

TOP TEN FAVORITE MOVIES

1/7/02

Here are my top ten favorite movies of all times and a few notes about them that I like. I hope you agree with this list somewhat.

10. *The Hidden* – Mid to late 1980's – Horror/Sci Fi

I enjoy watching *The Hidden* because it was a comedic science fiction movie that told about a bad alien versus good alien story while both aliens were inside a cop and a criminal. The bad alien kept crawling inside people and making the person or "criminal" kill, steal, and rob banks. The bad alien also had interests in getting its own way, fast cars, and loud music. The good alien attempts to destroy the bad alien with a laser beam. Not a large amount of superstars in this film, unless you count Kyle MacLachlan the star of *Twin Peaks*. A sequel was made, but it was not as impressive as this first one.



9. *Spaceballs* – 1987 – Comedy/Parody

The classic *Star Wars* parody directed by Mel Brooks (who also directed *Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein*, and *History of the World Part I*) shows how funny Sci-Fi can become when you change a name or two.

One example of this is the character called "Dark Helmet."



Helmet is supposed to be a parody of "Darth Vader," but keeps getting into funny situations where he can't breathe in his mask, flies into the front controls of the ship, and others.

That character says one of my favorite lines in the movie: "I bet she gives great helmet."

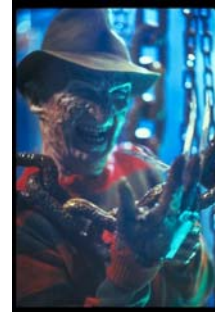
Obviously, a sexual connotation made, but funny as well. *Spaceballs* parodied how popular *Star Wars* was made commercial by

making some of the simple things in our lives with the *Spaceballs* theme. One example of this is a scene when Dark Helmet encounters Lone Starr. Lone Starr uses the Schwartz (in *Star Wars* talk "using the force") to pull a can of "Spaceballs the Shaving Cream."

8. The *Nightmare on Elm Street* Series – 80's –90's – Horror

All you have to say is *Nightmare on Elm Street* before someone would think of Freddy Kruger and his glove with sharp knives. The series start with Freddy being mean, horrible, and scary. Towards the end of the series, Freddy becomes funnier with using puns to make the children's favorite dreams into their worst nightmares. One of the best examples that I can think of is in *Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master*, where the mute character Joey's attention is taken in a dream by the

nurse that he is attracted to. She then lays him down on a bed in one of the rooms in the hospital. After stripping and starting to make out with him, she chokes him with her tongue then flicks out four “tongue ropes” to tie Joey to the bed. The bed falls in; showing an entrance to what the audience believes is hell. The nurse then turns into Freddy Kruger, and traps Joey into Freddy’s basement. The lighting in the basement is perfectly red, so the audience believes that it is “hell.”



7. *The Great Outdoors* – Late 80’s - Comedy



John Candy and Dan Aykroyd team up in this comedy that shows how the middle class and the upper class survive in the outdoors. There are so many funny scenes in this movie, including a horse that will not let John Candy ride it, a bear climbing onto John Candy’s truck, and a bald-headed bear that becomes a little more showing in the end. One of the reasons that I like this movie is that my

roommate and I can practically say the whole movie by heart.

6. *Full Metal Jacket* – 1987 – Military

The great work by director Stanley Kubrick, describes the roughness of basic training, the toughness of a drill sergeant, and the hellacious acts of the Vietnam War. *Full Metal Jacket*



showed a side of dark comedy in a scene where one soldier presents to a photographer a corpse of a Vietnamese soldier and calls the corpse his “bro.” The soldier also explains that it is his bro’s birthday party. I found this movie to be quite graphic, but more comedic acts at the beginning during the basic training scenes. Also, some funny unimportant information about this film: the drill sergeant was



actually a drill sergeant in the Marines before the film was made. Also, this past couple months ago, the drill sergeant made an appearance on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* to introduce the show.

5. *The Jerk* – 1979 – Comedy

I think this is Steve Martin's best work post-*Saturday Night Live*. Also, *The Jerk* is Steve's very first movie. Steve plays as Navin Johnson who is the adopted son of a poor sharecropper. He moves out to become someone, and falls into multiple situations. After a smitten relationship with a lady motorcycle rider and a deranged killer, he becomes a millionaire by inventing the "Opti-grab" handle for eyeglasses. *The Jerk* is a great rags to riches and back to rags story. This movie was out in theatres the day I was born.



4. *My Fellow Americans* – 1996 - Comedy

My Fellow Americans tells about three different presidential eras, President Kramer (played by the late Jack Lemmon), President Douglas (played by James Garner), and President Haney (played by Dan Aykroyd). Kramer and Douglas find out information about Olympia, which was a kickback taken by then Vice President Haney during Kramer's term as President, during Haney's term as President. In a major cover up by the White House, Kramer and Douglas were to be killed in a helicopter accident so the blame for Olympia would be placed on them. Kramer and Douglas survive the accident, but are stuck in North Carolina. The only way to contact their assistants is to walk to Ohio and contact from Kramer's Presidential Library. During their walk, Kramer and Douglas receive a crash course in how their policies had affected Americans, like immigration and economic downfall. This is one of my favorite movies because I enjoy a great laugh and I loved the comedy of Jack Lemmon. The duo of Lemmon and Garner is just so awesome that you would think they were Presidents.



3. *Blazing Saddles* – 1974 – Comedy/Parody

Another Mel Brooks movie makes it on this list, truly because I hate westerns! I was forced to watch them when I was younger, but when I saw this movie I couldn't stop laughing. One scene just gets better than the scene before it. Cleavon Little plays as Black Bart, a slave railroad worker who becomes the sheriff of Rock Ridge. Hedley Lamarr (played by Harvey Korman) tries to make the railroad go through Rock Ridge, but with Black Bart and his citizens, Lamarr doesn't have a chance. Directed by Mel Brooks, this classic is laughs galore.



Rumor has it that it will be shown in Pruis Hall later this month. You bet I will be there in front row crying my eyes out from laughter.

2. *Dragnet* – 1987 – Comedy

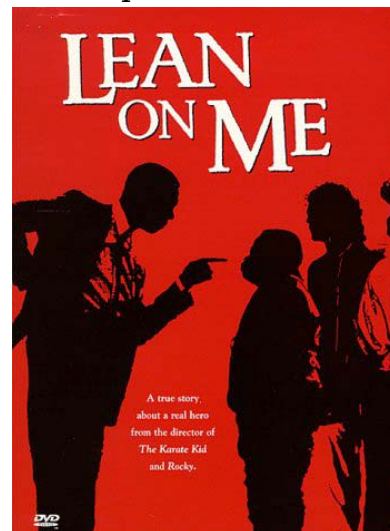
Based off the classic 1950's and 60's police drama starring Jack Webb and Harry Morgan, *Dragnet* takes a parody look into the Los Angeles Police Department. The movie stars Dan Aykroyd who plays Joe Friday, the blue-collar cop who knows all the rules. *Dragnet* also stars Tom Hanks who plays Pep Streebek, who is a laid back officer who can get things done without following the rules. Their mission in this episode: Stop a power hungry Reverend (played by Christopher Plumber) and a corrupt Police Commissioner (played by Elizabeth Ashley). Harry Morgan returns in his role as Frank Gannon, only he (since the end of the TV series) has been promoted to Captain. I found this movie to be good, and the only 2 lines I like in this movie are:



- * “Look out. Muppets!” – Joe Friday (Dan Aykroyd)
- * “I should have thrown all his stuff out the day he left, but unlike some people, I have a heart God damn It.” - Enid Borden (Kathleen Freeman)

1. *Lean On Me* – 1989 – True Story/Drama

The true story of Joe Clark (played by Morgan Freeman), a man who took the school he loved at one time and saved it from take over from the state of New Jersey. East Side High School was in poor shape and the test scores were nearly impossible for anyone in that school to pass. We first see Joe Clark teach class, teaching the students the word “imbrue.” Then a minute later, he leaves the school and does not return until 1987. The school is in shambles; unlike it was in 1967. He then throws out all the drug dealers, drug pushers, hookers, and trash out of his school. He then finds a student that he kicked out, but brings him back in because he thinks that he’s out in the world one day and “don’t know shit.” He tells the student that if he doesn’t show his act, then boom, he’s out of the school forever. Excitement builds as the school prepares for the tests and we find Joe Clark in jail for locks on the doors. A crowd prepares for a protest, but none is needed. Joe saved the school. I like this movie because it brought out the good things about going to school. Of course



everyone thinks that it's a waste of four years, but those are probably the four most important years of your life. If I met Joe Clark today, I would shake his hand and tell him how awesome it is to hear of his work at East Side High School. My favorite line from this movie:

* **Joe Clark:** There's only one boss around here, and that's me. The HNIC.

