

Notes and Queries

Don Larsson would like to draw people's attention to J. Hoberman's article, "Bad Movies" (Film Comment, July-August 1980, 7-12). Hoberman mentions one film--Bride of the Monster--with Pynchonian overtones: Bela Lugosi struggles with a rubber octopus; the film ends with an atomic mushroom cloud. Hoberman's comments on the relation of bad movies to surrealism are provocative in terms of Pynchon's use of mass culture.

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T. S. Tillotson passes along "another offering for the annotated bibliography project so admirably begun by Javaid Qazi [in PN 2]:"

Grieve, (Mrs.) M., A Modern Herbal. New York: Dover, 1971.

This is an outstanding reference work on herbalism, originally published in 1931. It agrees with much (but not all) of the herbalistic lore presented in Gravity's Rainbow. Consider a brief portion of the entry under "Mandrake": "The plant was fabled to grow under the gallows of murderers, and it was believed to be death to dig up the root, which was said to utter a shriek . . . which none might hear and live. . . . he who would dig up a plant of Mandrake should tie a dog to it for that purpose, who drawing it out would certainly perish."