"Big Chill" gives movie-going audience warm feeling

A movie review
by Don Strausburger

After three years of mediocre movies, one begins to wonder whether the film industry can give the public a movie that deals with sexual situations without only appealing to the teenaged audience.

In the case of **The Big Chill**, the answer is yes. Throughout the film's opening frames, the question of whether or not this is just another of the "drive-in epics" rings loudly in the spectators minds, but as the story continues it becomes obvious this film is an exception to the norm.

The film is reminiscent of the motion picture **Four Friends** in that it deals with the traumatic experiences of a group of students as they come together at a funeral for a recently deceased college cohort.

The film examines the lives of the eight major characters, who range from an investigative reporter to a public defender to a Vietnam veteran who has been a drug dealer since his return from the war. To give any details about this plot would be unfair to moviegoers since the plot is highly unpredictable and fun to watch as it developes.

The main reason this film works is its cast of characters. This is the most impressive cast for a comedy since the early Mel Brooks' films.

The cast is led by Glenn Close, who is best remembered for her role as the mother to Robin Williams in **The World According to Garp**, and the versatile comedy actor William Hurt.

Ms. Close plays the career-oriented wife who had an affair with the deceased friend, even though she seems perfectly content with her marriage. William Hurt plays the Vietnam veteran who has been dealing drugs for some time. The character loves to take risks in his work and somehow, always emerges victorious.

The film has many reasons to fail considering what it offers on the surface. There are no teen idols or established superstars; however the film does include eight new film industry talents.

For a pleasant change, ensemble acting is emphasized, instead of riding the comedic talents of just one or two actors.

The movie is witty, complex, and wonderfully entertaining, giving the audience the rare chance to see an adult movie without the near pornography occuring in many movies of the same basic principles.

The Big Chill, unlike nearly all of today's movies, is an intelligent study of real people. It is, as the screenplay notes, a cold world out there. Every once in a while a film comes along that will leave you feeling good about life in general.

The Big Chill is one of them.

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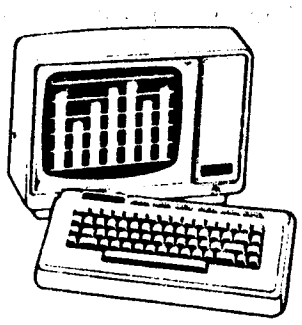

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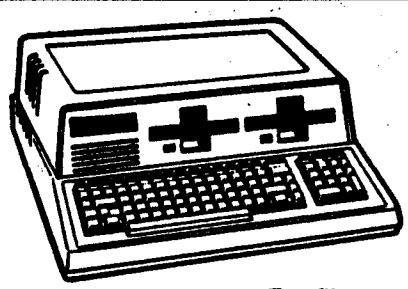

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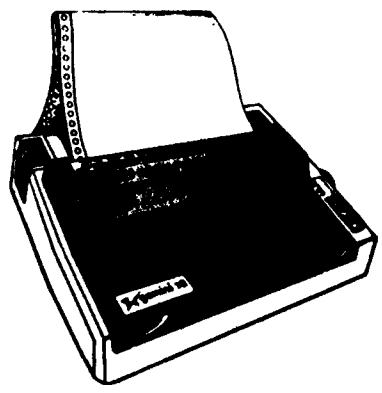

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