



film fan will have a few good films but which are not around often enough. They I feel like talking about some films I particularly like and most of my readers may feel the same.

This month there are three films that may not be unfamiliar, but I strongly recommend that any you have not seen you take the opportunity.

THE APARTMENT (1960)  
12 ANGRY MEN (1957)  
THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (1955)

THE APARTMENT is a comedy-drama about a young businessman (Jack Lemmon) who works at a giant and soulless Manhattan corporation. Lemmon is raising fast though the ranks. His secret (literally) is that all the executives are philandering husbands who look for places to have their trysts and Lemmon is a bachelor who lives alone. By lending out his door key to the executives who rate him he boosts his rank in the company. Then he discovers that the woman the execs are handing around is the elevator operator (Shirley MacLaine) whom he cares for. Director Billy Wilder creates characters and dialog to love. And Wilder is at the top of his game with this film. [Saturday, July 15, 3:15 PM]

Sidney Lumet was just at the start of his career when he directed the first film version of 12 ANGRY MEN (1957). He had just previously directed the TV version of the same play. The plot of the film may sound a little trite, but the film is solidly engrossing. With the exception of the first and last scene the film takes place entirely in one small jury room. A Chicano teenager is on trial for his life for having knifed his father. A court appointed lawyer had tried to defend the boy, but in the face of overwhelming evidence a guilty verdict seems inevitable. Eleven jurors are ready to vote guilty. One juror (Henry Fonda) sees the final verdict is to be chosen by him and wants to convince the others that there is still a reasonable doubt the boy is guilty. As the arguing goes around the table the jurors tell us as much about themselves as of the crime. The film is as much about how people make decisions and how personal prejudices cloud reasoning. Almost everything in the film suggests "low budget" but the cast is made of several great actors of the 1960s. [Saturday, July 7, 6:15 PM]

NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (1955) was the first film that Charles Laughton would direct. And it was the last film Laughton would direct. Most film fans know that this is the first and only film Laughton was to direct. There must be a story there because Laughton did a beautiful job of directing with a terrific, poetic style. If you see it look for the beautiful image of Shelley Winter, strangled and sitting in a topless car at the bottom of a river. Look for Robert Mitchum with the letters L O V E tattooed on the knuckles of one hand and the and letters H A T E on the other. Film fans will recognize Laughton as Quasimodo from the 1939 HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME and Dr. Moreau from ISLAND OF LOST SOULS. [Monday, July 9, 10:00 PM]

This is a tough month to try to pick out the best film, but I will go with THE APARTMENT.

Evelyn sends along listings for four small TCM film festivals in July.

6      Friday  
6:15 AM Green Slime, The (1969)  
8:00 AM Satellite in the Sky (1956)  
9:30 AM From The Earth To The Moon (1958)  
11:30 AM Forbidden Planet (1956)  
1:15 PM Countdown (1968)  
3:15 PM 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)  
6:00 PM 2010 (1984)

13      Friday  
6:15 AM Dead Men Walk (1943)  
7:30 AM Mysterious Doctor, The (1943)  
8:30 AM Disembodied, The (1957)  
9:45 AM Plague of the Zombies, The (1966)  
11:30 AM Devil's Own, The (1966)  
1:15 PM I Walked With A Zombie (1943)  
2:30 PM Black Magic (1949)  
4:30 PM Hypnotic Eye, The (1960)  
6:00 PM Two On A Guillotine (1965)

23      Monday  
6:00 AM Godzilla (1954)  
7:45 AM Godzilla, King of the Monsters! (1956)  
9:15 AM Bowery Boys Meet The Monsters, The (1954)  
10:30 AM Spook Chasers (1957)  
11:45 AM Phantom of the Rue Morgue (1954)  
1:15 PM Black Scorpion, The (1957)  
2:45 PM Beast From Haunted Cave (1959)  
4:00 PM Bucket of Blood, A (1959)  
5:15 PM House on Haunted Hill (1958)  
6:45 PM Killer Shrews, The (1959)

30      Monday (all Val Lewton)  
6:00 AM Mademoiselle Fifi (1944)

7:30 AM Seventh Victim, The (1943)  
 8:45 AM Ghost Ship, The (1943)  
 10:00 AM Bedlam (1946)  
 11:30 AM Isle of the Dead (1945)  
 1:00 PM Leopard Man, The (1943)  
 2:15 PM Please Believe Me (1950)  
 3:45 PM Youth Runs Wild (1944)  
 5:00 PM Cat People (1942)  
 6:30 PM Val Lewton: The Man in the Shadows (2007)