[Exits.]

Mr. O'Malley: "HNIC"?

Ms. Levias: Head nigger in charge."

Harold and Maude

1/9/02

MARY

Harold and Maude is my all-time favorite movie.

HEALY

Ouch. Come on, don't bust my chops. I know it's corny, but I do love it.

MARY

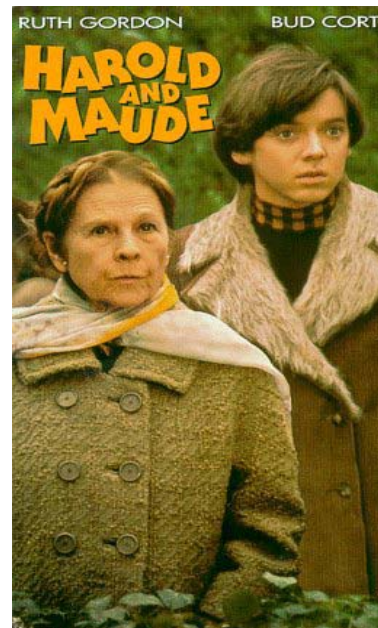
Pat, I'm not kidding. I really think it's the greatest--

HEALY

--Love story of our time.

There's Something About Mary

Is *Harold and Maude* really the “greatest love story of our time?” I would agree with that quote because it shows that no matter what age, love works in mysterious ways. When we first start into the movie, we find that Harold could have some major problems psychologically. That opinion is proven throughout the movie when we see the suicidal scenes and the number of funerals he attended of no one he knew personally. He always wants attention from his mother, who seemed to have everything planned for his life. She also buys him a new car, which he turns into a version of his old car: a hearse. She plans for him to be married and picks out the dates for him. Each girl that comes over to meet Harold gets to see him in a suicidal act. Each act gets unusually funny. Such humor called **dark comedy** makes the people who don't understand the humor in death look at people weirdly. I in particular found that most of the “suicidal” scenes were very funny. The best one that I found funny was when Harold sat and pulled out some Binanca, then a butcher's knife to cut off his hand. The way it was done was surprising and so quick that it didn't really seem too serious. That is really what I like about comedy; it's surprising and quick. If you don't catch it, then you've lost it. Harold then meets Maude. Seems odd at first that a young man would hang out with an older lady that was a complete stranger, but then again, they came out to be great friends. They would fight the system any way they could: stealing cars, Harold dodging the army (and his one-armed relative), and making a cop earns his daily pay outside of the donuts and coffee that he usually gets. Unfortunately, Maude does pass on, and I found that Harold's last suicidal act was a good way to pay tribute to



Maude's death. The movie ends well as we see that Harold tricked us again by not being in the car that crashes, but playing his violin and walking away. I really liked this movie; especially the comedic acts of both Harold and Maude. Maude reminds me of my mother, a free spirit, willing to have fun whenever and whenever.

Duck Soup

1/16/02

Rufus T. Firefly: You're a brave man. Go and break through the lines. And remember, while you're out there risking your life and limb through shot and shell, we'll be in here thinking what a sucker you are.

- *Duck Soup*

Writer's Note: I must admit before putting in this journal entry: this is my first Marx Brothers' film that I have ever seen. I loved it! Thanks for showing it to the class.

The classic Marx Brothers' *Duck Soup* played as a parody of many governments in the world today. The country of Freedonia has gone bankrupt! One person, Mrs. Teasdale, (played by Margaret Dumont) can help the country with a donation of 20 million dollars, but the country must make Rufus T. Firefly the new President of Freedonia. Rufus T. Firefly, played by Groucho Marx, becomes the cynical, sarcastic dictator of Freedonia and eventually goes to war with the neighboring country Sylvania. He reduces the worker's hours by cutting off their lunch breaks, raises taxes, and attempts to win the hand of Mrs. Teasdale. Watch out! Ambassador Tretino of Sylvania tries to win her hand as well. The two leaders try but could not solve their disputes, and the country goes to war. The war though ends up at Mrs. Teasdale's house. The fun comes in when Chicolini (Chico) and Pinky (Harpo) come in as spies for Sylvania, but end up working for Firefly in the government. One of my favorite scenes is the mirror scene, where Chicolini and Pinky are dressed up as Firefly. It is a true hilarious bit that I am sure needed lots of time to practice on and lots of film seeing how someone would make one error and then try doing the whole scene again. Harpo recreated this scene on *I Love Lucy*, when the gang traveled to Hollywood. Lucy dressed up as Harpo to impress one of the gang but ends up running into the real Harpo. Another scene that I liked was when Chicolini and Pinky team up and fight the lemonade vendor. The hat switch becomes hilarious but on top of that, the final peanut/lemonade war is funny because of Harpo jumping in and washing his feet in the lemonade bin. I also thought some of the lines were very amusing in the movie; mostly the lines are from Rufus T. Firefly.



Rufus: He may look like an idiot, and talk like an idiot, but don't let that fool you. He really is idiot.

Rufus T. Firefly: I can see you in the kitchen bending over a hot stove, and I can't see the stove.

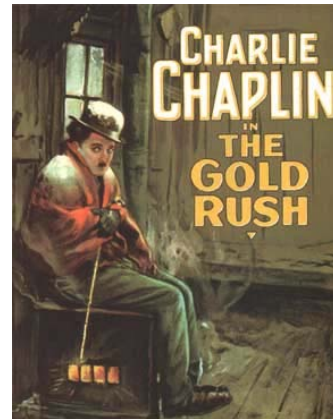
The Gold Rush

1/23/02

"The Gold Rush" is an outstanding silent film. Whether his [Chaplin's] intentions are to make you laugh or cry, he always gives you a good reason to do so."

- Brian Koller (epinions.com)

The Gold Rush is the quintessential Chaplin film with a good balance of slapstick comedy and pantomime, social satire, emotional and dramatic moments full of tenderness. This film was Chaplin's most favorite film, which showed us his "Little Tramp" character with his derby, cane, tight suit, distinctive walk, and mustache. This film was released in 1925, but made a great return in 1942 with sound and voice narration of Chaplin. The movie takes place during the great gold rush to Alaska. Many men that came were ignorant of the hardships that they would endure like intense cold, lack of food, and the journeys through ice and snow. In the opening scene of the movie, we find a line of prospectors who are winding their way to seek their fortunes. We see a Lone Prospector appear out of the snow (Chaplin) making his own path with his cane but does not realize that a bear is following him. We find another fortune hunter, Big Jim McKay, who makes a lucky strike of gold. He screams about his finding, but he loses his tent because it is blown away in a storm. At the same time of Big Jim's tent situation, the Lone Prospector finds himself a shelter during a major blizzard and warms up inside the shelter. The shelter is a cabin owned by Black Larsen who is a "wanted" individual. Black Larsen kicks the Lone Prospector out, but when the door is opened, the strong winds make the Lone Prospector seem as though he was on a treadmill and can not get out. The wind is powerful enough to blow in Big Jim. Black Larsen pulls out a rifle to shoot them, but Big Jim fights him off. Larsen is picked to go out and get food for the Lone Prospector and Big Jim. The Lone Prospector and Big Jim enjoy a big feast, which consisted of the Prospector's shoe. Oh yummy! I'm sure that will fill up anyone's appetite. Obviously the shoe isn't real, and I am sure that the audience at the time thought it was. The shoe is actually made of licorice. The shoe laces were twirled around and ate as spaghetti. Eventually Jim gets hungry once again, so he imagines the Prospector as a giant chicken ready to be killed and broiled! Jim starts to chase the "chicken" until the Prospector grabs a shotgun and tries to save himself. A bear comes in, the Prospector shoots and BOOM! Dinner is served! After the two split, the Prospector arrives in a gold mining town to cash in what gold he has got. There he meets Jack "Big Pimp" Cameron and his main lady,



