

# 'Compromising Positions' fits title; it's a multi-genre cinematic combo

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Movie Reviewer

"Compromising Positions"  
Directed by Frank Perry  
Starring Susan Sarandon  
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This is a difficult movie to categorize. It's funny in places but I'm not sure I can call it a comedy. It involves a murder and it has some suspense. Maybe I should call it a thriller. And then, it deals with an issue. So maybe I should call it a movie that deals with today's concerns. Take your pick. This movie is really a little schizophrenic. It can't decide what it wants to be.

Susan Sarandon plays Judith Singer, a nave uppermiddle-class housewife who lives in a seemingly predictable and very ordinary

neighborhood, Shorehaven. It is not until the neighborhood dentist, Bruce Fleckstein, is murdered that Singer learns the truth about her neighborhood.

In one of the funniest scenes in the movie, half of Shorehaven's housewives turn up to grieve the loss of Fleckstein at his funeral. The dentist apparently could operate out of the office just as well as he could in.

Singer is so shocked about her discovery that she decides to take up her long-lost career as a reporter and conduct her own investigation. She discovers that Shorehaven is not the sedate and conservative neighborhood it appears to be. It is filled with interesting characters in interesting positions.

And it's at this point where the movie can't seem to make up its mind as to what it wants to be.

It could be a comedy. The characters (except for Sarandon) are

unique and funny. Especially Mary Beth Hurt ("The Big Chill") as Singer's best friend. Hurt deserves an Oscar nomination for her role as a combination housewife, mother, artist and Mata Hari. Next to Meryl Streep, Hurt is one of the top actresses working today.

This movie also tries to depict the American housewife as a poor little slave locked into the stereotypical role and desperately seeking some excitement. So when a womanizing dentist comes along, he naturally finds it easy to seduce Shorehaven's housewives.

The script was written by Susan Isaacs from her novel. This could be an interesting approach to the story, but I just didn't have much sympathy for Sarandon's or her rich friends' plight. This movie is simply not very timely. The Equal Rights Amendment and women libbers have all but disappeared from to-

day's headlines.

So, what's the point, anyway? Was I supposed to be laughing or feeling sorry for Singer? Was I supposed to be afraid when Singer's life is endangered by the killer? Or should I rejoice at her opportunity to prove her real worth? This movie tries to be everything but lacks the strength to really come through on any of these points.

Most of the blame goes to Frank Perry who directed and produced the movie. His director tricks, obtuse camera angles and uneven storyline only put a barrier between his work and the audience. Overall, the direction is flat and lacks the excitement that a really sharp director could add to this movie.

The most enjoyable facet of this movie was its unique and memorable montage of characters. Based on that compromise, I can recommend "Compromising Positions." □

## movies-movies-movies-movies

**AGNES OF GOD (PG-13):** A young nun gives birth to a baby. Later, the baby is found strangled. Agnes says she doesn't remember of the birth or the impregnation. Meg Tilly from "The Big Chill" stars as Sister Agnes in this film that deals with the confrontation of faith and reason. Anne Bancroft and Jane Fonda also star. Plaza 3

**BACK TO THE FUTURE (R):** This is the most fun to hit the silver screen this year. Michael J. Fox, from TV's "Family Ties," stars in this time-traveling comedy. \*\*\*\* Cinema 3

**BEVERLY HILLS COP (R):** Here it is again. Eddie Murphy makes this flick a winner. But I am sure you already know that. \*\*\*\* Schulman 6

**COCOON (PG-13):** Visitors from another planet come to retrieve some friends that were left behind years ago in cocoons. However, they experience complications when a few nursing home residents discover the rejuvenating power of the cocoons. Director Ron Howard of "Splash" fame makes this flick a charmer that should not be missed. \*\*\*\* Plaza 3

**COMPROMISING POSITIONS (R):** Susan Sarandon stars as a housewife who is so shocked by the murder of her dentist she decides to turn reporter and investigate the case herself. This movie is a strange but not uninteresting comedy of life in suburbia. \*\*\* Schulman 6

**CREATOR (R):** An eccentric college professor (Peter O'Toole) strives to clone his wife who has been dead for 25 years. Go see this funny and heartwarming comedy and get "the big picture." Also starring Mariel Hemingway and Vincent Spano. \*\*\*\* Post Oak Mall

**DEATH BED (R):** I have no idea what this movie is about but it sounds like a horror movie. Schulman 6

**DODES KADEN (UNRATED):** This Japanese movie blends fantasy with reality to show how man can overcome his troubles with dreams and hope. Directed by A. Kurosawa. Aggie Cinema, 7:30 Sunday, Rudder

**EMERALD (R):** This is supposed to be a mystery starring Max Von Sydow. Schulman 6

**THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY (PG):** An offbeat comedy from Africa about a Coke bottle that is dropped from the modern world into an ancient one. Cinema 3

**INVASION USA (R):** Oh dear. Another Chuck Norris saves the world movie. I am sure I will not go see this movie but plenty of you people out there in newspaperland will because apparently, these movies make a lot of money. No comment. Cinema 3

**A MAN CALLED FLINTSTONE (UNRATED):** A full-length cartoon feature starring that swanky Stone Age man, Fred Flintstone and of course, his wife Wilma and Barney and Betty Rubble, his neighbors. Aggie Cinema, midnight Friday, Grove

**MAXIE (PG):** Maxie Malone is a wild flapper and actress who has also been dead for 60 years. Unfortunately, she never even got to see the one movie she got a part in. So she decides to come back and inhabit the body of a straight and proper wife of book collector and resume her career. This comedy may sound a little confusing but it stars Glenn Close ("The Big Chill" and "The Natural") as the raucous Maxie Malone and as the proper Jan Cheyney so it should be pretty decent. Also with Ruth Gordon and Mandy Patinkin ("Evita"). Manor East 3

**PEE-WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE (PG):** A wacky comedy starring comedian Pee-Wee Herman. See at your own risk. \*\* Post Oak Mall

**REAL GENIUS (PG):** An above average teen flick that provides a few laughs and is slightly more innovative than other science movies released this summer. Some smart college kids develop a powerful laser that their sneaky professor gives to the U.S. Air Force to use as a weapon. The kids decide not only to retrieve their invention but punish the evil prof as well. An inspirational story. \*\*\* Schulman 6

**RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD (R):** A horror-comedy that is supposed to be a spoof of "Night of the Living Dead." This movie reviewer has a low threshold for blood-and-guts movies so you are on your own on this one. Schulman 6

**SILVERADO (PG-13):** Ye-Ha! A shoot-em-up if there ever was one. This western revolves around four cowboys that fight off bad guys, protect innocent folks and generally do good deeds. \*\*\*\* Manor East III

**A SOLDIER'S STORY (R):** A black officer is sent to Louisiana in the 1940's to investigate the murder of a black soldier. This critically acclaimed film is similar to "In The Heat of the Night." Aggie Cinema, Friday 7:30 and 9:45, Rudder

**TEEN WOLF (PG):** Yuck! Pooey! A dumb and sloppy attempt at a movie. Don't waste your time on this loser. Terminally putrid (no stars) Post Oak Mall

**VOLUNTEERS (R):** A comedy starring Tom Hanks and John Candy. Hanks decides to join the Peace Corps to hide from an irate bookie he owes money to. Plaza 3

**WEIRD SCIENCE (PG-13):** Anthony Michael Hall of "The Breakfast Club" stars in this movie as a boy who makes his ideal woman. Rumor has it that this is a really, really bad movie. Manor East III