

Some interesting films on US television, August 8-14

David Walsh
8 August 1998

Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest

Saturday, August 8

*1:05 am (Bravo) -- *A Midnight Clear* (1992) -- Strong anti-war film about a squad of US soldiers in France near the end of World War II. Ethan Hawke, Peter Berg, Kevin Dillon, Gary Sinise starred. Directed by Keith Gordon, from William Wharton's novel.

1:30 am (TBS) -- *The Fly* (1986) -- David Cronenberg's film about a scientist (Jef Goldblum) who experiments on himself and evolves into a human fly. Cronenberg apparently saw his character's condition as a metaphor for AIDS. Geena Davis is the woman who stands by him. As usual, Cronenberg gets caught up in the machinery of his conceits and loses track of his theme.

*3:00 am (WGN) -- *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.

*6:00 am (AMC) -- *Limelight* (1952) -- Chaplin is a washed-up music hall comic who saves Claire Bloom from suicide in this exquisitely painful look at the art of performance. Chaplin and Buster Keaton, two immortals, team up in one memorable scene.

7:00 am (A&E) -- *Beat the Devil* (1954) -- Humphrey Bogart, Robert Morley and Peter Lorre team up in this cynical John Huston film about a group of lowlifes planning to acquire land rich in uranium deposits.

12:00 pm (AMC) -- *Destry Rides Again* (1939) -- James Stewart and Marlene Dietrich have memorable moments in this western comedy, directed by George Marshall. Dietrich sings the classic *See What the Boys in the Back Room Will Have*.

Sunday, August 9

12:00 am (AMC) -- *Call Northside 777* (1948) -- A solid, matter-of-fact drama about a reporter (James Stewart) righting a wrong: proving that a convicted killer is innocent. With Richard Conte and Lee J. Cobb.

12:00 am (TCM) -- *Of Human Bondage* (1934) -- Bette Davis stars as the waitress with whom doctor Leslie Howard becomes 'inexplicably' enamored. An interesting film, directed by John Cromwell, but W. Somerset Maugham's story is pretty stupid and insensitive.

6:00 am (TCM) -- *The Valley of Decision* (1945) -- Tay Garnett directed this interesting film about romance and labor strife. Greer Garson is a maid who becomes involved with Gregory Peck; his family owned a mine in which her father and brother were killed. Laid in Pittsburgh in 1870.

12:00 pm (A&E) -- *Robin and Marian* (1976) -- Likable, evocative film about the later years of Robin Hood. After years in exile, Robin (Sean Connery) returns to Sherwood Forest, takes up with Marian (Audrey Hepburn) again. Richard Lester directed; James Goldman wrote the script.

*6:00 pm (TCM) -- *Casablanca* (1942) -- The Michael Curtiz classic about life and love in wartime Morocco, with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

Monday, August 10

*12:00 am (TCM) -- *The Merry Widow* (1925) -- Erich von Stroheim's cynical silent version of the Franz Lehár operetta about a prince (John

Gilbert) forced to woo a rich American widow (Mae Murray).

4:15 am (TCM) -- *The Blackboard Jungle* (1955) -- Glenn Ford is a high school teacher in an inner-city school in this social realist film. He deals with violence, racism and threats against his family. With Anne Francis, Vic Morrow, Sidney Poitier, Louis Calhern, Richard Kiley; directed by Richard Brooks.

*8:15 am (AMC) -- *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939) -- John Ford's account of Abraham Lincoln's early years as a frontier lawyer, starring Henry Fonda.

*10:00 am (History) -- *Reds* (1981) (Part 1) -- Warren Beatty's account of the life and times of John Reed, American socialist and author of *Ten Days that Shook the World*, the authoritative chronicle of the October Revolution of 1917. With Diane Keaton and others.

1:30 pm (AMC) -- *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945) -- Extraordinary melodrama by John Stahl, about a woman (Gene Tierney) consumed by jealousy and possessiveness, to the point of madness and murder. With Cornel Wilde and Vincent Price.