Georgia. She has been arguing with Jack about her photographs. Jack wanted to keep one, but Georgia didn't want him to have one. The Prospector then proceeds to order a drink and watch everyone dance. He notices Georgia and starts to smile, but Georgia wanted someone else behind him. The Prospector falls madly in love with Georgia. He grabs her discarded photo ripped into two pieces and places them together. Georgia then picks him to dance with to make Jack jealous. The Prospector then does a very funny dance to where he uses his hands, his cane, and a rope to hold his pants up. Unfortunately, the rope is connected to a dog, which just coincidentally sees a cat and starts to chase it. This knocks the Prospector on the floor. Georgia asks the Prospector to save her from Jack's insults. The Prospector then tries to punch Jack, but hits a wall beam and his hat falls over his eyes. During the time that the Prospector tries to get his hat from his eyes, a grandfather wall clock falls off and hits Jack on the noggin. Jack is knocked out cold! The next day the Prospector plays



a trick to Hank Curtis for a warm meal. So, Hank asked the Prospector to look after his cabin and to feed his mule. Outside, the girls have a snowball fight. The Prospector opens the door to see the hullabaloo and gets a snowball to the face! When he notices who is with him, he is happy and goes to get firewood. While he is outside, Georgia notices her ripped up picture and decides to play a joke on him. They plan for a dinner at 8:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve night. After the girls leave, the Prospector throws a wild party for himself which included tossing around pillows, and feathers going up in the air! The night of the dinner, he sets the place up. It looks lovely. Then he drifts off and thinks about how the date will go. Here he does his classic "Dance of the Rolls" where he places a fork into two rolls and makes them do a pantomime dance – the Oceania Roll. The two rolls are stand-ins for his big boots as he smiles above the "shoes." Eventually, Chaplin and Big Jim get their gold and become wealthy millionaires.

I liked this film. It was funny and fun. It was interesting to see how "special effects" were used back in the time this film was made. Although there were some sad parts in the film, it is a good family get-together film. Also, the way that Mr. Chaplin used his voice to talk in the film was interesting.

Mr. Smith Goes To Washington

1/30/02

Jefferson Smith: Mr. President, I stand guilty as FRAMED! Because section 40 is graft! And I was ready to say so, I was ready to tell you that a certain man in my state, a Mr. James Taylor, wanted to put through this dam for his own profit. A man who controls a political machine! And controls everything else worth controlling in my state. Yes, and a man even powerful enough to control Congressmen -- and I saw three of them in his room the day I went up to see him!

Senator Joseph Paine: Will the Senator yield?

Jefferson Smith: No, sir, I will not yield! And this same man, Mr. James Taylor, came down here and offered me a seat in this Senate for the next 20 years if I voted for a dam that he knew, and I knew, was a fraud. But if I opened my mouth against that dam, he promised to break me in two.

I first saw this film when I was in my High School Government Class. James Stewart played a wonderful role as Senator Jefferson Smith, a "Boy Ranger" leader from his state. Notice how his state is never mentioned? It's not Indiana, Ohio, Mississippi, or California; it's just "his state." Smith is reunited with the state's senior senator-- presidential hopeful and childhood hero, Senator Joseph Paine. In Washington, however, Smith discovers many of the shortcomings of the political process as his earnest goal of a national boys' camp leads to a conflict with the state political boss, Jim Taylor. Taylor first tries to corrupt Smith and then later attempts to destroy Smith through a scandal. There were lots of funny moments just like when the rumors start about Smith, he goes and punches as many reporters as he can. This movie show true patriotism by showcasing the many monuments and memorials to Washington D.C., like the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, and even the statue of Justice on the top of the Capitol Dome. Even Smith tells stories about monuments.

Jefferson Smith: Get up there with that lady that's up on top of this Capitol dome, that lady that stands for liberty. Take a look at this country through her eyes if you really want to see something. And you won't just see scenery; you'll see the whole parade of what Man's carved out for himself, after centuries of fighting. Fighting for something better than just jungle law, fighting so as he can stand on his own two feet, free and decent, like he was created, no matter what his race, color, or creed. That's what you'd see. There's no place out there for graft, or greed, or lies, or compromise with human liberties.

Kind of makes you want to go out and run for Senator! Ok, maybe not, but still, Mr. Smith Goes To Washington is a great patriotic movie and should be shown to many Government, Social Studies, or other types of History classes that want to learn how our government usually works.

Bringing Up Baby

2/6/02

David Huxley is waiting to get a bone he needs for his museum collection. Through a series of strange circumstances, he meets Susan Vance, and the duo has a series of misadventures, which include a leopard called Baby. Well, like all works of art that are most deeply and subjectively beloved, it works to fulfill a fantasy: in this case, that a shy,



rather antisocial bookworm (Cary Grant, pictured above-left) might find his inner child as a result of being wildly pursued and ultimately netted by perfect because Hepburn's Susan is smart, self-confident, energetic, beautiful, charmingly kooky, and unambiguously smitten: spying her man from a distance, she proceeds to dent his car, trip him, steal his clothes-anything

to keep him near her. For his part, David is annoyingly preoccupied with work (he's trying in vain to complete the skeleton of a brontosaurus), although Susan detects a playful demeanor buried beneath this paleontologist's professional facade. In order to draw David out, Susan brilliantly lures him into helping bring Baby, her pet leopard, up to Connecticut. Here, with the help of Baby and George (a perpetually yapping terrier, aptly described as "a perfect little fiend"), Susan persuades David to choose her rather than his fiancée, the boring Miss Swallow (May Robson): in other words, to choose a life of crazy, anarchic, subversive adventure over one of staid convention. Along the way, a golf ball, an olive, a couple of swans, a "bad" leopard, and a "rare and precious" bone figure significantly (and metaphorically), although *Bringing Up Baby* isn't so much a screwball comedy as a love story. I found some interesting facts about this movie. First of all it lied. Leopards do not come from Brazil. And at the dinner table, Mrs. Random calls Susan "Katharine."



I liked this movie. I thought it was hilarious how Katherine's character made Cary's character seemed whipped and in a way, gay. The scenes with the leopard are great. I never really saw a Cary Grant movie before, and I thought this was a great introduction to one. Also, I never saw a Katherine Hepburn movie before and I thought she did an excellent job. I have often heard these two impersonated, but those impersonations aren't even close to the love that these two showed on the "Silver Screen."

Chinatown

2/13/02

Escobar: Isn't that your phone number?

Jake Gittes: Is it? I forget. I don't call myself that often.

