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[http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back\\_issues.htm](http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm).

**Correction:** (oops by Evelyn C. Leeper):

In response to [Evelyn's review of I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE](#) in the 05/10/24/issue of the MT VOID, Pete Rubinstein points out:

[Evelyn wrote,] "I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE (1949): I WAS A MALE WAR BRIDE came out a few years after the war, when the bombed-out European setting could be used for a comedy. (In general, most wartime comedies were set in the States, or well behind enemy lines, e.g., London.)"

London was behind enemy lines? I need to refresh my knowledge of WW II. [-pir]

Evelyn responds:

Ooops! Here I made exactly the sort of mistake I bemoaned in the 05/03/24 issue in my comments on word use and mis-use: I mixed my expressions. What I meant was either "well away from enemy lines" or "well behind Allied lines." [-ecl]

**INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM** (film review by Mark R. Leeper):

[For the 40th anniversary of INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, we are reprinting Mark's review from 1984.]

There is more to making a sequel than simply reusing characters. How the characters strike an audience will be very dependent on the style of the filmmaker. If the style of a filmmaker varies radically from one film to another, each film of a series may still stand on its own, but the seam will be painfully obvious between the films and the series as a whole will be weaker. This is the problem with the James Bond series. The Bond of FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE is a hard-as-nails secret agent who can be suave if given a chance. The Bond of MOONRAKER is a suave bungler whom the scriptwriter contrives to always be at the right place at the right time. The transition was slow but the series as a whole is weaker. There are many fewer films in the Indiana Jones series from Spielberg and Lucas--the second film just came out--but already the two films do not fit well together.

INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM amalgamates the styles of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK and Spielberg's 1941. The result is enjoyable but a real disappointment. RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK copied the serial style by taking itself semi-seriously. It is nicely ambiguous as to whether the audience is supposed to take seriously scenes like Jones being dragged behind a truck protected by only a leather jacket. The viewer is free to believe such scenes or guffaw at them. INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM takes the scene a step further by having Jones stop a speeding coal train by dragging his foot on the wheel. Again the viewer can ask, "Is that for real?" But when Spielberg adds billows of white smoke coming from the shoe, turning the scene into a joke, the answer is a resounding "Of course not!" The serious/tongue-in-cheek ambiguity that worked so well in the first film is taken away. When Spielberg cinematically tells his audience "this scene is just for laughs" the adventure aspect is taken away. We no longer have an Indiana Jones film but an Indiana Jones cartoon in live action.

And the humor of INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM is all too often a brand that simply does not work: the contrived mechanical humor of 1941. The opening nightclub sequence of INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM is just Spielberg asking what the elements are present in a nightclub and how to combine them to create as much chaos as possible. Spielberg just said to himself, "Okay, the diamond is on the floor. Now how do we make it hard to pick up? I know--suddenly a crowd of dancers comes out and kicks it around the floor. Now what? I know--a bucket of ice is spilled on the floor so you can't find the diamond." The addition of this clockwork humor fills the proverbial much-needed gap in the first film. It is not in the style of the 40's serial the way RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK was; it is 1941 humor and this film comes off as Spielberg's attempt to vindicate that style of filmmaking.

As far as the plot is concerned, this film had nearly the potential of RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK. It starts with Jones frenetically finishing up some previous adventure in which he was procuring a rare and valuable find in return for a diamond. Once again his find is stolen from him and his customer attempts to kill him with a novel death trap involving flying him thousands of miles, then sacrificing a valuable plane on the sound assumption that airplanes are cheaper than bullets. This literally drops Jones (together with a nightclub singer and a boy sidekick) into his next adventure, the return of a sacred stone to an (Asian) Indian village. The stone is being kept at an Indian palace built on top of the temple of a thugee cult which is built on a slave labor mine. Jones goes down only the three layers so misses the drug ring, the ancient artifact counterfeiting factory, and the bordello, which were the next three floors down in the sub-basement.

Like any Lucas or Spielberg film (yes, including 1941, though perhaps not THX-1138), INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM entertains. The viewer lays down his five bucks gladly, sure that he is going to get five bucks worth of entertainment. INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM is worth the price of admission, but RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK and STAR WARS:FR were worth the price and some more besides. INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM, with its gaps in logic and contrivance, is worth only the admission price. The next Indiana Jones film may not be worth that if Spielberg doesn't stop having fun making films instead of getting down to the serious business of making fun films. [-mrl]

**Word Use and Mis-Use** (letters of comment by Tim Merrigan and Paul Dormer):

In response to [Paul Dormer's comments on word mis-use](#) in the 05/10/24 issue of the MT VOID, Tim Merrigan writes:

[Paul wrote,] "I remember, some years ago, seeing a description of a forthcoming TV programme. It was about someone setting up a company to provide office lunches. The person was described as an ancestor of the Earl of Sandwich." [-pd]

I note, that while unlikely, it is possible for there to be a living ancestor of the current Earl of Sandwich, if his mother or one or more of her ancestors is living. [-tm]

Paul replied:

Both his parents died in the nineties and were in their eighties. Unlikely indeed any of his ancestors are still living. [-pd]

Paul also added:

Incidentally, a follow-up is a letter in The Guardian a while back from someone complaining that British Summer Time (daylight saving) starts end of March, just after the solstice but it ends at the end of October, a month after the solstice. Of course, they meant equinox, not solstice. [-pd]

**This Week's Reading** (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

DARWIN SLEPT HERE: DISCOVERY, ADVENTURE, AND SWIMMING IGUANAS IN CHARLES dARWIN'S SOUTH AMERICA by Eric Simons (The Overlook Press, ISBN 978-1-59020-299-9) says hardly anything about Darwin's time in the Galapagos Islands, which is just as well--that aspect of the voyage of the Beagle has been covered by many books. Much less time is spent on Darwin's time in South America, even though that time profoundly affected Darwin's thoughts, attitudes, and perceptions. (Or at least that is Simons's contention.)

Simons fell in love with the idea of tracing Darwin's footsteps when he found himself next to the Beagle Channel in Tierra del Fuego and seeing Darwin's THE VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE in an English-language bookstore, decided to read about the ship (and its voyage) after whom the channel was named.

Simons splits his (and Darwin's) travel into three parts: Scientific exploration on the east coast of South America, a look at the politics and culture that Darwin found there, and a more chronological journey up the west coast.

The problem is that most of the places Simons visits are, frankly, boring. His Stories of hiking around in the rain looking for a specific hacienda, or asking a series of people in a town about Darwin, only to discover that none of them knew anything about him (at least in conjunction with their town), make one desire to read THE VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE instead.

And just to cap this off, the typography is ... terrible. Normally books have an even right margin by using variable-width fonts. This has a variable-width font, but also compensates for long words that would extend past the right margin by putting the word on the next line, and inserting spaces \*between letters within the first word\* on the line that is left somewhat underpopulated. Also occasionally the letters in a word are mashed together (perhaps to solve the reverse problem).

My recommendation: read THE VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE instead (or at least first). [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

One cannot really argue with a mathematical theorem.  
--Stephen Hawking

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