[-mrl]

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**PROVENANCE** by **Ann Leckie** (copyright 2017, Orbit, 448pp, ASIN: B0753HV21Y, ISBN-10: 031638867X, ISBN-13: 978-0316388672, narrated by Adjoa Andoh) (excerpt from the Duel Fish Codices: an audiobook review by Joe Karpierz):

In **PROVENANCE**, Ann Leckie returns to the universe in which her Imperial Radch trilogy was set. **ANCILLARY JUSTICE**, **ANCILLARY SWORD**, and **ANCILLARY MERCY** took the science fiction community by storm, with **ANCILLARY JUSTICE** winning the Hugo for Best Novel of 2013 in 2014. The other two novels were also Hugo finalists, but I wasn't enamored of them, especially **ANCILLARY MERCY**. **PROVENANCE** is, I think, a much better book than **ANCILLARY MERCY**. While in the same universe as the trilogy, it is a much more refreshing story. However, it doesn't match up to **ANCILLARY JUSTICE**.

**PROVENANCE** opens after Ingray has freed a prisoner in order to retrieve the family vestiges. Vestiges are antiquities of sorts that are valuable to a family, and generally define what that family is (I was more comfortable in thinking of them as souvenirs; you know, things you keep to as a remembrance of an event. It worked better for me that way.). She is trying to outshine her brother, who currently has her mother's favor. Ingray is trying to win favor with her mother to allow her to take the family name in a sort of dynastic passing of the torch. Ingray returns home with the prisoner, who is supposed to have stolen and hidden Ingray's family vestiges, to find the planet in a bit of a mess and in the middle of an escalating interstellar conflict.

So, what started out as one story actually turns into another story. This is not unusual in any genre, let alone science fiction. And it works here too. The story gets complicated, and if you're not paying attention--as I sometimes was not while listening to the audio book--you can miss what's actually going on and how Leckie gets from that opening scene to the end of the story.

I don't know, maybe it's just me, but I think this story didn't need to be set in the same universe as the Imperial Radch trilogy. Yes, it's a wonderfully written, intriguing, and complex story. As I've said, there's a lot going on, but I can imagine that Leckie could have pulled this out of the Radch universe and it would have worked just as well. It would have been a little more work, surely, to set up a new universe for this story to be set in, but other authors do just that all the time without missing a beat. I obviously cannot speak for why Leckie set it where she did, but I would have liked to see her use her creativity again to come up with a new setting.

I made an earlier remark about not paying attention to the book. I cannot attribute that to the narration of Adjoa Andoh. She was a wonder reader for this book, changing voices seamlessly (I don't know anything about audio book production, but it seems to me that Andoh must have read the various parts separately and then the producers spliced (oh, THERE'S an old term for you) it all together to make the book.). No, I think that at times I lost interest in what was going on in the narrative, which is odd because I did say it is a good story. I don't know if that says anything about me or about the story itself.

If you're a fan of Ann Leckie and her work, you'll certainly enjoy this. Had I come upon this book without have read the previous trilogy, I think I would have enjoyed this as well. I did enjoy it anyway, just not as much as some other things I've read recently. Still, I'd recommend giving it a try. Odds are you'll enjoy it. [-jak]

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**APOCALYPSE NYX** by **Kameron Hurley** (copyright 2018, Tachyon Publications, 228pp, ASIN: B0778PVLMM, print ISBN 978-1-61696-294- 4, Digital ISBN 978-1-61696-295-1) (book review by Joe Karpierz):

Kameron Hurley is yet another one of those authors that I've read and heard a lot about. She has a regular column that appears in "Locus" magazine, where she writes about, well, just about anything. Up until now, her Locus columns are the only items of hers that I've read. I wasn't quite sure where to break in with reading her fiction; **THE STARS ARE LEGION** is her most recent novel and highly thought of in the field, so I've thought about starting there. The "Bel Dame Apocrypha"--a trilogy consisting of **GOD'S WAR**, **INFIDEL**, and **RAPTURE**, didn't seem like it was for me. Now that I've read **APOCALYPSE NYX**, however, it may be time to at the very least add **GOD'S WAR** to my to-be-read list.

Apocalypse Nyx is a collection of five novellas in the Bel Dame Apocrypha universe. Nyx--full name Nyxnissa so Dasheem--is the titular character of the stories. She is a bounty hunter, a former Bel Dame, a sort of government assassin. Now Nyx and her team take jobs for money. She typically retrieves items, but sometimes she ends up solving problems. But just about all

the time, the job is nasty, dirty, and bloody. And so is she.

