

# Some interesting films on US television, March 27-April 2

Marty Jonas (MJ), David Walsh (DW)  
27 March 1999

## Video pick of the week--find it in your video store

*Things to Come* (1936)--Visionary for its time, this film spans the coming world war, the descent into barbarism, and the technocratic rebirth of civilization. The sets are stunning and the music by Arthur Bliss is magnificent. The screenplay by H.G. Wells is a blend of his social-democratic ideas, his optimism about science and technology, and his weakness for dictatorships. Uniformly excellent acting by Raymond Massey, Cedric Hardwicke and Ralph Richardson. Directed by William Cameron Menzies. (MJ)

Asterisk indicates a film of exceptional interest. All times are EDT.

A&E=Arts & Entertainment, AMC=American Movie Classics, FXM=Fox Movie Channel, HBOF=HBO Family, HBOP=HBO Plus, HBOS=HBO Signature, IFC=Independent Film Channel, TCM=Turner Classic Movies, TMC=The Movie Channel, TNT=Turner Network Television

## Saturday, March 27

\*6:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Stranger* (1946)--Orson Welles's thriller in which the director plays a Nazi war criminal living in a sedate Connecticut town. With Edward G. Robinson. (DW)

6:35 a.m. (TMC)-- *One-Eyed Jacks* (1961)--Marlon Brando's only directing effort. He plays an outlaw seeking revenge on Karl Malden, a former friend, now a sadistic sheriff. (DW)

8:15 a.m. (Encore)-- *The Great Gatsby* (1974)--A pallid, but occasionally interesting film, based on the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel about the "careless" rich and their gangster friend, on Long Island in the 1920s. Robert Redford is too placid as Jay Gatsby, Mia Farrow too jittery as Daisy Buchanan. (DW)

10:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Captain Horatio Hornblower* (1951)--Raoul Walsh directed this sea epic set in the Napoleonic wars, based on the C.S. Forester novels, in his vivid, muscular style. Some remarkable sequences. The normally dull Gregory Peck is well-cast as Hornblower. (DW)

11:30 a.m. (Cinemax)-- *Contact* (1997)--An intelligent, refreshingly non-xenophobic film on the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. Jodie Foster plays the single-minded astrophysicist in this adaptation from the novel by the late Carl Sagan. Unfortunately, toward the end the film becomes mushy-minded and tries to make its peace with religion. (MJ)

11:55 a.m. (Starz)-- *Ishtar* (1987)--One of the most famous failures in recent Hollywood history, Elaine May directed this \$40 million picture, which stars Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman. Interesting as an historical curiosity. (DW)

\*12:00 p.m. (FXM)-- *The Culpepper Cattle Company* (1972)--An unjustly forgotten film about a naive young man joining up with a cattle drive. Grittily realistic depictions of the daily working life of cowboys--the kind of detail rarely shown in Westerns. A gem. With Gary Grimes, Billy "Green" Bush, and Geoffrey Lewis. Directed by Dick Richards. (MJ)

\*12:45 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962)--A Korean War hero (Laurence Harvey) returns to the US, brainwashed by his

Chinese captors and programmed to kill a presidential candidate. Ostensibly a cold war conspiracy thriller, this film turns around and becomes an intense satirical attack on right-wing politics. Angela Lansbury gives a superb performance as the war hero's villainous mom, as does James Gregory, playing a politician based on Senator Joe McCarthy. The baroque direction is by John Frankenheimer, from the novel by Richard Condon. With Frank Sinatra and Janet Leigh. (MJ)

\*2:15 p.m. (HBOP)-- *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)--James Ivory directed this touching film that follows a reserved Kansas City couple through several decades, revealing much of what really goes on under the surface of their long, seemingly placid relationship. Starring real-life husband and wife Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward in quiet, sensitive performances. Adapted--with inevitable changes and abridgements--from the brilliant but unfilmable pair of novels by Evan S. Connell, Jr. (MJ)

4:00 p.m. (Encore)-- *The Great Gatsby* (1974)--See 8:15 a.m.

6:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *Spaceballs* (1987)--Mel Brooks's send-up of the Star Wars saga. Rick Moranis is Dark Helmet and Daphne Zuniga is Princess Vespa. Other characters include Pizza the Hut. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Molly Maguires* (1970)--Sean Connery and Richard Harris co-starred in this well-meaning film about the secret organization of Irish-born miners in Pennsylvania in the 1870s. Directed by Martin Ritt. (DW)

9:30 p.m. (FXM)-- *The Hustler* (1961)--Basically a boxing film, but set among serious pool sharks. Robert Rossen's movie is beautifully shot and capably acted, but the dialogue is full of stagey, pseudo-profound, high-proletarian language. With Paul Newman, Piper Laurie, George C. Scott and Jackie Gleason. (MJ)

11:00 p.m. (HBO)-- *Face/Off* (1997)--Hong Kong action director John Woo lets out all the stops in this exciting, humorous, and (of course) preposterous film about a government agent (John Travolta) and his terrorist nemesis (Nicolas Cage) exchanging faces. (MJ)

\*12:00 a.m. (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. (DW)

\*2:00 a.m. (FXM)-- *The Culpepper Cattle Company* (1972)--See 12:00 p.m.

2:15 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Molly Maguires* (1970)--See 8:00 p.m.

\*3:25 a.m. (HBOP)-- *A Clockwork Orange* (1971)--Stanley Kubrick's brilliant but thoroughly nasty film about a sadistic young street thug (Malcolm McDowell) in the near future turned into a passive, spiritless citizen by means of a cruel form of aversion therapy. In the process, he also loses his ability to enjoy Beethoven. Kubrick adapted this from the novel by Anthony Burgess, and Burgess always hated the result. (MJ)

## Sunday, March 28

8:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *A Tale of Two Cities* (1935)--Ronald Colman provides some outstanding moments in this film version of Charles Dickens's novel about the French Reign of Terror. An extravagant MGM

production, directed by Jack Conway. With Edna May Oliver, Basil Rathbone and Reginald Owen. (DW)

9:30 a.m. (Cinemax)-- *Gattaca* (1997)--In this future capitalist society, your place in the productive process is determined by your genetic makeup--which is mapped at birth and stays with you as your main ID for life. One man rebels against the system. Andrew Niccol wrote and directed this intelligent film, highly derivative of the fiction of Philip K. Dick. (MJ)

10:00 a.m. (IFC)-- *Breaker Morant* (1979)--Australian film, directed by Bruce Beresford, about three soldiers in Boer War court-martialed for murdering prisoners. With Edward Woodward and Bryan Brown. (DW)

12:00 p.m. (FXM)-- *Hombre* (1967)--Martin Ritt directed, from an Elmore Leonard story, this film about Indian-raised Paul Newman trying to survive in Arizona in the 1880s. With Diane Cilento, Fredric March, Richard Boone. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (IFC)-- *Breaker Morant* (1979)--See 10:00 a.m.

5:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975)--Based on a true story about a man who held up a Brooklyn bank to raise the money for his lover's sex-change operation. With Al Pacino, John Cazale, Charles Durning. Directed by Sidney Lumet. (DW)

\*5:45 p.m. (HBOP)-- *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)--See Saturday at 2:15 p.m.

\*8:00 p.m. (IFC)-- *Barton Fink* (1991)--One of the Coen Brothers' weakest and most inadvertently revealing efforts, a cynical look at a socially conscious playwright working in Hollywood in the 1930s, and the "American reality" he uncovers. With John Turturro, John Goodman. (DW)

9:15 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Sirens* (1994)--Beautifully photographed, inscrutable tale of sexuality and mythology in a modern, sylvan setting. With Hugh Grant. (MJ)

10:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *They Were Expendable* (1945)--An extremely well-done film: the story of an American PT boat squadron, directed by John Ford. John Wayne and Robert Montgomery are the squadron's officers, but equally memorable is Donna Reed, as a nurse in love with Wayne's character. (DW)

\*10:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *My Fair Lady* (1964)--George Cukor's beautiful film of the Lerner and Loewe musical adapted from Shaw's *Pygmalion*. Memorable costumes and sets by Cecil Beaton. Starring Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn (whose singing is actually done by Marni Nixon). (MJ)

