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Hope and Glory inspires

Hope and Glory
Columbia Pictures
Westmount 4

review by Rosa Jackson

I knew nothing about *Hope and Glory* before I went and saw it, and from the very start I was pleasantly surprised. This is no big budget, action-packed adventure movie, but it has qualities of honesty and humour which set it apart.

The story is set in a London suburb, and centres around the life of a British family during the Second World War. What makes the film unusual is its perspective: we see most of the events which take place through the eyes of a young boy, Billy. We are shown the effect which the war, with its images of heroism and destruction, has on his imaginary world. He is too young to fully comprehend what is going on, but he is not too young to be influenced by it.

It is not only Billy who has trouble drawing the fine line between the illusions and the realities of the war. At the beginning of the movie, when war is declared, everybody is impatient for it to start; running outside and waiting for bombs to drop out of the sky, but not considering what the consequences would be.

Soon, air-raids and ration books become a way of life, but still the war is a source of almost joyful fascination. Billy and his "gang" of friends play war games in the remains of a house, using the debris which they collect as

weapons, and his 15 year old sister loses her virginity to a Canadian soldier in the wreckage.

The war causes people to shed their inhibitions, to be honest with themselves and each other. Hard as the British might try to keep the proverbial stiff upper lip in the face of disaster, the crisis forces each character to break down at some point. What is admirable about all the people in this movie, though, is their ability to admit to their weaknesses, and then to go on with their lives with the same strength and humour which they possessed before.

Although the British have quirks and traditions foreign to us, the characters are so real that they are easily accessible. I liked every person in this movie, even Grandpa George, who is grouchier than Scrooge himself. Billy's mother, Grace, shows unflinching love for her children, and dedication to her husband even after she has confessed to her closest friends that she does not love him.

While the war affects all of their lives and attitudes, the characters still cherish the small pleasures of life: a game of cricket, a rare taste of jam, a boat trip down the river. I found myself constantly between laughter and tears, being forced to see the humorous side of even the most tragic moments. This could have been a very sad movie, but instead it was inspiring; showing how even something as senseless as war can bring people together.

Prince interesting but shallow

Prince of Darkness
Universal Pictures Village Tree Mall, Jasper
Cinemas 6, Odessa, Twin Two Drive-In

review by David Gates

John Carpenter, the man who brought us such memorable films as *Halloween*, *The Fog* and *The Thing*, has released his newest project, *Prince of Darkness*. This horror flick has an interesting (if sometimes predictable) storyline and good effects. However, it lacks in character development and the tense atmosphere which is the key to a suspense thriller.

Set in Los Angeles, *Prince of Darkness* tells the story of a group of university graduate students and their professors spending a weekend at an old church. They're investigating an ancient secret religious sect ("The Brotherhood of Sleep") and one of its artifacts. As the students unravel the mystery of the sect, the artifact, which contains the son of Satan, "awakens" and proceeds to possess most of the cast.

The remainder of the film deals with the students' desperate battle to prevent the coming of Satan to earth. Although the plot may sound stupid, director John Carpenter and producer Larry Franco do a reasonably

good job with it.

One of the movie's strengths is its special effects. The effects are not overdone with blood spurting gore as they are in most horror flicks. Except for a dumb scene in which a possessed vagabond (played by a terrible Alice Cooper) sticks a bicycle frame through one of the students, the effects are very good.

The acting in this film is adequate considering the lack of character development in the script. The audience is unable to relate to the characters. In fact, in some cases, as when the geek was killed with the bicycle frame, it is hard even to sympathize with them. The performances by Jameson Parker (as Brian), Lisa Blount (as Kathryn), Donald Pleasance (as the priest) and Victor Wong (as Professor Brok) are shallow and mechanical.

Overall, the movie is interesting but lacking in punch. *Prince of Darkness* introduces such issues as the role of the Roman Catholic church and the callousness of our society, but these issues are not developed. The ambiguous ending of the movie leads the audience to believe that there will be a sequel to *Prince of Darkness* — without Alice Cooper, I hope.



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