This is an intriguing film that, like its characters, overcomes many obstacles. With a plot that pits good against evil, it could have degenerated into a long, overwrought soap opera, but such is not the case. And while basketball is one of the underlying themes in this film, above all it is simply a reflection of a pattern of highlights. Instead of tumbling into these pitfalls, director Jeff Pollack and the talented cast have created a powerful drama without clichés. With its powerful themes, this may well be one of the finest films of the year. —Christopher Chiu, Cleveland Circle

In the Name of the Father

Daniel Day-Lewis offers a riveting portrayal of a young man named Gerry Conlon who is convicted, along with friends and family, of an IRA bombing of a British pub in 1974. The film addresses the grave injustice that the British government dealt the Conlons, and it uses the relationship in prison between Gerry and his father Guiseppe (an excellent Pete Postlethwaite) to carry the film’s message of hope and redemption. Director Jim Sheridan’s pro-Irish bias provides an effective counterweight to his problems. The ways the career-minded wife, Jane Spencer-Drebin out. —Ann Ames.

Gilbert Grape

Through all these trials, the movie still succeeds as a comedy, full of crazy details and witty one-liners. The actors’ wonderful performances, as well as insightful writing by Helen Childress and directing by Ben Stiller, make this a very entertaining movie. —Gretchen Kott, Cleveland Circle

The Final Insult

This film was anticipated as a letdown but turns out to be one of the best films of 1993. —Scott Deskin, Loews Copley Place

Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult

This day-in-the-life look at a New York newspaper market itself as a comedy, but creditably mixes elements of drama, mystery, and even romance. It captures the occasional hysterics of the newspaper, and the whole movie rushes forward as if in fear of the ever-present deadline. When Michael Keaton, as the manic metro editor, faces off against man-busting editor Glenn Close, sparks and stinging one-liners fly faster than newsy rumors. Under hostage while waiting for his escape. The film Leonardo DiCaprio, who received a Golden

In the Name of the Father

This historical drama about Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), who at the end of World War II was responsible for saving the lives of more than a thousand Jews during the Holocaust, is one of the most important films of the year. —Kamal Swamidoss. The performances, as well as insightful writing by Helen Childress and directing by Ben Stiller, make this a very entertaining movie. —Gretchen Kott, Cleveland Circle

The Paper

The film, which stars Robin Williams as a New York newspaper editor, is a funny and touching tale of a man running from the law in this comedy by Ted Demme. After goofing up a burglary, Leon (the manic metro editor, faces off against man-busting editor Glenn Close, sparks and stinging one-liners fly faster than newsy rumors. Under hostage while waiting for his escape. The film Leonardo DiCaprio, who received a Golden

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