\*10:45 p.m. (HBOS)-- *The Ice Storm* (1997)--Excellent film by Ang Lee of aimlessness and disillusionment in the 1970s. As the middle class disintegrates in suburbia, we see the disintegration of the White House playing out in the background as the Watergate crisis runs its course. The fine cast includes Kevin Kline, Sigourney Weaver, Joan Allen, Jamey Sheridan and Christina Ricci. (MJ)

12:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *The Thin Man* (1934)--The first of the films featuring husband-and-wife detection team of Nick and Nora Charles, with more than a touch of madcap comedy. With William Powell and Myrna Loy as the duo. Directed by W.S. Van Dyke. (MJ)

1:40 a.m. (HBOP)-- *The Devil's Advocate* (1997)--Satan (portrayed in an over-the-top performance by Al Pacino) runs a white-shoe law firm in New York City. Keanu Reeves, as an ambitious young lawyer, makes a Faustian bargain and suffers for it. A very funny horror film that trades on the public's distrust of the legal profession. (MJ)

\*1:45 a.m. (IFC)-- *Barton Fink* (1991)--See 8:00 p.m.

2:00 a.m. (FXM)-- *Hombre* (1967)--See 12:00 p.m.

\*3:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *My Fair Lady* (1964)--See 10:00 p.m.

4:00 a.m. (Bravo)-- *Sirens* (1994)--See 9:15 p.m.

4:15 a.m. (HBO)-- *Smilla's Sense of Snow* (1997)--In Copenhagen, a half-Inuit scientist (Julia Ormond) investigates the suspicious death from falling of a young Inuit boy. A quiet, brooding film with beautiful photography of Denmark and Greenland is marred by a conventional

melodramatic ending with a conventional corporate villain (overplayed by Richard Harris with evil white hair). Also starring Gabriel Byrne. (MJ)

4:35 a.m. (HBOS)-- *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* (1969)--Paul Mazursky's comic, perceptive look at the sexual mores of the American middle class in the 1960s. With Robert Culp, Natalie Wood, Elliott Gould and Dyan Cannon. (MJ)

### Monday, March 29

\*6:00 a.m. (Showtime)-- *Once Upon a Time in the West* (1969)--Sergio Leone's drawn-out classic anti-Western, with Claudia Cardinale as the owner of land made valuable by the impending arrival of the railroad. Henry Fonda is a cold-blooded killer. With Jason Robards and Charles Bronson. Memorable score by Ennio Morricone. (DW)

\*6:30 a.m. (Sundance)-- *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961)--Alain Resnais' enigmatic film is one of the classics of French cinema. It asks questions (never answered) about the nature of time and memory. A marvelous film to watch, with its energetically mobile camera and lengthy tracking shots down ornate corridors. (MJ)

7:00 a.m. (Cinemax)-- *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972)--Of interest because it was made when disaster films were peopled by real actors and not filled with ultra-expensive special effects, cartoonish characters, and pretty faces. The preposterous story has a luxury liner and its passengers being turned over by a gigantic ocean wave; the passengers must find their way out of the upside-down vessel. The good cast includes Gene Hackman, Roddy McDowell, Shelley Winters, Ernest Borgnine and Jack Albertson. Directed by Ronald Neame. (MJ)

8:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Nothing Sacred* (1937)--Fredric March is a cynical reporter who sets out to make headlines with the story of a Vermont girl (Carole Lombard) supposedly dying from radium poisoning. Ben Hecht wrote the script and William Wellman directed. (DW)

8:00 a.m. (IFC)-- *Breaker Morant* (1979)--See Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

\*12:00 p.m. (FXM)-- *Lifeboat* (1944)--Alfred Hitchcock's tale of shipwreck survivors during World War II. With Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, and Walter Slezak as a Nazi taken aboard. (DW)

\*12:30 p.m. (HBOS)-- *The Producers* (1968)--Mel Brooks wrote and directed his funniest film, about two producers whose plan--to mount a deliberately awful Broadway musical that will flop and thereby bring them a tax bonanza--backfires. Starring Gene Wilder and the great, rarely seen (because of blacklisting) Zero Mostel. (MJ)

