



"In the Same Boat" (1911)  
Old Bridge Public Library, 7PM

Northern New Jersey events are listed at:

<http://www.sfsnnj.com/news.html>

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### **My Picks for Turner Classic Movies for August** (comments by Mark R. Leeper):

It has been years since I have seen *THE MORTAL STORM* (1940), and I think I saw it only once, but it was a jaw-dropper. It is a story set in a village in Germany. Fascism comes to the village and suddenly things are just not so pleasant any longer. When Nazism gets power it turns good friends into mortal enemies. Perhaps the strangest aspect of the film is the casting.

Now to tell the story the film needed familiar actors, many with likeable screen personas, who had to play Nazis and those characters had to play their roles as despicable. This includes Robert Young (of TV's *FATHER KNOWS BEST*) and Dan Daily as a Nazi Hitler Youth bully. And there are a host of others from the positive side of the tracks, like Frank Morgan (of *THE WIZARD OF OZ*). The cast must have better than a dozen or more familiar actors.

It is really strange to see someone you have always seen cast in roles like the friendly old postman spouting Fascist rhetoric. The film is a warning of what the world could expect from the fascist dictators who were just about then coming to power and who would be responsible for millions of deaths in the years to shortly come.

The German Ambassador to the United States asked Louis B. Mayer to "think twice" before releasing this movie. Meyer did and then released it anyway. Germany banned importing any MGM films while the Third Reich was in power.

The trailers were produced trying to NOT tell the ticket buyer what it was about. What was it about? It was about life in a happy little Germanic country and how things change when the Nazis come to power.

These days the film has become a real rarity. TCM has not shown the film since 2004.

Oh, I should mention that the film stars Jimmy Stewart and Margaret Sullivan. Also featured are Robert Stack, Maria Ouspenskaya, and Ward Bond.

[*THE MORTAL STORM*, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7 @ 04:00 PM (ET)]

Again Evelyn sends along films of interest:

6      Tuesday  
11:00 PM Cabin in the Sky (1943)

7      Wednesday  
8:00 PM Harvey (1950)

8      Thursday  
11:15 PM Pandora and the Flying Dutchman (1951)

13     Tuesday  
6:30 PM Quatermass Xperiment, The (1956)

14     Wednesday  
4:00 AM Heaven Only Knows (1947)  
6:00 AM Night Visitor, The (1971)  
7:45 AM Lost Horizon (1972)

18     Sunday

19     Monday  
8:00 PM Great Buster: A Celebration, The (2018)

20     Tuesday  
12:00 PM Enchanted Cottage, The (1945)

22     Thursday  
8:00 PM Freaks (1932)

23     Friday  
2:00 AM Island of Lost Souls (1932)  
3:30 AM Phantom of Paris, The (1931)

[-mrl]

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**CREATING WOODSTOCK** (letters of comment by Paul Dormer and Dorothy J. Heydt):

In response to [Mark's review of CREATING WOODSTOCK](#) in the 07/19/19 issue of the MT VOID, Paul Dormer writes:

[Mark writes,] "I have to give a full disclosure here. I have never been a fan of rock music. In 1969 as well as now I would have preferred music by Puccini." [-mrl]

I've often said that I gave up listening to pop music in 1968 as it was so terrible then. In practice, this was actually because for Christmas that year, my parents bought me a pocket radio that received the BBC classical channel better than any other and I got hooked on that.

And to clarify, "pop music" appears to mean something slightly different in British English to what it does in American English. See Lynne Murphy's explanation in this post:

<https://tinyurl.com/void-pop-music>

[-pd]

Evelyn writes:

Since the discussion "pop music" is buried in the middle of a long page, I'll quote what Geoffrey Pullum says here:

One last musical note, which came up in a conversation with friends recently, is that pop music has a much broader application in BrE than in AmE. In my American high school and (AmE) college/(BrE) university, it was deeply uncool to like 'pop' music, one had to like (orig. AmE) rock or (orig. AmE) R&B or, later, (orig. AmE) indie music. (Or jazz or classical, but not pop!) But many of the British acts that we thought were cool would have been defined (or would have defined themselves) as pop in Britain. A key difference may be the fact that the British charts don't categori{s/z}e music in such strict ways. Whereas the American Billboard magazine publishes a load of genre charts each week (giving rise to the AmE phrase crossover artist for someone who charts\* in more than one genre), the UK Singles Chart is not genre-specific and did not start having genre-specific versions until the 1990s.