Its lines like this that makes movies awesome! Jack Nicholson plays Jake Gittes, a detective who in some cases sticks his nose in the wrong places, literally. The plot behind *Chinatown* basically tells of Hollis Mulwray, who was a wealthy Californian landowner. Ida Sessions,



pretending to be his wife Evelyn, asks P.I. JJ Jake Gittes to investigate his adulterous ways. Jake takes photos of Hollis with a young lady. Hollis then turns up murdered, which Jake decides to investigate. Jake finds more than he was looking for. He discovers a plot to buy cheap, unwatered land for low prices, water the land, and sell it for millions of dollars. One Noah Cross, who is Evelyn's father and Hollis' one-

time business partner, masterminds the plot. His investigation leads him to an affair with Evelyn and a discussion with Noah Cross, both of whom seem curiously interested in the girl Hollis was seen with. Some facts about this movie:

- Directors Cameo (Roman Polanski): the hood who slits Jake's nose.
- The scene where Polanski slits Nicholson's nose was extremely complex to film, and the two men involved got so tired of explaining how it was done that they began to claim Nicholson's nose was actually cut.
- Jake Gittes was named after Nicholson's friend, producer Harry.
- Among the items in Ida Sessions' pocketbook, which Jake Gittes rummages through, are a \$2 bill and a Screen Actors Guild membership card.
- The name of Water and Power engineer Hollis Mulwray is likely a play on the real-life head of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, William Mulholland (1855-1935). A man obsessed with an engineering challenge of epic proportions, William Mulholland brought the Owens River to Los Angeles through a combination of determination and deceit.

- The first part of a planned trilogy written by Robert Towne about J.J. Gittes and L.A. Nicholson directed the second part, The Two Jakes, in 1990.
- Robert Towne originally intended to have a happy ending. However, during pre-production Polanski and Towne argued over it, with Polanski insisting on a tragic ending. Polanski won the argument and, when the picture was re-released in 1999, Towne admitted that he had been wrong.

I found this movie to be very funny. Jack Nicholson did an excellent job as J.J. Gittes. It was interesting to see how he figured the entire case out. If I had the chance to watch this movie again, I would. My family loves these kinds of movies and I believe they would enjoy it. They rarely enjoy good movies. Weird family I have, don't you think?

Cabaret

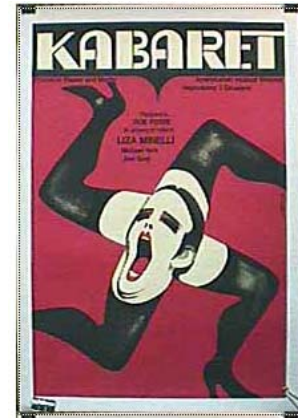
2/20/02

Sally: Life is a cabaret ol' chum so come to the cabaret.

I have heard of the musical "Cabaret," which will be coming to Emens Auditorium later this semester, but had never seen the movie. The storyline to Cabaret was unique; a lady (Sally Bowles, played by Liza Minnelli) who works in the local German "Kit-Kat Club" falls in love with a secretly bi-sexual man named Brian Roberts (Michael York). When Brian meets Sally for the first time, Sally refers to herself as an "International Woman of Mystery". Michael York later portrayed Basil Exposition in "Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery". We never know of Brian's bi-sexuality until he admits it to Sally. He admits it while she is dating an extremely rich German man who can buy her the world. Of course this takes place during World War II, so there are some Nazis sprinkled



about. Oh who am I to be kidding? There are many Nazis around, trying to take over the Kit-Kat Club. The owner is beaten to death by them, and they have their own musical number with "Tomorrow Belongs To Me." That song has become so popular along the Neo-Nazi movement, that a British skinhead band called



Skrewdriver created a cover of the song and put it on their album "Hail the New Dawn." Eventually at the end of the movie there's a dark flip, the audience has changed from men in black suits having fun, to a serious group wearing swastikas on their arms. The Nazi party had taken over. Sally became pregnant, and lived with Brian.

I thought this movie was interesting to the fact that I had never thought Michael York would play as a bi-sexual. Joel Grey did an excellent job as the Master of Ceremonies during all the performances. Liza Minnelli did a great job as Sally, so my question is, why isn't she playing Sally in the Broadway production?

Destry Rides Again

2/27/02

Washington 'Wash' Dimsdale: Here's your badge. Don't let anybody see it.

Kent, the unscrupulous boss of Bottleneck has Sheriff Keogh killed when he asks one too many questions about a rigged poker game that gives Kent a stranglehold over the local cattle rangers. The mayor, who is in cahoots with Kent appoints the town drunk, Washington Dimsdale, as the new sheriff assuming that he'll be easy to control. But what the mayor doesn't know is that Dimsdale was a deputy under famous lawman, Tom Destry, and is able to call upon the equally formidable Tom Destry Jr to be his deputy. Featuring a career reviving performance from Marlene Dietrich as bar singer Frenchie, which could well have been the inspiration for Madeline Kahn's "Blazing Saddles" character, Lili Von Shtupp.



Destry Rides Again is a popular and marvelous Western comedy spoof/farce from Universal Pictures. Director George Marshall parodies and satirizes the classic Western with its stereotypical elements - a lawless Western town with a saloon and a sheriff, with three saloon/musical numbers! The film's well-paced, brisk screenplay by Felix Jackson, Gertrude Purcell and Henry Myers was based on Jackson's



original screen story, suggested by Max Brand's novel of the same name. When I saw this movie, I thought it would be a boring western that was merely impossible to note as a "parody" or "satire." I was proved wrong. Jimmy Stewart plays a (at that time) laid back sheriff who uses the stories he tells to help the town of Bottleneck. Just like every week that we watch movies I catch myself being glued to that TV screen thinking "Ok, what's going to

happen next?" At the end of the movie, I couldn't believe it, the town was saved, the sexy sidekick was dead, and Jimmy Stewart lived on. Plus the funny Russian husband finally got his picture put on the wall of his house. Everyone is happy! One song at the end of the picture reminds Tom Destry of Frenchie, that song (a number 1 hit in the 1800's) was "Little Joe the Wrangler"

Little Joe the Wrangler

Sung in The movie *Destry Rides Again*

Little Joe, Little Joe

Oh, whatever become of him, I don't know

Oh, he sure did like his liquor

And it would have got his ticker

But the sheriff got him quicker - yeeha!

Little Joe, Little Joe

Oh, wherever his body lies, I don't know

When the yellow moon was beamin'

He could wrangle like a demon

And you'd always hear him screamin' - yeeha!

Little Joe, Little Joe

Oh, whatever he's doing now, I don't know

He had women by the dozen

And he swore they woz his cousins

Till he met up with their husbands - yeeha!

High Noon

3/6/02

Helen Ramirez: You're a good-looking boy: you've big, broad shoulders. But he's a man. And it takes more than big, broad shoulders to make a man.

Could Helen be talking about Gary Cooper in the movie "High Noon?" Of course she is. The classic 1952 picture stars Cooper as Marshall Will Kane, who just got married to Amy Fowler (played by the late Grace Kelly). Although times seem to be happy for this retiring



lawman until an outlaw (Frank Miller, played by Ian McDonald) he put in prison returns with his gang to take revenge. Miller's three gunmen are already at the train station,

waiting to join up with him. At first confident that he will be able to enlist support from his friends, Kane finds that one by one they all turn away from him -

Judge Mettrick (Otto Kruger) who is fleeing from Miller himself ("This is just a dirty little town in the middle of nowhere - get out while you still can."). He goes to workingman Herb ("I'm no lawman, I just live here - I've got a wife and kids."). There's proud Helen Ramirez (Katy Jurado), former flame of Miller's who fears retaliation because of her brief affair with Kane, Harvey (Lloyd Bridges), Kane's chief deputy, whose petty jealousy explodes into violence. Even Amy, whose Quaker principles make any thought of a conflict abhorrent, does not understand her new husband's determination to face a showdown. He tries to bring in the former Marshall, but he says no. Kane even enters a church during a church service seeking assistance, but the crowd still says no. What even hurts more is that the preacher lectures Marshall Kane about not coming into the church to marry, but to go to the Justice of the Peace Mettrick and get married. As Kane is reduced to going door-to-door seeking help, citizens

waste precious time debating the pros and cons of coming to their Marshal's aid. But when the noon train whistles sounds and the arrival of the gunmen is imminent, it is Kane and Kane alone who must confront his ultimate fate. Kane must have been thinking that the word 'loyalty' has been buried under a pile of rationalizations. What is a man to do? He goes out and tries to save the day. He tries to help this town that won't help him after all his hard work. He does save the day, but when the people of the town (they were scattered in their houses and businesses during the fight scene) come out and thank Kane, he takes



the badge that the town gave him and throws it in the dirt. In a way, I think he is telling the people, "Thanks for nothing. You could have come out and helped me fight, but you didn't. I don't need you or this tin star." I enjoyed this film, which is rare, because I do not particularly like western films, nor do I enjoy western TV shows. It has to be because I grew up watching them with my father who will watch them religiously. The only part I didn't like involved the constant singing of the "High Noon" theme, usually known as "Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling."

