



the movies

Louise Snider

## Film adaptation skillfully shows 'Ordinary' lives

There is nothing ordinary about "Ordinary People" (R). The screenplay by Alvin Sargent, who scripted "Julia," is a sensitive adaptation of the Judith Guest novel.

The directing, which marks Robert Redford's debut behind the camera, exceeds in excellence anything he has done in front of the lens. And the acting, from the principal parts to the minor ones — with one puzzling exception — is perceptive and moving.

Redford demonstrates his skill as a director in the integrated performances he elicits. Each character relates to the others, yet remains distinct no matter how small the role.

The fine tuning of the acting and directing, difficult to separate because they mesh so precisely, again is illustrated by the general tempo of the dialogue — the pauses, the rush of voices, the interrupted rhythms of speech. Each silence and each hostility reveals something more about the family and its relationships.

THE JARRETTs are a fine-looking threesome, a prosperous middle-class family in Lake Forest, a suburb of Chicago. They are as plastic and proscribed as their social ambitions, but they are very decent and very tidy.

From the shuttered facade to the immaculate interior, everything speaks of the need for order. There is little tolerance in this scheme for "making a mess."

Of course, there is a mess. The Jarretts' two sons were caught in a boating accident. Buck, the older boy — bright, popular, his mother's favorite — was drowned. Conrad, the younger one, survived with a crushing burden of guilt because he couldn't save Buck.

He attempted suicide and got blood all over his mother's towels and tiles. The movie begins after Conrad has returned home from the psychiatric hospital. He is going to school but is still very disturbed.

As a reflection of social values, the film's strength lies in its uncompromising treatment of mental illness. We can commiserate with the feelings of all those involved.

WHETHER CONRAD is with family or friends, his presence seems to generate awkward silences, tense moments and a nagging fear of saying the wrong thing.

Timothy Hutton (the son of Jim Hutton, TV's Ellery Queen) is outstanding as the confused, troubled boy. He especially uses his body language effectively to suggest the jittery nervousness and loss of "control."

Mary Tyler Moore as his mother conveys the fragility behind the hard, seamless facade. Her insistence on maintaining order and control masks a brittleness that cannot suffer blows.

Donald Sutherland is the father caught between them. His performance is very affecting but raises a question about the interpretation of the character. His inability to perceive the emotionally combustible situation around him borders on a slow-wittedness that contradicts his public image too greatly for easy acceptance.

Aside from this one shortcoming, "Ordinary People" stands out as one of the year's finest films for its power, honesty and skillful interpretation of its subject.

## what's at the movies

THE BLUE LAGOON (R). Lush photography but silly story of two shipwrecked youngsters who grow up unrelated on a tropical isle.

THE BLUES BROTHERS (R). A film that's as unoriginal and dreary as it is expensive (very) with one meatball scene after another and enough car crashes to make AAA go belly up.

BRUBAKER (R). Serious drama with Robert Redford as reform warden fighting corruption on state prison farm.

CADDYSHACK (R). Chevy Chase and other comics in misadventures of caddies at a stuffy country club.

CARNY (R). Jodie Foster runs off to join a carnival and gets involved with the clown and his partner. A film for those who like to get hustled.

DIVINE MADNESS (R). Energetic and electrifying Bette Midler in film version of the Broadway show.

DRESSED TO KILL (R). Horny murder mystery with more than a passing resemblance to Hitchcock's "Psycho."

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (PG). "Star Wars" sequel units original cast in continuation of battle against the evil empire.

FAME (R). Lots of young talent in vibrant musical about students at New York's School of Performing Arts.

THE FIENDISH PLOT OF DR. FU MANCHU (PG). Not very funny or very fiendish, but Peter Sellers' last film does include an occasional flash of comic genius that reminds us of what a gifted actor he was.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN (PG). Kirk Douglas in action drama of a warship that goes through a time warp to the hour before Pearl Harbor.

THE GREAT SANTINI (PG). Robert Duvall as Air Force pilot and dominating father in strong story of family conflict and love.

HOPSCOTCH (R). Chemistry of Matthew/Jackson pairing works again, but we don't see them together often enough in this halfway humorous (first half) film.

MY BODYGUARD (PG). Humorous, low-key film about two teenage boys of different backgrounds who join forces to put down school bully.

RAISE THE TITANIC (PG). Adventure as American special operations team tries to recover vital mineral from the ship while interested Russians have their own plan.

SAM MARLOW, PRIVATE EYE (PG). Contemporary mystery-comedy, that draws upon the '40s and the Bogart tradition.

SMOKEY AND THE BANDIT II (PG). Most of original cast plus Dom DeLuise appear in sequel that is chockful of crude jokes and action as the bandit transports a pregnant elephant from Florida to Texas.

THOSE LIPS, THOSE EYES (R). Frank Langella in romance that focuses on a group of summer stock actors in the 1950s.



Bette Midler brings down the house singing "Big Noise from Winnetka" in "Divine Madness."

## 'Shake-bop' sound moves audience

By NICK CHARLES

### review

The Kingbees got the Royal Oak Music Theatre's season off to a great start. The three-piece Los Angeles band had the audience on its feet and jumping to "shake-bop" rock and roll.

The Kingbees, dressed in fairly normal outfits didn't try to shock the crowd with gimmicks. The band just played its favorite kind of music, which seemed to be heavily influenced by Buddy Holly.

Guitarist/vocalist Jamie James, who writes all the group's original material, sang out "Sweet Sweet Girl to Me," "Man Made for Love" and "Follow Your Heart," as well as the Holly com-

position "Ting-A-Ling," from the Kingbees debut R 3.0. album.

After playing its hit single "My Mistake" and many encores, the group wanted to express its love for Detroit-area fans.

"WE REALLY had a great time playing here," said drummer Rex Roberts. "The crowd was real enthusiastic."

"We just want to say that the group appreciates more than we can show," said James. "Detroit is one of the major rock and roll markets, probably more than New York City."

"We really appreciate the fact that there's a Detroit in our lives. For us to have the city dig what we're doing... well, it doesn't really sink in until we get home, and this is our seventh time playing in the Detroit area."

"Yeah, and it's not like, 'Oh, we're going back to Detroit,'" said Roberts. "It's like we really want to come."

Bassist Michael Rumman explained more about the Kingbees style of music.

"There's definitely influences from different eras but we just call it 'American Rock and Roll.'"

"THERE'S A TOUCH of a twist beat," said James, "but I wouldn't call it new wave because I don't know what new wave is."

"We're influenced by all the periods we grew up in," explained Roberts, "but we don't play it like they did in the '50s, '60s or '70s. We're always going to have those roots but the more we work on our own material the sooner we will be known for having our own style."

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