

New movies: A report card

RECENT RELEASES:

"Harry and the Hendersons" (B+)
(PG) 111 minutes
Fun for all the family is former Dearbornite William Dear's happy comedy about the Henderson Family (John Lithgow, Melinda Dillon, Margaret Langrick and Joshua Ruddy) who return from their camping trip with a Bigfoot in tow. Well, not exactly in tow but Harry does come along to wreak a little pleasant havoc. Nifty supporting roles: Don Ameche, David Suchet and Linnie Kazan. Seven-foot-two Kevin Peter Hall is a real pleasure as Harry.

"The Untouchables" (C-) (R)
Brian DePalma directed top flight cast with Kevin Costner as Eliot Ness in Prohibition Chicago. Ness is still out to get Al Capone (Robert De Niro) with the help of Malone (Sean Connery). Robert Stack did a better job on TV. DePalma flunks on scripting in these two boring, rambling hours interspersed with occasional and overly obvious, bloody shoot-outs. There's enough story for half-hour TV cop show and enough character development to match the charismatic appeal of marshmallows. Sean Connery and the photography are the only pluses in this overrated epic.

"River's Edge" (D) (R)
Those who revel in disgusting images and think socially disaffected teenagers from broken homes are "cute," will probably like this story of teenager who murders his girlfriend and conducts tour of the body — based on actual event. Crispin Glover postures in an annoying Sean Penn parody while Dennis Hopper cements his stereotype as king of wasted old geezers. It was OK in "Hoolers" but here it's unpleasant. This film is recommended for those who flunked out by enjoying "Blue Velvet" and "Angel Heart." "Stand by Me" for the sado-masochistic set.

"The Believers" (D+) (R)
Maudlin, boring story of Minneapolis police psychologist (Martin Sheen) who returns to New York after his wife is electrocuted while preparing breakfast. Somehow this



John Lithgow and Melinda Dillon in "Harry and the Hendersons;" this Bigfoot movie got a big hand from Professor Dan.

all leads him into conflict with an evil voodoo cult. Lots of disgusting images and very little action or tension until the clichéd finish. If you're still with this one, please see me after class. I have some swamp land. Even lovers of occult films will be bored. I had enough dead chickens in "Angel Heart."

"The Witches of Eastwick" (A+)
110 minutes
Sophisticated comedy discusses sexual roles and relations quite explicitly. Superb performances by three lonely witches (Cher, Susan Sarandon, Michelle Pfeiffer) who conjure up a devil of a man, Jack Nicholson, who is simply great. Marred by some excessively gross images.

OLD FAVORITES:

"Platoon" (A+) (R)
Oliver Stone's widely renowned Vietnam epic. You may not enjoy its grim, realistic representation of that tragic conflict but the film is excellent and well-deserving of its many awards.



the movies
Dan Greenberg

"Hollywood Shuffle" (A-) (R)
Robert Townsend's wry look at a black actor's chances in Hollywood. Everybody is in for it as Townsend's deft, satiric wit nails Stallone, Siskel and Ebert, "B" Movies, Hollywood in general and his own career in particular.

"Beverly Hills Cop II" (B+) (R)
More of the same as "B.H.C.I." maybe even funnier, in spite of its glib, rock-video exterior. It's always a pleasure to watch Eddie Murphy and local friends, i.e. Detroit Police Commander Gilbert Hill. Setting records at the box office with almost \$5 million bucks in the till after 12 days playing at 2,326 screens around the country.

"Lethal Weapon" (B) (R)
Glover and Gibson give sparkle to a run-of-the-mill cop story. Their energy and charisma make it worthwhile.

"Round Midnight" (B+) (R)
"Cool" jazz of the '50s at its best with Dexter Gordon blowing a truly great saxophone. Herbie Hancock plays, and composed, some of the original film score.

"Raising Arizona" (B+) (PG-13)
Nicholas Cage, a convenience store bandit, falls in love with a lady cop. They can't have kids so they kidnap one. Good comedy.

WHO SAYS YOU CAN'T TURN IN OLD PAPERS?

"The Aristocats" (B) (G)
A Disney standard in re-release and an odds-on-favorite for the younger cartoon set as well as those with acute nostalgia. If you've never seen it, you'll like it, and maybe even if you have.

I FLUNKED THEM BUT THE BOX OFFICE DIDN'T:

"Blind Date" (C+) (R)
Even money was my best bet for this Bruce Willis-Kim Basinger story of a gorgeous blind date who runs amok. Boy, was I wrong!!! After two months its nationwide box office approaches \$38 million while playing on better than 800 screens.

"The Secret of My Success" (C-) (PG-13)
Everybody ragged on this one but Michael J. Fox's complications while rising up the corporate ladder averaged almost a million a day for its first 52 days. Still playing on nearly 1,300 screens.

SILLY STUFF:

"Police Academy 4" (D-) (PG)
For those who liked "1" through "3."

The grading system

Each week in "Street Scene" Professor Dan will grade the movies. Sorry, guys and gals, but you never get away from grades. No matter how many times you graduate, there'll always be somebody handing out marks...

Here's the scale:

A+ Top marks to a film that everyone will appreciate

A Close behind in the excellent category

A- Still in running for top honors

B+ Pretty good stuff but not perfect

B Good

B- All right but notable deficiencies

C+ Just a cut above average

C Mediocre

C- Not so hot and slipping fast

D+ The very best of the poor stuff

D What can you say after you've said you're sorry, but it is poor

D- It doesn't get much worse

F Flunks in every category, truly awful

Z- The absolute worst — reserved for the occasional disaster that excels in shoddy filmmaking.

"Project X" (D-) (PG)

The monkeys in this weak story about Air Force research are funnier than the people.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CLASS:

(For those who enjoy pain, suffering and other unpleasantness, this is your thing.)

"Ishtar" (D-) (PG-13)

Dustin Hoffman and Warren Beatty in an unfunny comedy about two songwriters caught up in midwest politics.

"Working Girl" (F) (unrated)

Birmingham's Lizzy Borden tries, unsuccessfully, to justify prostitution. An unentertaining movie reflecting the worst aspects of chichi revolution.

"L'Annee Des Meduses" (F) (unrated)

Valerie Kaprisky, who appeared with Richard Gere in the "Breathless" remake, is a nasty nymphomaniac who will bore most folks, except for the times when she disgusts them. Translate the title as "The Year of the Jellyfish," although I don't know why anyone would bother.

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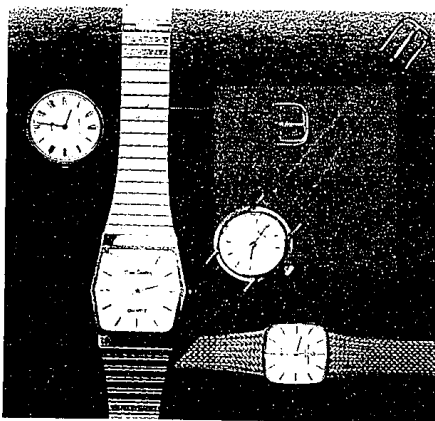
ADMIT ONE
John Denver June 19
Beach Boys June 20 & 21
Jimmy Buffet July 4
Air Supply July 6
Dan Fogelberg July 17
Anita Baker July 27
Kenny Loggins Aug. 13
Al Jarreau Aug. 22
George Benson Sept. 12
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