

All The World's A Circus

Movies everywhere

Movies, movies, movies. Are you seeing so many movies these days, you've signed a monthly maintenance deal to clean popcorn kernels from your teeth? Have you reached that point when you get up from a chair at home, it feels weird if your feet don't stick to the floor? Do you get the feeling that when you die and your life passes before your eyes, a critic will pan you in the next day's obituary?

Yes the movie industry is so profitable and so prolific, experts believe Famous Players Theatre will soon be able to afford real butter on their popcorn instead of that "battered flavored" Bardol topping which creates the kind of indigestion that sends doctors scurrying in search of a vaccine. Whenever I taste that rich, rancid, synthetic flavor I can actually see the accountant crunching the numbers that reduce popcorn costs by .038 cents per bag x 7 trillion bags per week x a 10-year stomach wall depreciation at 4% annuity = \$screw 'em.

Here then is my line-up of movies you just have to see this season.

It's a great big winter war story. The lines are drawn, death threats come from all sides and skirmishes erupt bringing all out war to the brink. World wealth is at stake. Body bags are sent to the front. It's "THE BALLARD FAMILY CHRISTMAS".

This year's smash baseball movie depicts a young boy from the islands who rises to the zenith of professional sports and earns \$2 Million a year despite an amazing handicap which he never really overcomes. The movie "GEORGE BELL SCISSORHANDS".

The very latest in mobster movies will frighten even the head of the horse that's hiding under your pillow. She stands by her man despite the sacred oath he took to slash and cut, wipe out and tear down everything in his path. Parent's guidance is recommended when Pearly Rae stars as herself in "MARRIED TO THE BOB".

This year's most touching and unlikely love story depicts inter-racial romance at it's delicate best. He's the first black

Governor General of a Canadian province. She's the first woman leader of a national political party. Off to the inaugural ball they go with Lincoln Alexander at the wheel in "DRIVING MISS AUDREY".

Large sweeping vistas of a strange land during revolutionary time in history is the backdrop for another unlikely love story. He wants her but without the responsibility she bears. She loves him

but fears the freedom he represents. She's a corporal in the Canadian army, he's a Mohawk Warrior named after a popular baked pasta dish - the movie - "OUT OF OKA."

He was a popular leader of the left. In blue suit and red tie he was the model of administration, the prince of provincial power. Then he called an election nobody wanted. Now David Peterson is "GONE WITH THE



William J. Thomas

WIND".

In a military thriller the Canadian Navy desperately tries to reach the war zone of the Persian Gulf but is delayed by faulty radar which causes them to do "figure eights" in Halifax harbour for 38 straight days in "NO WAY OUT".

In his brilliant documentary, Oscar-winning director John Zaritsky details the day-to-day whereabouts of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney during a time of historical crisis when the country splits apart after the failure of Meech Lake and Mohawk Warriors hold the nation hostage for 78 days. Using film noire technique with only the blackened screen as Canada and a pillowcase as the Prime Minister - the National Film board presents - "GHOST".

He's a powerful man with a pea for a brain. He demeans women and delivers toilet humor while dressed in a tuxedo at \$500-a-plate fundraisers. He's rude, he's crude, he's John Crosbie as himself in "UNCLE BUCK FROM CORNER BROOK".

The comeback movie of the decade depicts the return of Liberal Leader Jean Cretien to national politics. The movie's central theme "the little guy from Shawinigan is back" seems to fade early

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Life, According To "Baba"

Grab and Stab Tax

Well, as we blow gaskets and suffer high blood pressure from the newly installed Federal Goods and Service Tax (better known as the Grab and Stab Tax, or the Gouge and Stick-it-to-'em Tax!), let us not lose sight of two other issues connected with it.

Firstly. Who, or what, out there in our dear government is going to monitor whether or not merchants are taking the old invisible manufacturers' tax of 13.5 per cent off the price tag of taxable items, and replacing it ONLY with this new G.S.T.? Who, huh, who?

Having to trust the honesty and the integrity of the sellers out there in the market place is like putting your trust in the Tooth Fairy. Human nature, being the fallible thing it is, and human greed being a most moving force, who is going to ensure us consumers

that the price we're paying for an article has only the 7% Federal hike on it (plus the Provincial bite as well), or whether we're being gouged with the old and the new together? Who, huh, who?

I'd love to be able to trust my fellow human beings, especially those self-same merchants upon whom I, along with millions of other Canadians, depend for the necessities of life. But, just as I stopped believing in the Tooth Fairy, and Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny eons ago, so do I not believe human nature is going to change overnight. Just like this new taxing system.

