

# 'Throw Momma' is fast-paced, funny

Kelly Rhodes

Cinema

"Eliminate the motive and establish an alibi" is the way to commit the perfect murder, according to creative writing professor Larry Donner (Billy Crystal) in the Orion Pictures film, "Throw Momma From The Train."

In trying to explain this basic murder-writing idea to his less-than-bright student, Owen Lift, Larry mentions Hitchcock as the master of murder. Owen watches the Hitchcock classic, "Strangers on a Train," and decides that Larry must want Owen to kill Larry's ex-wife, Margaret (Kate Mulgrew). In return, Larry reasons, Larry can bump off Owen's mean, ugly momma (Anne Ramsey). Criss-cross killings: each one can perform the other's desired murder.

The result of this confusion is a hilarious, fast-paced comedy-murder spoof that shows off both Danny DeVito's skills as a director and as an actor.

DeVito manages to portray the slow-witted Owen with the wonderful zeal of the child that Owen still is. He is dominated by his screeching and overbearing momma, and he has some rather adult ideas about killing her, but doesn't think beyond that to the consequences.

DeVito, in his first feature film as a director, shows a bit of unusual creativity in his screen transitions. For example, DeVito will suddenly focus on a shirt with palm trees on it. Then a jet will fly above the palm trees, just like on a post card. Finally, DeVito drops the shirt, and the plane is flying across the blue sky above Owen. DeVito also uses good camera angles for each scene and skillfully organizes the confusing material.

Crystal's character Larry has the most obvious motive for the murder:

his ex-wife stole his first novel and published it as her own. Since then, his writer's block has extended to life in general. Crystal takes the situation and makes the best of it, showing the agony of typewriter pounding and paper crumpling, then the hilarity of trying to talk to Owen's strange momma. Crystal's best-known comic side is delicately balanced with the serious characteristics of Larry Donner.

The original screenplay was written by Californian Stu Silver. The speech and mannerism of each character tended to be somewhat stereotypical, but the dialogue was fresh enough to bring life to the crazy idea behind the script.

Silver's symbols were overly obvious, beginning when Larry told Owen, "In every great murder-romance, there is always a train." Trains appear in abundance, ranging from Owen's toy train to Larry's near kiddie-train tryst to the infamous train in the climactic scene.

"Throw Momma From The Train" is a short, but funny occupation for an evening. DeVito and Crystal are both great, and momma is enough to remind any student what he is missing at home.

## Iowa stays atop women's poll

From staff reports

The Iowa Hawkeyes, 11-0, were a near unanimous choice as the nation's No. 1 women's basketball team, according to the latest Associated Press poll.

Three ACC teams — Virginia, Duke and Maryland — are in the top 14.

### AP Top 20

1. Iowa (60)	11-0	1,274
2. Louisiana Tech (3)	12-0	1,200
3. Auburn (1)	12-1	1,170
4. Tennessee	9-2	1,043
5. Texas	12-2	1,019
6. Mississippi	12-0	971
7. Virginia	12-1	915
8. Ohio State	8-2	796
9. Rutgers	8-2	711
10. Stanford	13-0	696
11. Duke	12-2	593
12. Long Beach State	7-3	576
13. Georgia	11-3	534
14. Maryland	10-3	498
15. Western Kentucky	11-2	440
16. Washington	9-2	285
17. Nevada-Las Vegas	9-2	161
18. Southern Cal	8-3	105
19. Montana	11-0	104
20. Houston	11-1	86

Others receiving votes: Vanderbilt 82, James Madison 76, Colorado 31, Stephen F. Austin 16, La Salle 12, Nebraska 10, New Orleans 6, Tennessee-Cattanooga 6, DePaul 5, San Diego State 4, Clemson 3, Penn State 3, New Mexico State 2, St. Joseph's 1, Hawaii 1, Michigan State 1.

## Is Michael coming here? Maybe not

The rampant rumor that probably won't be sweeping our expectant campus about the upcoming Michael Jackson tour will more than likely be untrue. According to Smith Center public relations official Deana Nail, the story that was in the Raleigh News and Observer Wednesday was slightly unfounded.

"The contact has been made, but that means nothing," Nail said. The story was begun earlier this week when the Jackson promoters announced the big tour's stops for 1988, Chapel Hill included. No date, however, was announced.

