

FILM ESTIMATES

Progressive teachers will find dependable advice in these estimates on current film releases.

Recognizing that one man's meat may be another man's poison, the National Committee on Current Theatrical Films gives three ratings: A, for discriminating adults; Y, for youth; and C, for children. These estimates are printed by special arrangement with *The Educational Screen*, Chicago.

BIG BROADCAST OF 1937 (Jack Benny) (Para) Elaborate radio "revue" with thin plot and many "acts". Swing bands, song and dance, Burns and Allen comedy, Martha Raye, etc. Entertaining or not, amusing or silly, according to taste. Notable sequence with Stokowsky and his orchestra.

(A) Depends on taste (Y) (C) Probably amusing

CAIN AND MABEL (Marion Davies, Clark Gable) (Warner) Rollicking formula stuff. Prizefighter and chorus girl working way up—hate each other—must pretend love for publicity purposes—and expected result. Thick with dances, ring fighting and wisecracks, some very labored. Typical box-office.

(A) Perhaps (Y) Amusing (C) Little interest

CLOISTERED (made in French convent, dialog and song in French, but good English narrative accompanies as needed). Rarely impressive, revealing picture of activity and meaning of life in cloistered convent. Rich in beauty, symbolism and moving ritual, expertly and reverently done. Outstanding.

(A) Excellent (Y) Mature (C) Little interest

DANIEL BOONE (Geo. O'Brien, Heather Angel) (RKO) Vivid portrayal of fortitude, grim suffering, gruelling hardship in covered wagon trek across Alleghenies into Kentucky. True to times, but constant Indian massacres, tortures, violence, misery make it harrowing entertainment for any one.

(A) Perhaps (Y) Good but grim (C) Doubtful

DEVIL IS A SISSY (Bartholomew, Rooney, Cooper) (MGM) Very human study of underprivileged boys in city slums, their start in petty crime and gradual regeneration. Notable cast, finely knit story, outstanding work by boys and judge. Grim and thought-provoking, humorous and appealing.

(A) (Y) Very good (C) Doubtful

DODSWORTH (Huston, Chatterton, Lukas, Astor) (UA) Fine screen version of fine play showing effect of changed environment, from Midwest to Europe, on mature, long-devoted married couple. Trenchant, appealing realism, notably written, acted and directed. Intelligent "triangle" drama.

(A) Excellent (Y-C) Entirely too mature

GAY DESPERADO (Nino Martini, Leo Carrillo) (UA) Delightful mixture of farce, romance, satire, travesty and slapstick. Breezy action, picturesque dialog, notable singing. Mexican bandits emulate American movie gang methods, but soon learn better. Martini and Carrillo notably fine.

(A-Y) Very good (C) Unless too exciting

KILLER AT LARGE (Mary Brian, Russell Hardie) (Columbia) Amateurish murder mystery with a girl detective feebly played by Mary Brian. Whole narrative and direction incredibly naive. Wax dummies furnish the comedy. Harmless thriller so stupidly done as to be almost amusing.

(A) Hopeless (Y-C) Harmless but poor

LADIES IN LOVE (Young, Gaynor, Bennett, Simon) (Fox) Three girls of different backgrounds and ambitions start after careers. Three varied romances develop until fourth girl appears to complicate matters, and the three end the film by heading back for home. Little unity or charm.

(A) Hardly (Y) No (C) No

LIBELED LADY (Powell, Tracy, Harlow, Loy) (MGM) Lively, sophisticated, continuously amusing newspaper-high society comedy, smartly done by able cast, dialog clever aside from wisecracks. Hilarious efforts of two men to ward off libel suit complicated by two girls. Perfect "box office."

(A) Very good of kind (Y) Better not (C) No

OLD HUTCH (Wallace Beery) (MGM) Agreeable rural realism, with Beery good as shiftless, lazy ne'er-do-well with many children, who fishes while his worn-out wife works. Finds fortune in stolen bills, tangles with the thieves, but flounders through to win without much work after all.

(A) Rather good (Y-C) Very good

PRESIDENT'S MYSTERY STORY (Wilcoxon, Betty Furness) (Repub.) Merely central idea of Liberty serial (suggested by President Roosevelt, written by six prominent authors) turned into non-shocking social-political melodrama of big firms' ruthless competition with little ones. Good, obvious propaganda.

(A) Fair (Y) Fair (C) Little interest

SEVEN SINNERS (E. Lowe, C. Cummings, and English cast) (G-B) Entertaining detective-melodrama with gruesome bits but sustained interest. Elusive villain uses train-wrecks as means to murder and to cover murders, but suave American hero and heroine track him down. Good dialog.

(A-Y) Good thriller (C) Too strong

THANK YOU, JEEVES (Arthur Treacher, David Niven) (Fox) Crazy slapstick farce, with little of the Wodehouse original, full of hokum, archaic thrills and stock laugh-devices, but Treacher's role as valet to whimsical hero is redeeming feature. Decidedly different and amusing.

(A) Good of kind (Y) Amusing (C) Amusing

VALIANT IS THE WORD FOR CARRIE (Gladys George, Jackie Moran) (Para.) Mature, intelligent character comedy showing regeneration of prostitute by devoted love for two hapless waifs. Shift of interest and cast in second half mars drama but appeal holds. Difficult theme delicately and strongly done.

(A) Very good (Y) Unsuitable (C) No

WIVES NEVER KNOW (Boland, Ruggles, Menjou) (Para.) Typical Boland-Ruggles farce comedy. Married happiness interrupted when social "philosopher" convinces them that Charlie should be bad so Mary can forgive. Deft comedy, bordering burlesque and ending in regular "chase." Amusing domestic travesty.

(A) Amusing (Y) Mature (C) Little interest