

Russel shines in implausible 'Impulse'

FILMETER



ROBERT DIMATTEO

In Movie Theaters

IMPULSE (R) This is the movie that former Clint Eastwood girlfriend and co-star Sondra Locke was directing when Eastwood locked her out of their home. Subsequently, Locke has slapped Dirty Harry with a palimony

a part clicks for her, as in "Black Widow," she can also be riveting.

If only the plot surrounding Russell were more plausible. Instead, this is another thriller in which a "good" person gets in over his/her head. Here, the psychologically pent-up Russell starts to take her "work" too seriously. Soon, she's "tricking" even when she doesn't have to. One night she inadvertently witnesses a murder. Meanwhile, fellow cop (Jeff Fahey) is falling in love with her.

When characters in a movie behave stupidly simply to further the storyline (to get themselves in jams, the better to scare us), intelligent viewers rebel. Accordingly, there were groans and titters coming from the audience during moments of this movie. Still, that one stays with "Impulse" even



LOTTIE MASON (Theresa Russell) is an undercover cop whose life is complicated when she becomes romantically involved with District Attorney Stan Harris (Jeff Fahey) in the psychological thriller "Impulse."

suit, and the movie has opened to lukewarm reviews.

This thriller — starring Theresa Russell as an L.A. detective who works undercover as a prostitute — may have a hokey script, but Locke gives it a pulse. Just as Kathryn Bigelow did with Jamie Lee Curtis in "Blue Steel," Locke has gotten a terrific, flinty performance from Russell. In fact, if we have to have more buddy cop movies, how about a female one, starring Curtis and Russell?

Russell's career is turning out to be an interesting one. Director Nick Roeg's favorite leading lady (and off-screen wife) has an innate eroticism — even in her bad roles and awkward performances. But when something in

while disbelieving a lot of it is a credit to Russell — and to director Locke. **GRADE: ★★½**

CRAZY PEOPLE (R) This light comedy pivots on an advertising copywriter (Dudley Moore) who has a nervous breakdown, partly because he can no longer abide the lies he must tell. Sent to an asylum, he devises a new series of ads — all based on the novel idea of telling people the truth. Ads like: "Forget France. The French are annoying. Come to Greece." Or this one for United Airlines: "Most of our passengers get there alive."

By mistake, these ads get shipped off to the printers, and presto! Hones-

ty in advertising turns out to really sell. Soon the asylum inmates have formed a truly flaky team of copywriters.

Since real corporations are mentioned in the movie's fake ads, it's not surprising that some of them are less than pleased. But, if anyone should be upset, it's the psychiatric community, because this is one more movie that makes mental illness look cute.

There's another problem, too: Daryl Hannah. Her zonked-out quality is starting to wear awfully thin. As a fear-stricken patient who becomes a towering love object for Moore, she lacks the freshness she had in "Roxanne."

Is the movie funny? Sometimes, during the simulated commercials. But it relies too much on easy gags; eventually, that's all it has going for it. Unless, that is, your idea of fun is to laugh at other people's mental infirmities. **GRADE: ★½**

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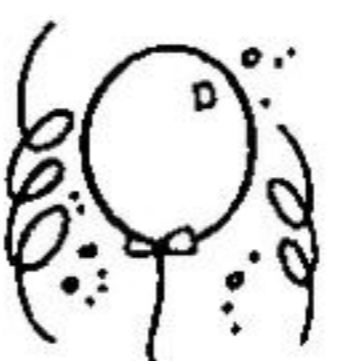
THE ABYSS (PG-13) CBS/Fox. Better than its reputation, this lavish underwater thriller succumbs to an awful ending. But, along the way, there are some sensational, scary moments. **GRADE: ★★★**

(Film grading: ★★★★★ — excellent, ★★★ — good, ★★ — fair, ★ — poor)



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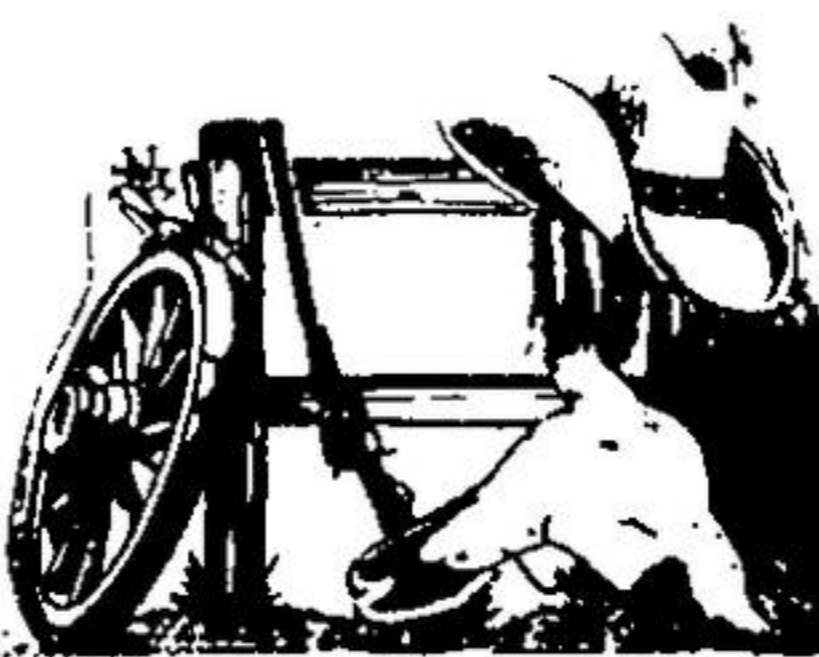
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