

And the award goes to...



American Music Awards

by Deanna Symoski

Aerosmith's Steven Tyler performs (far left), Destiny's Child accepts (left), and Britney Spears dances (right).



Some people might say this was truly the day the music died. Those people being the die-hard Britney fans who didn't think it was possible for her to lose an award, let alone two. The Princess of Pop fell to Faith Hill in the Favorite Female Pop or Rock category at the 28th Annual American Music Awards on January 8. Britney and beau Justin Timberlake's little ensemble were both beat out by Creed's *Human Clay* for Favorite Album in the Pop or Rock category. Creed also beat out archnemesis Limp Bizkit in the Alternative Artist category, and Backstreet Boys topped N'Sync (and Creed) for Best Pop/Rock

Band, Duo or Group. Other winners include 3 Doors Down in Favorite New Artist in the Pop or Rock category, and Kid Rock in the surprise win over Marc Anthony and the controversial Eminem in the Favorite Male Artist Pop or Rock category. Eminem lost to Dr. Dre in the Best Rap or Hip Hop Artist category, not that he would have been there to accept. The rapper was noticeably absent from the festivities.

While Faith Hill was the evening's darling with three total awards, (she also won Favorite Female Artist Country and Favorite Album Country for *Breathe*). Toni

Braxton received two statues for Favorite Female Soul or R&B as well as Favorite Album Soul or R&B for *Heat*. Brian McKnight took the honors for Best Male Soul/R&B artist, and Destiny's Child nabbed the Best Soul/R&B award for Band, Duo or Group.

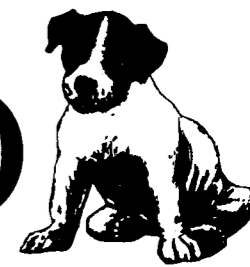
And now for the interesting stuff. Was it just me, or were Britney's dancers wearing little boys' underwear? In a comparatively tame performance, Spears was less the center of attention than the cast of randy females writhing around beside her. A relatively clothed Spears performed "Stronger" against a sort of Mad Max backdrop.

Marilyn Manson also took center stage, or was that Daryl Hannah? In a misdirected attempt to make some sort of fashion statement, a frighteningly punk Hannah was even more disturbing than Manson's journey into the crowd during his performance. Raucous and real, Manson's time on stage was actually one of the few worthwhile parts of the show.

If the nominees and winners seem like more of the same tired fodder radios can't get enough of, they are. Based on music sales and airplay, the AMAs proved to be a mainstream sampling of everything you're already tired of.

Sic' Em FIDO

by Deanna Symoski



Book Worms:

Why bad adaptations are eating away at the core of good novels

This is for anyone who read *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton then watched the film. This is for anyone who reads John Grisham novels then watches the film. But most of all this is for me, because I paid almost seven bucks last week to witness quite possibly the most terrible crime against literature ever conducted—*All the Pretty Horses*.

It's a long standing assumption, and one that is widely proven, that good books do not necessarily make good movies. You budding filmmakers out there, read that last line again. You well-read enthusiasts, take note. A book is a story someone wrote down in probably many pages that contains only the pictures inside the reader's head and only the ideas the author could sculpt with his words. A movie is not the literal translation of those words, as it is a new product in need of its own unique genius.

And therein lies the problem. Too often it seems the director or scriptwriter relies on the development and imagery inherent within the written word, forgetting that real people now have to make us believe what the characters we developed inside our heads have already proven. What can you show me about Louis' inner turmoil that I haven't already determined from reading *Interview With the Vampire*? What new insight on Daisy's character is in the film version of *The Great Gatsby* that F. Scott Fitzgerald left out of his own book? I've already engaged the original work, complete with the nuances of inspired writing, so in the words of NFL playoff promos, "You got to show me something more!"

And that's the tough part. When we read, all of us become filmmakers, casting the story, setting the stage, all inside our heads. Our imagination is the director, and we create our own movie based on the beautiful words on the page. The film we actually see on screen is simply the director's version and for this reason, because it's not ours, adaptations will very rarely touch us the way the original novel did. The film isn't ours. It's not that scriptwriters are lazy, but perhaps they are overly confident. They believe they can show you what they think you see when you read. They can't, and that's why I cried more when I read about Johnny than when I watched. While *The Outsiders* movie was satisfactory, these weren't *The Outsiders* in my head.

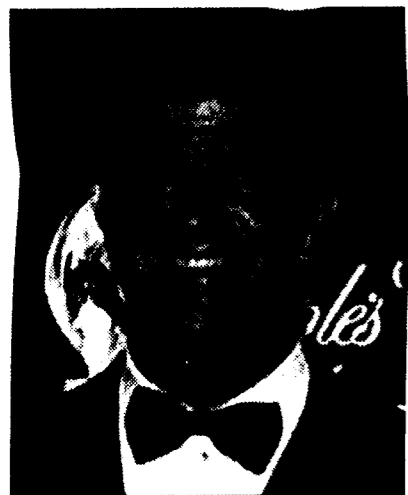
And films will never be able to account for time. An 800 page novel is an undertaking certainly not to be finished in two and a half, even three hours. So what makes anyone think that a film of the same story can be watched in that time? Say it takes you a minute and a half to read a passage about, oh let's say a horse. It only takes you three seconds to see that passage condensed into a shot in a film. The director may have shaved a minute and twenty-seven seconds off his movie, but he cheated you out of the time to really engage the idea. And that's if he or she chooses to leave that image in the story. Directors most often butcher details to fit their time allotment, making the story a moth-eaten version of the original.

