

# MT VOID 07/23/21 -- Vol. 40, No. 4, Whole Number 2181

©©©© © © ©©©© © © ©©©©© © © ©©©© ©©©© ©©  
©  
© ©©©© ©©©©  
©  
© ©

Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society  
07/23/21 -- Vol. 40, No. 4, Whole Number 2181

## Table of Contents

- [Bond Songs \(Part 1\) \(DR. NO, FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE, GOLDFINGER\)](#)  
(comments by Mark R. Leeper)
- [Labels and Alphabetizing](#) (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper)
- [Mini-Reviews, Series, and Psychohistory](#) (letter of comment by John Hertz)
- [SUPERNOVA ERA, the Ata Boys, and Sea Level Rise](#) (letters of comment  
by Kevin R, Scott Dorsey, Keith F. Lynch, and Peter Trei)
- [STAR TREK and the Venus Drug](#) (letters of comment by Gary McGath,  
Dorothy J. Heydt, Tim Merrigan)
- [This Week's Reading](#) (THE ONCE AND FUTURE WITCHES) (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper)
- [Quote of the Week](#)

Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, [mleeper@optonline.net](mailto:mleeper@optonline.net)  
Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, [eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net)  
Sending Address: [evelynchmelisleeper@gmail.com](mailto:evelynchmelisleeper@gmail.com)  
All material is copyrighted by author unless otherwise noted.  
All comments sent or posted will be assumed authorized for  
inclusion unless otherwise noted.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, send mail to [eleeper@optonline.net](mailto:eleeper@optonline.net)  
The latest issue is at <http://www.leepers.us/mtvoid/latest.htm>.  
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).

### **Bond Songs (Part 1) (DR. NO, FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE, GOLDFINGER)** (comments by Mark R. Leeper):

Back when I was newly-retired an old friend from my college days and I were discussing James Bond films and I mentioned that somehow the viewing public never noticed how weak so many of the Bond title sequences. They were really sappy and not up to the quality of other aspects of the productions.

One of the disadvantages of not having children is that you cheat yourself of having a second childhood, at least as far as entertainment goes. Well, for small children it would not do you much good anyway. Who wants to watch Barney with their very young children? Not many, I admit. But when the children start getting older you take them to see the Disney animated films. And you tell people you are just going to watch the kids, but after a few minutes it is "Daddy, I wanna go home." "Sh-sh-sh-sh, Daddy's watching the movie. Wow, look at that dragon the witch turned into! That is SO COOL!"

But not having children Evelyn and I missed all that. I think we also carelessly passed up having mid-life crises, which we really were entitled to even without children. In my case it was because I have always been mathematical and knew years in advance about when mid-life would likely be. It did not catch me unawares and so we didn't suddenly feel we had to act like 20-year-olds. Or perhaps we have been acting like 20-year-olds all along (minus the beer and the hang-gliding, of course). But I do admit that with the advent of DVD players we have been revisiting the adventures of my teenage hero, James Bond. When I finally acquired YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE, I finally realized it should really be YOU LIVE ONLY TWICE. But that is an example of what has been happening. I expect to be drawn into these films and I can see why I liked them, but I also see flaws I missed when I first saw them.

One of the things I am looking at is the song lyrics. To the best of my knowledge nobody really has done an appraisal of the songs of the James Bond films. I might as well do it, albeit superficially. I used to love the Bond songs. I would sing them to myself when I was mowing the lawn. Now I look at them and see how silly they were.

Take the title song from FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE. (I will take the songs in order but will skip over DR. NO. It did not really

have a title song. For the title music it used the wordless James Bond theme and a calypso version of "Three Blind Mice.") The lyric of the second Bond film goes:

From Russia with love I fly to you,  
Much wiser since my goodbye to you.  
I've traveled the world to learn,  
I must return from Russia with love.