The setting for the stories is a planet engulfed in what seems to be a never-ending war. The place is so dystopic it you'd find a picture of it next to the word dystopia in the dictionary. Or maybe you'd find a picture of it in an article that is trying to define apocalyptic. This place is mean and, well, weird. Bugs that seem to be everywhere and do everything, from power modes of transportation, to heal injuries under direction of magicians (mysterious people who demonstrate unusual powers in an otherwise (somewhat) rational world), to act as all sorts of weapons. There are shape shifters too. Nyx's band of misfits includes these and a couple of others, a young communications technician as well as someone who should probably be thought of as a sharp shooter.

Nyx is a dubious character at best. Her methods are, well, less than savory. She is violent and angry. She is trying to survive in the world, while at the same time trying to make it a better place. She gets involved in straightforward retrieval jobs, as well as morally questionable tasks, and manages to get involved in the middle of a dispute between members of a powerful family. She's just trying to do the best she can in a world that is out to get everybody. She has a nasty reputation, and, as I gather from these stories, the reputation is well deserved.

Still, deep down underneath that facade, there appears to be a decent person just dying to get out. If she were your manager at work, you'd quit in a heartbeat. She is mean and heartless, and on the outside doesn't seem to care about the people in her employ. The job may come first--after all, the money is the most important thing when you're trying to survive in this world--but the people that help you complete that job are important. On the surface, she doesn't care about her team. She constantly threatens them with bodily harm or expulsion from the team. But when the team is in danger, she just can't bring herself to follow through on her threats. It seems to me that she was damaged during her life as a Bel Dame, but doesn't want to admit it. Rather, she goes through life projecting a bravado that seems to be hiding something deep inside.

As I said, there are five stories in this collection. The first two are my favorites; "The Body Project" and "The Heart is Eaten Last" are more than a bit violent and brutal, but like all the other stories in this collection ("Soulbound", "Crossroads at Jannah", and "Paint It Red") there are morals to be told and lessons to be learned, both by Nyx \*and\* the reader. Each one will have you walking away thinking that you didn't see that coming.

Even though this book is being released in the summer, this is not light summer reading--unless you like your beach reading with a healthy dose of blood, violence, and snarky dialogue. If you do, then this book is for you. [-jak]

**Quidditch** (letter of comment by Gwendolyn Karpierz):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on Quidditch](#) in the 06/22/18 issue of the MT VOID, Gwendolyn Karpierz writes:

Re: Quidditch--people make this complaint about the snitch an awful lot, and while I don't disagree, I've always gotten the idea that most of the Quidditch we see is played by teenagers, and thus is not really at a level the sport is meant to be played, so scores rarely get high enough for there to be much debate over whether catching the snitch is a win or not. Playing at the professional level is a whole different game. The one professional match we see, it's indicated that Viktor Krum knew the other team (Ireland) was so good that his team would never catch up, no matter how long the game went on, so rather than seeing his team lose by several hundred embarrassing points in long drawn out agony, he wanted to exert at least a little power and take it into his own hands--but it was a close defeat that way. In a match with less discrepancy between teams, the snitch's catch makes a lot more difference.

There's also an indication that, at least at Hogwarts and quite probably in the professional Cup, the number of points you have at the end of the match determines where you fall in the lineup for the final results. In one of the books, Harry had it pounded into his head that if he caught the snitch and won the match, but won it by less than 50 (I think? That might not be the right number), they'd win the match but not the Cup. The number of points the snitch contributes thus could make the difference between first and second place in relation to the other teams.

I'm by no means arguing that the snitch is a perfect invention or that JKR couldn't have done it better, but I justify it to myself with the knowledge that, watching four teams of teenagers, we never really got to see it at its full potential. [-gmk]

**Tim Merrigan, Retro-Hugos, Fanart, Word Usage, and Robert A. Heinlein** (letter of comment by John Hertz):

In response to various comments in past issues of the MT VOID, John Hertz writes: I'm glad to see comments from Tim Merrigan [on squid, 03/23/18]. He had a long valorous run as Official Collator of APA-L for which I and others are grateful.

In MT VOID 2009 (v. 36 n. 40, 6 Apr) E says there were no fanartists in 1942, the year we're considering for Retro-Hugos. Fortunately for us all this is untrue. Unfortunately for the Retro-Hugos too few people seem to have noticed. The category appeared on the nominating ballot, but not the voting ballot, presumably because not enough nominations were received;

we'll know when the analysis is published: meanwhile the electronic may study .

