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## SUMMER MOVIE WRAP-UP

### Ryan saves the summer movie season

"The summer of audiences' discontent" might be a good title for the passing summer movie season. Many films failed to provide box-office bite to back up their nine-figure budgets. It seems movie malaise hit the majority of big-name, big-money flicks this summer. In fact some of the summers biggest hits were downright poverty-stricken in comparison to today's Hollywood budgets. It looks like only one film will actually make \$200 million during the summer season. This sort of summer drought is unheard of in Hollywood.

The smaller, thoughtful films seemed to strike a chord with the audience, where as the uber-budgeted, hype-o-ramas turned them off.

**Something About Mary**  
 This little film is one of the funniest to come around in a while. It manages to be offensive, hilarious and heartwarming at the same time. It also has a special message—being nice to the mentally challenged, could result in a woman of Cameron Diaz-esque proportions.

**The Truman Show**  
 Jim Carrey without the fart jokes. No, it is not a sign of the apocalypse—it is *The Truman Show*, a fresh idea and a solid film. Carrey plays quite the shrinking violet in this movie when compared to his other roles, as a man whose whole life has been a carefully crafted television program.

**Zorro**  
 In this day and age, any movie that features a hero who saves the world with a few huge explosions and enough ammo to fill a country, deserves a chance. *Zorro* delivers swashbuckling fun, and audiences wish for more. Anthony Hopkins and Antonio Banderas have great chemistry as the elder Zorro and pupil respectively. Plus, any film featuring Catherine Zeta-Jones screen should do great business.

**Lethal Weapon 4**  
 Buddy-cop films are about as common as motel bibles. The *Lethal Weapon* series has been around since the Reagan Era. Add those two ingredients together and you have the potential for a stale piece of cheese. Gibson and Danny Glover turn a parody into exciting testosterone candy.

**Summer Movie Money**

1998's Top Grossing Summer Movies	Estimated Budget	Projected Gross
Armageddon	\$150	\$200
Saving Private Ryan	65	180
Deep Impact	80	145
Dr. Dolittle	70	140
Godzilla	120	135
Lethal Weapon 4	130	135
The Truman Show	60	125
Mulan	95	120
There's Something About Mary	25	120
The Mask of Zorro	70	95

Figures in Millions of U.S. Dollars Source:Newsweek  
 BRAD GRAEBER/THE BATTALION

**THE MARGINAL**  
**Armageddon**  
 According to most sources, this is the highest grossing film of the summer should since it reportedly cost \$150 million to produce. It has enough explosions, Liv Ullmann tunes to make the film look like a video for the group. It was fluffy, like the popcorn that is consumed while watching it. *Armageddon* was tasty and good at the time, but in retrospect maybe the Junior Mints would have been better.

**THE GOOD**

**Saving Private Ryan**  
 To say something good about this movie is almost a cliché. To say something bad would incite the fury of the greatest nation on earth. It is better to be clichéd rather than have the scorn of the nation. This is a great film, excellent on many levels, from story to cinematography. The best part about this film is it will probably be the second-highest grossing film this summer. It had a modest \$65 million budget, but it will probably gross three times that much. One could say *Ryan* earned this. This is about as bold a prediction as suggesting the sun might rise, but look for *Ryan* to do well come Oscar time.

### Fools fall in love while vampires die at the movies



**Why Do Fools Fall in Love**  
 Starring: Halle Berry, Vivica A. Fox, Lela Rochon  
 Directed by: Gregory Nava  
 Rated R  
 Playing at Hollywood 16

three wives, got in trouble with drugs and the Army and self-destructed at the age of 25. This is an all-too-familiar plot; the actors are the only things that are different. The bright spot in the movie is the acting. Berry, Fox and Rochon add spice to the screen and portray their characters with originality. (B-)  
 -Beth Rocht

is based on, the movie offers style without substance. Do not buy the advertising blitz — catch it on video. (C)  
 -Stephen Wells

Americans, its universal appeal is what keeps it entertaining. **Blade** Starring: Wesley Snipes, Stephen Dorff Directed by: Stephen Norrington Rated R Showing at College Park and Oak Mall

**Why Do Fools Fall in Love** is based on the true story of the rise and fall of '50s teen singing sensation Frankie Lyman (Larenz Tate). The story is told by his three supposed wives — Zola Taylor (Halle Berry), a singer with The Platters, Elizabeth Waters (Vivica A. Fox), a shoplifter and Emira Eagle (Lela Rochon), a school teacher from Georgia — as they testify in court to determine who will rightfully receive his estate. In two hours, the women tell Frankie's story — how he married

54 Starring: Mike Meyers and Neve Campbell Directed by: Mark Christopher Rated R Playing at Post Oak Cinema and College Park Six  
 Studio 54, for those keeping up with VH1 "Behind the Music" documentaries, was the hippest place to be on the planet during the late 1970s and could have remained the hottest party locale today if the owner had not been a drug-chomping tax evader. 54 tells the story of three kids caught up in the hype of Studio 54 — glitz and glamour, innocence lost and the evils of excess. But, like the club it

**Smoke Signals**  
 Starring: Adam Beach and Evan Adams  
 Directed by: Chris Eyre  
 Rated PG-13  
 Playing at Hollywood 16  
*Smoke Signals* follows two Native Americans, Victor (Adam Beach) and Thomas (Evan Adams), who were raised on a reservation in the Pacific Northwest. Victor receives word that his estranged father has died, and he is sent to collect the ashes. While *Signals* does suffer from a somewhat contrived plot, what it has to say about modern society is enrapturing. Jokes about *Dances With Wolves* and Tonto and the Lone Ranger keep the movie moving along comfortably, but the subtlety of discovery and keeping traditions in a modern society resonates with audiences. While *Signals* is about Native

Once again, the villain done the hero. In *Blade*, Stephen Dorff gives a sufficiently good performance as Deacon Frost, the upstart ruler of the vampire kingdom supposedly exiled to the underworld. Dorff has progressed since getting shoved out of a limo car by Alicia Silverstone in Aerosmith's "Cryin'" video. Snipes uses actual fight choreography to put on a great martial arts performance with some very good gunplay. Kris Kristofferson provides background music and look grizzled. *Blade* is an entertainment some may find more than others. (B)

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