

# MT VOID 08/28/20 -- Vol. 39, No. 9, Whole Number 2134

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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society  
08/28/20 -- Vol. 39, No. 9, Whole Number 2134

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An index with links to the issues of the MT VOID since 1986 is at  
[http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back\\_issues.htm](http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm).

## Every Possible Kind of Science Fiction Story

Open Culture reprints "Every Possible Kind of Science Fiction Story: An Exhaustive List Created Pioneering 1920s SciFi Writer Clare Winger Harris (1931)".

<http://www.openculture.com/2020/08/every-possible-kind-of-science-fiction-story-1931.html>

This is a very short list. Far more extensive is Alistair Cameron's "Fantasy Classification System" (which includes science fiction), published in 1952; it ran to 52 pages. [-ecl]

## Science Fiction (and Other) Discussion Groups, Films, Lectures, etc. (NJ):

Needless to say, everything here is tentative. The Old Bridge group did hold a socially distanced meeting at one of the members' homes on July 23 to discuss ROBUR THE CONQUEROR.

All Middletown meetings cancelled/postponed until further notice

September 24, 2020: THE DARK FOREST, Cixin Liu, Old Bridge Public Library or someone's backyard, 7PM (or possibly earlier)

November 19, 2020: Rudyard Kipling:

- "A Matter of Fact" (1892)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/16578>
- "The Ship That Found Herself" (1895)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2569>
- ".007" (1897)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2569>

"Wireless" (1902)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9790>  
"With the Night Mail [Aerial Board of Control 1]" (1905)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/29135>  
"As Easy as A.B.C. [Aerial Board of Control 2]" (1912)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13085>  
"In the Same Boat" (1911)  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13085>  
Old Bridge Public Library, 7PM

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

This month TCM will be running stories by popular storytellers. We have one from Robert Louis Stevenson by way of film producer Val Lewton, and another by John Steinbeck.

John Steinbeck's EAST OF EDEN is a long novel. But Elia Kazan's film version is only a small piece of the story and is adapted from Steinbeck's novel. This piece updates the story of Cain and Abel. It is perhaps the best remembered slice of the novel and it is remembered mostly for the film version, which introduced the actor James Dean. The story is a moving experience because that small part \*was\* adapted into a film starring James Dean. This was Dean's first film and he was playing a man in an unbalanced rivalry with his brother for the affection of his father. The book was a great best seller in the early 1950s. Dean's performance is terrific.

[EAST OF EDEN, Saturday, September 5 @ 04:15 PM]

THE BODY SNATCHER is a sort of horror story itself based on a story which was in turn based on a tale by Robert Louis Stevenson. Body snatching--still a crime today (not surprisingly)--is the (very old) crime of digging up the graves and/or corpses of the recently dead and buried. The crime is romanticized as occurring in Edinburgh in the late 1700s with the crimes committed by the (actual) notorious criminals Burke and Hare who stole corpses to resell to the local medical school and its professor Knox. The film THE BODY SNATCHER starred Boris Karloff as the criminal of the title and Henry Daniell, sadly under-used as one of the great screen villains The RKO studio even forced on producer Lewton a minor role for Bela Lugosi, though really only for marquee value.

[THE BODY SNATCHER, Thursday, September 10 @ 08:30 AM]

Val Lewton is best known for the horror film and THE GHOST SHIP, the latter considered horror mostly for symmetry. MADEMOISELLE FIFI is a slightly cynical drama. It is my choice for best film of the month.

[MADEMOISELLE FIFI, Thursday, September 10 AT 06:00 AM]

Mark's Picks is a monthly feature of the MT VOID and independent of the Turner Corporation. In fact they probably don't even know I exist. Just as well I guess. All times are given valid in the Eastern Time Zone and will probably continue to be as long as the Covid-19 keeps me locked down. [-mrl]

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### **Absentee Voting** (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

For our US readers, here's how to make sure your vote counts in November if you want to vote by absentee ballot (with details for New Jersey):

- Figure out what's going on in your state in terms of how and when to get and cast an absentee ballot. You have to go check your local secretary of state or board of elections website. Google will be valuable here.
- Get an absentee ballot. Some states send them automatically to every voter, others require an application. Some states require an excuse; others do not. You may be able to do this on line, or you may have to mail an application in. DO THIS EARLY. Most states require the request to be filed by mid-to-late October. (New Jersey's is/was October 27, although it has been announced that all registered voters will get an absentee ballot.)
- If possible, track your ballot. Most states give your ballot a code. After you've requested it, you can go to the Secretary of State's website and see where you are in the process. (In New Jersey, you must set up an account first at .)
- DON'T WAIT. Ballots mailed late may not be delivered in time to be counted under state law. Each state varies on when its deadline is. (New Jersey requires a postmark by November 3, the day of the election, and November 5 for receipt of the ballots by the state.) Mail your ballot as early as possible!
- If possible, drop your ballot off at an official drop-off point rather than mailing it. New Jersey's drop-off boxes, for example, are listed on . This allows you to avoid standing in line, etc., at polling places(\*) while still avoiding mail delays.

(\*) The number of polling places may be reduced this year for a number of reasons, including a shortage of poll workers. Poll workers have traditionally been older people, who are much more likely to avoid taking a voluntary job that involves interacting with a lot of people.

[-ecl]

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**Classics Illustrated Comics (and THE LIGHT BRIGADE)** (letters of comment by Kip Williams, R. Looney, Kevin R, and Keith F. Lynch):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on Classics Illustrated Comics](#) in the 08/14/20 issue of the MT VOID, Kip Williams writes:

Here's ROBUR, who's been most everywhere...

