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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society Club Notice - 12/25/92 -- Vol. 11, No. 26

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are in Holmdel 4N-509 Wednesdays at noon.

01/06 The Best (and Worst) of 1992

01/27 THE ENGINES OF CREATION by K. Eric Drexler (The Final Tool)

02/17 ENTOVERSE by James P. Hogan

03/10 STEEL BEACH by John Varley

03/31 WEST OF EDEN by Harry Harrison

04/21 ARISTOI by Walter Jon Williams

(If This--AI, Virtual Reality, Nonotech--Goes On)

05/12 THOMAS THE RHYMER by Ellen Kushner (Fantasy in a modern vein)

06/02 WORLD AT THE END OF TIME by Frederik Pohl

(Modern Stapledonian Fiction)

06/23 THE USE OF WEAPONS by Iain Banks

(Space Opera with a Knife Twist)

07/14 SIGHT OF PROTEUS by Charles Sheffield (Human Metamorphosis)

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 908-834-1563 hocpb!jetzt LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell HO 1D-505A 908-834-1267 hocpb!jrrt MT Chair: Mark Leeper HO Librarian: Nick Sauer HO 4F-427 908-949-7076 homxc!11366ns

LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 3L-312 908-576-3346 mtfme!lfl

MT Librarian: Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 908-957-5619 mtgzfs3!leeper

Factotum: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 908-957-2070 mtgzy!ecl

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1. When I was in Arizona I want into a bookstore near the Tucson campus and while I didn't find anything I wanted to buy, I did find a fairly interesting booklet, 120 pages long, called "Voters: Check This Out." It is a voter's guide to propositions s/he would be voting for on November 3. Now they are none of my business, but they are really interesting to read anyway. You always find two or

three that are pure common sense. On the face of them they cannot possibly fail. But somebody will be richer if they do fail. These are the ones that spur the most controversy and in the end they haven't a hope of passing.

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With apologies to _ S_ w_ e_ e_ e_ n_ e_ y_ T_ o_ d_ d, suppose it has never been made illegal to turn stray cats into meat pies. Now somebody wants to do that in a state I will call Fritz. All of a sudden you discover there is an organization you have never heard of before called Fritzians for the Preservation of Cats, and ironically it wants to defeat the initiative to change the law in Fritz. They will claim that there are already too many cats around and it is making life miserable for all the cats. Stray cats are turning mean and turning on other cats. Also, they carry diseases that are infecting other cats. To protect cat rights it is desperately important that we continue to turn stray cats into meat pies. Further, the bill would be an absolute disaster for the state of Fritz. The wording is so loose that it will mean the veterinarians will no longer be able to treat cats.

Then there is the spectre that this really is just the thin edge of the wedge of cats' rights radicals. Their real agenda is to make it illegal for farmers to protect their sheep from bigger cats of prey. The proposition will end up costing Fritzians billions of dollars.

A huge multi-million dollar campaign will go on television telling people about the nasty future in store if the proposition passes. Billboards on highways threaten that the state of Fritz will be totally bankrupt hiring the extra law enforcement necessary for this totally unneeded bill, a bill that goes far beyond what any other state has done about the problem. Veteran congressmen will make statements that passing the bill will be playing right into the hands of the Japanese. Not only that, it will send half a million jobs to other states.

In the end, the citizens of Fritz vote overwhelmingly that they want stray cats turned into meat pies. It's the American way.

I have seen this exact campaign waged time and again over nosmoking areas in restaurants, over deposits on soda bottles, over banning steel-jawed traps, over banning dangerous insecticides, over protecting forests. They always work on the assumption that we are totally powerless to control side-effects of laws. Occasionally--rarely--this campaign fails and the proposition passes. Come back in two years and ask the people about the bill and they are really smug that the proposition has worked so well in their state and other states have been too stupid to pass similar bills.

In Arizona the current proposition was trying to ban particularly vicious animal traps. Common sense says yes, so those who want to use those traps had rolled out "the campaign." The American way of life depends on steel-jaw leg-hold traps. Barry Goldwater got on television and said that the ban was intended to end all hunting in Arizona; big billboards peppered the highways threatening dire

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results if the bill passed. Of course it failed. Hunters in Arizona who like these vicious devices can breathe a sigh of relief. But I ask you to remember "the campaign" so you will recognize it when you see it again. And I bet you will be seeing it again.

Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 908-957-5619 ...mtgzfs3!leeper

The more one is hated, I find, the happier one is.
-- Louis-Ferdinand Celine