Here are some facts about "High Noon:"

- Director Fred Zinnemann said that the black smoke billowing from the train is a sign that the brakes were failing. He and the cameraman didn't know it at the time, and barely got out of the way. The camera tripod snagged itself on the track and fell over, smashing the camera, but the film survived and is in the movie.
- Lee van Cleef does not have a word of dialogue.
- The pained expression on Kane's (Gary Cooper's) face throughout the film was entirely realistic, as Cooper had a bleeding ulcer at the time.
- This movie is rumored to be able to be viewed in real time. Several camera shots of clocks are present in the movie and they correspond with actual minutes ticking by.
- Producer Stanley Kramer first offered the leading role of Will Kane to Gregory Peck, who turned it down because he felt it was too similar to *The Gunfighter* (1950).
- Hadleyville is the name of the town in *High Noon*. It is never spoken but is clearly visible on the train station wall. Hadleyville was also the name of the town in *Gung Ho* but was placed in the northeast U.S. In the west, there is a real Hadleyville, in Oregon.
- In the fight scene involving Gary Cooper and Lloyd Bridges, Lloyd's son Beau Bridges, then a youngster was in the hayloft watching the filming. When water was thrown on his father after the fight, Beau could not help laughing, requiring the scene to be shot a second time. Cooper was not well and in pain but was gracious and understanding, according to Lloyd Bridges.
- *High Noon* was parodied on an episode of "Seinfeld" where:

- Elaine was blacklisted from Hop Sing's (Carl Foreman was blacklisted for writing High Noon)
- The opponent returning to race on the street (like the gunfighters returning for the showdown in the movie)
- The children denouncing Kramer as a communist (like the Hollywood stars that denounced their peers as communists and the towns folk that would not aid the sheriff)
- The entire communist thread (The McCarthy commission witch hunts, well done parody of an allegory of the Race)

“It’s time to play Rollerball!” – Paul Heyman

A classic movie is reborn with hot and fun action in “Rollerball.” Chris Klein plays as Jonathon Cross, who finds a job working with a “Russian Vince McMahon” character (Petrovich) played by Jean Reno. Of course Rollerball sets us in the year 2005 where it is the biggest sport this side of professional wrestling. Except, Rollerball has no



storyline, like professional wrestling! One episode of Rollerball show’s one of the team members getting slammed in the head with the metallic ball which is thrown in his face. Obviously since this is a PG-13 movie, the attack wasn’t shown, it was actually just



shown from the back of the man’s head. Yes, it seems like an accident, but to keep the ratings going, they keep hurting more people! Johnathan accepts and learns the ropes of Rollerball: The players are on Rollerblades, trying to bring a heavy metal ball into a high goal. Also, there are motorcyclists around to bring momentum to the players. Oh yes, and there are no rules in the game. During his skyrocketing career, Johnathan has to experience what Alexi has found out: Blood brings

more viewing pleasure to the audience. So, Alexi starts to bribe members of the different teams to cause more trouble than necessary on the field, and the viewers love it. Only a little later, Johnathan's life is already in extreme danger as well as those of his friends and teammates. In a final game, Johnathan and his team have to fight

for mere survival against their real opponent - their boss Alexi Petrovich. For wrestling fans there are two special cameos in this movie, which include Shane McMahon (the son of Vince McMahon, chairman of the WWF) and Paul Heyman (a former WCW announcer/ECW owner/WWF personality). Some fun trivia about this movie:

- This is another remake from John McTiernan of a film originally directed by Norman Jewison. The first was The Thomas Crown Affair.
- Jean Reno's character introduces a man named Enzo Molinari, which is the name of the character he played in Le Grande bleu

- Rollerball is referred to as "sports entertainment" - the current euphemism for professional wrestling.
- Due to negative previews, the release date was shifted many times from May 18, 2001, to July 13, 2001, then to August 1, 2001 and to August 17, 2001, and then finally moved off the schedule for the year to February 2002.

Chaplin

3/20/02

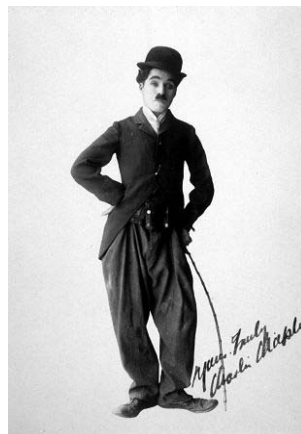
If you want to understand me, watch my movies. – Charlie Chaplin
(Robert Downey Jr.)

Who would ever think that Robert Downey Jr. would play as a classic film star such as Charlie Chaplin? I certainly did not. I found the movie very interesting because it told about the life of Charlie Chaplin, though his loves, life, and everything in-between being a young singer to becoming the most famous Silent Screen Actor known to date. What I found so interesting about this movie was that the actress playing



Charlie's grandmother was actually Charlie's real daughter in real life. I wonder what she thought it was like to "relive" though Charlie's life one more time. *Chaplin* is basically the biography of Charlie Chaplin, filmmaker extraordinaire. From his formative years in England to his highest successes in America, Charlie's life, work, and loves are followed. While his screen characters were

extremely hilarious, the man behind "The Little Tramp" was constantly haunted by a sense of loss. It's rare for me to show emotion during a movie, certainly during *Chaplin*, I did show lots of emotion during the movie. I laughed, I worried, and I almost cried. Robert Downey Jr. did an excellent job portraying the famous Silent Screen Actor. He showed emotion and comedy that if Chaplin were alive today, would be proud to have watched. The ending was perfect, as we sit and watch the classic films from the eyes of the elder Chaplin, before he gets his Award. You wouldn't think that a star such as Chaplin would be treated so badly, but this movie shows it and more. One thing I didn't get was I thought he was French. Tells you how much I know about him.



Sir Charles Spencer Chaplin
April 16, 1889 – December 25, 1977

Psycho

3/27/02

We all go a little mad sometime. – Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins)



One of Alfred Hitchcock's greatest works, *Psycho* tells about a Phoenix office worker, Marion Crane, who is fed up with the way life has treated her. She has to meet her lover Sam in lunch breaks and they cannot get married because Sam has to give most of his money away in alimony. One Friday Marion is trusted to bank \$40,000 by her employer. Seeing the opportunity to take the money and start a new life, Marion leaves town and heads towards Sam's California store. Tired after the

long drive and caught in a storm, she gets off the main highway and pulls into The Bates Motel. A quiet young man named Norman who seems to be dominated by his mother manages the motel. Eventually Norman's "Mother" finds out about the girl and murders her in one of the most famous scenes in movie history. The

scene had been done thousands of times in parody, comedy, movies, etc. We could look at the drain, which leads to her eye, and say that her life was "drained" out of her. An interesting fact about that scene is the blood that is used is actually chocolate syrup. Couldn't tell with the movie being in black and white. When a



private detective goes to the Bates Motel, he also is murdered for wanting too much information. The mystery is odd, because the sheriff tells Marion's sister that Norman's mother has been dead for quite some time. Who could be the person portraying Norman's mom? Why good ole' Norman himself. According to the Internet Movie Data Base, the stabbing scene had a couple interesting facts in it about when someone dies. When someone dies their pupils dilate. Marion's did not dilate. Also, Marion's pulse beats, briefly, in her neck as she lies on the shower floor after being killed. She also swallows (though another report has that error corrected before release).

