Yesterday' remade; 'Lawyers' loses

By John Monaghan Special Writer

Movie remakes rarely sparkle with originality. "Born Yester-day," an updating of Garson Kan-in's play and 1950 film, might as well have been cranked out by ro-

bots.
Melanie Griffith holds her own as Billie Dawn, former Las Vegas showgirl on the arm of Harry, a millionaire scrap dealer (here John Goodman). Beautiful but far from brainy, Billie is best seen and not heard in social situations.



/uono plays the evil Satori Bunko.

Aside from her obvious assets, Billie also provides an important business service. She blindly signs anything placed in front of her, getting her beefy boyfriend off the hook in case his shady busi-ness dealings with senators are ever expose

when Billie ends up on a Washington radio show, Harry decides she needs some smarter ling up. He hitgs a cynical newspaper reporter (is there any other kind in the movies?) named Paul (Don Johnson) to give Billie enough information to get her through a dinner party.

through a dinner party.

Johnson dons totoles-shell to make himself appear bookish, but it still doesn't make him much of an actor (William Holden played the role in 1950). Goodman, as usual, plays his part with the perfect blend of both menace and good humor and Griffith can often be a delight in roles like this and "Working Girl."

Some of the scenes in the ad-

"Working Girl."
Some of the scenes in the admittedly dated "Born Yesterday"
script remain quite funny, more a testament to Gerson Kaniin's original than anything done by director Luis Mandoki and screenwiter Douglas McGrath. A favorite bit still finds Billi good naturedly whipping Harry in gin

rummy.

There's something frightening about the way Mandoki and company (in this case the Disney production arm called Hollywood

MOVIES

Pictures) mess around with movies past. "Born Yesterday" joins recent Hollywood Pictures releases such as "Swing Kids" and "The Distinguished Gentleman" as pre-fals comedies that only remind you how great their predecessors were.

mind you how great their predecessors were.
Like Linda Rondstadt or Barry Manilow recording your favorito Duke Ellington song, Hollywood Pictures creates the movies' equivalent to musek.

"Let's Kill all the Lawyers" has a catchy title, but the locally produced feature has little else going for it. Opening at the Star John R on Friday, it has competent performances in an almost incomprehensible one-johe script.

Rick Frederick, a familiar face on the University of Detroit and Attic stages, plays aspiring lawyer Foster Merkul. He learns the legal ropes during an internability with

ropes during an internship with shamoless shyster Junior Rawley (James Vezina) and realizes may-be he doesn't want to join the rat

be he doesn't want to join the rat race after all. In the movie's heavy-handed plot device (inspired by a quote from Shakespeare no less), law-yers begin to disappear, dragged away in burlep sacks and ground into fertilizer. Merkul, mean-while, fantasizes about a beauti-ful woman named Satori (Mi-chelle de Vuone) who, not too sur-

prisingly, is responsible for the murders.

murders.

Along the way, you'll spot familiar Detroit landmarks like the Ren Cen, downtown Birmingham, and Liberty Street in Ann Arbor, along with local news anchors Cynthia Canty and Rich Fisher.

The local recognition is always to the contract of the c

fun.

Frederick and Vezina (not to mention the other acting talent mined from Detroit-area stages) are comfortable with the camera and easy to watch. Hopefully they'll move onto better productions.

they in move onto better pictures.

Writer/director/co-producer Ron Senkowski hasn't mastered the painful process of one shot flowing into another, making the movie (especially in the numerous dream sequences) almost impossible to follow. Edited into a 20-minute abort, this might really be something.

Most local reviewers will be kind to this movie, not wanting to stille film production in the city. So sue me for telling it like it is: "Let's Kill all the Lawyers" is rarely clever or funny. In fact, at times it's sheer torture.

If you have a comment for John Monaghan, call him at 983-2047, mailbox number 1866, on a touch tone phone, or write him care of Street Scene, Observer & Eccen-tric Newspapers, 38251 School-craft, Livonia 48150.

Barbara, weren't you a bit quick to push therapy?



Dear Readers:

The following voice mail ing voice mail message refers to a letter written by cares," asking for advice for a friend. The writer's understanding is that her friend is although a friend is although a friend with the family is deviauctional and that her friend's hope is psychotherapy, which would allow her to separate and individuate.

