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Best Bets

Reviews

"Dragnet"
Directed by Tom Mankiewicz
Starring Dan Aykroyd, Tom Hanks and Christopher Plummer

I haven't laughed this hard since I saw the original "Dragnet" television episode in which Jack Webb as Joe Friday set out to save Los Angeles from LSD. In the "Dragnet" movie, Dan Aykroyd plays the nephew of Joe Friday. Aykroyd is just like his uncle, a by-the-book, non-nonsense, just-the-facts-mam cop. He gets saddled with a new partner, Pep Streebek (Tom Hanks), a laid-back, party-animal detective who doesn't go for Friday's stiffness.

Friday and Streebek uncover a plot to takeover the City of Angels that involves a porno king, a demonic religious cult, a fundamentalist evangelist and the police commissioner. But they are unable to convince their boss, police chief and uncle Friday's former partner Bill Gannon (Henry Morgan), of their findings.

Aykroyd parodies Webb's dry, deadpan acting style to perfection and Tom Hanks plays off that very well. The only disappointment in the film is Henry Morgan's performance. Christopher is a pretty good villain. It's obvious that Morgan was included in the cast for nostalgia.

Those not familiar with the "Dragnet" television series might miss some of the jokes, but there is enough new humor in the movie to let it stand on its own.

"The Living Daylights"
Directed by John Glen
Starring Timothy Dalton, Maryam d'Abo and Joe Don Baker
****½

Today's trivia question: Who was the first actor to play James Bond?
No, it wasn't Sean Connery. It was Barry Nelson, on a 1957 television adaption of Ian Fleming's first Bond book, "Casino Royale."

In the past 30 years, James Bond has become somewhat of a mythological figure. Fleming's Bond books sold well throughout the '50s and '60s. Bond came to the silver screen in 1962 with "Dr. No," with Connery taking the role of 007. Connery played Bond in "From Russia With Love," "Goldfinger," "Thunderball" and "You Only Live Twice." Before he hung up his Walther PPK. After George Lazenby took the role in "On Her Majesty's Secret Service" and David Niven spoofed the role in the movie "Casino Royale," both in 1969, Connery came out of retirement in 1971 for "Diamonds Are Forever" and once again in 1983 for "Never Say Never Again." Roger Moore became the next Bond and made

seven movies before he became too flabby for the role.

"The Living Daylights" is the 15th film in the official Bond series ("Casino Royale" and "Never Say Never Again," which were not produced by Albert R. Broccoli, are not considered to be "official" Bond movies). Timothy Dalton was just the thing to put some life back into the James Bond series. Dalton's Bond is not the wimp that Moore turned into in the later films. He is not as tough as Connery, but he does have style. His only weak point is that his sense of humor isn't quite up to Bond standards.

The new Bond has to stop a conspiracy that involves arms, opium, diamonds and a cute Russian cello player. The British Secret Service, the American CIA, the Russian KGB, Argansian rebels and free-lance mercenaries are all tied up into the mess. Although the story is a bit contrived, at least it approaches believability.

Joe Don Baker makes a good Bond villain but should have been given more to do. Maryam d'Abo is just as beautiful but not as gutsy as such Bond women as Maud Adams, Ursula Andress or Diana Rigg were.

None of the Bond films, with the possible exception of "From Russia With Love," can be considered to be a great film. The Bond films are good, mindless entertainment and don't pretend to be anything else. Now that Dalton has been given a license to kill, we can expect several more good, mindless films before it becomes time for another Bond.

"Superman IV: The Quest for Peace"
Directed by Sidney J. Furie

Starring Christopher Reeve, Margot Kidder and Gene Hackman
★

There are only two things that can kill Superman — Kryptonite and another movie like "Superman IV: The Quest for Peace."

After such bombs as "Superman III" and "Supergirl," the series should have been allowed to die. The new movie is a step up but you have to have Superman's microscopic vision to notice the difference. Christopher Reeve must have really needed the

money to put on the cape and fly again.

In "Superman IV," the Man of Steel sets out to rid the world of nuclear weapons, the revenge-hungry Lex Luthor (Gene Hackman) sets out to destroy Superman, and a rich publisher buys the Daily Planet and forces its reporters to adopt

National Enquirer-style techniques. Along the way, Superman and Lois Lane (Margot Kidder) try to revive their relationship and the Daily Planet's new editor (Mariel Hemingway) falls in love with Clark Kent.

Gene Hackman's Lex Luthor is wonderful but not wonderful enough to save the movie. Reeve and Kidder don't offer anything new to the Superman-Lois Lane Relationship. Mariel Hemingway is nice to look at but that's about it.

If Jor El had been able to see "Superman IV" before Krypton exploded, he would have sent his son to some other planet. Instead of Superman, we have a Superboore. —Reviews by Karl Palmeyer

Howdy! This column has been missing for a while and we hope you missed it. By now you're probably ready for something to do other than homework. Best Bets is here to offer unique entertainment opportunities that can be reached with little difficulty. If your agency or group has a unique event coming up, let us know by calling At Ease at 845-3312.

Wednesday, August 5
Summer Dinner Theater The MSC Summer Dinner Theater is presenting "Saving Grace" and since the play began last night, tonight's performance is the second. Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. and the play begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$12 for non-students.

Thursday, August 6
Summer Dinner Theater: "Saving Grace" continues tonight under the direction of the MSC Summer Dinner Theater. Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. and the play starts at 8 p.m.

Friday, August 7
Movie in the Park: If "The Wizard of Oz" is one of your favorite movies, you might want to check out "Return to Oz." The film will be shown at dusk at Central Park, and is sponsored by the College Station Parks and Recreation. Admission is free and concessions are available. Bring your lawn chair.

Summer Dinner Theater The MSC Summer Dinner Theater's rendition of "Saving Grace" concludes tonight. Dinner is at 6:30 p.m. and the play is at 8 p.m.

Saturday, August 8
Diamond Dig If you believe that diamonds are a girl's best friend, or that they can be friendly with anyone, head over to Post Oak Mall. From 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. you can dig for diamonds while helping the Muscular Dystrophy Association. For a \$2 donation, you can dig through a small freezer for one of 10 quarter-carat diamonds or one of 200 quarter-carat cubic zirconias which are frozen in ice cubes. Even if you don't find a diamond, you'll still come home with a prize.

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