I love good horror films and must admit *Psycho* is a classic. I saw the updated version with Anne Heche, but the modern version in my opinion is not as good as the black and white. I will say that Vince Vaughn is a good Norman Bates, but Anthony Perkins did quite a better job. This movie is perfect in black and white, gives that feel that something creepy is going on and you shouldn't be there.

A Clockwork Orange

4/3/02

“Oh My Brothers...”

Alex: No time for the old in-out, love, I've just come to read the meter.

Earlier in this journal I had mentioned about Stanley Kubrick filming the infamous “war” themed *Full Metal Jacket*. He also directed *A Clockwork Orange*, this mind-boggling movie about a dystopian future riddled with youth gangs, it introduces us to thirteen-year-old Alex (Malcolm



McDowell in a stunning debut performance he has never been able to repeat) and his "Droogs". Speaking a largely invented (by Burgess) slang, Alex happens to be into Beethoven (a sly reference to Wagner-loving Nazis?) and ultraviolence. And ultraviolence is what the audience experiences for rest of the movie. *A Clockwork Orange* is an assault on the senses. It is loud - in both music (classics redone by Wendy Carlos on

the synthesizer) and garish 1970s colors. The violence and rapes have lost none of its intensity that made seventies' audiences squirm in their seats. Its impact, even after two decades of audiences getting used to all kinds of ultraviolence on the silver screen, is undeniable. It is an uncomfortable movie to watch. It preys perhaps most on our deep-seated fears of being the victim to unwarranted crime - not the person who

comes to steal our hi-fi set, but the criminal who comes to torture us and sadistically rape our loved ones while not even bothering with the hi-fi set! But the film also carries Burgess's very Catholic concerns with sin and free will. In the film, Alex is



subjugated to a treatment, which creates a total aversion to violence within him - he becomes physically sick when exposed to scenes of violence. But it also creates the same symptoms to listening to Beethoven as well. The obliteration of Alex's free will leaves behind merely the husk of an individual - one who will never experience genius, madness, what constitutes a human being. In Burgess's eyes this even a worse sin. Stanley Kubrick created an excruciating, yet ultimately powerful, film. It may not make for escapist viewing but cannot be missed by serious filmgoers. *A Clockwork Orange* was destined for endless late night reruns at film fests organized by students. I thought most scenes in the movie were funny, like the

hospital scene, where Alex is describing what he sees in each of the drawings. Some weird trivia about *A Clockwork Orange*:

- Kubrick once said "If Malcolm [McDowell] hadn't been available I probably wouldn't have made the film."
- The film rights were sold for "a few hundred dollars", but then re-sold for a much larger amount. Before director Stanley Kubrick became involved in the film, several different casts were considered for Alex and his droogs: girls in miniskirts, old-age pensioners, and The Rolling Stones.
- During the filming of the Ludovico scene, star Malcolm McDowell scratched one of his corneas and was temporarily blinded. He suffered cracked ribs during filming of the humiliation stage show, and he also nearly drowned when his breathing apparatus failed while being held underwater in the trough scene.
- The snake, Basil, was introduced into the film by Kubrick when he found out McDowell had a fear of reptiles.
- Sculptress Liz Jones made the sculptures in the Korova Milkbar.
- Kubrick insisted the milk in the milk dispensers were emptied, washed, and refilled every hour (the milk curdled under the studio lights).
- Many actors play multiple roles.
- Kubrick deliberately made continuity errors just before the author worked out who Alex is. The dishes on the table move around and the level of wine in the glasses change between shots to give a feeling of disorientation to the viewer.
- To film Alex's suicide attempt from his own perspective, a Newman Sinclair camera enclosed in a custom built plastic box was thrown off a building six times until it finally landed pointing downwards. It broke the lens of the camera, but the camera survived otherwise unscathed! Kubrick later marveled at the durability of this particular type of camera.

- When Alex and the droogs enter the Korova Milkbar, there are many paintings on the wall, one of a naked woman. This same painting appears in *The Shining* (1980), also directed by Stanley Kubrick.
- In this film, Anthony Sharp plays a government minister. In Stanley Kubrick's later film, *Barry Lyndon* (1975), he plays a former minister, Lord Harlan.
- *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) (also directed by Kubrick) soundtrack highly visible in record store.
- The blunt object the cat woman uses to attack Alex is a bust of Ludwig Van Beethoven, Alex's favorite composer and whose 9th Symphony accidentally becomes part of Alex's conditioning.
- One of only three movies rated X on its original release (the other two being *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) and *Last Tango in Paris* (1972)) to be nominated for Best Picture at the Academy Awards.
- The first line the prison minister says in the film, "What's it going to be then, eh?" is also the first sentence of the novel.
- In the book, Alex's last name is never revealed. "DeLarge" could be a reference to a line in the book in which Alex calls himself "Alexander the Large" while raping two 10-year-old girls (in the movie they are much older).
- The newspaper article gives Alex's last name as "Burgess".
- The tape that Alex removes from his stereo in order to play Beethoven bears the name of fictitious artist Goggly Gogol, mentioned later by one of the popsicle girls on the music store.
- The book that Frank Alexander is working on when Alex and his droogs break into his home is called *A Clockwork Orange*. Author Anthony Burgess uses a pun on the Malay word "Ourang." Burgess lived for several years in Malaya. The attack on his wife was based on an attack on Burgess' wife by four American GIs during WWII, which caused her to miscarry.
- The photomontage when Alex clobbers the old lady are mostly the paintings the old lady has hanging in her room.

- Professional bodybuilder David Prowse played Alexander's bodyguard. Even so, he was near exhaustion after the repeated takes of him carrying Alexander and his wheelchair down the stairs.
- Many phallic references: snake crawling between the legs of the woman in the poster, the popsicles held by the girls in the record store, the tip of Alex's walking stick, the object used by Alex to kill the woman.
- Malcolm McDowell chose to sing "Singin' In The Rain" during the rape scene, because it was the only song he knew all the lyrics to.
- Kubrick withdrew the film voluntarily from the United Kingdom after being criticized as too violent. Kubrick has stated that the film would be released there only after his death. It was.
- Dim and Georgie as policemen have badge numbers 665 and 667. This makes Alex, in the middle, 666.
- The language spoken by Alex and his droogs is "Nadsat": a mix of English, Russian and slang. Stanley Kubrick was afraid that they had used too much of it, and that the movie would not be accessible.
- Directors Trademark (Stanley Kubrick): [three-way]: Alex vs Government vs Alexander.
- Directors Trademark (Stanley Kubrick): [faces]: Alexander, when he realizes who Alex is.
- Directors Trademark (Stanley Kubrick): [114]: Alex is given "Serum 114" when he undergoes the Ludovico treatment.
- Directors Trademark (Stanley Kubrick): ['Kubrick Stare']: Alex, in the opening shot
- Compare the name of the Serum in "Clockwork Orange" to the name of the decoder in "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb": Directors Trademark : (Stanley Kubrick): [114]: Alex is given "Serum 114" when he undergoes the Ludovico treatment. Directors Trademark : (Stanley Kubrick): [114]: Name of the message decoder "CRM-114".

