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Four Feathers not four stars

by Daniel J. Stasiewski
staff writer

Somewhere around halfway through "The Four Feathers," there's an image of a hanged British soldier who was killed after his fort was invaded. Every time I think of this film, my mind drifts back to the noose comfortably wrapped around the actor's neck while his shoulders are forced up by an obvious harness that makes his execution look awkward and unnatural.

This careless moment is exceptional not because it stands out in a film of awful scenes. Rather, it's an inconsistently sloppy scene in a film so meticulously shot that this movie implodes from its contrived attempts at equaling the epic films that preceded it.

At the height of British Imperialism, Harry Faversham (Heath Ledger) becomes an officer in the British military. He loyally trains alongside his best friend Jack Durrance (Wes Bentley), with his proud father, a General, always observing his progress. Harry is also watched over by his adoring fiancé Ethne (Kate Hudson). Soon, Harry's battalion is told it will be shipping out to a real battle, and a panicky Harry abandons his military post for the safety of civilian life.

Once word of Harry's desertion reaches his fellow officers, the men quickly condemn the decision. Three former comrades each send Harry a white feather, a sign of cowardice. Worse, his fiancé presents a fourth white feather to Harry, in an attempt to counter the shame she too will inevitably face. Only Jack defends Harry and encourages his reengagement, which is especially hard when Jack is also infatuated with Ethne.

Jack can't reassure Harry before the regiment ships out, and Harry's guilt begins to drive him mad. Motivated by the four reminders he always carries with him, Harry decides he must go to Africa. There he will risk the life he was so keen on saving in attempt to protect his honor and save his friends.

It's usually hard to tell the overall quality of a film just in the first 10 minutes. With the campus master plan there is a very careful plan in terms of land use, a plan for facility development," said Negri. "It is all spelled out over the next five- to 10- year period what we hope to develop in terms of facilities." That's the only reason I didn't walk out of "The Four Feathers." The first impression of this being another war-love triangle (the fourth in a little more than a year) was something I was prepared to overlook. Sadly, the romance is not only bland and insensitive; it turns out to be even less attractive than the impotent triangle featured in another wannabe epic, "Pearl Harbor."

The dreadful love story results from my complete hatred for the three main characters. Since there is no initial character building, all three embody an almost cartoony quality of the pompous British upper-class with no concern for sentiment. No one is comfortable with their character and the film moves too fast to absorb anything that might appear between the lines. And that's just the first 10 minutes.

I did say that the film is shot with a meticulous eye. No surprise: it's directed by Shekhar Kapur of "Elizabeth" fame. However, there's a fine line between the magnificent art he attempts and the shallow garbage he releases. The camera angles are taken to the extreme in dizzying fashion. All I wanted was the damn thing to settle down. It eventually does, only to make you suffer through an endless procession of simple, slow-motion scenes. At least the film slows down for awhile. I needed proof that there is nothing between the lines.

If I were to elaborate on every one of the film's hollow pretensions, this review might never end. Instead, I'll say this. "The Four Feathers" is no epic. It's nothing more than an arrogant and artificial attempt at Oscar glory. In a year without "Rollerball," this could have easily been considered the worst movie. Honestly, I don't know which is more horrible: calling it the worst movie or putting it on the same level as "Rollerball."

1/2 Star out of four.

Penn State Behrend music poll

Survey reveals the music students want to hear

by Olivia Page
staff writer

A survey of 100 Behrend students about the music they want to hear reveals there is harmony in regard to musical tastes. Students who were polled voted in the categories of favorite music type, favorite vocalist, rap artist or music group, and the most liked and hated musician.

Behrend's favorite musician

It was six years ago that Tupac Shakur was killed and became a legend. Six years is a long time to be dead but it seems like only a few years. He is still being portrayed on MTV, BET, and VH1 music channels and there is a new documentary on him practically every other week. Tupac has unreleased albums coming out every year. He was voted as Behrend students' number one favorite musician.

The ever-so favorite and the ever-so hated: Britney

Six people out of a hundred who

100 says they absolutely hate rap music. Who else do people on cam-

the runners-up the most hated Marilyn Manson, techno, Kid Rock,

roll, alternative, classic rock and roll, techno, and punk. Those polled also chose jazz, classical, reggae, meringue, and salsa.

Weakest Link

Britney Spears was voted as this campus's most hated singer. Some scandalous jokes about Britney that will not be here, but Britney has been rated as this campus's weakest link.

Are changes needed?

This poll could help determine what music is played on campus. What this poll reflects is a need for change. Rap music and R&B were voted as the two favorite music types on this campus. Perhaps local radio stations need to ponder the results of this poll. Nearby cities such as Buffalo, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, have stations devoted primarily to rap and R&B music, airing almost every day and night. Why can't Erie have a station that reflects the music tastes of all ages?



Tupac came out at number one in the recent Behrend music poll.

Two Behrend females said they hated Ashanti's music. Nineteen negative votes went to country music. Country music was also a favorite of 13 people polled.

Favorite Music Type

In order of

pus hate? Britney Spears. Then came favorites came rap, R&B, rock and

The anticipated premieres of the fall season

by Rachel Lyon
staff writer

After taking a well-deserved summer vacation, primetime television is back in full-swing, with returning favorites and new hopefuls. Here's a few of the shows looking to make a big impact on the small screen.

Ten Most Anticipated Fall Premieres

1. "Alias" (ABC)- Jennifer Garner played undercover on two fronts, in her CIA-based hit, returning for a second year, and to the public as well. Virtually unknown last September, Garner proved herself as an actress, picking up an Emmy nomination for Best Actress in a drama series. Garner's character, Sydney, finds herself in conflict with her long-lost mother and Will becomes more involved in her world in the season premiere, Sunday at 9 p.m.

