

'Proposal' poses \$1 million question

By JOHN MONAGHAN
SPECIAL WRITER

The moral question that frames "Indecent Proposal" has heated up conversation around the office water cooler. Chances are many of those gab sessions prove far more fascinating than what unfolds on the screen.

Woody Harrelson and Demi Moore play young marrieds mated in love since high school. David, an architect, starts to build his California dream house while Diana peddles real estate. When recession hits and jobs grow scarce, the two scramble to make payments on the property while the house is stalled in mid-construction.

So, like any intelligent couple with financial problems, they hot-foot it out to Vegas with their remaining savings.

Enter John Gage (Robert Redford), the handsome financier and gambler who poses the \$1 million question: Will Diana sleep with

him for a seven-digit check? Moreover, will David let him do it?

Director Adrian Lyne and producer Cheryl Lanning, who last collaborated on "Fatal Attraction," recognize a hot property when they see one. Unfortunately, the movie's slickness only proves how out-of-touch Hollywood is with real life and real people.

Lyne, who also made "Flashdance" and "9½ Weeks," left his heart and head in MTV. A story like this should work on script and acting alone, but he jazzes up virtually every shot with quick-cutting and fancy camera work choreographed to popular music.

Harrelson, perfectly suited to the jock comedy "White Men Can't Jump," simply doesn't handle drama well. Despite his much-publicized off-screen affair, he's too glibly and goofy to make a believable romantic lead or architect.

MOVIES

In one especially hokey scene, and one that might sum up the entire movie, stary-eyed architecture students hang on every word of David's inspirational slide presentation. We might be similarly captivated with "Indecent Proposal" and its director, even though her final decision between the two men revives the most overworked cliché in movies.

As stupid as it was, last year's "Beverly Hills Cop" delivered basically the same theme and story in an entertaining and less pretentious package.

If you have a comment for John Monaghan, call him at 853-2047, mailbox number 1866, on a Touch-Tone at 853-2047, or write him care of Street Scene, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48160.

The part would be played far

less woodenly had it been given to Seymour Cassel (so clever as a flamboyant moneybags in "In the Soup"), or relegated to the role of the millionaire's bodyguard.

Demi Moore is the only performer who leaves a mark on "Indecent Proposal." She sheds that irritating squeak from her voice and depicts a believable woman who makes a choice, even though her final decision between the two men revives the most overworked cliché in movies.

SCREEN SCENE

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

DETROIT FILM THEATRE
Detroit Institute of Arts, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call 833-2323 for information. (\$5; \$4 students and senior citizens.)
"The Match Factory Girl" (Finland — 1989), 7 and 9:30 p.m. April 23-24; 4 and 7 p.m. April 25. A tedious but dysfunctional family begin to wear on a young woman in this import from director Aki Kaurismaki ("Ariel," "Leningrad Cowboys.") Plus a surprise short.

HENRY FORD CENTENNIAL LIBRARY
16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Call 943-2330 for information.
"Ladyhawke" (USA — 1986), 7 p.m. April 19. Rutger Hauer and Michelle Pfeiffer star in a medieval fantasy about star-crossed lovers caught in an evil spell,

helped by young pick pocket Matthew Broderick.

MAPLE THEATRE
4135 W. Maple Road, Bloomfield Hills. Call 655-9090 for show times. (\$5.75 evenings; \$2.95 twilight.)
"Like Water for Chocolate" (Mexico — 1992). A lonely woman puts all her energies into creating wonderful meals in this blend of fantasy and drama. As with the Danish hit "Babettes Feast," audiences won't want to see this film on an empty stomach.

MICHIGAN THEATRE
603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Call 668-8397 for information. (\$5; \$4 students and senior citizens.)
"Brother's Keeper" (USA — 1992), April 23-30 (call for show times) too. Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky's fascinating documentary explores the facts behind a bizarre New York murder trial involving four illiterate bachelor brothers. The controversial film is

handled with sensitivity and profound insight as the reclusive farmers are forced to enter society.

"Strictly Ballroom" (Australia — 1992), through April 30 (call for show times). 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, music-filled Austral hit.

REDFORD THEATRE
17360 Lahser, Redford. Call 637-3560 for information. (\$3 this night only.)
"The Last Command" (USA — 1928), 8 p.m. April 24. The Redford celebrates its 65th anniversary with this silent film, set in World War I, about a Russian refugee general working as an extra in a Hollywood film about the Russian Revolution. William Powell, Emil Jennings and Erich Von Stroheim star in this fascinating look at Hollywood and history from director Josef von

Stenberg. Guest organist Dennis James provides the musical accompaniment.

STAR JOHN R
32289 John R. (at 14 Mile), Madison Heights. Call 585-2070 for show times. (\$9 evenings; \$3.75 twilight.)
"Bad Lieutenant" (USA — 1993). Harvey Keitel's lead performance is apparently the best thing about this nasty exploration of a New York detective who indulges in reckless nights of sex, violence and drugs when he falls into debt. Directed by Abel Ferrara ("King of New York").

"Let's Kill all the Lawyers" (USA — 1993). Local filmmaker Ron Senkowski takes on the legal profession in a one-joke comedy filmed on location in Detroit and Ann Arbor. Talented stage actors James Vesina and Rick Frederick play a shameless shyster and his apprentice who watch colleagues one by one bite the dust. Occasionally clever but mostly a trial.

Homeless from page 5B

five-piece techno-metal band, with two powerful lead guitarists, a commanding drum/bass combination, and a vocalist who is an quieter mix between Ronny James Dio and Rob Halford of Judas Priest. Together they unleash a primal sound with a technical structure.