I love movies and that's why I hate to see such possibility go to waste. Matt Damon in a cowboy hat had such potential, but the script should have been original. With an original story, or even an original take on a preexisting story, the audience is subject to complete immersion rather than the distraction of pointing out holes. That's probably why Leonardo DiCaprio could pull off Shakespeare.

While there are those rare occasions where the film is better (see Grisham's *A Time to Kill* after you read the book), most films can never live up to our own expectations. The sun will never hit the trees the way you imagined, and the color of the river won't be the right color. The best they can do is guess what you see, so if you want your own version—the perfect version that's entirely yours—read the book. That's what they're for.

People's Choice Awards

by Deanna Symoski



Mel Gibson backstage

In another show of legitimacy for award presentations, The 27th annual People's Choice Awards granted honors to a cancelled television program and decided that the favorite film of 2000 was one that had actually been released in 1999...but who's counting?

In what can only be described as an ironic silver lining, John Goodman was chosen as Favorite Performer in a New TV Series for his work on *Normal, Ohio*, the same show that no one liked enough to actually watch. Goodman beat out Tom Cavanaugh of NBC's *Ed*, and Michael Richards of *The Michael Richards Show*, which was also sacrificed to the ratings gods this season.

Bette Midler won honors for her CBS show *Bette*, beating out fellow fledgling Geena Davis for *The Geena Davis Show*. Midler also topped newcomer Jessica Alba of *Dark Angel*.

NBC swept the Dramatic Series category with nominees *ER*, *Law & Order* and *The West Wing*, but it was the veteran *ER* that took home the honors. Another seasoned favorite, *Friends*, nabbed the award for Comedy Series, topping *Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Frasier*. David Schwimmer accepted on behalf of the cast, showing that there were no ill-feelings toward the only cast member who *didn't* wish to renew the contract. (Two words for ya, Dave: *The Pallbearer*).

Ed, the warmhearted show about a bowling alley lawyer, picked up the award for New Television Comedy Series, while James Cameron's *Dark Angel* took the New Dramatic Series award. While both shows saw their stars lose the respective performance categories, the accolades will surely help solidify the new series in their network lineup.

Drew Carey picked up an award

in the People's Choice category for Male Television Performer, beating out Kelsey Grammar of *Frasier*, and Ray Romano of *Everybody Loves Raymond*, sending those shows home empty handed. Jennifer Aniston of *Friends* took the Female Television Performer award, beating out Jenna Elfman of *Dharma and Greg* and Calista Flockhart, nominated for *Ally McBeal*.

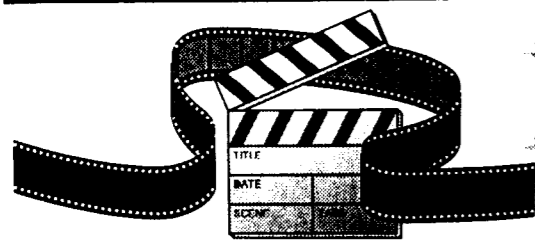
The film honors were a little less telling as the winners were chosen between November 1, 1999 and October 31, 2000 when the polling was conducted. Mel Gibson received two dramatic awards for *The Patriot* instead of *What Women Want*, since voting had ceased before the film was released. Jim Carrey received comedy honors for *Me, Myself, and Irene* instead of *The Grinch* for the same reason. Julia Roberts took home the award for Favorite Female Actress in a Motion Picture for *Erin Brockovich*, and *Meet the Parents* won the People's Choice for Favorite Comedy Motion Picture. The 1999 film, *The Green Mile*, scored for Motion Picture and Dramatic Motion Picture.



Julia Roberts as Erin Brockovich

Though the nominees were diverse, country ruled the music scene. Ricky Martin's bon bon didn't have quite the shake to knock out Garth Brooks as the country crooner nabbed the Male Musical Performer award. Faith Hill took the Female honors, topping Britney Spears and fellow country crossover, Shania Twain. Luckily N'Sync swooped in to save the day for boy bands everywhere, winning Music Group or Band, over Alabama and the Dixie Chicks. Whoo! That was a close one.

Overall, the popularity contest played out like it was supposed to. The fans screamed and the stars schmoozed and the balance of the universe was maintained.



New Releases

Movies

Save the Last Dance
13 Days
Antitrust
Finding Forrester
Double Take
Jan. 12

Video*

Any Given Sunday
Boiler Room
Final Destination
Magnolia
Next Best Thing: Special Edition

Music*

Silk The Shocker
All The Pretty Horses: Soundtrack
Alabama
The Gift: Soundtrack

DVD*

Pete's Dragon
Coyote Ugly

Wednesday night flip on NBC any time between 8pm and 10 pm to see what the People's Choice Awards were talking about.
Ed at 8pm,
The West Wing at 9pm
and *Law & Order* at 10 pm.