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# Sports

## The Opener

### Tar Heels will face rejuvenated Terps tonight

By JAMES SUROWIECKI  
Staff Writer

Can you say rebuilding? I knew you could. Now, forget that word, at least when you're talking about Maryland basketball.

The Terps, who were 0-14 in the conference last year, have left the bad memories and the bad games behind and emerged as a true force in the ACC. Young, hungry, and aggressive, Maryland has raced to a 9-3 record, 2-0 in the conference. UNC's visit to Cole Field House for a 9 p.m. bout tonight should be far from the automatic victory it seemed last year.

North Carolina will be without the services of shooting guard Ranzino Smith, the team's only senior and second-leading scorer. Smith is still bothered by a deep thigh bruise which kept him out of the Fordham game on Jan. 6.

The Terrapins have been blessed by an infusion of new talent, and by the blossoming of Tony Massenburg at power forward. Massenburg, who played eight games two years ago under Lefty Driesell, was suspended last year, but seems to have suffered no ill effects from his layoff. The 6-foot-9 Massenburg came back in December, and has given Maryland a devastating frontcourt.

That frontcourt is so impressive because Massenburg's arrival has allowed Derrick Lewis to swing back to small forward, and because 6-foot-10 freshman Brian Williams has shown his glass to be half-full, not half-empty, scoring 12 points a game and shooting .617 from the field while taking up plenty of room inside.

Lewis' move out of the pivot has enabled him to become better inte-

	UNC	Edge	Maryland
<b>Guards</b>	Senior sharpshooter Ranzino Smith (14.5 ppg) may sit out with thigh bruise, leaving Jeff Lebo (13.6 ppg, 53% on 3-pointers) and frosh King Rice to start.		Juco transfer Rudy Archer is leading team in scoring (15.8 ppg). He could be joined by 6-6 soph Steve Hood or 6-5 senior Keith Gatlin.
<b>Forwards</b>	Scott Williams is scoring at a 13.3 ppg clip and pulling down 6.3 rebounds an outing. Kevin Madden (10.0 ppg) and Steve Bucknall are sharing swing spot.		Shotblocking madman Derrick Lewis is back for his senior year and scoring 14.3 ppg. Tony Massenburg, a 6-9 rebounding monster, may guard Reid.
<b>Center</b>	J.R. Reid, still a monster though a tot no more, leads the ACC in scoring (19.4 ppg) and field-goal percentage. He's also third in rebounding (9.0 rpg).		Freshman Brian Williams is averaging 12 points a night in the middle. This 6-10 Pervis Ellison playlike is only going to get better.
<b>Bench</b>	With Smith, the Tar Heels can go nine deep. Without him, Rice and Madden must turn in great games. Redshirt frosh Pete Chilcutt (8.1 ppg) is a key.		There may not be a deeper team in the ACC than this one, including Duke. They can go 10 deep with ease, with 1986-87 starter John Johnson No. 10.
<b>Coaching</b>	Dean Smith, in his 27th year coaching the Tar Heels, has won 622 games, a winning percentage of 78. He's 3-0 against Bob Wade.		Bob Wade, after surviving a winless conference debut, has his team off to a 2-0 ACC start this year. A win tonight would help him outrecruit the Hoyas.

— compiled by Mike Berardino

grated into the offense, and to better utilize his quickness. At 6-foot-7, Lewis was small for a center, although his play last year suggested he was ignorant of that fact. As a small forward he seems at home, averaging 14.3 points and nine rebounds a game.

The biggest change in the Terrapin lineup, though, has been the addition of explosive point guard Rudy Archer, a jucos transfer who has been able to push the ball inside to the big men and hit the jumper from outside. Archer is averaging 15.8 points a game, while dishing out 5.6

assists, and is among the leaders in free-throw percentage as well.

"They have one of the best point guards in the nation in Rudy Archer," UNC coach Dean Smith said of the Terps. "We saw him last year and I thought he was one of the country's best point guards then, even though he was in junior college."

Last year, the Terrapins proved a surprisingly tough test when UNC journeyed north to play them. Maryland's improvement will undoubtedly translate into similar problems for UNC tonight. Still, this year's Tar Heel squad, though young, has

played with uncommon intensity, and stands at 11-1 on the year. Heading into its conference opener, North Carolina seems poised to mount a serious challenge for the Final Four.

Still, J.R. Reid, who of late has been remarkably impressive, has yet to play against a frontcourt of the size and shot-blocking ability of Williams, Lewis and Massenburg.