\*12:30 p.m. (Sundance)-- *Hamlet* (1996)--Kenneth Branagh starred in and directed this long, unabridged film of Shakespeare's play. It is exciting and lucid, and it dispenses with the oedipal nonsense of other recent versions. Branagh is strong in the part, and Derek Jacobi is the definitive Claudius. Also starring Julie Christie and Kate Winslet. (MJ)

\*12:45 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Blue Dahlia* (1946)--Raymond Chandler scripted this melodrama which sees discharged serviceman Alan Ladd come home to his unfaithful wife. When she is murdered, he becomes a suspect. With Veronica Lake and William Bendix. George Marshall directed the film, and John Houseman produced. (DW)

\*1:45 p.m. (IFC)-- *The Baron of Arizona* (1950)--In the great Samuel Fuller's intense film, a swindler tries to use forged land grant documents to grab the entire Arizona Territory. With Vincent Price, Ellen Drew and Reed Hadley. (MJ)

\*2:30 p.m. (HBOS)-- *The Ice Storm* (1997)--See Sunday at 10:45 p.m.

4:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Sirens* (1994)--See Sunday at 9:15 p.m.

4:15 p.m. (Cinemax)-- *Serpico* (1973)--Al Pacino plays a loner cop taking on corruption in the New York Police Department. As always, director Sidney Lumet captures the texture of New York City. (MJ)

\*7:30 p.m. (Sundance)-- *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961)--see 6:30 a.m.

8:00 p.m. (HBO)-- *The Fifth Element* (1997)--Vacuous, silly science fiction film in which the future of the universe hinges on a Brooklyn cabdriver (played in proletarian style by Bruce Willis) finding something called "the fifth element." Worth seeing only for its imaginative settings

and special effects. Typical scenery-chewing villainy by Gary Oldman. Directed by Luc Besson. (MJ)

10:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948)--John Huston directed this bitter version of the B. Traven story about three prospectors searching for gold in Mexico. Humphrey Bogart, Tim Holt and Huston's father, Walter, make up the trio. (Also, Wednesday at 2:30 a.m.) (DW)

10:30 p.m. (HBOS)-- *The Producers* (1968)--See 12:30 p.m.

11:00 p.m. (HBOP)-- *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)--See Saturday at 2:15 p.m.

12:30 a.m. (TMC)-- *Rosemary's Baby* (1968)--John Cassavetes is excellent as ambitious actor who involves himself in diabolical activities to advance his career. Mia Farrow is his unsuspecting wife. Roman Polanski wrote the screenplay, based on the Ira Levin potboiler, and directed. (DW)

\*1:00 a.m. (TCM)--*2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968)--Stanley Kubrick's science fiction epic. A space vehicle heads for Jupiter in search of aliens. One critic, somewhat unfairly, called it a project "so devoid of life and feeling as to render a computer called HAL the most sympathetic character in a jumbled scenario." Despite silly ending, the film is worth seeing. (DW)

1:40 a.m. (Encore)-- *Against All Odds* (1984)--Decent remake of the 1947 film noir *Out of the Past*. Good performances by Jeff Bridges, Rachel Ward and James Woods. Directed by Taylor Hackford. (MJ)

2:00 a.m. (FXM)-- *Lifeboat* (1944)--See 12:00 p.m.

3:30 a.m. (TCM)--*2010* (1984)--A nuts-and-bolts sequel that tries (and fails) to answer the riddles of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Though it holds one's interest and is well made, it lacks the vision, magic, and mystery of the first film. With Keir Dullea, Roy Scheider and John Lithgow. Directed by Peter Hyams. (MJ)

4:40 a.m. (Starz)-- *At Long Last Love* (1975)--Burt Reynolds and Cybill Shepherd can neither sing nor dance--they are definitely not Astaire and Rogers. Still, it's fun to watch them mangle Cole Porter's beautiful music and lyrics. Peter Bogdanovich's glitzy, expensive film proves that a warm affection for 1930's film musicals is not enough. One of the great bombs. With Madeline Kahn (often funny, despite her material) and John Hillerman. (MJ)

### **Tuesday, March 30**

\*7:45 a.m. (IFC)-- *The Baron of Arizona* (1950)--See Monday at 1:45 p.m.