I took the FANAC scans--for which I and others are grateful--or should be--into account when nominating; anyway I had no trouble (other than the usual difficulty of pondering) naming my full five (N.B. under the current rules we may each nominate five, from all which the administrators compile six finalists--or possibly more in case of ties).

We've failed that fine fanart. But we can still admire it. Among the greatneses of history is that it can be revisited.

This seems a good place to say again that I favor "fanart" and "fanwriting". A girlfriend or boyfriend is not merely a girl or a boy who is a friend.

It would be an extraordinary ballot that struck no one as sadly omittive. I Particularly wish this year's Retro-Hugo finalists had included, outside the fan categories, Alex Raymond for Best Pro Artist on the strength of FLASH GORDON, and Frank Belknap Long's "To Follow Knowledge" for Best Novelette, that strange masterwork by that strange master (see my note at ).

P.S. (MT VOID 2011, v. 36 n. 42, 20 Apr) "Oblivious" means "having forgotten", not "blind to". Why reach for a ten-dollar word--which doesn't do what you want--with a penny one at hand--which does?

P.P.S. Your joke (same page) "Someone who jumps into taxis in New York City very soon gets shot" supports "An armed society is a polite society", which you didn't like in BEYOND THIS HORIZON (MT VOID, v. 36 n. 43, 17 Apr)--where, incidentally, the author leaves many signs he's satirizing the world he describes--which haters and lovers of Heinlein both deem crimethinkful to suppose, as I've long bemoaned. [-jh]

Evelyn replies:

While the OED defines "oblivious" only as "having forgotten", every modern dictionary I checked also has "blind to" (or more specifically, "unaware of" or other synonyms) as a secondary (or even primary meaning. "Silly" used to mean happy or blessed; anyone who persists in using it to convey this meaning will be virtually universally misunderstood.

And I would definitely label "omittive" and "crimethinkful" as ten- dollar words. :-)

As for the taxis, the joke was Mark's, the Heinlein observation mine. (The joke also referred to jumping into an already occupied taxi, rather than a free one.) [-ecl]

**Giant Hogweed** (letters of comment by Andre Kuzniarek, Peter Trei, Paul Dormer, and Kevin R):

In response to [Mark's comments on the giant hogweed](#) in the 06/22/18 issue of the MT VOID, Andre Kuzniarek writes:

Regarding the Giant Hogweed invasion, here's the musical from almost 50 years ago:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4q7-wZmn-Q>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASo7dklOTPO>

(alternate remixed and illustrated)

[-ak]

Peter Trei writes:

It's an import from New Zealand, and has been endemic in Europe and the US for the better part of a century.

The comparison to the triffid is long standing, and has even reached genre fiction:

"Charlotte MacLeod, 1985: 'The Curse of the Giant Hogweed'"

[-pt]

And Paul Dormer adds:

As others have said, long been a problem in Europe. I remember it making the headlines in the UK back in the early seventies. A guy I worked with said his son had gone fishing and walked through the plants, pushing the stems away with his bare arms. Got nasty burns on them the next day. And I did hear that kids found the long hollow stems idea for making pea shooters, and getting burnt lips, but that may be apocryphal. There was a conductor called Christopher Hogwood who presented a programme on BBC radio at that time, and he once reported seeing the misprint he'd been dreading, about dangerous Hogwood. [-pd]

Kevin R suggests:

There's your next SyFy network "classic."

"Giant Hogweed v Kudzilla!"

[-kr]

**Wonder Woman** (letters of comment by Peter Trei, Kevin R, Gary McGath, and Tim Merrigan):

In response to [Mark's comments on Wonder Woman](#) in the 06/22/18 issue of the MT VOID, Peter Trei writes:

WW was created by William Marston (also inventor of the polygraph) and his wife during WW2, explicitly as a strong female role model. I will coyly mention that Marston, his wife, and their lover had an 'interesting' home life.

Wikipedia mentions that WW has an Achilles Heel--if her 'bracelets of submission' are chained together by a man, she loses her superstrength. I'm hardly a comics maven, but I've \*never\* seen this used. [-pt]

Kevin R replies:

The "chain the bracelets" idea is from the Golden Age. It was eased out after the Comics Code was instituted. They are reminder of how Herakles tricked Hippolyta (Hippolyte) by romancing her.