"Taxing" is so apt a word. This is taxing my patience, my intelligence, my sense of outrage, not knowing whether this new gouge into my wallet is REALLY going to benefit all of us economically (as the economists and financial wizards keep assuring us), or whether we're being taken for a financial ride down the slippery road of governmental and mercantile manipulation. I sincerely hope not. I DO want to trust our business people. I DON'T want to have my faith completely undermined by the hearing, and reading of, sad tales of gouging already going on from sea to money-shining sea.

So be on your toes, fellow consumers. Check out those new prices. Take the time to do a little figuring and calculating. You'll not only be doing yourself a favour, but every other consumer who comes after you.

Now, the other thing to keep your eagle eye on, is this present Baloney Government's electoral and G.S.T. promise, to CUT DOWN on governmental expenditures. This new accumulation of revenue is supposed to do that, reduce our National Debt, and keep our Social Services in place.

So, let us not read of more new shocks in the Auditor General's Annual Report, that dear Mila has once again changed the carpets at 24 Sussex Drive (at OUR expense), that Ministers and MP's have once again redecorated their parliamentary offices (at OUR expense), that they have also voted themselves another hefty hike in salaries, pensions and perks (at OUR expense).

Let's have some real investigative reporters stay close on governmental monkey tails to make sure such monkey business is not taking place. BEFORE, and not AFTER, the fact. Let's hear, or read, of some definite cuts in this over-heavy bureaucracy which over-burdens all of us. Do we really need so many Civil Servants running our lives? Do we really need so many feather-bedding types handing out insane grants of OUR monies on insane projects, or to private enterprises which hardly qualify as welfare cases?

Let this government finally do something sensible instead of trying to bamboozle us forever and a day with idiocies like Meech Lake, bilingualism, Senatorial patronage, the shameful schemozzle of Oka so ineptly handled, proposed aboriginal self-government, and Mila's unfortunate choice of decorators.

If we have to tighten OUR belts, then, for heaven's sake, let's see, and hear of, some signs of belt-tightening on the over-expansive girth of Freddy the Fearful Monster of Government.



Olga Landlak

Taking a new look at education

Dr. Randle Nelsen is an eccentric, somewhat scruffy-looking professor currently in the middle of a one-year sabbatical from the Sociology Department at Lakehead University. He wears basketball shoes and shorts as long as he can every year, until the cold of winter sets in and forces him to change to his blue jeans. But he wears the basketball shoes all year.

He's disturbed and challenged his own students by putting his radical ideas about education to the test in his classroom, at least once. His fourth year sociology of education students were somewhat taken aback when, for one course, he threw out the established curriculum, and told the students they were now in complete control of the decisions about what they were going to learn. That experiment is graphically documented in his interesting new book, *Miseducating: Death of the Sensible*.

Nelsen has spent the last 20 years of his life studying what's wrong with the North American education system. In *Miseducating*, he's calling for sweeping

changes in the school system. At the top of his list is the abolition of compulsory schooling - doing away with the law that says you have to go to school until you're 16.

"I think if you look at the research on kids who are unhappy at school and who act out their unhappiness, and make public their unhappiness, that's the major thing they're unhappy with, is that they're compelled to attend."

Nelsen says the law forcing kids to go to school until they're 16 makes teachers into cops - whose first priority is to maintain order, rather than doing the job they're supposed to be doing - helping kids learn how to think creatively, and independently.

Nelsen would also like to change the way the school system is governed, and put all schools back in the hands of local neighbourhoods (in large cities), or under the jurisdiction of community school

boards (in small northern towns). That's the way it was before the Conservative Minister of Education, Bill Davis, reduced the number of school boards from over 1,000 to just over 100 boards, back in the 1970's.

"We need a community base to the school. It should bring people who are uncertified in terms of academic degrees and diplomas, but have real life experiences that are important to people

who want to know what they know - it should bring these people together. And it shouldn't be age-graded, or age-specific. I think this is detrimental to building a sense of community. Because the community is a place, and a neighbourhood is a place, where people of all ages and all kinds of different backgrounds reside and interact. And the schools should reflect that."

Nelsen also has a lot to say about the use of computers in schools. Because

going to school is compulsory, the computer, in Nelsen's view, just contributes to making schools a training ground for corporate behaviour - training kids how to behave properly, rather than training them how to think critically.

"I don't see this computer-aided instruction teaching students to raise many of the kinds of questions I would like to see them raise. I think it blurs their sensibilities, it blurs their imaginations. The spin-offs of computers are all these video games that people are locked into. It's another form of social control, you know. In the 60s, if you wanted to pacify the population, feed them a lot of marijuana. In the 90s, if you want to pacify the population, feed them Nintendo."

Nelsen says it's just like taking a square peg, and hammering off the edges, until it fits into a round hole. No wonder, he says, kids rebel when this mass, bureaucratized school system tries to round off their creative "rough edges", so they fit into the

NORTHERN INSIGHTS

by Larry Sanders



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