

# Taster's Choice

## Cinema

"Fantasia." Carolina Theatre. Walt Disney's setting of music to animation smacks a bit of cliché, but it is a beautiful, imaginative work all the same. 2:21, 4:30, 6:20 & 8:46. \$2. Ends today. Late show Friday and Saturday: "Candy." 11:15. \$1.50.

"The Erotic Memoirs of a Male Chauvinist Pig." Variety Theatre. 1, 2:46, 4:08, 5:47, 7 & 8:50. \$2. Ends Sunday. Late show Friday and Saturday: "Play It Again, Sam." 11:15. \$1.50.

"American Wilderness." Plaza I. The makers of this film say, "We don't have any artistic ability, and we don't need any." Enough said. 4:30, 7 & 9:15. \$2. Ends today.

"Executive Action." Plaza II. Semi-fiction story of the John F. Kennedy assassination. It's all really terrible but the worst offender is the script, with its heavy-handed hindsight irony. 3:30, 5:25, 7:20 & 9:15. \$2. Ends today.

"Magnum Force." Plaza III. The sequel to "Dirty Harry," which was a masterpiece of its genre. This film, however, is a pretentious revolting piece of junk. 2:30, 4:50, 7:10 & 9:30. \$2. Ends Wednesday, Jan. 23.

"Ivan the Terrible, Part II." Chapel Hill Film Friends. The conclusion of the Sergei Eisenstein magnificent epic. Music by Prokofiev. Friday at 9:30, Saturday at 11:30 in Carroll Hall. \$1.50.

"Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me." Alternative Cinema. Francola Truffaut's black comedy about a female murderer. Good reviews from the New York critics. Friday at 7, Saturday at 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:30. \$1.50.

Free Flicks: Friday, "The Gold Rush." Perhaps the greatest Chaplin film set in the days of the Klondike Gold Rush. Saturday, "The Girls." This Swedish import deals with actresses on a tour of "Lystetrate" who gradually discover the play working in their personal lives. Sunday, "Repulsion." Confused by her feelings for men, a girl is driven to the brink of insanity by her fears and fantasies. All flicks at 6:30 & 9 in the Great Hall.

## Theatre

Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus." UNC Opera Theatre. Directed by UNC music professor, Dr. Wilton Mason. Friday and Saturday at 8 in Memorial Hall. Tickets, \$2, are now on sale at the music department in Hill Hall and will be available at the door shortly before the performance.

Woody Allen's "Play It Again, Sam." New Theatre, Durham. Friday and Saturday at 8. For reservations call 286-9414. Tickets, \$1.50, are also available at the door.

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January sales reminder: There will be the usual clearances, but don't expect bargains to be as good as in previous years. With shortages a problem, merchants don't move fast to cut prices these days. If you do spot a good buy in something you'll be needing, better grab it. All signs point to higher price tags for just about everything by summer and fall. -Changing Times

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Peter Hardy

# 'Executive Action' engrossing

I have seen few films in my life that have such an interesting effect on audiences as *Executive Action*. It connects with the half-buried memories of an entire national consciousness with frightening and disconcerting results. It is unfortunate that so remarkable a film could not be a really good one; still, it is totally engrossing.

The film's stated purpose is to show how the assassination of President Kennedy 10 years ago could have been the doings of a conspiracy instead of the work of a single crazed gunman.

Already the makers of the film are on shaky ground—is it possible to turn such a serious subject into a mere thriller? If they wanted to suggest an explanation for the many loose ends of the official investigation, why not make a documentary?

But would that have done any good? Would very many movie-goers have been interested in a factual film full of ballistic reports and witnesses' testimonies? If Edward Lewis, the producer and Mark Lane, who provided the story, wanted to shock their audiences into thinking about a subject that they obviously don't care to think about, they made the right decision.

People who have half-listened to conspiracy stories for years, but never bothered to look into the subject, may very well be forced to face the issue when they see this film.

The movie uses a combination of old footage of Kennedy during the last month before his death, including his trip to Dallas, and newly filmed action dealing with the work of the conspirators.

When people first come into the theater, I don't think they are expecting much—after all, it's only a movie. But I had the feeling that a kind of shock crept slowly over them as the film moved on.

It's astonishing to see history rewritten, as it were, and by the time the title "November 22" came over the screen it seemed impossible that they were actually going to do it. The use of old footage of the assassination, employed masterfully here, evokes memories since most of us have seen the film before.

The most stunning thing about the film is that it is so completely believable. In 1963, most Americans would have balked at the idea of a conspiracy—that sort of thing doesn't happen here—and indeed the conspirators in the film say that they are counting on that.

But now in 1973 we've seen some of the dark possibilities that American society is capable of allowing. With a government so entangled that nobody knows what anybody else is doing, it's easy to believe that such a thing could have happened.

The content of the film is extremely didactic, to the point where some of the dialogue is obviously put in for the sole purpose of reeling off facts for the benefit of the audience. I for one was not bothered by this because I found the material fascinating.

Incidentally, a little reading will show that most of the film is based upon recorded facts, such as the two men who identify themselves as Secret Service men to the police even though the Service later stated that they had no agents in the area. When things like this came

up in the film, I would hear people turn to their companions and ask, "Did that really happen?" For the most part they did.