I've seen places, faces and smiled for a moment,  
But oh, you haunted me so.  
Still my tongue-tied young pride,  
Would not let my love for you show  
In case you'd say no.

To Russia I flew but there and then,  
I suddenly knew you'd care again.  
My running around is through,  
I fly to you from Russia with love.

First of all it loses points because it has nothing whatsoever to do with the plot of the film. This guy singing is no James Bond. Barney Fife is a bit closer. It is a song written by someone returning from Russia to his previous girlfriend. He has been a world traveler but all it has taught him is that he should return to his girlfriend. But it must be returning from the right place. It won't work if he is returning from someplace like a dull Belgium or Denmark. Warm countries are right out. Apparently his girl wants to be returned to from Russia. Why, we never find out. Now the plot thickens. He has been traveling around since they split up, but he keeps remembering her and wishing he had been more romantic with her. He really did love her but the fear that she would reject him so unhinged his fragile little mind that he could not speak up. This guy's not ready to cross a street much less journey around the world. Well then he took a plane to Russia. Here he is sightseeing and in the middle he has a sartorial experience. Something like, "The Kremlin, onion domes, the snow and ice, fur hats, borscht. Hey wait. OF COURSE she'll love me again." Now there is an air of mystery added. Apparently she loved him at one time and stopped. Why? We never know. But that is why he is afraid to say that he loves her in case she rejects him a second time after once loving him. Now this wimp suddenly knows that he can make her love him again because he is returning from \*just the right country.\* This guy is too diffident to be any sort of lover. My advice? Lose him. And I hope he remembers to bring her one of those little nested dolls.

I mean after I listened to what this guy was really saying in his love song I find myself shaken and not stirred.

Well, let's move on to GOLDFINGER. A piece of this lyric goes:

Golden words he will pour in your ear,  
But his lies can't disguise what you fear,  
For a golden girl knows when he's kissed her,  
It's the kiss of death from Mister Goldfinger.  
Pretty girl beware of this heart of gold  
This heart is cold.

This song was clearly "written to spec" by someone who had not seen the film. It tries to be about the character in the film, but misses by a mile. I mean the words describe Goldfinger sweet-talking a lady. I tell you that Gert Frobe really looks like one hell of a lover, doesn't he? So here he is whispering sweet nothings into some lady's ear. But he isn't fooling her. Why not? Because she has already been painted gold and is dying of skin suffocation. I cannot say much for his tastes. At this point no amount of sweet-kissy-face is going to win her, no matter how cute Frobe/Goldfinger is. Well, leave us face it. She had to be after his money from the beginning.

So, those were the title songs from the early days of the Bond films, when they were still deciding just what to do with the character and the series. They were creating the Bond formula, songs and all. Next time I will talk about what the filmmakers did from that point on. [-mrl]

---

### Labels and Alphabetizing (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

Last week I complained about DVD packaging, and this week I am going to complain about DVD labeling. It's the same complaint I mentioned about PROJECT HAIL MARY a few weeks ago. Two DVDs we bought recently were THE RISE AND FALL OF MARGARET THATCHER and WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS. But in both cases, the company decided to put the leading words in much smaller type, so the spines (and in some cases the fronts) read "MARGARET THATCHER" and "RED FERN GROWS".

Okay, I know that in some sense this is common. Gibbon's work is THE HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, but everyone calls it just "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire". Adam Smith's work is AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS, but everyone calls it "The Wealth of Nations". And THE PERSONAL HISTORY, ADVENTURES, EXPERIENCE AND OBSERVATION OF DAVID COPPERFIELD THE YOUNGER OF BLUNDERSTONE ROOKERY (WHICH HE NEVER MEANT TO PUBLISH ON ANY ACCOUNT) is better known as just plain old "David Copperfield".

