SF&F is TMT's general, all-purpose, miracle-science-fiction column, bringing you a safety report from the world of scifi by a crew team of experts. Books, films, comics, magazines, television, radio and even real life will be amply covered by the likes of P. Allen Eldred, Ed Susman and a white host of guest typewriter fans whose pens aim at this or any other world is to get the latest sci-fi news to you.

MONKEY BUSINESS...

When CBS-TV announced that the popular PLANET OF THE APES film series was about to become a weekly prime-time TV show, that announcement was greeted with much fanfare in the scifi publications (including this one). A scant few months later, the same CBS axes announced the demise of that beloved simian series. That announcement was met with a minimum of protest, primarily because most critics concurred that the series didn't live up to ape fans' expectations. In this guest opinion piece, jab critic Don Foote explains what he considers the reasons behind the failure of the PLANET OF THE APES.

OR THE FAILURE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES!

PLANET OF THE APES seems to be everywhere these days. Toys, games, books, comics, movies, posters, you name it; the apes have popped up just about every medium, and profitably, at that. Every medium, that is, except television. When PLANET OF THE APES entered that, too, it died after less than half a season. The question is: Why? The answer is the basis of this article.

In this ape-watcher's humble opinion, there are three main reasons why the PLANET OF THE APES TV series failed. One, the apes were much too "human." Two, the scripts were cop-outs. Three, the series didn't make use of the "shock effects" of the PLANET OF THE APES films. Let's consider them in order.

In the majority of the APES movies, the apes were realistic-looking. They were definitely NOT human. Oh, they had a few emotions similar to humans, but, for the most part, they were foreign, alien, if you will. They were basically cold, cunning, intelligent, and nonpathysmic towards humans, exhibiting few few-emotions at all towards them, either than hate and scorn. They were not the equals of humans. The apes were, quite simply, the superior species.

On the TV show, this changed. Many of the apes became foolish. They displayed jealousy and envy towards the humans and towards argued with and bargained with humans, again something you rarely saw in the films. The whole apes series was based on the concept of Apes being superior to Man and this, I feel, is what crippled the show. The concept was destroyed.

Now, to the scripts. Almost from the very start they lacked the power, the appeal, the realism so evident in the film series. You felt kind of loath with the TV show. I never knew why some were the masters and others were the slaves. You didn't understand where this planet was. So many important points were either overlooked in the TV scripts. The dialogue was generally lousy, the plots usually poor, and the characters that the scripts featured were usually flat and unrealistic.

On the TV show, I think, most important to the demise of the TV series, was the lack of use of what I call the "shock effects" of the PLANET OF THE APES concept. What do I mean by shock effects? Well, for example, the discovery of the Statue of Liberty on a deserted beach on the moon in the first APES film. Or the discovery of what at first appeared an abandoned tunnel or mine shaft, but turns out to be a major 20th century subway depot like Grand Central or Times Square Station in the second film. BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES

BEWARE MORE BEASTS, a newly released anthology of frightening fiction, is Maloon Books latest addition to its horror line. Edited by Vic Ghidalia and Roger Elwood, the 640-page paperback features new stories by Barry Marder, Ed Hoch and Thomas Scordia, as well as rare memoirs by Jack Williamson, August Derleth and William Hope Hodgson. Maloon is also reprinting Ghidalia and Elwood's HORROR HUNTERS, an anthology that includes masterful stories by Lovecraft, Sturgeon, Leiber, Bradbury, Blackwood, and Derleth.

other apes, which was unthinkably in the films. The apes appeared whimsical, comical, and the humans on the TV show could trick them, outwit them and otherwise make monkeys of them. Apes actually is too strong and too widespread. Perhaps that's what could be the APES reign is coming to an end?—Don Foote

BLAME THE BEAST!

BEWARE MORE BEASTS, a newly released anthology of frightening fiction, is Maloon Books latest addition to its horror line. Edited by Vic Ghidalia and Roger Elwood, the 640-page paperback features new stories by Barry Marder, Ed Hoch and Thomas Scordia, as well as rare memoirs by Jack Williamson, August Derleth and William Hope Hodgson. Maloon is also reprinting Ghidalia and Elwood's HORROR HUNTERS, an anthology that includes masterful stories by Lovecraft, Sturgeon, Leiber, Bradbury, Blackwood, and Derleth.

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