

ENTERTAINMENT

AUMILLER CRITICS

By **KRIS AUMILLER**
Columnist
KRA5018@PSU.EDU

Did you ever have a lazy week? Well, I guess for my job it's two weeks. For me, this was the ultimate lazy week. Sorry to disappoint but I only made it to one new movie. Therefore, I went to my massive DVD collection and picked out two movies that I haven't watched in a while and decided to review those for my other two movies. Don't like it? What do you wanna do? Fight about it?

STRANGE WILDERNESS

Steve Zahn, Allen Covert, 1 Hour, 27 Minutes

After I saw the preview for this movie, I had to see it. It started with a Happy Madison production lead-in, so you know Adam Sandler had to have an eye for a funny movie. Even though he isn't in it, his posse is, and I think those guys are pretty funny in their small roles.

Accompanying the cast are up-and-comers Jonah Hill ("Superbad") and Justin Long ("Accepted"), playing smaller roles.

Peter Gauke (Zahn, "Saving Silverman") is the host of a struggling wildlife TV show. The show was a dominating force when his father hosted but after he died, Peter took over and it has spiraled down into the 3 AM timeslot. He best friend and Sound Man, Fred Wolf (Covert, "Grandma's Boy"), accompanies him on every trip out into the wild. While recording a voiceover, they are interrupted



and reminded that they have a meeting with their network head. Upon arriving, they are shown "highlights" of their show. When they have no defense for what they have been showing, their boss says the show has two weeks left and then it is cancelled. Gauke and Wolf go back to their office to think up ideas to save the show. Then, an old friend of his father's, Bill Calhoun (Joe Don Baker, "GoldenEye") stops by with a map of a cave where the legendary Bigfoot is hiding.

I'm not gonna beat around the bush and lie to you: This is one of the stupidest movies I've ever seen in my life. However, due to the amount of one-liners and humor (and one scene that involves

a shark), I think everyone should see it at least one time. Justin Long plays a pothead way too well. As for Jonah Hill, I'm not sure what exactly he was supposed to be doing other than yelling out random lines, but it was amazing. And for you "Super

Trooper" fans, the great Farva is in this one too.

RATING:

2 out of 5. The movie was dreadful.



However, it was funny enough to salvage 2.

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Jim Caviezel, Guy Pearce, 2 Hours, 11 Minutes

Like I said, I blew the dust off of the great shelf and picked two

winners for your reading pleasure. This forgotten movie headlines two great actors, Jim Caviezel and Guy Pearce. Caviezel has been good in the three movies I've seen him in and he had the balls to risk his career by playing Jesus in "The Passion of the Christ." As for Pearce, check out "Memento," and "L.A. Confidential."

Second mate Edmond Dantès (Caviezel) and his friend Fernand Mondego (Pearce), officers of a French trading ship heading towards Elba, are seeking help and medical attention to assist their ship's captain, despite the fact that the British are instructed to kill anyone who sets foot upon the island. Upon arriving, Dantès and Mondego are chased by British Dragoons who believe them to be spies of the exiled French Leader Napoleon Bonaparte. They would have died were it not for the Emperor's timely arrival and declaration that they are not his agents.

They are then brought to treat their dying captain. Later in the evening, Napoleon calls upon the ignorant Dantès to ask of him a simple favor; to give a letter to an old friend back home in France. He swears that the letter is innocent, yet still requests

that its existence be revealed to no one, not even Mondego. When the captain dies later that night, they are sent on their way. Once arriving at the port city of Marseilles, Dantès is reprimanded by the ship's first mate, for disobeying orders. The shipping company's boss is inspired by

Dantès' bravery and responsibility and thereupon promotes him to captain, over the first mate. Dantès' fiancée Mercédès Iguanada (Dagmara Dominczyk, "Running with Scissors") is intercepted by Mondego, who seeks her for himself, asking her to sleep with him. She refuses, and speaks of an incident from their past as children. They discuss the fact that Edmond will not be able to afford marriage to her for two whole years. When Mondego learns of Dantès' luck, however, they all realize that the wait will now be much shorter than two years. Mondego is ridden with envy. Soon after, Mondego conspires with the ship's first mate revealing that he knew what was in the letter and brings charges of treason on Dantès. For this, he is thrown a prison called Château d'If where France's "embarrassments" are placed to rot.

Obviously I cannot watch my massive collection continuously, even though I do have that kind of time. However, I haven't watched this movie in a few years and I remembered why I bought it...because it's great! Slightly unbelievable, but great nonetheless. Like I said in the opening, Caviezel and Pearce destroy their roles and the supporting actors back them up so well. However, I never understood why everyone had a British accent when they were all supposed to be French.

RATING:



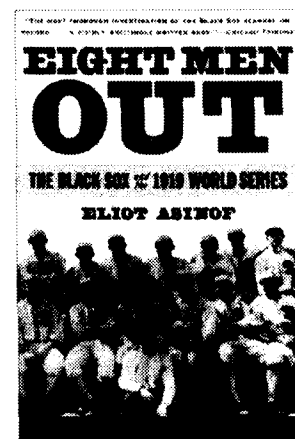
4 out of 5. Should definitely see it, and Guy Pearce should make more than one movie every two years.

EIGHT MEN OUT

John Cusack, Michael Rooker, 1 Hour, 59 Minutes

This movie is about the 1919 Chicago "Black" Sox, who were involved in the greatest black mark in baseball history (even with all the steroid crap going on now). This supposedly unbeatable team had seven players on it that threw the World Series. Due to a number of reasons, Eddie Cicotte, Lefty Williams, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, Oscar "Happy" Felsch, Charles "Swede" Risberg, Fred McMullin, and Arnold "Chick" Gandil were all culprits who agreed to take \$20,000 to lose. Unfortunately, George "Buck" Weaver was approached, but never reported it. Therefore, his name is tarnished forever.

