

First Wives Club not much more than seen in promos

Future homemakers/wreckers take note—Hugh Wilson's *The First Wives Club* is a two-hour lesson on what makes a marriage tick. Or should that be a lesson in how to transform a happily-married woman into a ticking bomb? Audiences would have to agree on the latter after sitting through a film packed with male-bashing antics and slapstick revenge tactics.

The movie opens with a scene we all know well (or will eventually)—four friends toasting their 1969 college graduation with gifts and promises of staying in touch forever. Flash forward 20 or so years to one of the friend's (Stockard Channing) suicidal plunge from her penthouse balcony as a result of losing her tycoon husband to a younger woman (Heather Locklear). The remaining three friends catch up and bond at the funeral after learning that they

have all been traded in for younger models by their husbands.

Each woman has her own different problem. Goldie Hawn plays Elise, an actress made up of 65% silicone and 35% vodka, who refuses to be cast as anyone's mother, although her career is dwindling. Diane Keaton is apologizing Annie, who acts as a pinball bouncing off of her lesbian daughter, controlling mother, and manipulative ad-exec ex-husband's bumpers.

Movie Review By Carey Gore

Bette Midler deserves the most applause as Brenda, the overweight and dejected mother of a thirteen year-old son who is having as hard a time dealing with his parent's divorce as he is with puberty.

"Cheers" veteran Dan Hadaya is also excellent as Midler's philandering electronics-king ex-husband who falls for the convincingly ditzy Sarah Jessica Parker, whom Midler terms "Little Miss Midriff."

The plot stops there, folks. The rest of the film is little more than an unrealistic scene-by-scene attempt to make the three ex-husbands pay for being the lowlifes that they are. The women are righteous; the men are rascals. Midler makes a great over-bearing and loud Jewish housewife with ancestral mob ties, while Hawn and Keaton are slightly less-convincing in their roles. There's lots of girlish squealing with a few scattered good jokes throughout (most of which can be caught in the television ad for the film).

My recommendation to those of you who haven't seen it yet? Unless you are really in a "death to men" kind of mood, wait for the Blue Ridge debut!

No Code works for Pearl Jam

By Tory Hoke

Now is the time when all college pawn shops and music stores see a surge in used music. The flood of fall releases is over, and students have to decide whether they want to keep "New Adventures in Hi Fi" or eat. They'll choose eating, but their loss is your gain. You'll want to bring a CD or tape player to check what you buy; most places don't provide listening stations but will let you listen if you bring your own. Along with the following, I recommend Toni Braxton's "Secrets" and Tracy Chapman's "New Beginning," but fat chance of finding those used.

Pearl Jam's *No Code*: Where *Vitalogy* was dark, *No Code* is faded. The band seems worn-out, probably because this is their fourth album in as many years, not to mention the many side-projects and soundtrack contributions. But worn-out *works* for Pearl Jam, just like angry and funky and grimy have worked for them.

Listeners expecting the usual rockin' album opener may be disappointed by the quiet "Sometimes," which would have been more welcome as an end-of-side palate cleanser. But "Hail, Hail" more than picks up the pace, and it's a *love* song! "Who You Are" has been criticized for its anemic world beat, and "Smile" has been called a bad Neil Young rip-off, but if you listen without prejudice, you find that both are perfectly passable WRDU night music. "In My Tree" is the best thing here - if Eddie Vedder ever chummies to the news media, he'll lose a huge source of inspiration. (And I think I hear Stone Gossard's riff from side-project *Brad*'s "20th Century" in "In My Tree"'s chorus.)

"Habit" is, predictably, about drug use, but listen for Vedder's spin on Mike Watt's "speakin' as a child of the 70's" line from his hilarious "Against the 70's," on which Vedder sang for the Watt compilation, "Ball Hog or Tug Boat." Fresh blood Jack Irons brings his Chili Peppers sound most notably to "Red Mosquito" in a swinging 6/8. Gossard sings on "Mankind," which would be all over the Top 40 had the Gin Blossoms released it.

There's a heaping helping of soft songs here, all strong except for "I'm Open." Vedder talks over it, but Langston Hughes he ain't. The ballads would play better if they were the exception rather than the rule, but make no mistake: this is an end-to-end album. You'll mean to rewind a track and never get around to it because the next one's so good. Hail, hail, Pearl Jam.

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Band: The Usuals
more information to follow

Tobacco: continued from page 1

titled, "Others to feel tobacco's pain," says that the FDA regulations will not have a direct effect on "farmers, cigarette makers, warehouse operators and retailers." John Maxwell, a tobacco analyst at Wheat First Securities in Richmond, Va., is quoted in the article as saying that, for the aforementioned businesses that depend on tobacco, the impact of the regulations would be "nearly zero." He says that the cigarette business has grown overseas and made up for any lack it had in the U. S. For this reason, he says, North Carolina tobacco is in demand. The industries that will be most hurt by the FDA regulations, says Maxwell, are advertising, publishing, and entertainment.

However, most people in North Carolina disagree. Senator Jesse Helms is quoted in the September 1996 issue of *North Carolina Farmer* as saying "The president, if he attempts to regulate tobacco, will declare war on the more than 76,000 North Carolinians who make up the tobacco community." Helms goes on to say that in the president's attempt to curb teenage smoking, he is only attacking the people "who earn their living growing, manufacturing, and selling tobacco." He also called the FDA's regulations "unconstitutional" because they "violate the First Amendment."

North Carolina governor Jim Hunt vehemently opposes Clinton's anti-tobacco campaign and says he will fight it. Gov. Hunt has a history of opposing any anti-tobacco or anti-smoking campaigns by the federal government. In an article by Barry Yeoman in last week's *Independent*, it mentions that in 1983, Hunt worked against a bill for tougher warning labels on cigarettes. In 1984, he wanted the Surgeon General, C. Everett Coop, dismissed because Coop was against smoking.

This article also states that tobacco is not as important as it was 10 years ago. The North Carolina Department of Agriculture's tobacco program administrator, Carl Sofley, says there are fewer than 10,000 farmers growing to-

bacco. Many farmers stopped growing tobacco because the tobacco companies found it cheaper to buy tobacco from other countries.

Without tobacco, what other alternatives do North Carolina's farmers have? There is always the possibility of phasing out tobacco and growing other crops. But that too has its drawbacks. Gordon says, "[Tobacco] has given us the ability to grow food crops to feed this country because these crops usually do not bring in the money to justify growing them alone."

If food crops do not bring in enough money, what about utilizing tobacco in another way? Research is already being done to see what other uses there are for tobacco besides smoking products. Because tobacco proteins are easily manipulated, tobacco is already being used in genetic engineering. At the University of Chapel Hill Employee Forum on July 5, 1995, Chancellor Michael Hooker stressed that because tobacco can be used in genetic engineering, the University should research more ways to use tobacco to help the industry. In November of 1995, Biosource Technologies announced plans to build a tobacco-processing facility in Kentucky. Biosource Chairman and CEO, Robert L. Erwin, said that the company is "excited about the opportunity to aggressively pursue alternate uses of tobacco."

No one knows what the future of the tobacco industry in North Carolina will be in the years to come. Farmers like the Gordons can only hope it doesn't end up in smoke.

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