Barbara:

I didn't like your response to the article on Feb. 22. It is very daring of you to tell the writer that her friend's family is dysfunctional and that her friend needs help. How could you be 100-percent sure and say something like that right off the bat without knowing the family, and especially when it was only the friend that wrote? She may not see things the way her friend does.

For some reason or another,

friend does.

For some reason or another, we mothers do go through a lot of this on a daily basis. Mothers do nose in to others' business where they shouldn't be and if the daughter doesn't take the advice, we get angry. Then you have to tell the mother where she belongs and that this is your life. The whole thing can even backfire. This lady could have been the only daughter. There's just no telling.

caughter. There's just no telling.

It is tacky to tell her friend
that she needs treatment when
you have never heard from the
person going through it herself.
You recommended treatment
for someone without their input.

Dear voice mail messenger: Dear voice mail messenger:
Thank you for your response
to the article. I am in complete
agreement with you that it is
daring to tell the writer that
her friend's family is dysfunctional and that her friend
needs treatment.
I agree that I cannot be 100percent aure and applegize in

percent sure and apologize in that my need to be helpful led

"TCBY"

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to a conclusion that may not be accurate. I think that you wilk agree that there might be a kernel of truth or more in my represent and that it could be helpful to the writer of the let.

If such responses to letter are helpful to the writers, I am willing to put my neck on the block and rightfully have it chopped off by a thinking per son like you.

Barbara

Voice mail message:
My name is Deniss and I
have a suggestion for "Sad at
Christmas." Create your own
raditions. That's what I did to
get over my melancholy of
Christmas. Don't depend on
other people to make your holiday happy. Make your holidaly
happy for yourself by yourself.

Dear Denise:

What you said is so pertinent that I will extend it to every day of the year. The ability to know how to make one-self happy is important every day of the year and at Christmas.

Voice mail message:

Thank you for your column on divorced parents sleeping with a boyfriend or girlfriend when their child is in the home. It was titled 'Parent extions have effect on child.' The was woll-written and it was specific answer as how would affect the hild hat just that it would. The column will help me bring up to my what have the world affect the hild hat just that it would. The column will help me bring up to my what have the world will have a side of the world will be wi

Dear J.:
Thank you for your kind comment. It is good that you will be able to bring the subject up to your husband. That doesn't mean he will change.

Barbura

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experi-enced counselor, send it to Street Sense, Observer & Ec-centric Newspapers, 36251 Schooleraff, Livonia 4810 You can also leave a message by calling 953-2047, mailley 1877, on a Touch-Tone phone.

421-8229

Livonia Plaza

ANY YOGURT

SCREEN SCENE

A sampling of what's playing at alternative movie theaters across meno Detroit as reviewed by John Monaghan.

DETROIT FILM THEATRE

Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-2323 for information. (\$5; \$4 stu-

2323 for information. (\$5; \$4 stu-dents and senior citizens) "Olivier Olivier" (France — 1992), 7 and 9:30 p.m. April 2-3; 1, 4 and 7 p.m. April 4. A psycholog-ical-thriller, based on a true story, about a nine-year-old boy's disap-pearance from a small French

no one's really sure if he's the same child. Directed by Agniesz-ka Holland ("Europa, Europa"). HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL

istRAPY

13671 Michigan Ave., Dearborn.
Call 943-2330 for information.
(Free)

"Adventures of Sherlock
Holmes" (USA — 1947), 7 p.m.
Mar. 29. An early teaming of
Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce
as Holmes and Watson and still
one of the best. They're out to foil
arch-enemy Moriarity, who plans
to steal the priceless Star of
Dehli.

MICHIGAN THEATRE
603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call
668-8397 for information. (\$5; \$4
students and senior citizens).
"Ben-Hur" (USA — 1959), 2
p.m. April 2-3 (organ overture begins at 1:30 p.m.). Charlton Heston stars in the epic story of a
gladiator around the time of
Christ. Always a thrill on the big
screen.

M MAPLE THEATER

4135 W. Maple Road, Bloomfield Hills. Call 855-9090 for show times. (\$5.75 evenings; \$2.95 twilight)

"Strictly Ballroom" (Australia — 1992). A rebel dance champion is being stifled by the "strictly ballroom" rules imposed at a local dance competition. Not surprisingly, he falls in love with his dance partner in this colorful and music-filled Aussi hit.