12:00 p.m. (TMC)-- *Saturday Night Fever* (1977)--A hardware store salesman in Brooklyn becomes a champion disco dancer at night. This is the film that launched John Travolta's film career, and he is a marvel as a dancer. Music by the Bee Gees. Directed by John Badham. (MJ)

12:30 p.m. (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. (DW)

2:30 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Virgin Spring* (1959)--One of Ingmar Bergman's most somber works. A girl from a religious family is raped and murdered by itinerants, in medieval Sweden. With Max von Sydow, Brigitta Valberg, Gunnel Lindblom. (DW)

\*3:45 p.m. (Cinemax)-- *Chinatown* (1974)--The best example of modern film noir. A convoluted tale of incest, corruption, and the fight over access to southern California water. Jack Nicholson plays the private detective. With Faye Dunaway, John Huston. Directed by Roman Polanski. (MJ)

4:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Viva Villa!* (1934)--Wallace Beery does a lively job of portraying the Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa. Ben Hecht wrote the script, which plays fast and loose with historical fact. Directed by Jack Conway. (DW)

\*6:00 p.m. (Cinemax)-- *Alien* (1979)--A bloodthirsty alien creature pursues the crew members of a merchant space vessel. Beautifully done,

one of the most frightening films ever made. Sigourney Weaver plays Ripley, one of the first smart and clever heroines in modern film. With Yaphet Kotto, Tom Skerritt, Ian Holm and John Hurt. (MJ)

6:15 p.m. (HBOS)-- *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* (1969)--See Sunday at 4:35 a.m.

8:00 p.m. (IFC)-- *Mississippi Masala* (1992)--Mira Nair's story of cross-cultural romance between Denzel Washington and Indian-born Sarita Choudhury, set in Greenwood, Mississippi. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (Comedy)-- *Something Wild* (1986)--Melanie Griffith, in one her rare performances of substance, turns out to be trouble for Jeff Daniels, an uptight businessman. Ray Liotta is her psychotic boyfriend. Not a great film, but it has its moments. Directed by Jonathan Demme. (DW)

9:00 p.m. (HBOS)-- *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977)--Steven Spielberg's special-effects-filled take on UFO sighting as a religious experience. Starring Richard Dreyfuss. (MJ)

10:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *West Side Story* (1961)--Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins co-directed this screen version of the remarkable Leonard Bernstein-Stephen Sondheim musical. Natalie Wood and Richard Beymer are dull; Rita Moreno, Russ Tamblyn and George Chakiris are memorable. *Romeo and Juliet* set in New York City of the 1950s. (DW)

10:00 p.m. (FXM)-- *All That Jazz* (1979)--Choreographer/director Bob Fosse's overwrought autobiographical film about his mental and physical crackup. Not strictly speaking a musical, but it is filled with musical numbers--including a bizarre one occurring during the main character's open-heart surgery. With Roy Scheider and Ben Vereen. (MJ)

10:00 p.m. (IFC)-- *Police* (1984)--Gerard Depardieu and Sophie Marceau star in this film about a brutal policeman who falls for Marceau, involved in the narcotics trade. Directed by talented French director Maurice Pialat. (DW)

1:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *What's New, Pussycat?* (1965)--Silly, but sometimes very funny film directed by Clive Donner and written by Woody Allen (in his first such effort), about fashion editor Peter O'Toole who goes to psychiatrist Peter Sellers for advice. Mayhem ensues. (DW)

4:10 a.m. (IFC)-- *Police* (1984)--See 10:00 p.m.

### **Wednesday, March 31**

6:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *Hold Back the Dawn* (1941)--Charles Boyer is a European refugee living in a Mexican border town. He woos unmarried Olivia de Havilland in an effort to get into the US. Mitchell Leisen directed with a certain flair. Billy Wilder co-wrote the script, basing it in part on his own experiences as a German refugee. (DW)

9:45 a.m. (TMC)-- *One-Eyed Jacks* (1961)--See Saturday at 6:35 a.m.