But while one might apply this to THE RISE AND FALL OF MARGARET THATCHER, WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS is \*not\* known as "Red Fern Grows"; that doesn't even make sense as a title. And it is annoying when one goes to organize one's DVDs (or books) alphabetically, and even more so when two people are organizing DVDs (or books) alphabetically, because one person will

shelve THE RISE AND FALL OF MARGARET THATCHER under "R" and the other will look for it under "M".

And don't even get me started on "Dr." versus "Doctor", or numbers. [-ecl]

---

**Mini-Reviews, Series, and Psychohistory** (letter of comment by John Hertz):

In response to [Mark's reviews](#) in the 05/07/21 issue of the MT VOID, John Hertz writes:

Mark's Mini-Review #15 titles ([issue] 2170) could be read together. "Black Bear, I'm thinking of ending things, she dies tomorrow."

In response to [Evelyn's comments on series](#) in the same issue, John writes:

Seems to me that series fail ([issue] 2170), not at any particular length, but when authors keep writing after they cease creating. Frank Baum wrote fourteen Oz books. Patrick O'Brien wrote twenty Aubrey & Maturin books. Isaac Asimov should not have written a fourth Foundation book--on another tentacle, THE END OF ETERNITY (1955) came after SECOND FOUNDATION (1953) and may be his best, and I like "gold" (1991)--which he might have called APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA except the allusion to Cardinal Newman's book might have confused people who rejoiced that Asimov was an atheist but couldn't follow his jokes.

And in response to [the quote](#) in the 06/11/21 issue of the MT VOID, John Hertz writes:

No sooner do I comment about Asimov's Foundation books than I find you quoting Astolphe-Louis-Leonor, Narquis de Custine ([issue] 2175), "The circumstances of human society are too complicated." Of course he lived several millennia before Hari Seldon. [-jh]

---

**SUPERNOVA ERA, the Ata Boys, and Sea Level Rise** (letters of comment by Kevin R, Scott Dorsey, Keith F. Lynch, and Peter Trei):

In response to [Evelyn's review of SUPERNOVA ERA](#) in the 07/16/21 issue of the MT VOID, Kevin R writes:

There was a recent documentary on the Ata boys:

<http://paradise.docastaway.com/six-tongan-castaways-ata-island-shipwreck-1965/>

Trailers embedded there:

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

<https://youtu.be/88noN4PoJqc>

CBS-TV did a feature on this, which, if the ad on FACE THE NATION was accurate, will re-air on 60 MINUTES tonight.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/shipwreck-deserted-island-south-pacific-survivors-60-minutes-2021-04-04/>

In the notes at the bottom of this page are links to older stories, some from Australian TV.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tongan\\_castaways](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tongan_castaways)

[Evelyn wrote,] "Another error is having New York City and Shanghai flooded like Venice, but action going on in and around the White House, which sits on the District of Columbia flood plain and would also be submerged. Both of these are probably because the original copy editing was done in China, and so these were not caught there."

Did they get KAMANDI comics in China?

<https://www.comics.org/issue/25510/cover/4/>

<https://a.disquscdn.com/uploads/mediaembed/images/1122/2015/original.jpg>

[-kr]

Scott Dorsey writes:

Fred Pohl's take on this in STARBURST involves a lot of sandbags and much of the government moving to a Holiday Inn in Roslyn as I recall. [-sd]

Keith F. Lynch replies:

Roslyn is just as low-lying as DC. (I used to live in Roslyn.)

Kevin notes:

1-S Roslyn is on Long Island, NY. Only 91 feet/30 metres of elevation in that village on Long Island Sound. Neighboring villages may have some hills up to 150 feet. LI North Shore towns tend to have bluffs ringing their harbors.

