

a nightmarish lord of the flies

by Jim Russel

Lord of the Flies
directed by Harry Hook
Columbia Pictures

The morning after the press screening of *Lord of the Flies*, I awoke at 2 a.m. to

find my fingers clutched tightly around the "neck" of my pillow. "You bloody bastards . . . You ruined it . . . you ruined it!" I shouted over and over until the sound of my voice snapped me out of my homicidal rage. I got out of bed and stumbled toward the

bathroom. The cold water I splashed on my face calmed my spirit but couldn't rinse away the sense of remorse. Why couldn't I . . . why couldn't someone have prevented them from butchering *Lord of the Flies*?

I staggered back to the bedroom and, upon reaching the foot of my bed, dropped to my knees, clasped my hands together and raised my eyes upward. "Oh please Mr. Golding," I pleaded. "Don't let them make another movie from your book . . . Tell them to leave it alone! I loved *Lord of the Flies* . . . It was wonderful . . . it was terrible . . . it drove me to the greatest heights . . . it plunged me to the depths of despair . . . Mr. Golding . . . the film-makers took the guts from it! They murdered it with wooden spears ripping it open with their greedy fingers and devoured it. Then they cut off its head and left it impaled on the end of a stake, a sacrifice to the god of 'Net Profit.' It must never be allowed to happen again. Thank you for listening . . . goodnight Mr. Golding."

No, this isn't the first time film-makers have attempted to capitalize on the success of Sir William Golding's 1954 classic novel. In 1963, Peter Brooks tried it and, to a large degree, succeeded. Granted, Brooks' film was shot with the dexterity (and budget) of a home movie, and granted the medium was black and white, and granted the acting was wooden to say the least, but Brooks still managed to retain the underlying evil, tension and despair that ran



through Golding's book. Mr. Hook, however, though blessed with decent acting, credible photography and a budget of \$11 million, came up empty handed.

Gone from the beginning of the story is the nuclear explosion that implied, to the boys and to the reader, that the world was in the grip of a nuclear holocaust. Gone is that initial sense of hopelessness that rescue might not be imminent. Gone is much of the tension that existed between Ralph, who represented "civilization" and Jack, who represented savagery. Gone is Piggy's wisdom. Gone is the mystique surrounding the beast and gone is the sanctimonious British naval officer, dressed in his starched

white uniform, a savage no less evil than the children he has come to rescue.

"I should have thought that a pack of British boys . . . would have been able to put up a better show," the officer mutters as he surveys the death and destruction wrought by the boys who were so easily stripped of their flimsy togs of civilization.

I would have thought that a pack of big-time Hollywood types would have been able to make a better movie than this. As it stands, however, *Lord of the Flies*, version number two, is TV fare for a lazy Sunday afternoon and nothing more . . . pity.

I give it a two out of 10 — buy the book instead.

trite tale of brotherly love

by J.A. Stephan

Coupe de Ville
directed by Joe Roth
Universal

If you have any interest in seeing *Coupe de Ville*, save a few bucks and wait for this lackadaisical film to pull into your nearest video store. Word of mouth should cause it a quick death at the theatres.

The screenplay originated from a family yarn of three alienated brothers brought together by their dying father to drive a sparkling new, baby-blue Cadillac from Michigan to Florida for their mother's birthday. However, this trite tale of brotherly bonding on the open road never manages to mesh comedy and drama. Comedic touches are clever but conventional; dramatic confrontations wilt under the predictability of their outcomes. Real life is not necessarily the stuff of great movies.

The brothers include Bobby, a teenage troublemaker (Patrick Dempsey); Marvin, an overbearing air force sergeant (Daniel Stern); and Buddy, a lovesick college graduate (Ayre Gross). Their adolescent discord has matured into adult animosity aggravated by the circumstances of the mission.

Bad feelings turn petty disagreements into major confrontations, making the trip especially torturous. As the battle rages, the trio are often driven to distraction by mishap. Intercepted by Southern cops, dented by a street sign and marred by an obstructing cow, the *Coupe* becomes their shared nemesis. If the boys fail their father, they will be defeated as brothers.

Upon arrival in Florida, Bobby, Marvin and Buddy attempt to salvage their relationship and the car. To raise the repair money, they go from begging their uncle to risking Bobby's coin collection at the greyhound races. The hardship demand that the brothers work together, thereby strengthening their bonds and reunifying the family.

Director Joe Roth's exploration of family relations remains uninspired throughout the *Coupe's* journey. The sorry character development of first-time scriptwriter Mike Binder is partly to blame. His dialogue is ordinary. The audience struggles to stay involved in an emotional void.

Lazy pacing exacerbates an already wanting situation. Because the happy ending is a given, anticipation is lost. The story is not intriguing enough to make up for the deficit.

Although a period piece, Roth's recreation of the early '60s is visually bland. He choose 1963

because that year was "the apex of New Frontier optimism" for the nation. An optimism adequately represented by the family, but missed in their surroundings. The soundtrack is one bright exception. Gold like "Louie Louie" and "Transfusion" liven up the trip.

Just as spirited are the performances. Dempsey, currently suffering the box office blues, manages well as a sensitive youth at odds with his siblings. Stern transforms smoothly from overblown to sympathetic. Gross' sappy look fits the role of the brothers' peacemaker, but as a "Romeo" he falls short. A typecast Alan Arkin confidently conveys both the warmth and the surliness of the father. The actors work well to overcome the limitations of the script.

Coupe de Ville stresses the importance of forgiveness within a family. It is a little message which gives birth to a little film.



Toronto-Bayview Regional Cancer Centre

The Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation

2075 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4N 3M5

Telephone: (416) 488-5801

Fax: (416) 480-6002

TORONTO-BAYVIEW REGIONAL CANCER CENTRE

SCHOOL OF RADIOTHERAPY

INVITES YOU TO APPLY FOR

TRAINING AS A RADIOTHERAPY TECHNOLOGIST

Become part of a dynamic team of health care professionals in cancer management. Qualify to work throughout Canada and many other countries (Australia, England, New Zealand, etc.)

If you have graduated by September 1990 with a BSc which includes a credit in Calculus and Physics you may be eligible for a reduction in program length.

Please apply by April 13, 1990 or call (416) 480-4951 for further information.