

Don't look for a dog in 'Dogfight'

Turn a group of immature swaggering, young jarheads loose on a town the night before they are shipped overseas and you might be able to predict the kind of joint they'll visit and the trouble they are liable to get into before they drag themselves back to the base the next morning.

In the film "Dogfight," River Phoenix and a group of fellow Marines have a game to see who can find the most unattractive date for their party, the winner taking a cash prize. It's obviously a cruel and callous joke on the unsuspecting women, whom they have coaxed, flattered and manipulated into accepting the date.

Phoenix has been striking out and getting very frustrated until he wanders into a little restaurant to get out of the rain. He spies a waitress, played by Lili Taylor, who might fit the bill. Set in 1953, she's an aspiring folk singer so he bluffs his way through a conversation about Woody Guthrie. After some hesitation on her part and boyish



pass the popcorn

LeAnne Rogers

coyness on his part, Taylor agrees to the date.

TAYLOR'S FACE is marvelous as she excitedly starts getting dressed up for the date, then turns to panic as she tries on everything in her closet. One very '60s detail I noticed was her plastic pop-bead necklace.

Phoenix keeps checking his watch and pulling cigarettes, wanting to get to the dogfight. With her hugely teased hair and chiffon dress, Taylor is rather a sight when she finally emerges.

Heading for their date at a local club, Taylor pours out her love of folk music, her frustration at spend-

ing most of her time working at her mother's restaurant and her hope to have an effect on the world, maybe through joining the Peace Corps.

Taylor's wonderful as this smart, open and idealist girl, who is so excited about being asked out that she doesn't notice her date is barely listening to the conversation.

Some of her chatter must have been sinking in, though, because Phoenix rather mildly tries to divert her from the party and once inside weakly suggests they not dance, the dance floor being used for final judging in the dogfight. When Taylor finds out about the game and confronts him, Phoenix comes out on the short end.

ALTHOUGH HE confesses to not knowing why, Phoenix shows up at Taylor's home later trying to make amends. A Marine since he was 16, Phoenix plays a basically immature young man who is starting to experience some personal growth. The rest of the film explores the relationship that develops between the pair.

Phoenix and Taylor are both very good, developing rounded characters who aren't cutouts even though they represent the societal polarization that developed during the course of the U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. The movie brings those divisions down to a human level.

When Taylor says folksingers can change the world, Phoenix suggests she join the Marines. Shooting changes the world.

As it turns out, neither was completely right. And life doesn't necessarily turn out like one expects.

"Dogfight" is available on video cassette at area video stores.

Bauer hones dial-and-chat skills

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Howard included working for WMVO-AM in Mount Vernon, Ohio.

His trials in rock radio are well documented: Bauer worked at WABX-FM and later WLLZ-FM, where he also became known for his involvement in a annual canned food drive.

When he left WLLZ-FM, Bauer received a call from Dan Kott at WXYT, whom he had worked with in the past. He put Bauer in touch with executive producer Pat Sheehan, who was familiar with the deejay's

work at WABX-FM.

HE STARTED out hosting "Open Line Detroit," but was deemed a natural for a talk show for a younger audience. Through years of spinning "Stairway to Heaven," though, Bauer became tuned into a disenfranchised generation.

"I know where they're at. I know

how they feel about things," Bauer said. "I know what they're worried about. They're still my people."

"The people who listen to me on rock radio I considered friends. I talked to them on the request lines. They cried to me about their girlfriends leaving them and their boyfriends leaving them, losing their jobs."

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