosexual roommate/lover Bob, Bob's "theatrical" mother, Bruce's psychoanalyst, and Prudence's psychoanalyst. A series of bizarre coincidences puts these six people on a collision course with the hilarious climax.

BEYOND THERAPY builds momentum slowly. The first 45 minutes, during which the relationships between the main characters are revealed and expanded, are slow sometimes to the point of being tedious. About half of the people in the audience walked out during this part of the film.

But once all the players are lined up in their domino like positions, the film delivers a 20-minute punch line worth the wait. When the final push comes, the characters start to fall, and knock each other down with a very satisfying crash.

I rate it +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.

Steve Fritzingler CCI-OSG Reston, Va.

Subject: Nightmare on Elm St. Part III

Path: mtuxo!homxb!houxm!ihnp4!cbatt!ucbvax!cgl!pixar!good

Date: 7 Mar 87 05:57:30 GMT

One, two
Three, four

Freddy's after you
Better lock the door

Five, six
Seven, eight
Nine, ten

Get a crucifix
Better stay up late
Never sleep again

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Yes, the inimitable Freddy Kroeger is back in "Nightmare on Elm Street Part III: The Dream Warriors". In addition to the awkward title the latest nightmare from Wes Craven has a few flaws. The Girl from the first film is back, and can't act her way through wet tissue. But her acting is so bad that it begins to grow on you by the end of the film. The only other real problem is that the wires show once or twice too often.

End of bad news.

If you agree that the Nightmare on Elm Street series is the "Out of Africa" of slasher films, the "Casablanca" of dead teenager flicks, then you'll enjoy this trilogy-defining sequel. Besides learning more about Freddy's genealogy, physiology and ontogeny, we are treated to an almost endless stream of imaginative effects. I mean the practical effects and stop-motion animation are well executed and just plain fun. Freddy's incarnation as a television set (with an enjoyable cameo by Dick Cavett and Eva Gabor), and the tongue-spouting seductress, were particularly original. I was also impressed with the clay and skeletal animation.

Don't worry that it's formula. You should *enjoy* the formula. For "The Dream Warriors" they pull in almost every snatch of ghostie-ghoulie lore in moviedom except thunderstorms and oak stakes. Bad acting, stilted dialogue, shaky plot and all it's still worth seeing, especially in a big room full of screaming adolescent females. The person I saw it with liked it better than Part II, while I think I liked Part II just a little more. That should give you a pretty good idea where it rates.

--Craig

