

Depp loses pants, nostrils

BY BETH DOZIER
STAFF WRITER

"You will not like me," Johnny Depp's Earl of Rochester tells the audience during the opening monologue, peering out of the darkness. "You will not like me now, and you will like me a good deal less as we go on."

His words apply to the film, too. As the Earl falls deeper and deeper into a self-destructive well, "The Libertine" becomes increasingly incoherent.

The film follows John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (Depp), a real-life 17th-century poet with more fondness for paramours than Parliament.

Based on a play by the same name, Laurence Dunmore's murky work depicts Wilmot's demise as he makes his way around London's grimy bordellos and playhouses, drinking and carousing himself to an early grave at the ripe young age of 33.

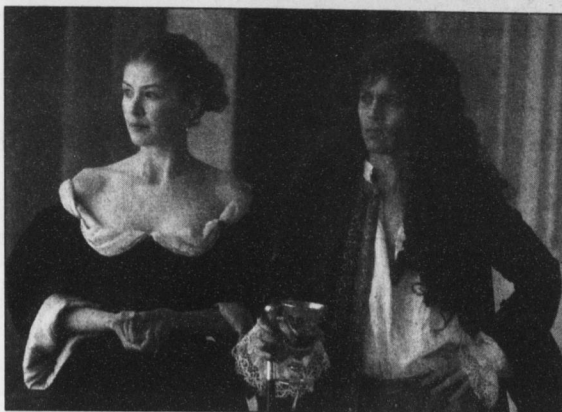
The unfortunate Earl eases his disillusionment with life with alcohol and harlots, leaving his beautiful wife, Elizabeth (Rosamund Pike, who defines her small role with a mesmerizing presence), to run his estate.

Citing the London stage as his only solace, Wilmot takes Elizabeth Barry (Samantha Morton), a fledgling actress, under his wing, hoping to turn her into London's greatest stage presence.

Meanwhile, the insecure King Charles II (John Malkovich) commissions Wilmot to pen a play to impress the French ambassadors.

Big mistake. Wilmot responds with a sexually charged play mocking the irresolute monarch. But luckily for Charles, Wilmot takes care of his own demise.

It's been said that suffering makes for great art. In that case, with Wilmot succumbing to vene-



COURTESY OF THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY
The tormented and debaucherous Earl of Rochester (Johnny Depp) walks on the side of his wife (Rosamund Pike) in another period piece.

MOVIE REVIEW 'THE LIBERTINE'

★★
real diseases that eventually cause his nose to rot off, "The Libertine" would be one of the greatest films ever made.

Except it's just too painful to watch.

The film is intriguing in the beginning, creating an interesting love triangle between Wilmot, his beguiling wife and the strong-willed actress.

But Wilmot's self-destruction takes the helm, and pretty soon, "The Libertine" no longer has a plot. It becomes a nonlinear, foggy depiction of Wilmot's downfall and debauchery, including an orgy scene that truly might be an engineering marvel.

Who knew Restoration London was such a den of iniquity?

Perhaps the film should have focused more on Wilmot's work.

"The Libertine" alludes to his literary talent and depicts him uttering a few haggard verses here and there, but his sexual conquests take the spotlight.

Depp is excellent as usual, giving Wilmot a demonic ferocity that ensures he's correct when he predicts the audience will not like him.

But even though Wilmot could never appear in a Disney movie, poor Depp can't escape the nonchalant swagger of Captain Jack Sparrow.

With pretty much the same costume, accent, long dark hair and general air of bawdy arrogance, Wilmot is like the "Pirates of the Caribbean" character before he developed a penchant for eyeliner and swashbuckling.

"The Libertine" might have been more aptly named "Pirates of the Caribbean 3: Curse of the Syphilitic Skank."

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Gender-swapping flick isn't all that entertaining

BY JACKIE RANDELL
STAFF WRITER

The only thing emptier than the theater airing Amanda Bynes' latest attempt at acting is the movie's plotline.

"She's the Man" is a cheesy, poorly adapted take on the gender-swapping plotline of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," and Bynes does nothing to resuscitate the doomed flick.

Unlike "10 Things I Hate About You," loosely based on the Bard's "Taming of the Shrew," "She's the Man" doesn't succeed in adapting archetypal plotlines to modern sensibilities. And bad acting is this movie's downfall.

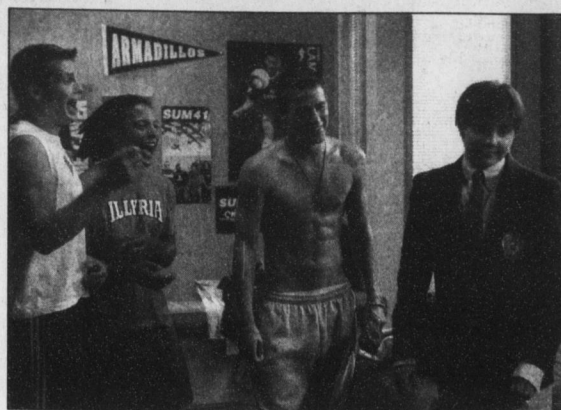
Bynes started her acting career on Nickelodeon's "All That." Since then, she hasn't developed her acting skill beyond the overly wrought facial expressions and mannerisms expected of her on the children's network.

She has, however, developed breasts, which she impresses upon the audience at every possible opportunity.

The predictable plot goes something like this: After the girls' soccer team at her high school is nullified and she's refused a spot on the boys' team, Viola (Bynes) takes on her twin brother Sebastian's identity.