2. "Survivor: Thailand" (CBS)- The newest installment of the hit-reality series premiered last Thursday amid all the hype built up by the network. However, CBS needs to create more conflict, more danger, and more unexpected twists to ensure that the show survives another season. If you can stand another competition, watch Thursdays at 8p.m.

3. "Everybody Loves Raymond" (CBS)- Simply the best comedy for CBS, especially after three stars took home Emmys in their respective categories. The end of last season had Debra saying (or almost saying) the M-word to Marie. In classic "Raymond" style, one simple situation leads to complete family dysfunction. However, there's nothing dysfunctional about the fact that Ray and company anchor CBS's big night of comedy, and could do so for years to come. See why "Everybody Loves Raymond" on Mondays at 9 p.m.

4. "Friends" (NBC)- After a friendly showing at the Emmy's, the sitcom kicks off its ninth season with the most pressing question in television: Joey or Ross? Also, what about Monica? Will she be the last female friend to conceive? This is the last big hurrah for what has truly been an amazing nine-year run. "Friends" will easily be the top-rated comedy, if not the top-rated show in America again this season. Tune in with the rest of America, Thursdays at 8 p.m. on NBC.

5. "Law and Order" (NBC)- The King of Wednesday's Primetime "Law and Order" gears up for its 13th season. Filmed on location in New York City, the season premiere will spell trouble as an American Muslim seeks to disprove that he killed in the name of his religion. Sure to be another successful season, tune in Wednesday at 10 p.m.

6. "CSI" (CBS)- No doubt, "CSI" was the biggest success of the previous year, and its heavy hitting lineup on Thursdays could threaten NBC's night of comedy. The Las Vegas-based drama characterizes the gathering and analyzing process of the

hype. Its biggest competition, ABC's "NYPD Blue" is no longer competition. The first season was recently released on DVD, and the second season begins Oct. 29, 9 p.m. on FOX.

9. "ER" (NBC)- Another heavy-hitter for NBC, "ER" takes you back to the hospital where a young girl died of smallpox. Despite a lockdown and quarantine, Carter and Abby had the chance to kiss, hinting at perhaps a new romance. Possibly a smart move, considering the show needs to reinvent itself in order to sustain for another few years. The nail-biter can be seen

Thursday nights at 10 p.m. on NBC.

10. "The West Wing" (NBC)- "What we are interested in here are the two minutes before and after the president is on CNN," says creator Aaron Sorkin. Although "TV Guide" felt the drama hit some creative snags last season, "The West Wing" still managed to capture the Emmy for Best Drama. Hmm...if they



Maura Tierney returns for another season of "ER."

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can be Emmy winners in an "off year," then expect big things from Martin Sheen and company this season. The show kicks off with a two-hour season premiere and then can be seen Wednesdays at 9 p.m. on NBC.

New series that will show strong this year and return next year

1. "CSI: Miami" - Ask NBC: spin-offs work. The "Law and Order" series has already spewed two clones in the past two years, so why wouldn't this corset work for "CSI," considerably better than its rival at NBC. The new setting will give it the "CSI" feeling mixed with a little bit of "Miami Vice." Although executive producer Anthony Zuiker points out, "They'll wear their emotions a bit more on their sleeves," compared to their counterpart, "CSI." "CSI: Miami" airs Mondays at 10p.m. on CBS.

2. "8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter" - John Ritter's new comedy caught the attention of 21 million viewers with the show's premiere last Tuesday. The series is based on a book of humorous essays, written by W. Bruce Cameron. Executive producer Tracy Gamble says the premise of the show is "a wonderful gray area where the father is trying to parent the kids, at a time when they don't want to be parented." TV Guide says "8 Simple Rules" has the best chance of reclaiming ABC's family-comedy crown. Tune in at 8p.m. Tuesdays on ABC.

3. "Boomtown" - NBC will definitely hit it big with this one. Bringing a refreshing angle to the crime genre, "Boomtown" lets the viewer look into all aspects of Los Angeles. A crime is committed, and contradictory points of view from cops, bystanders, and paramedics are shown. "Band of Brothers" writer Graham Yost feels that "sometimes in trying to tell the whole story, it's better to tell little bits of the story." To be part of the puzzle, tune in to NBC, Sundays at 10 p.m.

"Mid-season replacement, standing by..."

Shows on the outs halfway through 1. "Fastlane" - "The Fast and The Furious" for the small screen. The main character's name is even Van, (similar to Vin). Again, Fox tries to push the envelope with lots of violence and sex, in an HBO-like fashion. Executive producer John McNarama teamed with video turned movie director, McG, who wondered, "How come there's no cool, young, hot, fun cops on TV?" Although the show offers fast-paced, adrenaline-pumping action, it will fail to hold viewers attention due to lack of substance. To indulge in this big-screen wannabe, check out Fox on Wednesdays at 9 p.m.

2. "That Was Then" - Travis Glass finds himself and his life a complete loss. At 30, he still lives with his mother; he still pines after his high school sweetheart, now married to his brother, and oh, what to do? Easy. Glass travels back to the late 1980s at which point he gets to relive his adolescence and right all that's wrong. This offspring of "The Wonder Years" and "Back to the Future" basically is identical to the WB's new show "Do Over." Except the WB gets the edge for trying to be funny. TV Guide simply summed up "That Was Then" as "a mess." See for yourself, Fridays at 9p.m. on ABC.

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