movies...

By Jeff Blakes

If you are interested in literature and have read Henry James' 'The Death of a Lion,' you have read a novel that was thoroughly research and written before the Hollywood-style approach. (It won a Pulitzer Prize in 1914.)

Unlike James, who set his novel in the English countryside and moved the plot only to a Parisian gentleman, Herman Wouk has decorated his work with modern touches to keep it interesting. The movie clearly does nothing to help sell the book. Wouk should never have let his book get out of print.

What might very well be a potential classic is hidden beneath the inevitable macon of Hollywood film art.

Drozding with television cliches, the film serves out at you with the pseudo emotionality the public likes. If I were a businessman, as someone in the movie managed to point out through his Hollywood makeup, I should be delighted to find the man paying his money to see it; actually, I should be as delighted to find the public not paying a cent. But a movie in a one-shot affair: once you are taken you are taken. You walk out with the feeling that your brain has been overused, chewing the bad plot, feeling funny about the sex scenes, vowing never to read the book. Eternally, you asked the author for all time.

You don't realize that the movie is not the book and not the book is responsible for your stomach ache.

The Hollywood style is disgusting, familiar. Picture those hot-blooded scenes where the ear for the first time the tragic news begins to både like an eolian pipe, his lips twitch, his jars, his eyes widen so that you can see the blood veins. He drops the receiver to the floor and breaks out in tears. James Franciscus, who plays Youngblood, does it quite well.

Then there are the 'cheated' and sexy drawl none can match. Says Jeanie (Genevieve Page) to Youngblood, thinking of the millions he has made on his first book, 'You're a fast worker.' Later on she exclaims, 'Well I'll bite' which a few people thought funny enough to laugh at! When it comes to the subdued and sexy drawl none can compare with Genevieve Page, who plays the third cousin of the triangle.

The book, for all I know, might be realistic and profound. Here and there in the film there are hints of an underlying unity to the work, unity which the director clearly doesn't care about. He wants to sell the movie.

On occasion Herman Wouk peppers through, and what he says, through the medium of his novel, and in spite of the medium of the film, leads me to suggest that you read the book instead.

Were the Mitchell Trio tickets worth the black market price?

Opinions vary. But most of the audience reacted favorably to the Trio's songs and satires at the November 24 performance at the Kneale Auditorium. Along with the usual folk songs, Mike Klob, Chad Mitchell, and Joe Fraizer belt out their famous 'John Birch Society,' and 'Twelve Days of Christmas,' a song inspired by the hero's welcome given certain released ex-Nazis.

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