<https://archive.org/details/ClassicsIllustrated162RoburTheConqueror>

Archive has a whole pile of Classics Illustrated. The RAR or CBZ versions require a dedicated app to read, but are much better quality than the PDF ones. Don Perlin drew this one, which came right before MASTER OF THE WORLD, drawn by Gray Morrow (and it suffers in comparison to Morrow's work). Alfred Sundel adapted the script in both cases.

And I'll say again that the CI version of Hugo's NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS is the best version anywhere, apart from the original. With stunning art by Reed Crandall and George Evans, it made me want to read the novel, which I've now done several times. It is effective because it actually follows the book instead of trying to second-guess the author, which also seems to me to be giving some credit to the audience for brains. [-kw]

And R. Looney writes:

I'm not old enough to call them Classic Comics, although we go way back. I think their "War of the Worlds" was one of my very first exposures to Science Fiction. But my local source never had a very complete collection; not sure how that tale slipped through--but I also found "Robur the Conqueror" there. Still have a copy--but if you want to see it (and like me, catch up on those you missed) let my refer you to the Internet Archive, which has them all at <https://archive.org/details/classicsillustrated>.

Thanks for your MT Void! That was a good tip, pointing me at THE LIGHT BRIGADE by Kameron Hurley. [-rl]

Kevin R writes:

Indeed, there was no "Invisible Man" published in the "Classic Comics" series from Gilbertson:

<https://www.comics.org/series/10765/covers/>

In the "Classics Illustrated" run, IM doesn't appear until 1959.

<https://www.comics.org/issue/515346/cover/4/>

My conjecture is that pre-1978 copyright law allowed Gilbertson to treat the novel as being in the public domain in the US, but I don't have the particulars.

It was released in a British edition, and, IMS, the UK copyright would still have been in force.

I wonder if a licensing fee was paid?

<https://www.comics.org/issue/342173/cover/4/>

[-kr]

Keith F. Lynch replies:

Maybe that's just how long it took for the invisibility potion to wear off. :-) [-kfl]

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**Loos** (letters of comment by Paul Dormer and Gary R. Schmidt):

In response to [Steve Milton's comment](#) in the 08/21/20 issue of the MT VOID that "loo" comes from the French "l'eau", Paul

Dormer writes:

Possibly. Supposedly from the cry of gadyloo, a corruption of the French "gare de l'eau", which grammatically would be "gare l'eau", meaning beware of the water, which was cried when throwing the contents of a chamber pot from an upper story window.

But Chambers dictionary suggest also possibly lieu, meaning place.

Which reminds me that at my place of employment, it was sometimes required for people to work extra hours and instead of paying overtime, you were allowed to take extra holiday. This was known as TOIL--Time Off In Lieu (of wages).

Which led to jokes of the form, "I was late this morning because I had a bad curry last night and I took some time off in loo."

Gary R. Schmidt replies:

"Garde," from "garde a l'eau," surely. C'n'est pas a railway station!!! (The thing that's not rendering for some is an 'a' with an accent grave on it.) [-grs]

Paul responds:

I was going by the entry in Chambers Dictionary:

ORIGIN: Recorded in this form by Smollett; supposed to be would-be Fr gare de l'eau for gare l'eau beware of the water; Sterne records garde d'eau in Paris (Sentimental Journey)

Amusingly, Google translate gives "Gare l'eau" as "Park the water" and "garde l'eau" as "Keep water". "Garde a l'eau" comes out as "Water resistance". [-pd]

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

LOST HORIZON by James Hilton (Pocket, ISBN 978-0-671-66427-5) is showing its age. Not only does it fail the Bechdel Test(\*), but one finds such exchanges as:

"... it would not be considered good manners to take a woman another man wanted."

"Supposing somebody wanted her so badly that he didn't care a damn whether it was good manners or not?"

"Then, my dear sir, it would be good manners on the part of the other man to let him have her, and also on the part of the woman to be equally agreeable."

Yes, Hilton does give the woman some say in the matter, but apparently only as an afterthought.

In Shangri-La, this paradise on earth, racism still exists. Te High Lama says, "Our best subjects, undoubtedly, are the Nordic and Latin races of Europe; perhaps the Americans would be equally adaptable...."

The High Lama also says, "... for the benefit of our younger colleagues ... the women of the valley have happily applied the principle of moderation to their own chastity." Again, women seem to be there only to serve the men, rather than to be human beings in their own right.

The copy editor seems to have slipped up at least once. First someone says, "The porters are due in a fortnight's time..." but later the text says "[u]ntil the two months were past, nothing much could happen."

One passage that reminded me of a famous science fiction series comes when the High Lama says, "But the Dark Ages that are to come will cover the whole world in a single pall, there will be neither escape nor sanctuary, save such as are too secret to be found or too humble to be noticed."

Compare that to, "The dark ages to come will endure not twelve, but thirty thousand years. ... I do not say now that we can prevent the fall. But it is not yet too late to shorten the interregnum which will follow." [FOUNDATION, by Isaac Asimov, in case you don't recognize it.] And the same method is given for saving humanity in both cases: "By saving the knowledge of the human race." (In Shangri-La this extended to the arts and philosophy as well.)

(\*) It's amazing how many books, even newer books by authors who seem to be totally egalitarian in their outlook, fail the Bechdel Test. Kim Stanley Robinson is hardly a reactionary, and GREEN EARTH is the 2015 thousand-plus-page revision of the 2004 et al "Science in the Capital" trilogy, but the only conversation between two women with names that is not about

men is part of a committee meeting and so is not a true conversation. [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

I want to have children, but my friends scare me.  
One of my friends told me she was in labor for 36 hours.  
I don't even want to do anything that feels good for  
36 hours.

--Rita Rudner

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