

'Sex, lies, and videotape' explores sexual dishonesty



Andie MacDowell in 'sex, lies, and videotape'

This summer we've been inundated with movies on drug wars, gang wars, underwater wars, racial wars and the Vietnam war. Anyone expecting the same from "sex, lies, and videotape" will either be severely disappointed or pleasantly surprised.

"Sex, lies, and videotape" is a movie that doesn't need to beat you over the head to make its point. The movie won the award for best film at the Cannes Film Festival, and rightly so: With its sardonic charm it manages to be a delightfully dark comedy and a powerfully disturbing social commentary in one. Under Steven Soderbergh's masterful direction, the movie becomes one of those rare gems that we get only ever so often in American cinema — a truly intelligent movie.

The movie revolves around the lives of four characters in Baton Rouge, La. Ann Millaney is a repressed housewife who hates to be touched by her husband and feels that sex is highly overrated. In the opening of the movie, we see her seated in her psychiatrist's office trying to deal with her problems while still refusing to face them. This funny, moving scene is indicative of the movie's attitude as a whole; instead of facing their lies, characters try to hide them in the fallacies that they have created for themselves.

Ann is married to John Millaney, a

Hasanthika Sirisena

Cinema

successful lawyer. John is good-looking, dependable, successful and a decent husband, on the surface. Underneath this facade, John is actually a sleazy, manipulative liar motivated solely by his sex drive.

John is carrying on an affair with Ann's sister Cynthia. Cynthia is a highly sexual, passionate woman, who is jealous of her sister's pristine, respectable image. In fact, she is jealous enough to carry on an affair with a man that she neither likes nor respects.

Their lives are disrupted by the arrival of Graham Dalton, a dark, errant young man returning to Baton Rouge after nine years. Ann is drawn to this unusual stranger, whose honesty encourages her to seek sympathy and comfort from him. But Graham has his sinister side: For sexual pleasure he videotapes women confessing their sexual habits and desires. Like the other characters, Graham is trying to hide from his true problems and the consequences his actions have upon people.

Lies are, ultimately, the focus of this movie. The lies these characters tell each other are so integral to their

lives that at first not even the viewer can tell who is lying or telling the truth.

As the movie progresses, we watch the lives of the characters slowly open so that we finally see their hidden motivations and deliberate inconsistencies. With ironic twist after ironic twist, we see the consequences these characters' actions have and how those consequences come to haunt their lives. We watch as they become painfully aware of the results and finally take responsibility for them. "Sex, lies, and videotape" takes an honest look at modern relationships, and while it makes no judgment calls, it does make demands.

The movie takes a disturbing look not only at our personal lives but also at our society. On a superficial level the film is about four characters in a Southern town. If you delve deeper, you realize these characters could be any one of us, and they are a part of all of us. Their lives are only a reflection of the society they live in — a society based on sex, lies and videotape. The movie even questions our own motivations behind watching the film.

The acting in the film is excellent. James Spader, as Graham Dalton, gives a riveting performance; he is one of the few actors who can use

gestures and expressions as effectively as words.

Andie MacDowell is hilarious and endearing as Ann. You might recognize her as the L'Oreal girl, but this lady can act. Her sensitive portrayal of the confusion behind her character gives Ann a convincing strength and believability.

Peter Gallagher handles John's duality superbly and lends a surprising and unnerving vulnerability to what could have been an otherwise two-dimensional character. Laura San Giacomo manages to handle Cynthia's wicked sensuality with an intelligence and humor that adds depth to her character.

We are so used to seeing fancy, high-budget, mediocre movies that we have forgotten what the standards of a good movie are. This is a movie that shows us what they should be.

"Sex, lies, and videotape" is well-written and deftly filmed. Steven Soderbergh does not waste words or camera movements to make his point; instead, he relies on silence and unobtrusive camera movements to make a subtle but powerful point. This is a movie that follows in the footsteps of suspense masters like Hitchcock, leaving you startled, maybe amazed, but definitely moved.

Fetchin' Bones cranks out Monster music

By CARRIE McLAREN

Staff Writer

So who exactly is this blonde bouncing around on my television? This can't be the same Hope Nicholls I saw nearly two years ago in Tampa.

Nope, Hope's new and improved. She's grown up and moved to Hollywood for her way-cool "Love-Crushing" video. In fact, Hope looks like every other *Flashdance*-thing on the screen now.

Nicholls' band, Fetchin' Bones, matches her new shinefree look; so does the Bones' latest album, *Monster*. You might want to call *Monster* polished. My handy press sheet says *Monster* is money. *Monster* is fame. *Monster* is the band's grab for both. The album cries out for salvation by the MTV generation.