*3:00 pm (History) -- *Reds* (1981) (Part 1) -- See Monday, at 10:00 am.

4:00 pm (TCM) -- *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954) -- Director Richard Brooks' strained effort to capture F. Scott Fitzgerald's story, now set in post-World War II Europe. A tale of disillusionment and loss. With Elizabeth Taylor and Van Johnson.

8:00 pm (AMC) -- *A New Leaf* (1971) -- Elaine May's first directing effort in which she also co-starred as a clumsy, introverted heiress wooed by Walter Matthau, a playboy who has run through his fortune. The final cut was taken out of May's hands and she disclaimed it.

Tuesday, August 11

6:00 am (TCM) -- *He Who Gets Slapped* (1924) -- Swedish Victor Seastrom, possibly 'the world's first great director, even before Chaplin and Griffith,' made this silent film in Hollywood, based on Leonid Andreyev's despairing play, about a brilliant scientist who becomes a circus clown. With Lon Chaney, Norma Shearer, John Gilbert.

8:30 am (AMC) -- *A Woman's Vengeance* (1948) -- Hungarian-born Zoltan Korda directed an intelligent Aldous Huxley script about a philandering husband suspected of murdering his wife. With Charles Boyer, Ann Blyth, Jessica Tandy, Cedric Hardwicke.

*10:00 am (History) -- *Reds* (1981) (Part 2) -- See Monday, at 10:00 am.

*3:00 pm (History) -- *Reds* (1981) (Part 2) -- See Monday, at 10:00 am.

8:00 pm (AMC) -- *Reap the Wild Wind* (1942) -- Cecil B. DeMille directed this intriguing film about 19th century salvagers off the coast of Georgia. Ray Milland and John Wayne fight over Paulette Goddard, as a spirited Southern belle.

8:00 pm (TCM) -- *Elmer Gantry* (1960) -- Burt Lancaster is the salesman who becomes a fire-and-brimstone preacher, joining evangelist Jean Simmons' crusade, in this critical look at fundamentalism and fakery in 1920s' America. Richard Brooks directed, based on the novel by Sinclair Lewis.

10:30 pm (TCM) -- *Inherit the Wind* (1960) -- A film version of the Jerome Lawrence-Robert E. Lee play based on the Scopes trial, the 1925

case of a Southern schoolteacher charged with teaching evolutionary theory. Spencer Tracy, Fredric March and Gene Kelly starred. Stanley Kramer, with his usual earnestness, directed.

Wednesday, August 12

*12:00 am (TNT) -- *Citizen Kane* (1941) -- Orson Welles' classic work, the tragic story of a newspaper tycoon with delusions of grandeur. Based loosely on the life of millionaire William Randolph Hearst, the film was essentially suppressed when it came out.

*1:00 am (TCM) -- *The Night of the Hunter* (1955) -- Robert Mitchum is a sinister religious fanatic in pursuit of a couple of children and the money their father stole, in the only film Charles Laughton ever directed. James Agee wrote the screenplay, from a novel by David Grubb. With Lillian Gish, Shelley Winters.

*2:30 am (TNT) -- *North by Northwest* (1959) -- One of Alfred Hitchcock's wondrous late 1950s' color pieces, with Cary Grant as an ad executive turned into a wanted and hunted man.

8:00 pm (TCM) -- *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935) -- Charles Laughton is memorable as the abominable Captain Bligh on board a British ship bound for the South Seas. Clark Gable is Fletcher Christian. Directed by Frank Lloyd.

Thursday, August 13

*10:30 am (AMC) -- *Saboteur* (1942) -- Excellent Alfred Hitchcock film, with Robert Cummings as an innocent munitions plant worker accused of sabotage. With Priscilla Lane.

*12:30 pm (AMC) -- *Shadow of a Doubt* (1943) -- Teresa Wright is a young girl who comes to realize that her amiable uncle is the Merry Widow murderer, in this remarkable Alfred Hitchcock work. Playwright Thornton Wilder helped write the script.