<https://tinyurl.com/WW-weakness>

If an Amazon's bracelets are removed she's not powerless, but loses self-control, not unlike the "berserker rage" Lee and Kirby would refer to in their Mighty Thor stories.

ABC-TV toned the bracelets weakness down, by replacing the "bound by a man" bit to with "steal WW's belt/"magic girdle," which was what Herc was sent to do to her mother. [-kr]

Gary McGath also responds:

MAD's parody in the Fifties did something which may have been an allusion to that. The villain declared that it was physically impossible for her to bounce bullets off her bracelets without suffering damage and threatened to quit the story. She gave up her bracelets in deference to logic, and then he was able to beat her up. [-gmg]

Kevin answers:

Nivlem did worse to Woman Wonder in the final panel!

Elder! Kurtzman! A fannish beanie copter hat!

<http://jeffoverturf.blogspot.com/2011/09/woman-wonder-bill-elder-mad-mondays.html>

Tim Merrigan replies to the original article:

"Wonder Woman was just not a science-fiction-based hero like Superman. What good is a superhero who does not feed my lust for science fiction?" [-mrl]

Interesting article, but I LOLed at this. Got the fiction right, the science, not so much. Flies with no visible, or otherwise, means of support (Wonder Woman has her invisible plane), capable of moving (significantly) faster than a photon, capable of picking up tall buildings, and other things bigger than himself, with no damage to them, unless he wants them damaged (I call it his structural integrity field), capable of projecting beams from his eyes in at least low intensity x-ray (no one he looks at gets radiation sickness, of course, that could be part of the structural integrity field) and he's capable of focusing the back scatter, and intense infra red, his powers come from the color of the star the planet he's on orbits, etc.

At least they were up front with Wonder Woman, claiming that she's a demigod, daughter of Hippolyta and Zeus. As to her accoutrements, I don't remember a shield, and those weren't gauntlets, they were/are the cuffs of slave shackles. Also you didn't mention, though I did above, her invisible plane. [-tm]

Peter notes:

Last year a movie was released about Marston, his wife, and their girlfriend: "Professor Marston and the Wonder Women". [-pt]

Kevin R replies:

The original, Siegel/Shuster version of Superman had a powerset and explanation more on the order John Carter, Aarn Munro and/or Hugo Danner. "Power inflation" set in early as "The Man of Tomorrow" had to top his earlier feats and those of such early competitors that his lawyers couldn't scare into leaving the field or win lawsuits against. [Wonder Man, Master Man, et al.] You want to see magical science in early super-character stories? Check out "STARDUST, THE SUPER WIZARD!"

WW doesn't pick up the shield, or sword until the 1986 reboot after the "Crisis On Infinite Earths," courtesy of George Perez and Len Wein. They brought back a lot of the mythological elements, and tweaked them a bit, referring to Ares and Hermes rather than Mars and Mercury, as the Marston/Peter stories did in the 1940s, for example.

<https://www.comics.org/issue/43569/cover/4/> has the first cover with Diana up-armored to face a more dangerous than usual foe.

There have been many takes on the character in the past seven decades. [-kr]

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

I have written about synchronicity before and, okay, you are sick of hearing about it, but this is too good to pass up.

The other day I was listening to the podcast "Classical Stuff You Should Know", in particular, the episode about "The Grand Inquisitor" segment of THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV by Fyodor Dostoesky (ISBN 978-0-140-44924-2). Because the three podcasters are teachers at a Christian academy, they delved into the theology fairly deeply. One claimed that the temptations offered to Jesus by Satan were the ability to provide the necessities of life to his followers, miracles to prove his claims, and the unity of fellowship for the world. A discussion of whether Christianity had achieved this unity ensued, in which it was observed that though there are a lot of Christians, they are divided into larger and smaller denominations. As an example, one cited the final split between the Eastern and Western churches in 1054 over the correct content and method of baking the Communion bread. (I bet you did not know that was the final straw!)

Then, not an hour later, I picked up IN THE DEVIL'S GARDEN: A SINFUL HISTORY OF FORBIDDEN FOOD by Stewart Lee Allen (ISBN 978-0-345-44016-7), a book about food taboos. I was reading the chapter on foods that supposedly generate anger (and hence were often forbidden), and got to a section on cannibalism, when what should I run into but a long explanation of the symbolism of Communion, and an explanation of the dispute between the Eastern and Western churches over the Communion bread?! [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile -- hoping it  
will eat him last.

--Winston Churchill

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