10:00 a.m. (History)-- *Merrill's Marauders* (1962)--It's questionable how much this has to do with real history, but engrossing war film directed by Samuel Fuller; Jeff Chandler as commander of US soldiers fighting Japanese in Burmese jungle. (DW)

\*11:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *To Be or Not to Be* (1942)--Classic black comedy about an acting troupe in Nazi-occupied Warsaw. Jack Benny is superb as the conceited ham who heads the troupe, and Carole Lombard is his faithless wife. Not to be missed. (MJ)

12:25 p.m. (IFC)-- *Mississippi Masala* (1992)--See Tuesday at 8:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m. (History)-- *Merrill's Marauders* (1962)--See 10:00 a.m.

\*4:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *White Heat* (1949)--Not-to-be-missed crime drama about criminal with a serious mother complex. James Cagney is unforgettable in Raoul Walsh's film. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (Comedy)-- *Something Wild* (1986)--See Tuesday at 8:00 p.m.

4:15 p.m. (Cinemax)-- *Gattaca* (1997)--See Sunday at 9:30 p.m.

6:15 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Naked Jungle* (1954)--Above-average jungle adventure directed by Byron Haskin, with Charlton Heston and Eleanor Parker. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *Witness for the Prosecution* (1957)--Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Power and Charles Laughton in Billy Wilder's filming of

an Agatha Christie courtroom potboiler. Power's last film. (DW)

11:00 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Rosa Luxemburg* (1986)--Margarethe von Trotta's evocative, if sometimes a little pat, biographical portrait of the great Polish Marxist and co-founder of the German Communist Party, murdered in 1919. With Barbara Sukowa. (DW)

1:00 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Naked Jungle* (1954)--See 6:15 a.m.

3:00 a.m. (TMC)-- *Men of Respect* (1991)--Fascinating but largely unsuccessful attempt to translate Macbeth into a modern gangster milieu. Starring John Turturro, Peter Boyle and Rod Steiger. Directed by William Reilly. (MJ)

\*3:30 a.m. (TCM)-- *Z* (1969)--Fictionalized account of the assassination of Greek liberal politician Gregorios Lambrakis and the government coverup. Director Costa-Gavras has made this into an ominous, sinister political thriller. With an all-star French and Greek cast headed by Yves Montand. (MJ)

#### Thursday, April 1

\*7:00 a.m. (Cinemax)--*42nd Street* (1933)--Classic 30s musical, with Warner Baxter as ailing director and Ruby Keeler as the newcomer who is called on at the last moment when the star injures her ankle. With Dick Powell, directed by Lloyd Bacon. (DW)

\*7:15 a.m. (Showtime)-- *Notorious* (1946)--One of Alfred Hitchcock's best. American counterespionage agents convince the patriotic daughter of a convicted Nazi spy to marry a Nazi agent in South America. Very suspenseful (especially the sequence with the dwindling champagne bottles), and with complex characterizations. Wonderful chemistry between Cary Grant and Ingrid Bergman, and an oddly sympathetic performance by Claude Rains as the Nazi agent. (MJ)

\*12:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *A Night at the Opera* (1935)--Along with *Duck Soup*, one of the Marx Brothers' best efforts. Unfortunately, a silly, uninteresting love story occasionally gets in the way. Directed by Sam Wood; with the inimitable Margaret Dumont, also Kitty Carlisle and Alan Jones. (DW)

12:30 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Rosa Luxemburg* (1986)--See Wednesday at 11:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. (HBO)-- *John Grisham's the Rainmaker* (1997)--Francis Coppola took a John Grisham potboiler and made it into an engrossing but pedestrian film. Nonetheless, it is rich in characters, with particularly good work by Danny DeVito and Mickey Rourke (in a surprising stand-out performance as an ultra-sleazy lawyer) Also starring Matt Damon, John Voight, and Claire Danes. (MJ)

\*2:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *A Day at the Races* (1937)--Marx Brothers foolishness. Set in a sanatorium where rich and hypochondriacal Margaret Dumont is the most prominent patient. Directed by Sam Wood. (DW)

3:00 p.m. (History)-- *Hell to Eternity* (1960)--Remarkable account of US World War II hero Guy Gabaldon, who had been raised by Japanese foster parents. With Jeffrey Hunter, David Janssen, Vic Damone. Directed by underrated Phil Karlson. (DW)

4:45 p.m. (HBOP)-- *The Firm* (1993)--Another film that takes a shot at the legal profession. In this paranoid potboiler, a young, ambitious lawyer finds out that his high-toned firm is totally owned by organized crime. An unremarkable film is saved by a remarkable performance by Gene Hackman (always dependable) playing a cynical partner. From the bestseller by John Grisham.