Keith answers:

I apologize. I haven't read STARBURST since shortly after it was published 39 years ago. So when you mentioned the government moving to Roslyn, I mistakenly assumed you were misspelling Rosslyn, Virginia, which is just across the river from DC. Iconic photos that show the Lincoln Memorial in the foreground and the Washington Monument and Capitol building behind it are all taken from Rosslyn. [-kfl]

Scott responds:

It was in fact Rosslyn, VA. And no, it's not very much higher ground. The Science Advisor points out that von Knefhausen's cell is below water level and that he'll be drowned if the generator is shut off, as I recall. [-sd]

Keith also replies:

New York City and Shanghai are both on coasts. DC is inland. It would be a simple matter to build a dam on the Potomac, downstream of DC, with a built-in nuclear reactor dedicated to powering pumps to keep the upstream Potomac's water level what it is today. This project probably wouldn't cost more than a few billion dollars, a negligible increase to the federal budget. [-kfl]

Evelyn responds:

However, the events in SUPERNOVA ERA take place in a time frame that would not (IMHO) really allow for such a project. [-ecl]

Peter Trei notes:

In reality, the government would have moved to The Greenbriar, in WV, but its existence was not public until 1992, just a bit too late. [-pt]

And Scott responds:

Good point, although that may have been enemy territory by that point. The United States was a good bit less united by that time in Pohl's world. [-sd]

---

**STAR TREK and the Venus Drug** (letters of comment by Gary McGath, Dorothy J. Heydt, Tim Merrigan):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES](#) in the 07/16/21 issue of the MT VOID, Gary McGath writes:

The Venus Drug fixed the women's hairdos. I never understood how it did that. [-gmg]

Dorothy J. Heydt adds:

And gave them a new coat of makeup. [-djh]

Tim Merrigan suggests:

It's secondary chemical mind control (of the men), through the pheromones the women produce, along with a direct psychotropic effect on the women taking it/to whom it's given, without their knowledge, which boosts their self confidence.

The improved image of the women who have taken it, shown in the show, is through the eyes, and minds, of the men effected by it.

It should improve the images of any women in the area, but improve it more for the women who've taken it. [-tm]

---

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

THE ONCE AND FUTURE WITCHES by Alix E. Harrow (Redhook, ISBN 978-0-316-42204-8) is an alternate history of America where magic was/is real, but was supposedly burned out along with (Old) Salem during the witch trials. But bits of it have survived, and now three witch sisters are trying to use it for the suffragette movement, as well as bring back as much magic into the world as they can.

On the whole the story was engaging, but many of the points it was trying to make about attitudes, politics, and religion seemed rather obvious. Harrow also uses a common trick in alternate histories--mapping names and people from our world to the alternate. So we have the Square Shirtwaist Factory fire, and folklorists Charlotte Perrault, the Sisters Grimm, and Andrea Lang.

(It has only now occurred to me that having the "founder" (in some sense) of Shangri-La named Father Perrault may have been intended by James Hilton as a reference to Charles Perrault and a hint that the story of LOST HORIZON and Shangri-La is really a modern fairy tale.)

It is not clear what the change point of our world was with the alternate. The destruction of Salem and a stronger reaction to witchcraft would have changed subsequent United States history, but its occurrence in 1693 could not change Charles Perrault into Charlotte before the 1697 publication of their folktales. One could argue that the change was that magic was real, but there seems to be little indication that this has a noticeable historic impact in the alternate world.

[slight spoilers]

A more fundamental problem I have is the implication that witchcraft is necessary in order to accomplish social change. Assuming one does not believe witchcraft was used in our world's social movements (e.g. the suffrage movement), this is clearly false in our world. One can argue, I suppose, that since it turns out that the "anti-witchcraft" politicians are also using witchcraft, its use by the reformers may be more necessary in the alternate world. But the message it sends is that working for social change is futile without witchcraft, or prayer, or some supernatural assistance.

I wouldn't stop this from my recommending the book, but it did strike me as a unfortunate subtext. [-ecl]

---

Mark Leeper  
mleeper@optonline.net

Quote of the Week:

People do not believe that mathematics is simple,  
it is only because they do not realize how complicated  
life is.

--John von Neumann

**Tweet**

Go to [our home page](#) THE MT VOID