

# Films around campus

## capsule reviews

### Rating Key

- ★★★★ excellent
- ★★★ good
- ★★ fair
- ★ poor

By John Wilson

#### The Arrangement ★★

Friday to Sunday  
"Successful" advertising executive Kirk Douglas reaches middle-age and realizes the worthlessness of his life. Elia Kazan directed this depressing tale based on his best-selling novel.

#### M ★★★

Friday and Saturday  
Atmospheric thriller, directed by Fritz Lang, about a child murderer on the loose. Peter Lorre's first starring role.

#### The Owl and the Pussycat ★★★½

Friday to Sunday  
Barbara Streisand gives one of her best performances in this funny film as a hooker who barges in on writer George Segal after he has her evicted from her apartment.

#### The Cheyenne Social Club ★★½

Friday to Sunday  
James Stewart and Henry Fonda make a good screen team in this easygoing comedy about two grizzled cowboys who inherit a bordello.

#### The Graduate ★★★½

Friday to Sunday  
A very fine satirical comedy, one of the biggest box-office hits in movie history. Dustin Hoffman became a star in the title

role of a college graduate returning to the affluence of suburbia and finding hypocrisy all around him.

#### Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex... ★★★

Friday to Sunday  
Woody Allen is both director and star of this film, which consists of six segments satirizing sundry sexual situations. Some skits sloppy, several side-splitting.

#### Milhouse ★★½

Friday only  
A satirical look at the career of Richard Nixon, utilizing film and television clips of the events in his past. Will outrage his supporters and delight his detractors.

#### Rabbit, Run ★★

Friday to Sunday  
In one of his first starring roles, James Caan plays "Rabbit" Angstrom, a former high-school basketball hero who can't cope with the responsibilities of adulthood. A fair version of John Updike's novel.

#### McCabe & Mrs. Miller ★★½

Friday to Sunday  
Robert Altman (M\*A\*S\*H) directed this murky, moody western about frontier life. It focuses on the partnership formed by the title characters (Warren Beatty and Julie Christie), which has her running the local brothel and him tending bar.

"American Graffiti" is a great film. Not because it deals with great human problems but because it is a thoroughly professional, highly polished piece of cinema that is continuously entertaining.

"American Graffiti" is a nostalgic reconstruction of one night in 1962. It takes place in a typical small American town on the final evening before several characters are to leave for college. The goings-on are funny and exciting, and the characters are superb.

There is the squeaky-clean all-American teenager with P.F. Flyers, a car and a steady girl, played with squeaky-clean perfection by Ronny Howard who was the squeaky little kid from "Andy of Mayberry."

There is the bespectacled, shy and clumsy guy everyone calls "Toad" who deep down is just like everyone else.

There is the "tough guy," the hot rodder, sporting a T-shirt, tight jeans and the meanest car in the county.

These characters, together with an assortment of other typical but authentic replicas of Americana, produce a strikingly vivid image of the early '60's. The streets are lined with 1956 Edsels, big-finned Cadillacs with fur dice dangling from rear-view mirrors, and the main gathering spot is the drive-in hamburger stand where the waitresses all wear roller skates.

The film's director, ex-film student George Lucas, has achieved with skill and professionalism a masterful reproduction in refined detail of an era not long past.

Lucas' last film, "THX 1138," was an interesting attempt to create a strange future environment where society was totally mechanized and inhuman. An intriguing and unconventional film, "THX" lacked strong dramatic structure and was not very successful.

Lucas learned from his experience, though. He has given "American Graffiti" a tight, well-paced script that moves along quickly and smoothly, and has filled the soundtrack with music like "The Peppermint Twist" and other rock-and-roll tunes from the '60's along with the great disc jockey "Wolfman" Jack.

What Lucas managed to create is not just a nostalgic reminiscence. Partly because he grew up in the early '60's and partly because we all are caught up in a backward-looking cycle at the moment, Lucas' film shows us a bit about ourselves and the way we live, or think we want to live. There is something essentially and uniquely American about "American Graffiti" and there is a level of social commentary which flows swiftly along beneath the obvious fun part of the film.

"American Graffiti" is a superior example of American movie-making with all the elements of greatness. To miss this film would be a mistake.

# 'American Graffiti'

a nostalgic reconstruction  
of one night in 1962

By Mark Trachtman

"M" . . . has visual excitement, pace, brilliance of surface, and feeling for detail — Interpreted by Peter Lorre with a spark of genius" — Pauline Kael

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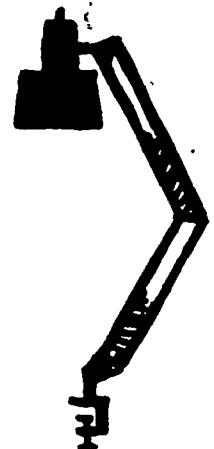
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