Maryland has played LSU and Missouri well on the road, and beating UNC would represent one giant step for Terpkind.

Can you say upset? I knew you could.

## ACC Basketball Standings

Team	Men's	
	Conference	Overall
Maryland	2-0	9-3
Duke	1-0	9-1
Georgia Tech	1-0	12-2
N.C. State	1-0	8-2
Virginia	1-1	8-7
North Carolina	0-0	11-1
Wake Forest	0-2	4-7
Clemson	0-3	7-5

### Tonight's Games

North Carolina at Maryland, 9 p.m.  
St. Louis at Duke, 7:30 p.m.

Team	Women's	
	Conference	Overall
Virginia	2-0	12-1
Maryland	3-1	10-3
Clemson	2-1	8-2
Georgia Tech	1-1	7-4
Wake Forest	1-1	12-1
Duke	1-2	12-2
N.C. State	1-3	6-7
North Carolina	0-2	6-6

## Football or info? You decide

From staff reports

New UNC football coach Mack Brown is looking for a few good men — not that he doesn't already have more than enough. Students interested in trying out for the 1988 UNC football team should contact Mike Marks or Joe Robinson at 966-2575.

Tryouts are open to individuals who are academically eligible and in good physical condition. It would also help if you ran a 4.4 40 or can bench press 400 pounds (those are our words, not Mack's).

★★★

Hey, you out there. Do you pore over the DTH sports page every day? Buy up sports magazines the day they come out? If so, then the UNC Sports Information Office is looking for you.

The Office is now taking applications for student assistants to begin work in August 1988.

Some form of sports journalism background will be helpful to applicants, but isn't required. If interested, please contact Assistant Sports Information Director Dave Lohse at the Smith Center.

## Jordan, Reid still tops in their field

Langston Wertz

Opinion

the NFL when I saw a playoff game in the Louisiana Superdome and the home team was playing. Then I switched over to NBC and saw Eric Dickerson, you know, the Eric Dickerson who was Mr. L.A. Nightclub Man, playing in Indianapolis Colt white. Did you read that right? (Go back and read it again.) Indianapolis and New Orleans were in the playoffs. What's next, Kansas City and Green Bay in the 1989 Super Bowl? ...

Speaking of football, Syracuse quarterback Don McPherson picked up the Maxwell Award as college football's best player. At least somebody knew who was the NCAA's finest. ...

Switching to hoops, J.R. Reid awakened from an early-season slumber, much to the chagrin of college coaches everywhere. "Baby Jay is," as commentator Al McGuire acknowledges, "the best college

player in the country." Sorry, Larry Brown.

In the professional ranks, Charles Barkley, he of overweight joke fame, must have spent his summer taking lessons from Michael Jordan. With Jordan getting some new guest stars on his highly-rated Chicago-based basketball show, Barkley's spin-off hit in Philadelphia now gives the NBA and its fans the league's only one-man variety show.

Barkley's been a terror to Patrick Ewing, teams and backboards everywhere. ...

Jordan, the NBA's best player (sorry Magic Man), gave the Knicks an early Christmas present. Air Jordan scored only 16 points as Chicago lost 90-89 on Christmas Eve. ...

Sometimes college hoops ain't fair. Harvey Grant, twin brother of Chicago Bull and ex-Clemson Tiger Horace, must be giving Clemson coach Cliff Ellis heartburn. Grant left Clemson unhappy with his playing time. Now with Oklahoma, Grant is helping the Sooners score at a rate of 116.8 points per game, better than

all but two pro teams.

With the Sooners, Grant has led the team in scoring. He had 40 points as Oklahoma averaged 16.6 points per second, and demolished Oral Roberts, 144-93. In 40 minutes. ...

While at home in Charlotte, I ran into a guy who was wearing a green tank top and he told me who was the best player in basketball. He said the man wears Tony Dorsett's number and sports black shoes. I, in turn, argued for a sensation who gives the NBA its best highlights this side of Dominique Wilkins and scores like Wilt. ...

Ex-boxing champ Larry Holmes still has a few more days for clear thinking. Holmes didn't show up for a pre-fight press conference claiming he was mad because his opponent, current champ Mike Tyson, didn't shake his hand at an earlier conference.

Holmes would be wise to perform his illusionary magic once again and not show up for his Jan. 22 date with "Iron Mike." He would be really mad if he woke up in a hospital and couldn't recall how he got there.