

On the altar of adolescence

: RECKLESS



exploitation films concerning young people who cleverly manipulate situations, resulting in their eventual triumph: becoming part of the system. This, I think, is only half the struggle of adolescence.

Reckless reminds us of the urge to rebel, to establish one's own identity over that of society. Clearly, it is an unfashionable film, yet it is not the overwrought cliché that some critics have maliciously harpooned.

Director James Foley has utilized a number of techniques to get his message of abandonment across. The camera shots are all either mid shots, close-ups, and, in some cases, extreme close-ups. Thus the film seems suffocatingly intense. When the protagonist says all he wants to do with his life is to "get out of here," the shots give you the concrete feeling of claustrophobia.

There are a number of risks taken in the film, the most important being the laconic character of the script. The immediate realities of adolescence are more important than materialistic wish fulfilment (e.g., *Risky Business*, *All the Right Moves*). Hence, most of the teenagers in the film don't say

much, and when they do talk it certainly isn't any rhetorical splendour.

It is understandable that critics have attacked *Reckless* for its rather stifled dialogue and pedestrian narrative. What they are missing is the visual impact of the movie. The two leads, Aidan Quinn and Darryl Hannah, are unspectacularly normal-looking. That should be clue enough to the intentions of the film. Of course, in America you can never be too obvious.

Reckless is in love with the visual idea of adolescence. The decrepit steel mill town setting further removes any natural

beauty from the scenario. Darkness and half light dominate the screen, suggesting that the adolescent's struggle is some primordial urge to reach light.

Concrete visual elements reinforce narrative events, for example the first love scene occurs not in a raging romantic sunset but rather in a dusky glowing school furnace room.

Of course, there are moments where the director goes overboard. During a dance scene, the couple is circled by the camera at such a rate that it becomes rather difficult to watch. Okay, we get the idea of vertiginous movement, enough is enough! But, as previously stated, in America you can never be too obvious.

Reckless
A film directed by James Foley

Every generation, I suppose, needs its remake of *Rebel Without a Cause*. Lately we seem to have been flooded with youth

Review by R.F. MacDonald



FRAN LEBOWITZ

As part of Dalhousie's celebration of International Women's Day, Fran Lebowitz "the funniest woman in America" who is a popular guest of New York's Dave Letterman Show, will share her fresh offbeat humour, wit and fantastic observations of modern social behavior. For information call 424-2140.

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