"Mac" (USA — 1993). John Turturro makes his directorial debut in this moving story of three Italian brothers who try to cash in on the residential construction boom in the 1950s. A heartfelt tribute to Turturro's father handled with charm and insight.

'Vanishing' is chilling Dutch import

STATE WEITER

On a sunny day, a young couple drives along laughing and playing woffl games. With bicycles on the roof, they are going on vacation. The mood shifts abruptly when they enter a mountain tunnel and run out of gas. The couple argues and the man walks off through the unity of the working the makes us generally a standard to the care.

woffinn crying in the car.

"The couple makes up, stopping at a bustling rest area where the man swears he won't abandon her eve'd again. It's a promise that will couple back to haunt the young mpi in the 1991 Dutch film "The Vanjishing." The young woman goes across the parking lot to make a purchase and never comes here.

book.

The young man starts his increasingly frantic search for his
gildriend, showing a snapshot
and trying to convince someone
that she is missing. A traditional
triller would follow the young
man's search for his girlfriend's
pocasibly shift to the girlfriend's
pocaspective. "The Vanishing" is a
different sort of film and instead
shifts its attention to a man who
we'd seen earlier hanging around
the concession area.

We've seen the man, played by

We've seen the man, played by Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu, in his car putting a phony cast on his arm and covering a cloth with chloroform. He's experimented

TKids wanted to be a fireman or dogitor or football player, I wanted to be a revolutionary, "he said. "That was sort of my ambition. Then I was cursed with being a guiar player and that became my orbibasion. "In this band with the help of the other like minded individuals, it's been sort of a fusing of the two worlds." The fusion has proven successful. Before Rago released its self-tigled dobut album, the group sold taye than 5,000 copies of its 12-seng demo at its live shows and through its fan club. The group—which also consists of vocalist characteristics are not successful and drummer Brad Wilk—also opened for Body Count, Public Easemy, Pearl Jam and Perry Farrell's Porno for Pyros.

Rage from page 5B

Kids wanted to be a fireman or

VIDEO

with himself as the guinea pig to see how long the effects last and calculating how for he could drive during that time.

This is a family man, a college professor, a solf-described sociopath. Donnadieu's character seems to be a regular guy with apparently above average intelligence. He comments that his abortomiality is such that those closest to him don't notice it.

His callm, studious exterior

normality is such that those closes to him don't notice it.

His calm, studious exterior doesn't change whether he is contriving ways to lure victims into his car or chatting with his family. It's indescribably creepy to watch him interact with his wife and daughters or converse with a co-worker, as his comments take on a deeper meaning in light of his secret life.

The man spots a poster on the street seeking information about the missing woman and we learn three years have passed. Her boyfriend, played by Gene Bervoets, is still looking for information. He has no illusions or hopes that she might still be slive. He is obsessed with the idea of finding out what happened to her. It's a fixation which affects his current relationships and his entire life.

The boyfriend has been receiving postcards, apparently from his girlfriend's abducto: Instructime

ing postcards, apparently from his girlfriend's abductor, instructing him to appear at meetings. After a

Rage's music, a fierce meld of punk-inspired hard rock and po-litically charged rap, is a testimo-ny to its musical abilities. The group used no samples, keyboards or synthesizers in the making of

or synthement the album.

"All the noises you hear on the record are created by guitar, bass and vocals," Morello said.

live shows.
"We play everything live; every squawk and sheet metal noise on there is reproduced live."

Rage Against the Machine per-forms with House of Pain and Wool at the State Theatre, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Friday, April 2. Tickets are \$10.50. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Call 981-8450 for more information.

couple fruitless meetings, the po-lice conclude the postcards are a heax but the boyfrend persists leading to a confrontation. This is an extremely-well done, thought-provining film. The scar-iest part is the apparently reason-

"The Vanishing" is available on tape at local video stores. If you have a question or comment, call LeAnne Rogers at 953-2103 or write her at The Observer & Ec-centric Neuspapers, 36261 School-craft, Livonia 48150.







Wednesday Buffet

Featuring: - Homeade Soups - State Bade Soups - Assorted Piezas - Homemade Bread & Garlic Rolls - Dessert Table - Served 4:30 - 8:30 p.m. - Groups Welcome - Cocktall Available - State Bade Soups - State

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Geechy Guy

