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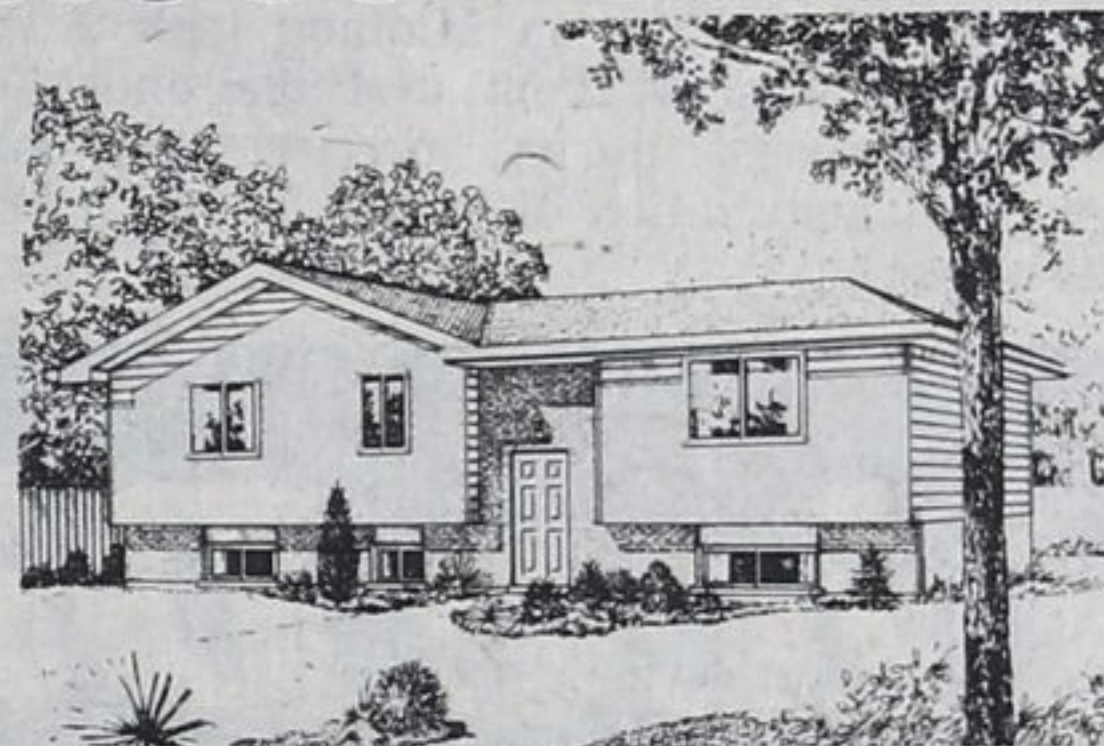


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The Bostonians

a movie that is more than a slice of Masterpiece Theatre

by TERRY DUPUIS

Viewers who like movies in which the characters enunciate all of their words clearly and speak in complete sentences should enjoy a new movie called *The Bostonians*.

This film is based on a novel by the distinguished 19th century American writer Henry James. The book is only two years short of being a hundred years old. Speech mannerisms have changed in this period, but the makers of the movie version have courageously held up the original work and have placed a faithful and literate rendition of it onto the screen.

The Bostonians throughout most of its two hour length bears a resemblance to something which we might see on television's "Masterpiece Theatre".

To present it on 1984 theatre screens is a daring move, since it is likely to appeal only to a limited audience. Still, I have to admit that it was refreshing to see a civilized stately movie of this type. It makes a sharp difference in theme and content. *The Bostonians* contains no high speed car chases, no killings and no coarse language.

James' novel and the movie which has been made from it deals with the feminist movement which first emerged in America in 1875, particularly the way in which it affected upper class Boston society. Screen newcomer Madeleine Potter portrays the story's heroine Verena Tarrant. She is an attractive intelligent young woman who is the only daughter of a faith healer. Her father is something of an eccentric and a bit of a scoundrel, but he has met with a certain amount of success in treating the wealthy Bostonians.

