

Some interesting films on US television, June 20-26

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19 June 1998

*Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, June 20

5:00 a.m. (AMC)—*Foreign Correspondent* (1940)—Joel McCrea is the correspondent caught up in a spy intrigue in Alfred Hitchcock's film, with George Sanders, Robert Benchley, Herbert Marshall, Laraine Day.

11:00 a.m. (TCM)—*El Dorado* (1967)—Robert Mitchum, a drunken sheriff, and John Wayne, a gunfighter, join forces to defeat a rapacious rancher and keep peace on the range. Directed by Howard Hawks.

1:00 p.m. (WGN)—*Bullets Over Broadway* (1994)—Woody Allen film set in the 1920s about a playwright who will do practically anything to have his play produced, including casting a gangster's girlfriend. Overdone and not as funny as it should be. With John Cusack, Dianne Wiest, Jennifer Tilly, Chazz Palminteri.

3:00 p.m. (TCM)—*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1966)—Richard Lester directed this film version of the Broadway musical comedy (with a score by Stephen Sondheim) about ancient Rome. The wonderful Zero Mostel plays a slave in a jam. Frenzied and trying too hard, the film still has its moments. Phil Silvers, Buster Keaton, Jack Gilford, Michael Crawford costar.

11:00 p.m. (TCM)—*The Pink Panther* (1964)—The first of the series, with Peter Sellers as the bumbling Inspector Clouseau chasing the famous jewel thief, The Phantom. With David Niven, Claudia Cardinale, Capucine, Robert Wagner. Directed by Blake Edwards.

Sunday, June 21

4:00 p.m. (TCM)—*Father's Little Dividend* (1951)—Amusing follow-up to *Father of the Bride*, with Spencer Tracy as the father, Joan Bennett as the mother and Elizabeth Taylor as the daughter-bride. Vincente Minnelli directed.

4:00 p.m. (USA)—*The Godfather, Part II* (1974)—The second part of Francis Ford Coppola's three-part examination of a Mafia family. This one goes backward in history—Robert De Niro plays the patriarch in his early days—and forward—Al Pacino plays his melancholy son. With Diane Keaton, Robert Duvall, et al.

7:30 p.m. (AT&T)—*The Horse Soldier* (1959)—A 1959 Ford western, with John Wayne as a cavalry officer leading Union troops into Confederate territory during the Civil War.

*5:30 p.m. (TCM)—*The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948)—John Huston directed this cynical tale of greed and violence in Mexico, as three prospectors search for a treasure in gold. With the director's father, Walter Huston, Humphrey Bogart and Tim Holt. From the story by B. Traven.

10:00 p.m. (AMC)—*Friendly Persuasion* (1956)—William Wyler directed this film about a family of Quakers and, therefore, pacifists, trying to survive with dignity during the Civil War. With Gary Cooper, Dorothy McGuire and Anthony Perkins.

Monday, June 22

12:00 a.m. (TCM)—*The Student Prince in Old Heidelberg* (1927)—A minor silent film by Ernst Lubitsch, a version of the Sigmund Romberg operetta. With Ramon Novarro and Norma Shearer.

4:00 a.m. (TCM)—*The Barretts of Wimpole Street* (1934)—Sidney Franklin directed this stolid and tasteful MGM production, the story of the romance between poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett in Victorian England. With Norma Shearer, Fredric March and Charles Laughton.

9:15 a.m. (AMC)—*Murder, My Sweet* (1944)—Worthy, hard-boiled adaptation of Raymond Chandler's *Farewell My Lovely*, with Dick Powell as Philip Marlowe. Directed by future HUAC informer Edward Dmytryk.

10:00 a.m. (TCM)—*The Fallen Sparrow* (1944)—John Garfield and Maureen O'Hara star in a pro-Loyalist film about a Spanish Civil War veteran tracked by Nazis in New York City. Richard Wallace directed; with Walter Slezak.

2:00 p.m. (AMC)—*A Foreign Affair* (1948)—Billy Wilder directed this story of postwar Germany, with Jean Arthur, an American innocent, sent to investigate conditions in Berlin, but falling in love. With Marlene Dietrich in fine form.

4:00 p.m. (TCM)—*The Pirate* (1948)—One of Vincente Minnelli's classic MGM musicals, with his wife, Judy Garland. Gene Kelly is a circus clown she mistakes for a pirate. Cole Porter wrote the songs.

6:30 p.m. (AMC)—*The Spirit of St. Louis* (1957)—James Stewart, a little long in the tooth, plays Charles Lindbergh in this Billy Wilder film about the first trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. A mediocre work.

*10:30 p.m. (TBS)—*The Searchers* (1956)—John Ford Wayne and Jeffrey Hunter search for Wayne's niece, taken by Indians. Natalie Wood plays the girl. An essential American film.