A pinnacle of their performance was an epic original, called "Withered Stone," a moving piece that starts out dulcet and crescendoes into a raucous dual guitar performance.

"This was our second live performance as a group," said Ron Rollins, the band's drummer.

"Although I wasn't sure until after the show what charity it was we were performing for, I was just happy to help and be out in public again."

Mr. Know It All kicked off their segment of the performance with a couple well-harmonized cover songs from Kansas and Van Halen.

Then they performed a canny pop style original "Mirror, Mirror" that litigated the stage. They're a foursome that packs some punch.

"When we were called upon to do the show, we kind of all said sure we'd love the chance to do a charity spot," said Mike Conception, the band's guitarist, who incidentally placed second in the 1992 Motor City Guitarist Contest.

The benefit performances are a

dream come true for their organizer.

"I have been working to get this thing off the ground for a while, having had about five other charity shows in the past," said Pepitone. "I plan to set up a few more in the spring too."

"Some of the other local fundraising performances have been around town at Skateland and at Ashley's and we plan to have more on the west side."

In the future, there are plans to work for other charities like the Red Cross and the Salvation Army, Pepitone said.

All in all, the concerts are entertaining evenings with a good cause.

For more information about the next charity concert or how you can help the homeless, call the Wayne Metropolitan Community Service Agency at 843-3266.

Make decision from a position of confidence



BARBARA SCHIFF

Voice Mail Message:
Barbara, I am very upset about what I am about to tell you. I feel anxious about it, even panicked. I am 30 and have been dating a man my age for about a year.

Our relationship is quite flawed but we are both in therapy and so I have hoped that enough would change that we could be happier and more intimate together.

This week my boyfriend's sister called. She told me that she, too, has been in therapy and through it has discovered that she was repeatedly sexually abused as a child and teenager by her father. She believes my boyfriend experienced similar treatment. She told me that she recovered memories of abuse when her therapist gave her "The Courage to Heal," a book by women who have suffered this treatment.

She called to tell me all of this because she was afraid my 3-year-old daughter would not be safe with her father. She wanted to warn me.

I feel so confused. I called my boyfriend's therapist to tell him what I had learned. He thanked me for the information but would not discuss it with me further. My own therapist will only say that there is no way to know if this information is true. She says that I must make decisions about my relationship with him based on what I know about him, not on what his sister says. She also says that memories of abuse that are recovered after reading "The Courage to Heal" are not necessarily valid.

If I knew for sure that his father abused him, I would want to break off the relationship. I feel that kind of treatment in childhood is too hard to overcome. I would never feel that my daughter was safe with him. He is a nice man but of ten flat and not involved. He has been very nice to my daughter but sometimes he avoids her. Can you give me any insight into this mess?

Dear Caller,
You ask a number of questions; most importantly, you don't know if you want to be with the man you are dating or if you want to break up with him. This is crucial because of what it says about you. It says you do not know yourself well enough to be confident about what makes you happy or unhappy.

Choosing a partner is inadvisable from that position

of relative weakness. The disturbing information you have just learned about your boyfriend and his family looms large because of your lack of confidence in yourself. It is not necessarily because of the information itself.

In your panic, you are declaring that you do not feel the freedom of choice. Freedom and confidence are based on the ability to keep trying new ways of solving problems until a satisfactory answer is found.

In your current situation that means that you could be fine without your boyfriend, if you don't like him enough to stay with him. Or, that you could make a relationship with him work if that is the course you decide to take. In either situation, there is no cause for panic because you are in control of yourself and can manage well with different outcomes. That is freedom.

You have brought up some current issues surrounding sexual abuse. First, when "The Courage to Heal" has been read before memories of sexual abuse have been recovered, such memories are often not accepted in a court of law. Legally, the book is considered so suggestive that it can plant memories that are not true. There are children and adults who are prone to suggestibility and fail to distinguish between what really happened and what was suggested to them.

Second, you think that early sexual abuse cannot be overcome so that a person could live a normal life. I have seen many cases where you are right. I have also witnessed a few when a person conquered his or her past to become fully functioning and possibly even deeper because of his or her past experiences.

Some therapists believe that a person is asking too much of himself or herself if they expect a happy and normal life after an abusive beginning. Others try to facilitate growth through it.

If you decide to stay with your boyfriend, you will need to be vigilant when your daughter is with your boyfriend's father. I hope I will hear from many of you who are familiar with the depression and anxiety that sexual abuse causes. I am especially interested in whether you can become whole, despite it.

Barbara

If you have a question or comment for Barbara Schiff, a trained therapist and experienced counselor, send it to Street Scene, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48160. You can also leave a message by calling 933-2047, mailbox 1877, on a Touch-Tone phone.

Second City sets Detroit auditions

The Second City will hold auditions for its Detroit cast Monday and Tuesday, April 26-27, at the Fox Theater in Detroit. The auditions, open to the public, will take place 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2-5 p.m., each day.

Actors and actresses with improvisational training are encouraged to try out for "six to seven" openings in the new troupe, according to The Second City.

"Our goal is to eventually have a completely home-grown cast; that's the way Second City works," said associate producer Kelly Leonard in a 1992 interview.

The granddaddy of all improv/sketch comedy troupes, The Sec-

ond City is still going strong in its original home of Chicago with two city stages and one suburban venue playing to packed houses.

The still-thriving Toronto stage has spawned great talents like John Candy, Rick Moranis, Dave Thomas and most recently Mike Myers.

The Second City also has three different touring companies in addition to the four resident stages. The new Detroit stage, to be next door to the Fox Theater, will take its logical place between Chicago and Toronto. It's slated to open by late summer.

For more information about auditioning, call 965-2222. —Bob Sadler

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