I was particularly struck by the sudden breakdown of telephones in Washington at the time of the assassination, the incredible shoddiness of the Dallas department's investigation and the film showing Kennedy being thrown backwards by a bullet that supposedly hit him from behind. In fact, if there is anything unbelievable about the film it is that anyone could ever have been convinced of Oswald's guilt.

Of course, it's easy to look back and say this now. *Executive Action* should not be taken as the truth by anyone, though hopefully it might lead people to look into the evidence more closely and decide for themselves.

The movie has lots of artistic problems. David Miller's direction of the new sequences is uninspired, as is the playing of many of the principals. The editors have done a fine job mixing old and new footage, but the effect they create is damaged by the poor, unrealistic photography used in the new sequences. It's as if the subject matter is so intrinsically interesting that nobody could botch it up.

So, I can understand those people who call it a bad movie, even though I wouldn't go so far as to call it that. My reaction to it was subjective, as will be the reactions of most people who see it, I suspect.

But whatever it is, *Executive Action* is well worth seeing and will probably be of greater interest to people than many better movies.

# Digging up naughty nostalgia

by Mark Dearmon  
Feature Writer

May 10, 1929: Prohibition is still in full swing. The Depression is five months away. Hitler is still unknown to the world. And scandal hits the UNC campus.

The source of the scandal is the *Yellow Journal*, a newspaper published three times a year by Sigma Upsilon, a campus literary fraternity. The first issue was published in 1924.

In previous issues, the members of Sigma Upsilon were content to poke fun at some prominent members of the UNC community.

Some comments as "Archie Patterson had his er-er-a adenoids removed week before last" and "Ikey Bellamy wishes to announce that he will spend next week end in Raleigh, uh, uh, as usual" filled the six page publication.

Copies of the last *Journal* were sold on May 10, 1929, during the UNC-Virginia baseball game on campus. Members of Sigma Upsilon could be seen hawking the bright yellow, tabloid-sized papers in the stadium.

Little did the *Journal* staff realize the extent of their clairvoyant powers when they printed "Extinct After This Issue" as one of the headings. Headlines such as "Enraged Spouse Finds Local Poet in Love Nest" disturbed many University officials, putting the campus up in arms.

Walter Spearman, 1929 *Daily Tar Heel* editor and well-known campus leader (now UNC journalism professor), was the target of some of the "Hayshaker" exaggerations:

"Walter Spearman tried to thrust himself, unasked and unwelcomed (as usual) before the public eye. Spearman refused to write any more editorials until it was

officially recognized that he is the only man ever to be in line for three major campus offices."

In spring 1928, Spearman had the choice of running for editor of the *Tar Heel*, president of the YMCA or editor of the *Yackety Yack*.

Another article in the *Journal* that got much attention was "Fountain Pen Girls Filled With Gratitude," the tale of two enterprising young girls who sold fountain pens in front of a local store. The story implied that the girls were selling more than fountain pens.

"Their success was little less than astounding. Many of their customers have since said that they received complete satisfaction."

The *Journal* also made other sexual innuendos:

"George E... suddenly got his water cut off at the hen house after several of the girls found out that his intentions were purely physical."

Then, on May 11, 19 students were called before the student council and suspended for their association with the *Journal*.

During the next week, 11 of the accused were reinstated. The remaining eight were suspended for the rest of the semester.

Among the suspended students were Glenn Holder, editor-elect of the *Daily Tar Heel*, and John Mebane, editor of the campus literary magazine. In the May 14 issue of the *DTH*, letters of apology appeared on the front page from Mebane and Holder.

Holder wrote:

"To the Student Body of the University of North Carolina: I have offended the students and faculty of the University in certain respects, and I accept full responsibility."

"The *Yellow Journal* was assembled hastily and without consideration of the importance of several articles, which never should have been published under any conditions, even in a *Yellow Journal*."

"I am heartily ashamed of my connection with it."

Earlier in the year, members of Sigma Upsilon were warned not to print scandalous material in their *Journal*. The flagrant disobeying of this order made the consequences even worse.

Spearman was asked to continue as *DTH* editor for the remainder of the semester as a result of Holder's suspension. In a 1929 editorial, Spearman addressed himself to the problem of the *Yellow Journal*:

"When a serious mistake has been made—such as the inclusion of certain stories in the *Journal*—some attempt must be made to correct the mistake, to deal with its perpetrators, and to prevent the recurrence of the same blunder. We trust, however, that it will be remembered that college is, after all, a sort of laboratory in which students are experimenting before going out into the business of living and that mistakes—even foolish and unpleasant mistakes—are not capital crimes."

"A mistake has been made. Now let it be remedied as quietly and effectively as possible."

In a recent interview, Spearman, now a UNC journalism professor, recalled the *Yellow Journal* of 1929. He still condemned the *Journal's* attack of some students and the printing of certain scandalous stories.

But, he said, "A lot of it was just pure fun. A lot of people were asking for what they got."

If a publication of this type were to appear on campus today, he said, it would hardly be noticed.

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