

Stephen King looks into his *Dark Half*

by Robb Frederick
Entertainment Editor

Stephen King has never claimed to be a gentle author. His unparalleled literary catalog, supported by chilling characters ranging from rabid dogs to vengeful automobiles to reborn pets and children, has kept millions of fiction enthusiasts warily reading until the early morning hours.

King continues to assault the imaginations of his readers in his latest horror offering, *The Dark Half*. Revolving around novelist Thad Beaumont, *The Dark Half* details the pressures placed upon a celebrity struggling to independently continue the work which has brought his star status.

The morbid excesses of King's style, however, provide a few grisly obstacles for Thad's continued prosperity.

After two moderately successful books, Thad Beaumont begins to write under the pseudonym George Stark. Stark's writings, centered around the character Alexis Machine, contain a degree of violence quite different from the style of Thad's own writing. The novels also differ from Thad's in another way; each sells extremely well.

In spite of the financial success under Stark's name, Thad decides to do away with his "dark half" and resume writing as his own self. Stark, however, objects to this decision, and the pseudonym becomes a vindictive entity.

Stark begins to roam the Maine countryside killing individuals related to Thad's career. His trip takes him to publishers, agents, and finally to Thad's own family.

King characterizes Stark as the epitome of evil, creating a villain without hesitation or remorse. Stark's artistic ability with a straight razor is mercilessly detailed through King's narrative.

An original touch of King's allows Stark to possess fingerprints identical to those of his creator. Because of this, Thad is immediately blamed for the killings, a situation which is intensified when each victim is found to be involved with the

writer's career.

As Stark's crusade continues, the story begins to focus on the relation between Thad and his living penname. The two are capable of subconsciously communicating, and each begins to show traits of the other.

The Dark Half climaxes as the central characters converge on Thad's summer home. Stark, who is rapidly degenerating, forces Thad to collaborate with him to create a final novel.

King's choice of characters enables him to weave an intricate work containing scenes of frightening realism. The use of a writer struggling with a penname is nothing new for King, who produced his first five books under the name



Richard Bachman.

The novel also continues the style of another King nightmare, *Misery*, which described the perils of a celebrated novelist confronted by an obsessed fan.

The primary fault in *The Dark Half* is King's tendency to take his grotesque descriptions to excess. The scenes involving Stark's razor use are unnecessarily graphic. King seems to be using the passages more for shock than for plot elaboration, and this may disappoint some fans already familiar with King's proven mastery of the medium.

Although this use of repulsive descriptions weakens the quality of *The Dark Half*, the book remains far above the caliber of other "horror" novels. King's creativity is unequalled, and his realism verifies his knowledge of the subject matter.

Back to the future again

Special effects wizardry fails to save sequel

by Joe Williams
Collegian Staff Writer

Back to the Future Part II picks up with the ending of part one. "Doc" Emmet Brown (Christopher Lloyd) comes back to whisk Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) and his girlfriend back to the future to save their children.

The script for *Back To The Future Part II* is crafty enough to make your head spin. In this movie the characters travel 30 years into the future, back to an altered 1985 (were they started), and then back to 1955.

The future sequence in the first part of the movie is fun but also has more brand-name products than should be advertised in one movie. The age makeup in this sequence is so grotesque it makes it difficult to recognize the characters. The first part of the movie is also the most inventive.

Fox plays Marty at his present age, older Marty, his

son Marty Jr., and his daughter Marlene together in one scene. After saving his children, Marty goes back to 1985 to find it has been altered.

This is where the plot gets so confusing the writers have Doc use a blackboard to explain everything. Doc and Marty go back to 1955 to save 1985. This is where the film gets a little tedious.

Many film clips from the first movie are used here to keep things moving along. There's a well done Hitchcock-esque scene where Marty tries to steal a book that's responsible for altering the future. But from there on plot twists start to get annoying.

Finally, the end of the movie arrives, but nothing is actually solved. The climactic events get carried into the next sequel, which has already been filmed and will be released this summer.

In part one, Marty got to change his future. In part two Marty gets to fix his mistakes.

Both are fantasies we can all identify with, but in *Part II* there is scarcely any character development worth mentioning.

Michael J. Fox is likable as Marty, but he's pretty much the same as he was on the television show *Family Ties*. Christopher Lloyd's Doc is just as insane as his previous performance in the first film.

Sequels are older than anyone can remember and their primary purpose has always been to capitalize on the popularity of the first story. But what makes a sequel good is that it can stand alone. The central characters remain, but the story changes.

Back to the Future II does not stand alone. Not only does it blatantly capitalize on its predecessor, it is devised to make viewers go back to see the first movie. The ending is a quasi-cliffhanger leaving a need to see part three.

This is not the worst sequel ever made, it just doesn't measure up to its original.

Bear sympathizes with wildlife

by Christi Luden
Collegian Staff Writer

Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud and produced by Claude Berre, *The Bear* is a phenomenal movie. The Tri Star Pictures film is in its sixth week at Cinema World, and it appeals to people of all ages and walks of life.

The setting in the gorgeous wilderness of British Columbia allowed for filming which will leave viewers in awe. Since the film is based on the lives of two bears, Bart and Youk, there is little dialogue and that fact made the scenery even more noticeable and important.

The movie begins by showing a mother bear digging into a bee's nest to get honey for her cub. The nest was located in the side of a mountain, and the rocks around it began to loosen as the mother dug further. The rocks fall upon the mother, killing her instantly. The cub (Youk) is left to fend for himself.

Many of Youk's growing experiences are documented in *The Bear*. The cub first encounters a frog, which he chases around playfully. There are many scenes with this cuteness throughout the film.

After Youk is introduced to the audience, two bear hunters are shown at their campsite, cleaning their recent kills. As morning comes, the two hunters set out to track more bears. They come upon a set of huge footprints and continue to track them until they locate a mammoth male bear. The young hunter shoots and wounds the bear, causing it to run away and later mutilate a horse belonging to the hunters. This action prompts the movie's primary storyline.

The large bear (Bart), wounded and bleeding, limps on to find a cool stream to bed down in, in order to clean his wound. Once this stream is found, Youk returns to the picture. The cub is thrilled to see another of its

kind, and immediately tries to get close to Bart. After a bit of growling and thrashing, Bart finally allows Youk near him. At this point, a father-son relationship begins.

The rest of the film is filled with the two bears helping each other in times of need. Youk receives guidance through a strange world, and he is comforted when nightmares of his mother's death haunt his sleep. Bart finds friendly companionship as he continues to run from the hunters who have vowed to finish him off.

The credits at the end of *The Bear* contain many trainers' names, as well as the different animals captured on film. The movie's purpose is also stated here: The film was made to draw sympathy from the audience in order to make viewers more aware of the increasing rate of bear killings. That goal is accomplished through the gentle depiction of these traditionally ferocious animals.

Crossword Puzzle Solution

S	T	A	R	B	R	I	M	M	U	G
E	A	S	E	E	E	L	S	O	R	E
A	T	T	H	A	W	S	A	G		
T	R	E	R	A	S	M	U	C	H	
C	L	A	M	D	R	E	W	L	O	O
R	E	P	E	L	D	E	E	P	M	N
A	T	T	A	I	N	S	E	R	A	P
T	A	T	R	I	P	D	O	L	L	S
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A	L	P	O	R	E	L	A	C	N	E
B	O	S	B	A	S	E	B	E	T	S

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