The movie opens with the Sox winning the pennant. When the team goes down to the clubhouse, Eddie Cicotte (David Strathairn, "The Bourne Ultimatum") asks about the bonus that was promised to the team. When the man in front of them says that it's the champagne that they are holding, they are obviously disgusted until they pop it. To add insult to injury, it's flat. During the team's celebration in a bar, gamblers approach Chick (Rooker, "JFK") to see what it would take to fix the series. Chick says it would take seven or eight guys for \$10,000 each. However, he tells this to two different people to double his



money. The series comes along, the players (that I mentioned above) are in, and the gamblers lay down their bets. Besides the gamblers, no one else knows that the fix is on.

Not only is this a good sports movie (with its attention to detail and great baseball action), it is a great movie about the time period in general. In 1919, obviously, players didn't make nearly the salaries that they do today. For example, Eddie Cicotte was paid \$9,000 for the whole season in which he won 29 games. There was a part of his contract where he

would get a bonus for winning 30 games, but it was denied because "29 is not 30." So, he took \$10,000 to throw just Game 1. For those of you who are terrible at math, he just doubled his annual income. That, and it is a great movie about a sad story. The "Black" Sox scandal is in the top 5 for biggest scandals in sports history. The White Sox could've dominated the Reds in a sweep, but they rolled over for the money. Personally, I think it is a root of why players today make so much cash. Anyway, John Cusack is brilliant (Just like he is in everything, so underrated) and it has a great depiction of the amazing "Shoeless" Joe Jackson.

RATING:



5 out of 5. Brilliant movie, even if you aren't a baseball fan.

"Heroes" duels for Wii

By **JAMES COUCHE**
Columnist
JCT5101@PSU.EDU

and day and it makes the game feel disjointed. The open-world section is the game's biggest shortcoming. Pop-up and frequent slowdown

takes on part-time jobs to afford his next ranked match. These side jobs are glorified mini-games that are usually just as tedious and

suplexes and power bombs to lay waste to his opponents. The motion controls were used in moderation for this game and it helps to keep

of faceless bodyguards before facing the latest ranked assassin. These "boss fights" are quite intense, playing out like a battle of

game's strongest quality is its main character, Travis Touchdown. What sets him apart from the Master Chiefs of gaming is the fact that he is very flawed.

Travis tries to play it cool but frequently becomes the victim of his own dorkiness. He gets abused, humiliated, and taken advantage of by everyone from his opponents to his beautiful but vindictive agent Sophie. Despite this, Travis always manages to come out on top but further misfortune is never far away. These qualities, while strange at times, make the character relatable in ways that most video game heroes are not.

While crafting this game, Suda 51 obviously wore his geek tendencies on his sleeve. "No More Heroes" is littered with references to movies, anime and even other video games. It is no accident that the beam katana looks and sounds exactly like a lightsaber. Other references include fighting a baseball team called "The Warriors", a motorcycle straight out of "Akira", and collecting seven familiar-looking orange balls for an old man. Even the old perverted ninja master makes an appearance though he seems to be more interested in Travis than he is in young girls. Arcade games of the late 80's receive

homage at various points in the game and even the controversy of "Manhunt 2" is poked fun at.

If you are looking for an open ended game on the Wii to fill the void of Grand Theft Auto, do yourself a favor and buy "The Godfather: Blackhand Edition".

"No More Heroes" is the latest creation of oddball game designer Goichi Suda (Suda 51), the man who brought us the stylish yet frustrating "Killer 7". The game centers around Travis Touchdown, a twenty-something otaku (anime lover) who becomes an assassin after winning a beam katana at an internet auction. After having a violent run-in with the 11th ranked assassin, Travis sets his sights on becoming the number 1 assassin in the country.

Like Suda 51's previous efforts, "No More Heroes" is oozing with style. The developers compensated for the Wii's inferior graphics by ramping up the art design and the result is a game that is quite stunning at times. The game has an extreme high contrast, cell-shaded look and the character designs are very unique, giving the game a lot more personality than most of the photo-realistic games out there for other systems. Unfortunately, this doesn't extend to the world that these characters inhabit. The city of Santa Destroy is mostly very drab without much detail, and its streets are so devoid of activity at times it seems like a ghost town.

"No More Heroes" is separated into two distinct parts; a Grand Theft Auto-style city and over-the-top battle sequences. These two sections are as different as night



Travis, the main character of "No More Heroes" (Wii), wields his "beam katana" in preparation for battle. "No More Heroes" transitions from open-ended sandbox play to intense battles.

makes it so ugly and unplayable that it seems like a bad joke by the developers. The biggest problem with it is that there is next to nothing to do; no combat, not much detail to explore, and you only get one vehicle. The monotony is temporarily broken when Travis

repetitive as real part-time jobs. This game truly shines when Travis has his beam katana armed. The combat in "No More Heroes" is flashy and addictive and blows away anything else on the Wii. Travis combines sword fighting with wild wrestling moves like

things streamlined and enjoyable. Button presses perform basic attacks while kill slashes and wrestling moves use the system's motion controls. Combat is fluid, responsive and feels very natural. Every action sequence begins with you cutting a path through legions

wits that requires fast reflexes and careful strategy. Had this been the sole focus of the game, "No More Heroes" would have fared much better as a whole. As it is, the over the top battles serve as the light at the end of the tunnel. Aside from the combat, the