- The first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth, 1st Movement are used in the doorbell chimes of Frank Alexander's house. Perhaps that is what drew Alex to the house the second time.
- The doorbell of Frank Alexander's house is the same the beginning of Beethoven's 5th symphony. It has been thought that Beethoven was representing the sound of fate knocking on his door with the begging of his 5th. This would be the case for Frank Alexander.
- Stanley Kubrick said "This movie will only be released when I am dead in the UK." The movie is making its first break through in the UK now that Stanley Kubrick has died.
- One of the reasons of why Kubrick asked Warner Bros to help the ban of the movie on the U.K. were, according to his wife Christiane, several death threats that the family received because of the film.
- Alex's father is played by Philip Stone. He also played Delbert Grady in *The Shining*, another Stanley Kubrick film.
- To film Alex's suicide attempt from his own perspective, a Newman Sinclair camera enclosed in a custom built plastic box was thrown off a building six times until it finally landed pointing downwards. It broke the lens of the camera, but the camera survived otherwise unscathed! Kubrick later marveled at the durability of this particular type of camera.
- In this film, Anthony Sharp plays a government minister. In *Barry Lyndon* (1975), he plays a former minister, Lord Harlan.
- Walter Carlos, co-inventor of the Moog who did the music for the film, had a sex change a year later, and now goes by the name Wendy Carlos.
- Anthony Burgess originally sold the movie to Mick Jagger for \$500 when he needed quick cash. Jagger intended to make it with the Rolling Stones as the droogs.
- Anthony Burgess absolutely despised Kubrick's movie -- particularly because he received no money from it. When Kubrick retreated behind his castle after the movie was hysterically received, Burgess was left to deal with a movie he did not authorize, made from a book he didn't even particularly like. Years later, Burgess wrote a stage version of *A Clockwork Orange* where

the first character to step onto the stage had a remarkable resemblance to Kubrick. The rest of the cast members then proceed to beat the Kubrick-doppelganger.

- Alex refers to the prison chaplain as the "prison Charlie". In Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*, Sgt Hartmann calls the Marines clergyman "Chaplain Charlie".
- The British pop music group "Heaven 17" took their name from one of the fictional pop music groups mentioned in this film.
- In the record store it appears that not only is the soundtrack for *2001* clearly visible, but the record on the back shelf appears to be the Beatles, *Magical Mystery Tour*.
- In the record store scene where Alex meets the two teeny-boppers, there are clearly visible copies of both the soundtrack to Kubrick's own '*2001*' (See on the front of the sales booth near Alex) and The Beatles' "*Magical Mystery Tour*" (Located on the wall behind the sales booth, right in the middle [it's yellow]).
- The title "*A Clockwork Orange*" refers to the idea of something mechanical hidden within or taking the appearance of something organic.
- The writer of the book, Anthony Burgess, lived for a time in Malaysia [where his wife was beaten by four American GI's, thus giving inspiration to this story]. In Malay, the word "ourang" means man, [this is also part of the derivation of the word 'orangoutang', the other half being derived from "houtan" meaning jungle] therefore, the title of the story is actually a pun on the British expression. Rather than a clockwork fruit, it is a clockwork man, which is, of course, exactly what Alex has become by the end of the film.
- The idea of Alex and his droogs, and their unusual lingo is taken from the book "*Time Out of Joint*" by Philip K. Dick, where main character finds himself in the future, where all teens dress weird and use Russian words.
- Judging by the accents of many of the characters (Alex, Georgie, Dim, Mother, Father, Joe the Lodger), the film is set in the city of Leeds, and not in London as is often thought.

- Alex's cuff links are bloody eyeballs.
- Directors Trademark Stanley Kubrick: Maniacal staring face, can be seen on Alex at the opening shot. Other examples are Jack (The Shining), shortly before going homicidal (wearing black turtleneck), and Private Gomer Pyle (Full Metal Jacket) shortly before killing Sargeant Hartman and then himself.
- In the book, the last chapter reveals that Alex has the potential to truly mend his ways, without brainwashing. He contemplates marrying one of his girls and having children, so as to continue his marvelous lineage. Kubrick chose to leave this chapter out of the movie, thinking it would make Alex a malleable character.
- A lot of the phallic symbols (e.g. the Milkbar, the Paintings, the giant phallic Sculpture that Alex used to clobber the woman) were invented solely for the movie. In the book, the Milkbar is nondescript, the Catlady's room is also nondescript and Alex clobbers her with a bust of Beethoven
- In the movie, Alex attacks a tramp and is later attacked by that same tramp and his friends. In the book, it was a man reading a book on Crystallography.

Of course, with this trivia, some goofs had to happen too:

- The black mark on Dim's leg disappears during the fight scene at the river.
- During the rape scene in the opera house the victim has only one sandal laced up, it is on her right leg. In the next cut it is laced up on her left leg.
- When Alex and his droogs pull up to Alexander's home in the car, a crew member can be seen moving in the background between two trees
- The prison chaplain puts his arm around Alex twice.
- The room in which Alex is imprisoned while being forced to listen to the Ninth is typical of those in the roof of an old country cottage. However, the house shown on entry is ultra modern with no such loft-type rooms.

GoodFellas

4/10/02

"As far back as I can remember, I've always wanted to be a gangster."
- Henry Hill, Brooklyn, N.Y. 1955.

Henry Hill is a small time gangster (played by Ray Liotta), a local boy turned gangster in a neighborhood full of the roughest and toughest who takes part in a robbery with Jimmy Conway (played by Robert De



Niro) and Tommy De Vito (played by Joe Pesci). Based on a true story, Henry's two partners kill off everyone else involved in the robbery, and slowly start to climb up through the hierarchy of the Mob. After an extended jail sentence, Henry must sneak around the back of the local mob boss, Paulie Cicero, played by Paul Sorvino, to

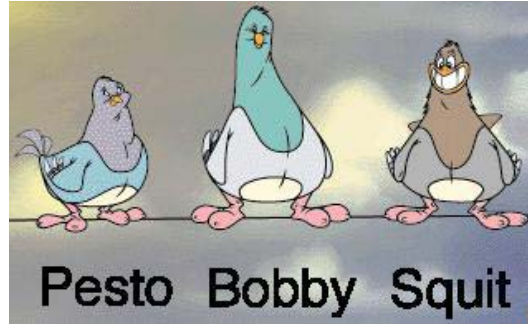
live the life of luxury he has always dreamed of. In the end, the friends end up in a hell of a jam, and must do anything they can to save each other, and stay alive. Henry, however, is badly affected by his partner's success, but will he stoop low enough to bring about the downfall of Jimmy and Tommy? I found some interesting trivia about GoodFellas:

- In the scene that opens with the title "New Jersey, 1963," Henry can be seen leaning on a 1965 Chevy Impala.
- Henry and others are outside Idlewild Airport in 1963, and overhead a Boeing 747 is landing/taking off. 747s had their first test flights in 1969, entering service in 1970.
- **Boom mike visible:** Shadow in Henry's house when he is talking with Marie about the Lufthansa heist.
- When Karen is holding a gun in Henry's face, a different gun is used for close-up and long shots.
- Set in the 1960s, several scenes show characters using steel Smith & Wesson pistols, first produced in the 1970s.
- **Revealing mistakes:** When Karen drives off after telling [?] to go into the dress shop, the car blows a fake license plate off a car.
- After Tommy shoots Spider's foot, Henry gets up to help him, but can be seen sitting down in the background.

- Obvious blood spray used in wide shot of Stacks Edwards Hit. Also, Tommy's gun does not recoil or eject a spent cartridge.
- The phone jumps around on Morry's shoulder when he's talking to Henry.
- The final chase scene takes place in 1981, but a centre brake light is visible. These first appeared on a few 1985 model cars, and generally on the 1986 models.
- A camera is visible in the background at Henry's mother-in-law's house when they go to hide the gun.
- Series of over 10 shots where items such as wine glasses and napkins on the table fill, empty and move themselves while Tommy is telling his anecdote at the restaurant.
- Near the end, when Henry is driving around and watching for the helicopter, a package of Winston cigarettes is on the dashboard of his car. This particular package design has a gold eagle on it and was newly marketed beginning around 1987, several years after the story takes place.
- A title card dates the Billy Batts murder as June 11, 1970. Later, Henry says "it's been six months" when they go to dig up the grave. It should therefore be winter in New York, but the boys are in shirtsleeves and Henry's kids are going to the beach the next day.
- In prison, a close-up is shown of garlic being cut into very thin slices with a razor blade. A wider shot shows Paulie cutting the garlic into huge chunks.

