

Army of Darkness splashes across the big screen

Trapped in time. Surrounded by evil. Low on gas.

by Rick Kastan
Entertainment Editor

The Dark Ages. Plague and poverty rule the days. Even worse, darkness rules the night. An army of darkness, leagues of the newly risen undead (Deadites) out to destroy the living and take over the world. But as certain doom approaches, a leader from another time and place suddenly materializes with a magic all his own.

His name is Ash. His Excalibur: an unreliable chainsaw strapped to his arm where his hand used to be; his lance, an aging 12-gauge shotgun; his steed, a 1973 Delta 88 Oldsmobile badly in need of a tune-up; his sanity, nonexistent.

Hence comes the long awaited, much delayed third entry in director Sam Raimi's series of Evil Dead films; and if you are a fan of either of Raimi's previous dead films like me, then you shouldn't be at all disappointed with *Army of Darkness*.

The original *Evil Dead* came out in 1983, at the tail-end of the unrated gore-horror trend of the early 80's. It was fast, funny, cheap, gory, indescribably scary, and featured a unique visual style unrivaled in films of those days. *The Evil Dead* fast became a cult hit.

Five years later, Raimi and

company returned to the horror genre with *Evil Dead 2: Dead by Dawn*. It was half-remake, half-sequel and all different. Ash (Bruce Campbell), the dim-witted S-Mart clerk turned hero from the

calculations, should NOT have worked but did; a sequel of the same merit as the original, yet for different reasons.

Now comes *Army of Darkness* (the distribution company has

very hip, very fast paced, very funny satire of both sword-and-sorcery flicks and action heroes.

Ash is back, way back.

Sucked back into the Middle Ages at the end of the last film,

is too happy about it. But for him to return to his own time, he must first help the villagers by obtaining the fabled Book of the Dead and destroying the evil.

The movie moves at a breakneck pace (sometimes so fast it's hard to understand what exactly is going on), and is full of spectacular special effects, tired macho one-liners (courtesy of the insane Ash) and Three Stooges-esque violence.

One moment, Ash is being attacked by hordes of little Ashes, then he's splitting in two (creating a good-Ash and a bad-Ash), and next he's being stretched by wind tunnels and eye-poked by skeletons. The action is non-stop and the special effects (while not terribly gory) are believable.

Campbell is still very good in the role he created, and is successful in bringing the slapstick humor of the second film to a boiling point here.

Is *Army of Darkness* a good movie? No. There is no characterization and no real point in the film. Is it a good time? Definitely. The action is fast and funny, the monsters scary, and there's not a lot of plot to get in the way of the violence.

All in all, *Army of Darkness* is a very good time (although a bit too short at only 77 minutes), and well worth the money.



Shop smart. Shop S-Mart.: Reluctant time-traveller, Ash (Bruce Campbell) shows a band of villagers his "boom-stick" in *Army of Darkness*.

first film, was back to fight the undead, but this time Raimi opted for a more comic, less horrific tone for the film. The result, a completely original and hilarious tour de force that, by all

effectively kept the moniker *Evil Dead III* away from it to not limit its appeal to just the ED cult), and while it is not quite up to par with the other entries in the series, it stands up by itself as a

he is beat-up, out of place, pissed-off and quite insane. For the citizens of these medieval times, Ash represents the only hope to destroy the Deadites - and neither the villagers nor our hero

Untamed Heart stretches credibility to the breaking point

by Eric Kesselring
Collegian Staff

Let me admit that I have a certain bias when reviewing *Untamed Heart*, the new Christian Slater movie. My opinions are slanted horribly because I do not worship Slater. When his name appears in the pre-credits I am not overcome by a sudden urge to go "Woo!" Call it a guy thing. Please don't report me to the Christian Slater fan club.

I must also admit that I do expect a lot from Slater. His powerful charisma helped make *Heathers* a dark masterpiece and *Pump Up the Volume* a thrilling reality. Then again there was that nasty *Kuffs* incident. In any case I was hoping *Untamed Heart* would be both endearing and romantic.

I am still trying to figure out what went wrong. The basic concept is a bit silly but basically sound.

Caroline (Marisa Tomei) is a waitress in a Minneapolis diner. She appears to be outgoing, ambitious and street-smart. She

chats with her customers and is constantly gabbing with her co-worker and best friend Cindy (Rosie Perez). But her air of confidence is only a front.

Slater plays Adam, a silent busboy in the diner for which Caroline waits tables. Caroline is the typical movie young woman. Her romantic life is active but unrewarding because of the horrible men who do not appreciate her. Adam is an orphan with a heart condition. His traumatic life has left him introverted, virtuously naive, and sort of messed-up.

When Caroline is assaulted on her way home from work, Adam beats off her assailants and carries her to her home. Unavoidably she falls in love. Adam was already in love. He has been following Caroline home every night. Their rising romance makes for enjoyable viewing. Adam is the sweetest thing since gumdrops. Slater's role is essentially part man, part child, and part wounded puppy.

Untamed Heart is undeniably romantic. Adam brings a live Christmas tree into Caroline's

room while she sleeps. On Adam's birthday he gives Caroline a present. The beauty of innocence does grab at the viewer. I am not convinced that *Untamed Heart* reaches far enough.

The other night my roommate was writing a paper refuting the idea that chivalry is dead. He had an easy time observing chivalrous activities. The problem was if the spirit behind chivalry still means something. The problem with *Untamed Heart* is if the romance actually means something.

The movie definitely contains romantic actions, but lacks the feeling needed for true romance. To really enjoy a good romance, you have to fall in love yourself. It is tough to fall in love in less than two hours if you are distracted. Between Caroline's inability to be even slightly independent and her incessant giggling, I felt the girl was a dip. Adam is similar to Slater's shy role in *Pump Up the Volume*, but lacks the angry soul that made the character a person.



Sexy Rosie Perez stars as Cindy in *Untamed Heart*

Untamed Heart has some merits, but it tries too hard. If the plotline were toned down, the movie would be far more believable. You sense that

Untamed Heart tries to get an emotional response by doing traditionally emotional things. There is more to love than wine and roses.