

FILM ESTIMATES

Recognizing that one man's meat may be another'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.

BEETHOVEN CONCERTO (Russian, excellent English titles) (Amkino) Notable Russian picture, dominated by children, with two extraordinary little heroes in national competition for violin honors. Acting notable, music beautiful, human interest strong. Culture and happiness presented as Russian norm.

(A) Very good (Y) Good (C) Perhaps

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS (Bartholomew, S. Tracy, L. Barrymore) (MGM) Powerful portrayal of rich little snob transformed by hard knocks and high adventure among rough but understanding fishermen. Grand Banks schooner life magnificently shown in tense, convincing, human drama. Masterpiece of cinema.

(A) Excellent (Y) Excellent (C) Very strong

ELEPHANT BOY (Sabu, Indian boy, and Kala Nag, the elephant) (UA) Another masterpiece by Flaherty of "Nanook" and "Man of Aran." Great, natural, healthy thrilling picture, made in native jungles, from Kipling's tale of deep friendship between adorable boy and mighty elephant.

(A) (Y) (C) Excellent

FIRE OVER ENGLAND (Flora Robson, R. Massey) (U. A.) Colorful, richly romantic semi-historical film of 16th Century and intrigue between England and Spain, showing Queen Elizabeth's defeat of Spanish Armada. Excellent but not always authentic character portrayals. Highly romanticized history.

(A) Fine of kind (Y) Very gd. (C) Doubt. int.

FIREFLY, THE (J. MacDonald, Allan Jones, et al.) (MGM) Musical and photographic masterpiece despite undue length due to prolonged war scenes. Richly romantic, colorful spy story, costumed and set, with charm of scene and action, in Spain in days of Napoleon. Delightful music superbly sung.

(A) Excellent (Y) Excellent (C) Doubtful int.

OUTCASTS OF POKER FLAT (P. Foster, J. Muir, V. Weidler) (RKO) Lusty, lively melodrama based on Bret Harte stories of Gold Rush days. Drinking, shootings, and child poker player in hero's gambling house! But minister, school teacher-heroine and vigilantes bring law and order and drive out gamblers.

(A) Hardly (Y) Better not (C) No

PARNELL (Clark Gable, Myrna Loy) (MGM) Dramatic story of fiery Irish patriot whose cause for home rule meets defeat when scandal breaks over his love for married woman. Impressively set and marked character interest but film weakened by Gable's lack of fire and excess dialog, which thins out pictorial value and content.

(A) Very good of kind (Y) Mature (C) No

PENROD AND SAM (Billy Mauch, Frank Craven, Spring Byington) (Warner) Boy-parent psychology, young human nature, engagingly presented in modernized Tarkington story, with healthily exciting melodrama added. Quite wholesome entertainment for all, with bits perhaps strong for sensitive children. Mauch promising.

(A) (Y) Very good of kind (C) Probably good

LITERATURE AND HISTORY

THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER (Mauch Twins and outstanding cast) (1st Nat.) Mark Twain's fanciful tale of 16th Century English Court splendidly screened, in spirit of book and times. Only a trying moment or two for very sensitive children. A much-loved classic admirably handled. No romance lugged in!

(A) Excellent (Y) Excellent (C) Good

REVOLUTIONISTS (Russian, with English titles) (Amkino) Sincere, convincing story of actual growth of revolution from Czarist terrorism of '96 through bloody climax of 1905. Some naive still, but notably good photography, acting and narrative. Avoids raucous sound, dragging tempo, and overdone close-ups.

(A) Good (Y) (C) Doubtful interest or value

SLIM (Hy, Fonda, Pat O'Brien, M. Lindsay) (War.) Realistic, convincing drama deals with heroism and devotion to duty of linemen who work on high tension power lines. Human characters, notable photography, thrilling, suspenseful climax. Little romance, deep friendship of two men are appealing elements.

(A-Y) Interesting (C) Too thrilling

TOAST OF NEW YORK, THE (E. Arnold, C. Grant, Oakie) (RKO) Lively, highly fictionized and romanticized history of Fisk's manipulation of men and stock markets, and rise to financial power in post-civil-war days, the good-natured, swashbuckling, ruthless hero reaping ruin and death in final audacious scheme.

(A) Good of kind (Y) Doubtful (C) No

THIRTEENTH CHAIR (Dame Whitty, Madge Evans, Lewis Stone) (MGM) Excellent screening of old Veiller melodramatic thriller, in which spiritualistic medium functions to aid law in detecting cold-blooded slayer of two. Some gruesome moments. Roles by Dame Whitty and Lewis Stone are notable.

(A) (Y) Very good of kind (C) Too strong

UNDER THE RED ROBE (Raymond Massey, Conrad Veidt, Annabella) (Fox) Mostly interesting English version of famous romantic novel of Richelieu and the Huguenots. The too mature Veidt does romantic role rather heavily, and charming Annabella's English is none too clear, but Massey's Richelieu compensates.

(A) (Y) Very good (C) Little interest

WEE WILLIE WINKIE (Shirley Temple, V. McLaglen) (Fox) Little Shirley at her best in Kipling story altered to fit. Delightful, appealing little girl action throughout. Mature surroundings and situations, of course, with some violence, pathos, tense moments, and improbable but pleasing climax.

(A) Very good (Y) Excellent (C) Mostly good

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There is a high proportion of favorable estimates on these two pages because they reprint only the thirty best out of the hundred and fifty-odd estimates circulated by *The Educational Screen* since the last issue of this magazine.

GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT

BETWEEN TWO WOMEN (F. Tone, M. O'Sullivan, V. Bruce) (MGM) Well-acted, overlong romantic drama, fine in spots, but hospital background and action not always credible, melodramatic crises overdone, as surgeon-hero's marriage to wealthy socialite fails, leading to divorce and return to fine little nurse.

(A) Good of kind (Y) Perhaps (C) No

CALL IT A DAY (Ian Hunter, Frieda Inescourt) (War) Light, domestic comedy of springtime romance with outstanding cast, sprightly dialog, deft direction. Brazen love-chasing by emotional females. Adult opinion will vary from whimsical and amusing, to overdone and silly. Perhaps a good "horrible example" for youth.

(A) Very gd of kd (Y) Doubtful (C) Slight int.

DREAMING LIPS (Bergner, R. Massey) (U.A.) British film. Tense, intimate triangle. Little action but of high dramatic value and character interest, crisply done, in real English. Convincing, appealing, grimly tragic. Bergner extraordinary as wife torn between love for musician and loyalty to husband.

(A) Fine of kind (Y-C) Utterly mat. and unsuit.

EMPEROR'S CANDLESTICKS, THE (Powell, Rainer and fine cast) (MGM) Complex, but finely-acted and written spy thriller of intrigue between Czarist Russia and Poland. High suspense throughout. Strong, wholesome romance intrinsic to plot, without sex objection. Elaborate costume thriller in European setting.

(A) Very good of kind (Y) Good (C) Little int.

EVER SINCE EVE (R. Montgomery, Marion Davies) (MGM) Light, trivial comedy. Heroine is too beautiful. All employers offend with unwelcome attentions. Disguised as ugly duckling becomes secretary to irresponsible novelist-hero, with inevitable complications and ultimate romance. Wisecracking, loud comedy.

(A) Depends on taste (Y) Better not (C) No

GIRL LOVES BOY (Eric Linden, Cecilia Parker) (Grand Nat'l) Simple, human little story of small town life in horse and buggy days. Rich, shallow playboy, married to gold digger, is extricated from false marriage and reformed by love for fine heroine from proud, impoverished family. Appealing touches of home life.

(A) Fair (Y) Good (C) Yes

MAKE WAY FOR TOMORROW (V. Moore, Beulah Bondi) (Para.) Realistic domestic comedy, notably acted, depicting contrasts and conflicts between aged parents and their children. It is deeply human, convincingly true, frequently amusing, but too many moments are poignant and depressing for popular success.

(A) Exc. (Y) Mature but good (C) Beyond them

NIGHT MUST FALL (R. Montgomery, R. Russell, Dame Whitty) (MGM) Genial, smiling young man, living as trusted and loved member of rural English home, finally disclosed as hideous psychopathic killer. Striking blend of gentle realism and stark crime. Quiet, grim, difficult theme very ably presented.

(A) Very unusual (Y) (C) Doubtful value or int.

OH DOCTOR (Edward E. Horton) (Univ.) Crazy farce about crooks trying to swindle rich hero who imagines himself mortally ill with complications of diseases. Heroine comes in as nurse and transforms him. Only feature, Horton's unique comedy work as the hero.

(A) Hardly (Y-C) Fairly amusing

SARATOGA (Jean Harlow, Clark Gable) (MGM) Credible, well-acted romantic racetrack story, with good comedy. Gay, scheming bookmaker-hero and stubborn heroine in love but wrangle incessantly and try to outsmart each other until misunderstandings are cleared up. Some sex touches crudely, needlessly lugged in.

(A) Fairly amus. (Y) Better not (C) Unsuitable

A STAR IS BORN (Gaynor, March, Menjou) (UA) Expert glamorization of Hollywood with fine technicolor and notable cast. But heroine's success must depend on disagreeable screen-hero whose drunken antics lead her to stardom, him to suicide, and picture to anticlimax. Fine material stupidly ruined.

(A) Depends on taste (Y) No (C) No

TUNDRA (Expedition picture) (Norman Dawn) Amazingly fine and striking photography of actual Alaska, its landscape, mountains, bergs, fauna and flora, and the adorable doings of two bear cubs. The attempted adventure "story" is naively artificial and often preposterous—weak drama in splendid settings.

(A) Unusual (Y) (C) Mostly very good

ROAD BACK, THE (R. Cromwell, John King, et al.) (Univ.) Notable production, stirringly, impressively depicting futility, horror and tragic by-products of war. Unfortunately, ill-conceived buffoonery and slapstick blur the impelling poignancy of author's theme—the maladjustment of soldiers to civilian life.

(A) Excellent (Y) Mature (C) Not for them

TOPPER (Constance Bennett, C. Grant, Roland Young) (MGM) Hilarious, well-acted, sophisticated, preposterous fantasy, with clever trick photography to carry out preternatural theme of gay, irresponsible pair whose whimsies are continued by their spirits after car crash. A novelty, overlong, overdone in spots.

(A) Amusing of kind (Y) Perhaps (C) No

WILD MONEY (E. H. Horton) Lynne Overman) (Para.) Rather different and well told newspaper story with amusing comedy and much character interest. Fine performance by Horton as penny-pinching auditor on paper who is thrust into reporter's job in kidnapping case; proves his efficiency, heroism.

(A) Amusing (Y) Good (C) Prob. amusing.