In the guise of Sebastian — who actually is in London with his band — Viola attends an elite boarding school in order to prove that she can play soccer with the boys.

For some reason, Bynes takes on a bizarre Mini-Me like accent when playing Sebastian that's unbelievably irritating and even less believable.



COURTESY OF DREAMWORKS PICTURES
Amanda Bynes tries to be one of the guys amid much tomfoolery in a ghastly teen adaptation of Shakespeare's classic "Twelfth Night."

MOVIE REVIEW 'SHE'S THE MAN'

★
Somewhere along the line, she falls in love with her teammate Duke (Channing Tatum), and an uncomfortable love triangle ensues.

Tatum plays the stereotypical handsome soccer player. His character really gains dimension, however, when the audience learns he's actually a softy at heart — Sebastian (aka Viola) predictably swoons.

When the true Sebastian returns, some funny moments result from the confusion.

For example, when the principal of the school believes he's on to Viola, he approaches the true Sebastian, who flashes his "Willis and Doodleberry" to clear up the

confusion. Shortly thereafter, Viola flashes her breasts to achieve the same aim and shoots the movie's rating into the racy PG-13 realm.

After her true identity is revealed, Viola begs to play in the soccer match against Cornwall, Viola's old school. Duke launches into a spiel that ends in the climactic, "Some have greatness thrust upon them."

Bynes should try to land an agent more like Mandy Moore's, who will increase her credibility in Hollywood. Otherwise, movies like "She's the Man" will propel her onto the B-list faster than a spot on "The Surreal Life."

Right now, she's not even close to the man.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Dance-punk band dupes men, women and children

BY BETH MECHUM
STAFF WRITER

Men, Women & Children urge you to get out on the dance floor, and they mean business.

The band, started by former Glassjaw guitarist Todd Weinstock and friends wants its listeners to have fun and lose inhibition while enjoying to the music.

A solid dance-punk band, Men, Women & Children shows it's more than just a gimmick on its first full-length album.

Pegged by many as somewhat of a joke, it's clear on the LP that the band actually does have musi-

cal talent. Chock full of electric, disco and funk sounds, the six-piece band sounds like Panic! at the Disco with a stronger rock influence.

While the lyrics aren't the greatest or the cleverest, the funky beats more than make up for the lack of wit.

After all, who needs wit when you can dance?

The group's self-titled LP is the type of album you'd put on at a party, but listening to it for pleasure probably isn't the best idea.

The songs become somewhat monotonous, but there are a cou-

ple of standouts. "Lightning Strikes Twice in New York" follows a different pattern than the other formulaic songs and uses irony to recognize the band's strength: dance music.

"I will forget/But I will not forgive/All the things you said/In the beat of the moment."

Another standout is "The Name of the Train is the Hurricane." The track doesn't have anything particularly special about it, it's just one of the most fun to listen and, of course, dance to.

Despite the anomalies, most of



the songs are elementary in style and in writing. In "Vowels," there is a truly moronic refrain that was

MUSIC REVIEW MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN

★★
meant to be cute but comes out as insulting to the listener.


"A-E-I-O-U Nothing" is ridiculously repeated again and again for seemingly no reason.

At least it's the last song, so it can be easily turned off, guilt free.

With beats this good, it's just sad the band lets the lyrics go to the wayside.

Men, Women & Children is something the hipsters will especially like, but when looking for a calm, enjoyable listening experience, look somewhere else.

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Prince waxes on sexuality, spirituality

MUSIC REVIEW PRINCE 3121

★★★★

BY ADAM WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

Consider 3121 to be the magic combination that has finally allowed the Purple One back into his tower of greatness.

This is the album that 2004's *Musicology* should have been. Whereas the latter lacked the musical fire and fury of yore, 3121 reeks of vintage Prince.

It's smart, sexy and has enough winners to remind listeners why they fell in love with this provocative and innovative artist in the first place.

The one-two punch that is made of "Lolita" and "Black Sweat" hits early on in the album, giving the audience a black eye of pleasure that sets up all the bruising to come.

What is easily the dirtiest song about serial monogamy in recent memory, "Lolita" is a sunny pop delight that Prince hasn't hit quite so right since "Raspberry Beret."

On "Black Sweat," Prince proves once again that he is the master of tight hooks, with enough pounding beats and screeching synth work to steam up any given dance floor.

"I'm hot and I don't care who knows it/I got a job to do," he belts out, exuberating the erotic confidence of "Kiss" that made the diminutive star into such an unlikely sex symbol.

Prince keeps the momentum going strong with "Fury," a track that gives justice to his own genius guitar work that so few of his other songs rarely have a chance to display.

His instrument transforms into the scorned woman he warns us about, her revenge and bitter heart seeping through each and every note.

Baring a side of himself rarely seen, "The Word" is a commentary on his own views of spirituality, with allusions to born-again salvation and "streets of gold" abundant throughout the track.

Who knew a man whose sole desire in life once was to simply "Jack U Off" would be singing about the Lord, and making it sound so tantalizing?

With its Latin-inspired sound, "Te Amo Corazon" is an oddly-placed ballad that doesn't belong in an album so fully realized with the help of Prince's specialty brand of funk. And sounding like a video game rather than a hot dance number, "Love" is squashed by the other tunes on the album.

These tracks are simply mere cracks in the great work that Prince has built for himself — on 3121, Prince has truly reclaimed his crown.

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