It soon becomes evident to the old guy that his daughter would make an ideal spokeswoman for the feminist movement which is beginning to emerge in Boston. And he is not above turning his daughter over to others for

a sum of money, others who want to use her in their movement. Particularly a middle-aged spinster named Olive, who is portrayed by Vanessa Redgrave. Olive becomes Verena's close friend and mentor, grooming her for her role as spokeswoman for the American female who is seeking liberation in 19th Century America.

But a problem enters the picture in the form of Olive's own distant cousin from Mississippi. Basil Ransom is a dashing young man who becomes infatuated with Verena, and there is the imminent threat that he will lure Verena away from the movement. Since he is a male, Olive sees Basil as an enemy of their movement, and she tries to protect her young protegee from him.

The Bostonians is the type of movie in which acting performances are the most important component in the overall success or failure of the enterprise. And this movie is fortunate in that it has some tremendous performances. First of all there is stage actress Madeleine Potter who makes her screen debut here as Verena. She gives an intelligent performance, and she well conveys the tension and inner struggle of Verena, who is torn between her dedication to the movement which she is representing and her attraction to the dashing stranger who is trying to enter her life and make claims upon it.

Christopher Reeve is also noteworthy as her persistent suitor Basil. *The Bostonians* reveals that Reeve can certainly play other roles besides Superman, and he is surprisingly effective in this costume picture. Vanessa Redgrave almost dominates the movie as the dour determined feminist who is very protective of young Verena. Also impressive in supporting roles are Jessica Tandy as an elderly feminist; Linda Hunt as a sardonic attorney and Wesley Addy as Verena's conniving father.

Between the Lines

by ELI HENDRIKS-WITMER

Photography has begun on the Steven Spielberg production *Goonies* for Warner Brothers Studios. Included in the cast are Ke Huy Huan (Indiana Jones' sidekick in the Temple of Doom), Sean Astin (son of John Astin and Patty Duke) and Josh Brolin (son of James Brolin) currently starring in the hit TV series *Hotel*. Now everybody's kids want to get into the act!

back up his new album. And rumour has it that Broadway smash Carr is planning to feature him in his musical *La Cage Aux Folles*.

Paperbacks

One looks at a book of war photos for some of the same reasons the pictorial-diaries were taken I suppose - to see at first hand and empathize with outrageous happenings to private citizens caught between fire and political struggle. Photographer Thomas L. Friedman confirms this in his foreword to *War Torn*, a selection of recent war photos taken in Cambodia, Nicaragua, Lebanon, Africa and Ireland. The majority of the photos dramatically focus on the most innocent victims of strife - children. In one series of three pictures we witness a Salvadorean child die in his father's arms. In another, the bodies of three nuns are found in shallow graves in El Salvador. Moving, gut-wrenching actually, the sheer impact of so many dramatic photos takes its toll. The news photographers explain their motives behind such a career - one not without risk. The book is dedicated to one of the contributors, John Hoagland, who died last March, caught between the Salvadoran army and the guerillas. Most of these photos have never been published before (Random House, \$19.95).

1984 has been a year of tremendous change in Canadian politics and a no-holds-barred year for cartoonists as they wrestled with new faces, new jaws and said goodbye to Pierre Trudeau, who has been their bread-and-butter for almost 12 years. *Best Canadian Political Cartoons 1984* edited by N.M. Stahl has a varied selection of cross-continent cartoonists (36 in all, 200 cartoons) including the Sun's Andy Donato and Sue Dewar. Over the year, the Senate inspired some vitriolic cartooning, Revenue Canada's jack-boot approach as seen briefly in a quickly withdrawn TV ad was certainly grist. So was the metric battle, the Grange Commission, the sinking dollar, Grenada - truly a hodge-podge of cartoon ideas, spawning some whimsical, some darkly sardonic works of art in Canadian newspapers (McClelland & Stewart, \$12.96). Patricia Job