

**MOVIE REVIEW**

# Cookie offers many pleasures

By DIAHANN NADEAU  
The Herald

**COOKIE:** Peter Falk starts in this off-beat comedy about an estranged father and daughter. The twist is that he is an ex-racketeer who has been in jail for 13 years, and his daughter is the illegitimate offspring of a long-time liaison with his loving mistress.

Out on parole, he finds his daughter is a gum-chewing, wisecracking rebel, his wife runs a dog grooming salon, the D.A. has a personal vendetta against him, and his partner has cheated him out of millions. What's a poor ex-con to do? Plenty.

Dino (Falk) is forced to take drastic measures to counter his

enemies; at the same time he has to straighten daughter Cookie (Emily Lloyd) out.

There is a lot of humor in the problems Dino has - his picture is splashed across the front pages and he is being touted as the new Mafia don, yet he has no money, his loud-mouth wife (Brenda Vaccaro) nags him and keeps his covered in dog hair, and his mistress Lenore (Dianne Wiest) wants to get married. Cookie comes up with a solution, and although it is a little confusing, the picture ends on a high note.

Falk is a joy as the harassed Dino, conveying his anger through his calm demeanor, and coming across as something of a sex symbol.

His unabashed passion for Lenore is delightful, a winning example of true love, something to restore one's faith in such a thing.

Wiest is her usual marvelous self, always a little vague, and her more than a little kitschy (notice the pink Christmas tree); she is always a pleasure to watch. Lloyd is good as Cookie, although she doesn't display the verve that astonished audiences in her starring debut "Wish You Were Here." Brenda Vaccaro, Jerry Lewis and Lionel Stander all offer good supporting performances.

Cookie is a happy comedy, a nice little film about love and the mafia; it is not a great movie, but certainly offers many pleasures.

**TREMORS**

Yes, I did review this when it came out in the theatres, but Tremors is one of the very, very few movies I actually wanted to see again. This wonderful little horror-comedy is still good on the small screen, although the monsters are reduced, and the splatter effects are not quite as splashy and gratifying.

In case you missed the first review, Tremors is about two handy men in Perfection, Nevada, who discover that something quite horrible is going on in their little corner of paradise. Something is killing people, and as the tiny population grows smaller, they are the unlikely heroes who have to battle and outwit the monsters.

Tremors is a take-off of the classic horror B-movies, only it adds humor to the terror, giving us a chance to laugh and be scared witless in the same moment. One of the best things about these creatures, aside from the fact they are supposed to stink to high heaven, is their cleverness; the townspeople find their options being reduced at every turn by these smart underground worms.

Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward are great as the reluctant heroes, Finn Carter is the lovely seismologist, Michael Gross and Reba McEntyre are the gung-ho survivalists. Everyone in the cast plays it just right, and this movie remains one of my favorites for 1990.

All videos provided through the courtesy of Country Videos.

## John Wayne tribute to air on the CBC

One of the best of Wayne and Shuster's comedy sketches, Frontier Psychiatrist, will be featured on Gilmour's Albums on CBC Stereo Aug. 11. It airs at 6:08 p.m.

The sketch is part of a tribute to Johnny Wayne, who died July 18. For decades, Wayne and his partner, Frank Shuster, were Canada's best-known comedy team.

The program will be rebroadcast a day later on CBC Radio, at 12:08 p.m.

A Canadian woman was willing to spend \$1,000 for a chance to become a contestant on the Wheel of Fortune game show, says Global TV.

One of the 300 candidates chosen in a random draw conducted by Global (more than 30,000 entries were received) was a woman who has since cut short a vacation in Houston, Texas, in order to participate in the finals of the contestant search. The change in her travel plans is costing her \$1,000, said Global.

Officials from the Los Angeles-based syndicated game show were putting the 300 candidates through a series of tests in Toronto this week to select 10 contestants for the show.

American viewers - and TV executives - are finding Canadian-produced drama to their liking.

The 1989 CBC-TV production Love and Hate, recently aired by NBC in the U.S., was North America's most-watched TV program for the week ending July 22.

The two-part miniseries is based on the murder of Joann Thatcher and the trial of her ex-husband, former Saskatchewan cabinet minister Colin Thatcher.

"This is the first time a Cana-

dian production has topped the U.S. ratings after all the years of everyone saying it couldn't be done," said Ivan Fecan, director of programming for CBC-TV.

Love and Hate was the highest-rated Canadian program aired on CBC last season.

Production of a TV movie on the controversial manslaughter conviction of a Nova Scotia youth is under way in Halifax.

The Bruce Curtis Story: Journey Into Darkness, produced by Atlantis Films and Citadel Communications, is based on a true story.

Curtis, at age 18, was convicted of aggravated manslaughter in the 1982 shooting death of a school friend's mother in New Jersey. The case - and the way it was handled - attracted attention in both the U.S. and Canada.

The movie will air on CBC-TV early next year, said an Atlantis spokesman.

"Bruce's story is terrifying," said Atlantis producer Seaton McLean. "The events leading up to the crime, the crime itself and the subsequent controversial court decision are fascinating in the way only true stories can be. Bruce walked into a nightmare and it's that nightmare we want to explore."

Simon Reynolds play Curtis, Jamiz Woolvett portrays Scott Franz, Curtis's New Jersey schoolfriend, and Kenneth Walsh (who played Colin Thatcher in Love and Hate) plays Curtis's defence attorney.

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