

Comment: It's a sad sad sad sad film festival

It's a Third Third Third Third World
Lister Hall

by Jens Andersen

The plot is the familiar cliché: a young greenhorn enters the world of grown men, where he is laughed at for being a sissy. But after a dint of hard work and right-thinking he proves his manhood in a remarkable feat of derring-do, wins the heart of Tess Trueheart, and rides off into the sunset.

Pure Horatio Alger hokum, and I suspect that even the dewiest freshperson on campus would snicker to hear it. But plug in a cleancut Cuban brigadista (teacher cadet) in the place of the All-American boy, exchange the soaring platitudes about the Home of the Free for soaring platitudes like La Revolucion Wins Every Battle, replace the nasty gooks with nasty Americano mercenaries, and presto, the U of A's socially-conscious intellectual vanguard will break into applause.

Which is what happened at the showing of *El Brigadista* at the Third World film festival Saturday night. As one enlightened audience member said, "That was a rilly good movie."

In fact it was a compendium of almost every prefabricated character ever manufactured by Hollywood: the sweet dimpled heroine, the sadistic town bully, the roughneck who reforms his ways, the cute mischievous urchin, the overprotective mother, the cheap tramp who almost seduces the hero, ad nauseam.

And also a compendium of every hackneyed Hollywood incident: the good clean fun hunting scenes (technically superb), the romantic walk on the beach with soft music playing scene, the cut them off at the pass battle scenes, the tearful farewell scene, the flag flying bravely in the breeze scene, etc.

A soft-sell classic if there ever was one. And why not? What is good enough for motherhood and apple pie is good enough for the heroic struggle of the working class.

The other films I saw ranged from horrible to tolerable. *History Book*, a long animated feature, belabored the theory that capitalists are evil selfish

people, and if only they were replaced by wonderful, noble and heroic socialists, then everybody would live happily ever after.

History Book's narrator is an omnipresent mouse who says things like: "This is how capitalism works - it always robs people of their human dignity."

"The Russian people have learned that the only way to be free is to have a revolution."

"Again the workers are used for cannon fodder... they continue to shoot each other instead of the capitalists."

"In a people's war everyone takes part in the collective effort and the capitalists are defeated. YAAAY!"

"The Soviet Union stays in eastern Europe because it fears another attack from capitalists."

In case the message isn't clear enough, at the end of each of the film's nine reels a world map is shown with the Third World in red. The red areas coalesce to form a star.

If one needs an antidote to the atrocious garbage being taught in high school social studies courses, why not use, say, some of the historical comedy sketches from Firesign Theatre's first two albums instead? These sketches fit the description of "refreshing, entertaining and demystifying" better than the Marxist claptrap in *History Book*, which earned these pausing adjectives in the festival brochure.

Tilt, by the National Film Board was fair to middling: effective for yanking the head of the average booshwah out of the sand (providing the booshwah attended the festival), but ultimately disappointing in its rehashing of ancient liberal solutions like doing unto others and helping one's neighbor.

In the Jungle was a lovey-dovey cartoon allegory wherein the jungle animals escape the hunters (capitalists) who have enslaved them, thereby achieving peace and harmony, with the birds not eating worms, etc. Another overdose of happily ever after.

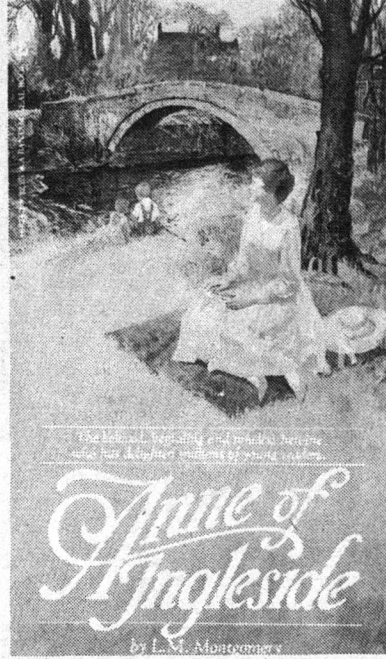
Blood of the Condor was the stylistic flip of *El Brigadista's* slickness, filmed in black and white, using odd arty shots, and

featuring generally expressionless actors. It was concerned with the sterilization of Bolivian Indians by American doctors as part of an alleged Bolivian genocide program. It depicted the Bolivians as rich and cruel and the Americans as decadent, inconsiderate and stupid, a portrait that was actually rather subtly done. However at the end of the film, as unsobly as the bottle of Coke or Labbatts Blue at the end of a commercial, there flashed onto the screen a shot of Indian

arms thrusting rifles into the air.

Well, I have to admit that the idea of shooting incurable capitalists, mass-murderers and ignorant doctors is a mighty tempting solution when they begin to get me down with their parade of never-ending imbecilities. But why stop there? Why not throw in the left-wing (and right-wing) world-saving propagandists and their film-making tools at the same time and *really* clean things up?

Strictly literature for kids



Anne of Windy Poplars
Anne's House of Dreams
Anne of Ingleside

review by Pat Just

I can remember developing an enthusiasm for L.M. Montgomery's books when I was nine or ten years old. I read the first three in paperback at least ten times, and promptly forgot all about them. They were books that kept me excited then, for the heroine, none other than Anne of Green Gables, seemed to get out of all her scrapes with very little trouble, and was

almost always happy over something or other.

Now, three more books in that series have been reissued, which I have never heard of. They try to recapture the magic of those first three books, but there is a twist. The new edition which tells the story of Anne's adult life, is being promoted as adult reading.

After I looked over the whole series, I realized that the whole reason that I read them as a child was because they represent a sort of artificial happiness. Read a chapter or two; get happy. That's great for children, but most adults should be beyond such basic fantasizing. The books are still the same as when I was young, but one's judgment and taste in literature changes with age.

This is light reading, the type of thing you read in the bathtub. It doesn't matter if it gets wet.

The inherent talent of L.M. Montgomery still comes through, though it is somewhat dilute. By writing so many sequels, she has reduced Anne of Green Gables from a novel praised by Mark Twain to the level of a serialized soap opera, or the familiar Harlequin Romances.

This is still good children's literature, though, because it is high in imagination. I would give a copy of the first Anne novel to someone in that age bracket, and the rest of the series if they are enthusiastic.

But frankly, as an adult, I would be embarrassed to be seen carrying these on the campus without a brown paper covering.

COCKTAIL PARTY XEROX

XEROX CANADA INC. WOULD LIKE TO INVITE ALL STUDENTS INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN A DISCUSSION ON THE MERITS OF A CAREER IN SALES AND MARKETING (GIVEN BY U. OF A. GRADUATES) TO ATTEND A COCKTAIL PARTY AT:

**EDMONTON PLAZA HOTEL
MARLBORO ROOM
ON THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1981
AT 6:00 P.M.**

A NUMBER OF YOUR PEERS, RECENTLY GRADUATED FROM U. OF A., WILL ALSO BE ON HAND TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND TELL YOU WHAT LIFE AT XEROX IS ALL ABOUT. SO, EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT GRADUATING AT THIS TIME BUT ARE CURIOUS ABOUT FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS, WHY NOT PLAN TO JOIN US ON THE NINTH.

PLEASE CONFIRM WITH MARK SMITH OR GRANT ZAWALSKY (BANFF STUDENT, BUSINESS SEMINAR), 301 C.A.B., TELEPHONE 432-2736, YOUR INTENTION TO ATTEND (SIGN UP SHEET ALSO POSTED ON 301 C.A.B. AND BACUS DOORS).

**SEE YOU AT THE HOTEL
XEROX
XEROX CANADA INC.**