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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society  
 Club Notice - 11/30/90 -- Vol. 9, No. 22

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.  
 LZ meetings are in LZ 2R-158. MT meetings are in the cafeteria.

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

- 12/05/90    LZ: EQUAL RITES or THE LIGHT FANTASTIC by Terry Pratchett  
                   (Humorous SF)
- 01/09/91    LZ: BRAIN WAVE by Poul Anderson (Intelligence)
- 01/30/91    LZ: RITE OF PASSAGE by Alexei Panshin (Adolescence)
- 02/20/91    LZ: MARTIANS, GO HOME! by Frederic Brown (Social Satire)
- 03/13/91    LZ: TOM SWIFT by Victor Appleton II (Juvenile SF)

\_ M \_ E \_ E \_ T \_ I \_ N \_ G    S / \_ E \_ X \_ T \_ E \_ R \_ N \_ A \_ L  
 \_ C \_ O \_ N \_ V \_ E \_ N \_ T \_ I \_ O \_ N \_ S / \_ E \_ T \_ C.

- 12/08/90    SFABC: Science Fiction Association of Bergen County: TBA  
                   (phone 201-933-2724 for details) (Saturday)
- 12/15/90    NJSFS: New Jersey Science Fiction Society: Jim Frenkel  
                   (phone 201-432-5965 for details) (Saturday)

HO Chair:    John Jetzt    HO 1E-525    834-1563    hocpa!jetzt  
 LZ Chair:    Rob Mitchell    LZ 1B-306    576-6106    mtuxo!jrrt  
 MT Chair:    Mark Leeper    MT 3D-441    957-5619    mtgzy!leeper  
 HO Librarian: Tim Schroeder    HO 3B-301    949-4488    hotsc!tps  
 LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen    LZ 3L-312    576-3346    mtunq!lfl  
 MT Librarian: Evelyn Leeper    MT 1F-329    957-2070    mtgzy!ecl  
 Factotum:    Evelyn Leeper    MT 1F-329    957-2070    mtgzy!ecl  
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1. Our next film festival is a double feature I have wanted to show for a long time, but until recently the first film has been unavailable. Both films star Jimmy Stewart but as opposite characters. In the second film he completely distrusts the type of character he plays in the first film. On Thursday, December 6, at

7PM, we will be showing:

Aircraft and Engineers

NO HIGHWAY IN THE SKY (1951), dir. by Henry Koster

THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (1966), dir. by Robert Aldrich

THE MT VOID

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The theme of the first film is whether a scientist's responsibility is to science or society. Nevil Shute (author of On the Beach) drew on his career as an aircraft engineer in writing the novel No Highway. (They made the film title a little more self-explanatory.) In NO HIGHWAY IN THE SKY a mousey little scientist (Jimmy Stewart) at an aircraft plant is convinced a new sort of metal fatigue will cause his company's new plane to crash. When a suspicious crash does occur, he is sent to investigate on a plane that may be similarly flawed. A very good cast includes Jack Hawkins, Marlene Dietrich, and Glynis Johns. The good films become more timely with age and with disaster prediction becoming more of a possibility for events like earthquakes and architectural failures, this film is more relevant today than in 1951.

THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX is not relevant at all, but it is a thumping good adventure film. An excellent cast led by Jimmy Stewart and Richard Attenborough tell thriller writer's Elleston Trevor's story of a plane crash in the Arabian desert. The survivors are miles off-course with little food, little water, and a map. Told with tension and suspense, this is a classic story of how you save yourself with just the materials at hand. The cast includes Peter Finch, Hardy Kruger, Ernest Borgnine, Ian Bannen (nominated for an Oscar), Dan Duryea, and George Kennedy. (Personal note: I first saw this film one night on television at my college Student Union. The film runs long and fifteen minutes before it was over they tried to close the building for the night. An audience of thirty people absolutely refused to let them even get near the television to turn it off. There was nearly a nasty incident. That night the Student Union stayed open until THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX got over.)

Mark Leeper

MT 3D-441 957-5619  
...mtgzy!leeper

Democracy is the most difficult of all forms of government since it requires the widest spread of intelligence....

-- Will Durant

DANCES WITH WOLVES  
A film review by Mark R. Leeper  
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Capsule review: Epic portrait of a Sioux tribal life as seen through the eyes of a Civil War officer. American Indians have rarely or never been portrayed so believably and sympathetically. Its biggest flaw is that the White Man does not seem as realistically portrayed.

The film resembles W h i t e \_ D a w n and \_ F a r e w e l l t o  
\_ t h e \_ K i n g  
in plot and spirit. Rating: high +2 (-4 to +4).

I suspect that of all the films of 1989, the one that will be best remembered will be \_ G l o r y. It may not be the best film of 1989, but it has a sort of timeless quality that will hold up for many years. That was 1989. This year I think we have an even better film that has that same timeless quality. There have been films in the past that have tried to give sympathetic views of the American Indian. It is not hard

to be more sympathetic than films like FortApache. Little  
BigMan,  
unaccountably popular, attempted to be sympathetic but gave the  
impression that the writers knew nothing about American Indians. (I do  
not know if the novel was as bad or not.) Other films such as Cheyenne  
Autumn tried to speak of injustices done to the Indians, but they too  
never got into the minds of native Americans. Perhaps Danceswith  
Wolves, based on the novel by Michael Blake, is no more authentic than  
is LittleBigMan, but it certainly feels like the most authentic film  
ever made about American Indian culture.

Kevin Costner directs and stars as John Dunbar, who is to have his  
leg amputated due to wounds in a Civil War battle. Not having the  
courage to face his future, he attempts suicide and in doing so  
accidentally makes himself a hero. This not only wins him medical care  
sufficient to save his leg, he is also given his choice of posting.  
Wishing to see the Western frontier before it is overrun by the white  
man, he requests a posting to an isolated and deserted fort far out on  
the frontier. His thoughts about facing hostile animals and more  
hostile Sioux are overcome by his curiosity and his willingness to  
accept and appreciate that which is alien to him. The film picks up his  
enthusiasm to meet, understand, and befriend the very alien culture of  
the neighboring Sioux. He must first overcome their distrust. There  
the storyteller somewhat unrealistically contrives circumstances in  
Dunbar's favor. This is a long film and each stage of his acceptance by  
the Sioux is shown and not overly glossed over. In particular, language  
problems are quite believably difficult and eventually overcome by  
another contrivance. Eventually Dunbar is accepted into the Sioux  
society and Costner can show us how Sioux lived and thought.

If the film has a major weakness it is that it exaggerates the  
stupidity and strangeness (even if not the cruelty) of the hordes of

invading white men. The positive view of the Sioux would be more  
believable if the view of the White Man had more credibility. There is  
a love story of Dunbar with a white woman who has been Sioux since she  
was captured as a child. This subplot could have been a distraction  
from showing us the Sioux lifestyle, but if so it was only a minor one.

Mary McDonnell, familiar from Matewan, plays Dunbar's lover interest,  
Stands with a Fist.

\_ D\_ a\_ n\_ c\_ e\_ s\_ w\_ i\_ t\_ h\_ W\_ o\_ l\_ v\_ e\_ s is told with a grace and humor that keeps the viewer constantly entertained through its nearly three-hour length. Costner is to be congratulated for creating such an unorthodox film (about a quarter us in Lakota, the Sioux language, and subtitled), and at the same time so enjoyable a film his first time directing. I give it a high +2 on the -4 to +4 scale.