2:30 pm (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.

*4:15 pm (AMC) -- *Strangers on a Train* (1951) -- Hitchcock classic, with Farley Granger as a callow tennis player and Robert Walker as a psychopath, based on the Patricia Highsmith novel, co-scripted by Raymond Chandler.

8:00 pm (TCM) -- *Marnie* (1964) -- Tippi Hedren is a woman who can't stop stealing and Sean Connery is her employer, and admirer, who is trying to figure out why. The story traces her problem to psychological trauma. Alfred Hitchcock directed.

9:00 pm (USA) -- *The Age of Innocence* (1993) -- Martin Scorsese's disappointingly flat, unironic filming of Edith Wharton's extraordinary novel about New York society in the 1870s. Worth seeing, however.

*10:30 pm (TCM) -- *North by Northwest* (1959) -- See Wednesday, at 2:30 am.

*11:00 pm (Bravo) -- *The Third Man* (1949) -- Carol Reed directed this sharp look at life in post-World War II Vienna, impoverished and corrupt, where the Cold War is beginning to take shape. Orson Welles plays the mysterious Harry Lime and, one suspects, contributed to the overall feel of the film. Score, played on the zither by Anton Karas, is justly famous.

Friday, August 14

1:00 am (TCM) -- *Suspicion* (1941) -- Joan Fontaine is a new bride who believes her husband, Cary Grant, is trying to kill her. According to the book, he was, but Hollywood's production Code forbid it. With Nigel Bruce; directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

2:15 am (AMC) -- *Artists and Models* (1955) -- An extravagant Frank Tashlin cartoon, with Jerry Lewis, Dean Martin, Dorothy Malone and Shirley MacLaine.

*4:00 am (A&E) -- *Abraham Lincoln* (1930) -- D.W. Griffith, director of the notorious pro-Klux Klan *Birth of a Nation*, made this biography of the US president who freed the slaves. One commentator noted that his 'art had become so deceptively simple by the time of *Abraham Lincoln* (1930) that most critics assumed he was in a state of stylistic decline.'

Daisy Kenyon (1947) -- (AMC) of --Otto

interesting postwar melodramas. Joan Crawford, Dana Andrews and Henry Fonda form a love triangle.

6:30 am (AMC) -- *Spawn of the North* (1938) -- Henry Hathaway directed this intense and well-acted film about the Canadian fisheries. George Raft, Henry Fonda, Dorothy Lamour, John Barrymore and Akim Tamiroff starred.

8:00 am (AMC) -- *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936) -- Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur play the leading roles in one of Frank Capra's Depression parables. Longfellow Deeds (Cooper) has twenty million dollars and wants to give it away to those in need; Arthur is the hard-boiled reporter trying to figure him out.

*10:00 am (AMC) -- *The Lodger* (1944) -- John Brahm's atmospheric retelling of the Jack the Ripper story, with Merle Oberon and George Sanders, among others.

3:00 pm (AMC) -- *A Star is Born* (1954) -- Judy Garland is the star on the way up and James Mason the unfortunate drunk on the way down, in George Cukor's version of the tragic tale. A remake of the 1937 film made by William Wellman, with Fredric March and Janet Gaynor.

*8:00 pm (TCM) -- *Woman of the Year* (1942) -- Katharine Hepburn as a globe-trotting political commentator and Spencer Tracy as a sports reporter, in their first film together. Entertaining film, directed by George Stevens, marred by a conformist ending.

10:00 pm (TCM) -- *Adam's Rib* (1949) -- One of the stronger Spencer Tracy-Katharine Hepburn films, in which the two find themselves on opposing sides in the court case of a woman (the wonderful Judy Holliday) who has shot and wounded her philandering husband (Tom Ewell). Ruth Gordon and Garson Kanin wrote the script; George Cukor directed.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)