The Bones began upheaving guitar chunks in October 1983. A rigorous touring schedule helped the band make a name for itself beyond its

local Charlotte scene. Atlanta's dB records released their 1985 debut, *Cabin Flounder*. Spewing ragged, energized rock, country scraps, psychedelic folk and swing, *Cabin Flounder* came close to matching the band's invigorating live shows. Nicholls' guttural howls and growls made an easy transition to vinyl, courtesy of Don Dixon's competent yet rough production.

Despite a switch to a major label, Capitol, Dixon left the edges intact for the second album, *Bad Pumpkin*. This album brought more riveting guitar work and furied cries, but, with her wiry blond mop and adventurous stage garb, Nicholls created an enticing yet menacing persona.

After the album's release, the Bones went on involuntary vacation for a year when drummer Marc Mueller and guitarist Gary White opted out. The pair formed the Skeeters with bassist Marco Heeter and made *Wine, Woman, and Walleye*. Meanwhile, Fetchin' Bones

collected Clay Richardson and Errol Stewart and lashed out with another Dixon byproduct, *Galaxy 500*. Though glossier than its predecessor, the album nevertheless had its share of highlights, most hailing from the Land o' Funk. (The CD version boasts six additional tracks, including a remix of "Stray" and hopping cover of Rick James' "Superfreak.")

Monster breaks from the band's tradition in more ways than one. Yes, now Nicholls and friends have hit MTV and the glossy-band-photo scene. Ed Stasium, producer behind Living Colour and Mick Jagger, stepped into Dixon's shoes. Stasium straightened out the quirks and added catchy, if redundant, melodies.

Fetchin' Bones still have a few hooks, though they toss in more than ample choruses now and have sanded the rough spots. They've twisted their sound into something altogether accessible. As a result, old fans may entertain themselves more with the surrealist dog-thing on the cover than

the album itself. It's easy to dismiss the work as sell-out cancer when placed beside older material.

On the other hand, a broader, more mainstream crowd can enjoy *Monster*'s attacks. Toes will tap, hips will shake, and more than a few listeners may find themselves crooning along in the shower. Though the Bones probably won't make heavy rotation on Top 40 radio any time soon, the College Music Journal eats this stuff up.

Fortunately, the Bones maintain a lofty reputation for live performances. In the flesh, this band is U-G-L-Y. Thank God. But don't take my word for it; the Bones beg to be seen live, unmolested by the studio. The show starts around 10. Dress for comfort.

Fetchin' Bones will perform at *Cat's Cradle* tonight. Advance tickets are available for \$6 at *Schoolkids Records, Poindexter, Record Bar* and *the Cradle*. For more information, call 967-9053.

Drama department to hold auditions

From staff reports

The Department of Dramatic Art will hold auditions Tuesday, Sept. 5, for its fall production, Lanford Wilson's "Balm in Gilead." The auditions are open to all registered students.

The play, which has 25 roles for men and women, will be directed by Adam Versenyi, visiting assistant professor of drama and dramaturgy for PlayMakers

Repertory Company.

Auditions will be held from 3:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. Sept. 5. Sign-up sheets for audition times are posted in Graham Memorial 104.

Production dates for "Balm in Gilead" will be Nov. 9-12, with rehearsals beginning in early October.

For more information, call 962-1132.

Send the Daily Tar Heel home to Mom and Dad. Call 962-1163 for details

 **CAROLINA**
DINING SERVICE

 **Flexible Scheduling**

 **Free Meal Dollars**

 **Varied Positions**

 **Convenient Locations**

 **Competitive Wages**

 **Recruitment Incentives**

for more information or an application, come by the personnel office at Lenoir Hall Mon.-Fri. 9am-4pm or call 962-0200. Join our team and work for the premier name in the hospitality field!

**THE BEST PART-TIME
STUDENT JOBS ARE
AVAILABLE RIGHT HERE
ON CAMPUS!**

Diversity at University.

Rumor has it that there is one place in the Triangle that's got you covered both coming and going.

University Mall has it coming with the best of fall fashion and accessories, the best of food and fun, and the best of what's new for the home.

And as for going, University Mall even has your rear view covered with Fanny Packs. **The packs will be given away September 5-9. Show \$10 in University Mall receipts and your UNC Student I.D. to receive a free Fanny Pack.** There is a three-per-customer limit.

The Fanny Pack Giveaway Booth is located in the Ivey's Wing of the Mall. Booth hours are 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Supplies of these totes are limited, so hurry to get yours.

University Mall.

Where Taste Comes In Hundreds Of Flavors.



UNIVERSITY
Mall & Plaza

15-501 By-Pass • Estes Drive • Chapel Hill