

Movies effective, but lack bravado

African colonization, Boston newspaper

What sets *Black And White In Color* apart from most films depicting colonialist attitudes towards race relations is the film's lack of bravado.

Not that the film isn't effective—*Black And White In Color* is frequently chilling in its treatment of white dominance on the Ivory Coast before World War I. But director Jean-Jacques Annaud lends a relaxed, but assured hand to his film without resorting to blatant didacticism.

Black and White In Color is not a great film (despite winning an Oscar over *Seven Beauties*, which is a great film), but it is certainly a worthwhile one. You can't help but be moved by Annaud's earnest contempt

films

Black and White In Color
Between the Lines

By HANK BAKER

and horror at the way the French and German colonialists feel about their racial superiority and how they use the frequently willing natives for corrupt purposes.

The hazy color at the film's beginning gives us a sense of the lazy, meaningless lives the French neo-bourgeois colonialists have at their outpost. The local commander sits alone and drinks, one woman struts around whorishly and a young ex-student refers to the blacks as "almost men."

Once, the news of World War I reaches the French, however, they immediately put together a ragtag army of natives to attack the German outpost, resulting in a resounding defeat.

The young student, named Fresnoy, is against the attack from the beginning. But once it is obvious that the French are in danger of a counter-attack, Fresnoy emerges as the one competent leader of the group. Instead of throwing an army together like before, he uses all sorts of tactics, brutal and otherwise, to enlist as many natives as he can. The cold-bloodedness of his technique allows him to soon dominate not only his black army, but his compatriots as well. From here, the film moves toward its chillingly ironic climax.

Annaud has an eye for detail that is frequently marvelous: a native's indignity at being cheated by French priests selling reliquies.

the purple color of the French general store (which is as out of place in its surroundings as the French are).

Claude Agostini's cinematography captures both the film's contrasting moods (the perfectly drilled black soldiers against the hazy backdrop) and the horror of the battle sequences. But Annaud falters in his treatment of the characters. He is indeed to be credited for not only showing how the French, German and English equally exploit the natives, but also for demonstrating how most of the blacks allow themselves to be used and turned into a facsimile of another ethnic group.

But Annaud's treatment of the French is questionable. His depiction of Fresnoy's metamorphosis into an authoritarian militarist is gripping and controlled. But the other, more foolish bourgeois inhabitants are not developed well.

Their decision to put together a native army (unused to military weapons) within 24 hours is just too idiotic a decision to believe.

Without such finer shadings, it's hard to totally give yourself over to Annaud's point of view. He is clearly trying to be as subtle and honest as he can, and his ardor is rewarding even when his judgment is not.

Joan Micklin Silver's judgment is a bit more off target. Her new film, *Between The Lines*, is this year's first cinematic anachronism. I suppose that radical newspapers like the *Back Bay Mainline* (the newspaper in the film) still exist, but to make a film about the deradicalization of youth and set it in 1976 is a mistake. The disillusionment with the radical '60s spirit was well-nigh complete around the early '70s. *Between The Lines* is set about six years too late.

I'm not trying to minimize the importance of deradicalization as a subject—the death of the counter-culture and today's lackadasical, almost contemptuous attitude toward it. This subject would be great for a film, but Silver isn't up to it.

Between The Lines offers more on the ideas behind deradicalization, but the insights are haphazard. Harry (John Heard), who has been with the paper since the beginning, is not as impassioned as he once was, and there are intimations that the paper is about to be bought by a newspaper conglomerate.

The bulk of the film is the various

interactions, romantic and otherwise, among the staff at the paper. These scenes are frequently enjoyable and interesting.

I think Silver's chief problem is her hesitancy to really grasp her ideas. She concentrates more on the characters' personal lives, yet she fails to show us the relevance the interactions have to what she is trying to get across.

When most of the staff decides to stay on even after the paper is bought, the point is ill-

prepared, particularly since some of the writers consistently act as though they'd quit on the spot. The only two consistent characters are the two that leave—one quits and another is fired.

Between The Lines does mark an improvement on some of Silver's talents. Kenneth van Sickie's photography is more professional this time (though some of the camera placements are amateurish) and the quality of the acting is high.

Country food

By MACK RAY
DTH Contributor

Dip's Country Kitchen in Chapel Hill features traditional Southern-style cooking at low prices. Carolina natives will appreciate a place that serves their favorite down-home victuals, and Yankees in exile may find Dip's an edifying cultural and culinary treat.

Dip's is located on Rosemary Street, next door to Tijuana Fats'. It is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m.

dining

Dip's County Kitchen
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7-12 Friday-Saturday
9-8 Sunday

to midnight Friday and Saturday and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday. The breakfast menu includes country ham, sausage, any style eggs, salmon croquettes and cheddar cheese omelets. There is a lunch special every day, in addition to plate lunches, burgers and barbecue sandwiches. Dinner entrees included a choice of two vegetables and rolls or cornbread, for a maximum price of \$3.

Entrees at lunch and dinner include meat loaf, fresh fish, grilled ham steak, hamburger steak, fried shrimp and a vegetable plate. But barbecue and fried chicken are what Dip's is really all about. Their fried chicken and barbecue chicken, at \$2.15 each, are unbeatable. Dip's serves barbecue pork and beef ribs that should be bronzed and immortalized as monuments to carnivorous delicacies everywhere.

The choice of vegetables includes potatoes and onions, potato salad, tossed salad, corn and pinto beans. Their turnip greens are tender, perfectly seasoned and don't have to be choked down with a mouthful of cornbread. Dip's serves premium beers for 55 cents. For dessert, a varying selection of

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Dip's Country Kitchen, where you can go when the craving for home cooked chicken or barbecue strikes.

pies, such as apple, pecan, coconut, and sweet potato pie is offered.

Dip's is a little far from campus, but well worth the effort to get there. Residents of Carrboro should check into Dip's for a hearty breakfast before class. Service is sometimes slow, and the stark decor is reminiscent of a fallout shelter. A jukebox, replete with many Aretha Franklin tunes, can help pass the time. The location may be obscure, the service may be casual, but at Dip's, the customer pays for hearty food and no bogus frills.

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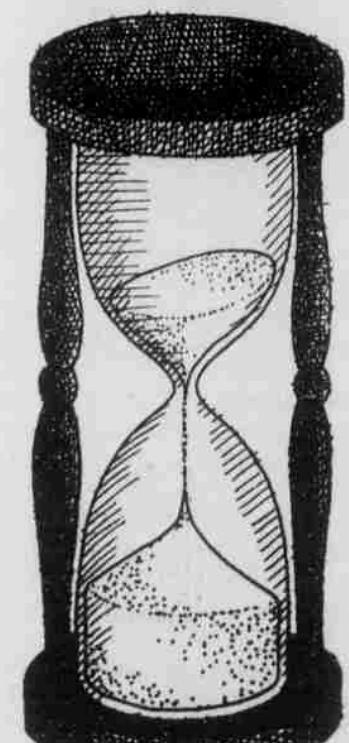
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