I liked *GoodFellas* because it was a nice “Italian-style” film that based around a family. I have never really seen a gangster type movie, but this one I enjoyed basically because the “inner-gangster” that we all have tries to jump out and laugh when someone is being beaten up or murdered. I have always wanted to sit down and see Robert DiNero play a character that he has been known for and not just some “former secret agent who’s daughter is to be married to Ben Stiller” person. (Obviously that was from “Meet the Parents.”) The storyline to this movie was great and the actors were superb. I didn’t notice but after I heard Ray Liotta say his famous line “As far back as I remember,” I remembered hearing that in a cartoon somewhere. Warner Brothers recreated the whole *GoodFellas* idea into a cartoon called “GoodFeathers.” This skit was done during “Animaniacs.” The story line was perfect: Three pigeons hanging out, perching on a statue of “Martin Scorsese.” These three pigeons were

named Pesto, Bobby, and Squit and were drawn to look like a satire of the characters in *GoodFellas*. What was so amazing about the GoodFeathers was that they sounded just like the actual guys from the movie. “Pesto” sounded a little off of Joe Pesci, but close enough to sound like him and also acted like Pesci in the movie, being hot tempered and



able to go off if he was pushed too much. Pesto also kept saying (say for example Squit said that Pesto was acting “funny”) “Funny? How am I funny? Do I make you laugh?” etc. “Bobby” obviously named after Robert DiNero because he looked and sounded just like the famous actor. He even acted as the cool head in the group. “Squit” was named, well, I don’t know why because his name doesn’t have anything to do with Ray Liotta’s character in *GoodFellas*. The only two connections with Squit and Henry Hill is and



they both sound the same as if Ray Liotta is the voice of Squit (which isn’t true) and that they both start out the story with the same line: “As far back as I can remember.”

The Seventh Seal (Det Sjunde inseglet)

4/17/02

Antonius Block: Nothing escapes you!

Death: Nothing escapes me. No one escapes me.

No one escapes Death is right! This movie, an art house classic, shows a group of people going through the time of the Black Plague. Though the movie was hard to understand because of the foreign placement, the



storyline was simple: A man seeks answers about life, death, and the existence of God as he plays chess against the Grim Reaper. A Knight and his squire are home from the crusades. Black Death is sweeping their country. As they approach home, Death appears to the knight and tells him it is his time. The knight challenges Death to a chess game for his life. The Knight and Death play as the cultural turmoil

envelops the people around them as they try, in different ways, to deal with the upheaval the plague has caused. The movie stars Bengt Ekerot as Death and Max von Sydow as Antonius Block. What I thought was weird about this movie was that they kept talking about the seventh seal and reading from The Book of Revelations, chapter 8, but nothing is shown about the seventh seal unless the plague was the seventh seal. The only time the plague is shown was while a man runs up to the group and asks for some water or some food. I believe that to make the plague more playable, that the man with the plague should have touched one of the group and made them have it as well. I believe also that the irony of the title is that there were seven in the group and at the end they were all taken to "purgatory." According to the Internet Movie Database, The last scene in which Death is dancing away with his followers was shot when all the actors had gone home, using some technicians and a few tourists instead. And as popular as the movie is, there was only one goof made during the movie: In the witches' forest, you can see the windows of apartment buildings between the trees. Probably the most popular mentioning of Death's character in modern film would be in *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey* which premiered in 1991. William Sadler played as Death in that movie. Only in this movie, Bill and Ted play the Grim Reaper in Battleship and Clue instead of chess. The basic plot to this movie is that Bill and Ted are



dead and must outwit the Grim Reaper and traverse Heaven and Hell to return to the land of the living, rescue their "babes" and have a "most triumphant" concert at the all-important Battle of the Bands. There was also an episode of *Animaniacs* where one of the Warner Brothers (Wakko) played against a "Swedish" Grim Reaper in a game of checkers. Although the Grim Reaper attempted to play the game, Wakko ate the game! So the Warner Brothers (and Sister) got sent to "Purgatory," with the cute song "Purgatory, here we come."

I Am Sam

1/27/02

“Love is all you need” – Movie Tagline

The movie is based from the character in the book “Green Eggs and Ham.” Sean Penn plays as Sam Dawson, a man who has the mental capacity of a 7-year-old child. He works at Starbucks, making everyone’s life enjoyable. Sam is obsessed with the Beatles. At the beginning of the movie, Sam and his “girlfriend” (a homeless woman) rush to the hospital since she is giving birth. Sam names his daughter Lucy Diamond (Dakota Fanning) after the Beatles song and raises her.

But as she reaches age 7 herself, Sam's limitations start to become a problem at school; she's intentionally holding back to avoid looking smarter than him. The authorities take her away, and Sam shames high-priced lawyer Rita Harrison into taking his case pro bono. Rita is a high powered self-absorbed attorney who initially takes Sam’s case as a dare from her colleagues, but she learns more from Sam than any other client around. On the surface the two couldn’t be further apart, but deep inside and in reality, they are subtly similar. Sam’s compulsive nature matches Rita’s socially acceptable obsessive-compulsive nature. Her manic need for perfection and success alienates her from her own son and has been slowly destroying her own self worth. Did you know that Ringo was never mentioned in the movie as a Beatle? This film is soaked with populism because you fight for Sam to win. You sit there and want Lucy to run to her dad and to tell the authorities where they can stick it. I liked this movie. It brought a smile to my face and almost a close tear. The actors were really believable in this movie and the soundtrack (popular stars singing classic Beatles songs) was excellent. I would definitely recommend this movie to my friends as something to see.



ICE AGE

3/22/02

“Think about the last time cartoon characters could bring you to tears as well as laughter, and you'll realize that this movie is as rare as the creatures that people it.” – Sue Pierman *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

A star-studded cast provides the voices for the prehistoric creatures in this computer-animated feature set 20,000 years ago as the Ice Age



approaches. Seemingly anti-social Manny, a woolly mammoth (voiced by Ray Romano), acts as if he just wants to be left alone. When he meets Sid (voiced by John Leguizamo), a sloth, the two become unlikely traveling companions. The plot thickens when the duo finds a

human infant and decides to try to return the child to its "herd." Manny slowly but surely reveals his heart of gold, while Sid continues to provide comic relief. Diego (voiced by Denis Leary), a saber-tooth tiger with ulterior motives, soon joins them in their search for the humans. Ultimately, this group of misfits becomes its own herd, learning about friendship and loyalty as they brave snow, ice, freezing temperatures, predators, hail, and even boiling lava pits. The four reluctantly come together when they have to return a human child to its father while braving the deadly elements of the impending Ice Age. All the while, a saber-tooth squirrel, Scat, provides comic relief as he valiantly struggles with an acorn. A well-written, humorous script and endearing characters mesh well with the state-of-the-art technology and effects. Other stars lending their voices to the feature include Goran Visnjic, Jack Black, and Jane Krakowski. I believe this movie also is based on populism, more like animated



populism. The movie does end on an emotional note as the pack delivers the baby to the father. The human “herd” thank the animals with some gifts. The pack walks away slowly and emotionally. But at the end of the movie, the scat returns from being locked in ice for a few thousand years, trying to pack

his acorn in the ground, except he wasn't in the ice age this time. His acorn cracks into the ground and up a volcano to the explosion of hot lava. Here we go again...