Googling the phrase "I'm just a pop star", we find it attributed to David Gilmour of Pink Floyd and Bjork--but in my American days I would not have described either of them in that way (especially not Pink Floyd). I would have limited its use to Britney Spears and 'N Sync or whatever the (orig. AmE) tweenies were listening to at the time. I had thought that the uncoolness of pop was what made Pop Idol into American Idol when it moved across the Atlantic--but Wikipedia tells me it was legal restrictions instead. Younger Americans can tell us if pop has redeemed itself in recent years (comments, please!). [-gp]

And Dorothy J. Heydt writes:

Heh. I had a similar experience, somewhat earlier. I can't pin down the year exactly, but 1954 or maybe 55, or whenever rock'n'roll replaced the rather harmless, silly, innocent songs of "Your Hit Parade". This was also the time when, having moved to Kettleman City, where my father was teaching sixth grade and making more money than ever in his life (because the place was such an armpit of society that the school \*had\* to pay big bucks to attract any teachers at all)--and 33-1/3rpm LP records had just come in, and my mother bought a phonograph and started subscribing to Record-of-the-Month or something, and that's when I got into classical music. [-djh]

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

Our movie and book discussion group watched DESTINATION MOON in honor of the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11, and read "The Man Who Sold the Moon" by Robert A. Heinlein. This story was not the basis of the movie--that was Heinlein's ROCKET SHIP GALILEO. Heinlein also co-wrote the screenplay. The story, like a lot of Heinlein's work of that period, is annoying--the main character has a dream of going to the moon, yes, but he is still basically a greedy capitalist. Just as one example, he claims to have a load of first-day covers that have been postmarked on the moon, when in actual fact they never went to the moon at all. That he is cheating all his customers does not seem to bother him. Whether the perpetrators of the Apollo 15 postal covers incident (see Wikipedia) were inspired by this story or not is unclear, but at least they actually took the covers to the moon. One gets the impression that Heinlein thinks Harriman is the hero of the story, but if so, he's definitely a flawed hero.

("The Man Who Sold the Moon" is a novella that is the featured story in the collection of the same title [ISBN 978-0-671-57863- 3].)

EARLY RISER by Jasper Fforde (ISBN 978-0-670-02503-9) is not in any of Fforde's current series, but certainly looks like he's thinking of starting another one. It is set in an alternate world in which winters are much more severe, and the vast majority of people have to hibernate through them. (At least this is true in Wales, and one presumes everywhere, or people could migrate instead of hibernate.) Not everyone survives--one has to build up huge reserves of fat--and there's a mysterious

drug that helps people get through by suppressing energy-consuming dreams.

It may be because I am most familiar with Fforde through his "Thursday Net" series, in which the first-person narrator is a woman, but in spite of a few of what seemed to me (admittedly ambiguous) indications that the first-person narrator here is a man, I could not help but think of "Charlie" as female. And Eleanor Ingbretson found at least one very subtle hint that Charlie was female. The ambiguity must have been intentional, because many reviewers have said they looked for gender clues and found none. Other reviewers have used gender-specific pronouns in describing Charlie but, ironically, do not agree on which ones to use. (In this sense, EARLY RISER reminded me of Martha Wells's "Murderbot" series.)

To my mind, Fforde has never achieved the heights that his first novel, THE EYRE AFFAIR, did. His sequels to that were just not as fresh, and his other series never appealed to me. EARLY RISER is not as good as THE EYRE AFFAIR, but it is enjoyable and witty enough that I didn't feel I had wasted my time, and I might even pick up a sequel if one appears, if only to find out if Charlie's sex gets more specifically defined. [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time.  
--Bertrand Russell

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