



A letter from dad gather the women in "Little Women," starring Wynona Ryder, Trini Alarado, Kirsten Dunst, Susan Sarandon, and Claire Danes.

Keaton and Davis are "sleeping with the enemy" in 'Speechless'

by John Hafner
Assistant Entertainment Editor

Every now and then it's nice to switch gears and try something new. After viewing "Speechless," a romantic comedy starring Geena Davis and Michael Keaton, I was reminded that refreshing changes can occur in the movie industry too.

Although I am a literal season ticket holder for Van Damme - Schwarzenegger type movies, I was instantly charmed by the plot and characters in "Speechless." Who wouldn't be? This is Geena Davis we're talking about!

Davis (Julia) and Keaton (Kevin) play the roles of speech writers for opposing senatorial candidates in a very tight and highly televised campaign. They fall in love before learning of each other's occupation, though. Kevin tells Julia he is a sit-com writer and Julia claims to be a news reporter.

Their true identities are shockingly revealed to each other at a grade school assembly in which they are both invited as guest speakers. Instead of answering the students' questions about politics and election campaigns, they engage in a personal mud-slinging match not unlike the one their candidates are caught up in.

Accusing each other of "sleeping with the enemy" to

learn the other candidate's campaign strategies and secrets, Kevin and Julia find the burden of political agenda and the watchful eye of the media too much to bear. Everything seems right for their romance except two key elements: timing and setting.

Through a series of humorous and touching scenes, the "politically incorrect" pair surmount countless hurdles to give their love a chance to grow, including Kevin's jealous ex-wife and Julia's hard-to-get-rid-of ex-fiance.

Michael Keaton adds a comic flair to the film, and Geena Davis conveys her "girl next door" image to make "Speechless" appeal to wide audiences.

Even though it contains no fight scenes, no Middle East terrorists, no blood or guts, or even the slightest mention of firepower, "Speechless" is definitely a must-see. Even if you, like me, would rather see Van Damme break a bad guys legs than take a chance on a romantic comedy or drama, Keaton and Davis are truly worth the ticket price.

If you're still not convinced, do what I do. Ask yourself, "Would Tim Allen like this movie?" The answer in this case is, "Yes, I think he would."

Ryder's "totally inspiring" in Alcott's 'Little Women'

by Karen Steele
Collegian Staff

"Little Women," a film by Gillian Armstrong, is currently playing at West Erie Plaza and Millcreek 6. The film is based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott.

Winona Ryder stars as the rebellious Jo March who dreams of independence. Armstrong, who wanted someone passionate and lively for the part, found Ryder "totally inspiring."

The story is about the March family. The mother, or "Marmee" is played by Susan Sarandon. She is the source of wisdom for the four March daughters. The oldest daughter, beautiful Meg is played by Trini Alvarado. The sweet Beth is

played by Claire Danes. The youngest, Amy (the romantic) is portrayed first at age 12 by Kirsten Dunst and then at age 16 by Samantha Mathis.

"Little Women" depicts a 19th century family living in New England while the father is away, fighting in the Civil War. The film illustrates a great deal of sisterly love as the girls move out of childhood and grow into women.

One could certainly argue whether this film has a plot or not, because it seems to be "about" many things. It is about strong family priorities and good morals. It is about the search for freedom and personal happiness. Marmee teaches her four little women to strive to learn so they won't ever become

just decorations on the arm of a man. Meg, Jo and Amy each seem to long for this feminine independence while at the same time, they desire true love.

Alcott's story centers primarily around Jo, who struggles the most in her search for self. Refreshing in today's society, Alcott showed how girls and boys can be best friends. Jo became dear friends with Laurie, who is played by Christian Bale.

The film seems to represent all aspects of growing up -- good and bad. It will make you laugh, but it will also make you cry as it touches upon the pain a family feels for a loss. I agree with Armstrong who said that "in these confusing times, such a positive message about family is richly needed."

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