Tuesday, June 23

7:30 a.m. (TCM)—*Gunga Din* (1939)—If one sets aside the history and politics of this film, about the heroic British army fighting off thuggee cult in nineteenth century India, “the most entertaining of the juvenile Kipling movies.”

2:30 p.m. (TCM)—*The Locket* (1946)—A drama about a woman (Laraine Day) with psychological problems who ruins the men who fall for her. One of several “mood-drenched melodramas” directed by John Brahm. With Brian Aherne, Robert Mitchum, Gene Raymond.

3:00 p.m. (HIS)—*Dark Command* (1940)—Raoul Walsh directed this lively Hollywood version of the rise and fall of the murderous Quantrill raiders, active in Kansas during the Civil War. Walter Pidgeon plays William Quantrill, John Wayne is the marshal with whom he clashes.

6:30 p.m. (AMC)—*The Gunfighter* (1950)—Gregory Peck is a gunslinger trying to live down his past. Henry King directed, from a script by William Bowers and Andre de Toth.

10:30 p.m. (TBS)—*M*A*S*H* (1970)—The film that brought Robert Altman his first major success, a cynical and sometimes facetious look at the Korean War and the military in general. Made in the midst of the Vietnam War. With Elliott Gould, Donald Sutherland, Tom Skerritt, Sally Kellerman.

Wednesday, June 24

12:00 a.m. (TNT)—*From Here to Eternity* (1953)—Fred Zinnemann directed this generally overrated work, based on the James Jones novel, about life on an army post in Hawaii on the eve of Pearl Harbor. With Burt Lancaster, Montgomery Clift, Deborah Kerr, Donna Reed, Frank Sinatra.

*2:30 a.m. (TNT)—*On the Waterfront* (1954)—Elia Kazan's famed film, with Marlon Brando as an ex-boxer working on the docks, Rod Steiger as his crooked brother, Lee J. Cobb as a corrupt union boss, Karl Malden as a crusading priest, Eva Marie Saint as Brando's girlfriend. Kazan was seeking to justify his role as an informant to HUAC; a good movie made for the wrong reasons.

6:00 a.m. (TCM)—*The Body Snatcher* (1945)—One of the Val Lewton-produced thrillers, with Henry Daniell as a doctor forced to deal with the nefarious Boris Karloff to obtain cadavers for his work. Based on the Robert Louis Stevenson short story; directed by dull Robert Wise.

11:45 a.m. (AMC)—*No Highway in the Sky* (1951)—James Stewart gives a remarkable performance as an aviation engineer who tries to persuade the authorities that planes should be grounded after a given time. With Marlene Dietrich.

12:00 p.m. (TCM)—*Executive Suite* (1954)—A power struggle erupts after the death of a major executive. Interesting to compare the corporate culture of the 1950s (and Hollywood myths about them) with

today's. With William Holden, Barbara Stanwyck, June Allyson, Fredric March, Walter Pidgeon. Robert Wise directed.

6:30 p.m. (AMC)—*The Crimson Pirate* (1952)—A swashbuckling adventure, with Burt Lancaster at his most athletic. The German émigré Robert Siodmak directed.

Thursday, June 25

3:15 a.m. (AMC)—*I Confess* (1953)—Alfred Hitchcock's tale of a priest, played by Montgomery Clift, who hears a confession of a murder and later becomes accused of the crime. Filmed in Quebec.

8:15 p.m. (AMC)—*Springfield Rifle* (1952)—Andre de Toth's Civil War film about a Union officer (Gary Cooper) who goes undercover to expose a Confederate horse stealing ring. Dark and spare, with an exemplary performance by Paul Kelly as the chief villain.

10:35 p.m. (TBS)—*Two Mules for Sister Sara* (1970)—The formerly blacklisted Albert Maltz wrote the script, from a story by director Budd Boetticher, about a drifter (Clint Eastwood) who helps a “nun” (Shirley MacLaine) stage an uprising in Mexico. Veteran action filmmaker Don Siegel directed.

Friday, June 26

6:00 a.m. (AMC)—*Ruggles of Red Gap* (1935)—Charles Laughton is an English butler won in a poker game by an uncouth American westerner. Amusing film directed by Leo McCarey. Laughton's recitation of the Gettysburg Address is memorable.

8:00 a.m. (TCM)—*Caged* (1950)—One of the original women-behind-bars films. John Cromwell directed Eleanor Parker, Hope Emerson and Agnes Moorehead in this “minor classic of repression.”

*2:00 p.m. (AMC)—*A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951)—Elia Kazan's version of the Tennessee Williams drama about the strong and the weak in a New Orleans tenement. Marlon Brando, Vivien Leigh, Kim Hunter and Karl Malden.

See Also:
AFI's 100 Greatest Movies: Some serious questions
[18 June 1998]



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