6:00 p.m. (AMC)-- *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. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (TCM)-- *I Want to Live!* (1958)--Susan Hayward is prostitute-crook Barbara Graham, framed up, according to the movie, and sent to the gas chamber. A remarkable anti-death penalty film made at a time when opposition to capital punishment was gaining strength in the US. Directed by Robert Wise. (DW)

National 9:00 *Lampoon's* *(Cambridge)*--

Chase and Beverly D'Angelo star in this often hilarious low comedy about a quintessentially middle-class family's cross-country trip to the Wally Land theme park. The sequences with Imogene Coca are especially funny. Directed by Harold Ramis. (MJ)

10:15 p.m. (TCM)-- *The Pink Panther* (1964)--See 6:00 p.m.

\*11:00 p.m. (HBOS)-- *Barry Lyndon* (1975)--An intelligent adaptation of William Thackeray's novel about an eighteenth-century scoundrel, directed by Stanley Kubrick. (DW)

11:00 p.m. (TNT)-- *Network* (1976)--Heavyhanded satire on the TV industry. News anchorman (Peter Finch) has a psychotic episode on a national broadcast; his formless rage is taken up by the general populace. He is then regarded as a prophet. Sidney Lumet directed the Academy Award-winning script by Paddy Chayefsky. Starring Peter Finch as the mad newsman. (MJ)

11:30 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Pink Panther* (1964)--See 6:00 p.m.

\*1:00 a.m. (Starz)-- *Wag the Dog* (1997)--Very timely. A US president hires a PR team to distract attention from a sex scandal by fabricating a war with Albania. Barry Levinson's film has bite, and the screenplay by David Mamet is sinister and funny. Great ensemble acting by Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, Denis Leary and Anne Heche. (MJ)

#### Friday, April 2

6:00 a.m. (TMC)-- *Detective Story* (1951)--William Wyler's somewhat dated film about the activities inside a New York City police station. Kirk Douglas is a bitter cop, Eleanor Parker his wife, William Bendix another detective. The good cast also includes Horace McMahon, Lee Grant and Joseph Wiseman. (DW)

6:00 a.m. (HBOS)-- *Saturday Night Fever* (1977)--See Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.

7:30 a.m. (AMC)-- *Make Way for Tomorrow* (1937)--A remarkable portrait of an aging couple (Victor Moore and Beulah Bondi) in the Depression years, shunted aside by their ambitious children. Directed by Leo McCarey. (DW)

\*9:15 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Bank Dick* (1940)--Eddie Cline directed, but the mastermind here is W.C. Fields, who wrote the screenplay and starred. Fields is a lowlife who gets a job as a bank guard; Grady Sutton is his prospective son-in-law, Franklin Pangborn a put-upon bank inspector. (DW)

12:30 p.m. (Bravo)-- *Repulsion* (1965)--Catherine Deneuve starred as a sexually repressed girl who goes homicidal when her sister leaves her on her own in an apartment for a few days. Startling at the time, it seems dated today. Directed by Roman Polanski. (DW)

4:15 p.m. (Cinemax)-- *The Cotton Club* (1984)--Richard Gere stars in Francis Coppola's sometimes successful attempt to capture the music and gangster violence of Harlem in the 1930s. The production was riddled with problems and the often rewritten screenplay is by novelists William Kennedy and Mario Puzo. (MJ)

\*4:30 p.m. (HBOS)-- *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985)--Woody Allen combines Keaton's *Sherlock Jr.* and Fellini's *The White Sheik* to come up with a satisfying tale about a drab housewife (Mia Farrow) romanced by a character (Jeff Daniels) who literally steps out of the movie screen. (MJ)

\*5:45 p.m. (AMC)-- *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940)--John Ford's version of the John Steinbeck classic novel, about the Joad family, driven from their home in the 1930s "Dust Bowl." Henry Fonda plays Tom Joad. With Jane Darwell, John Carradine. (DW)

10:00 p.m. (FXM)-- *Wall Street* (1987)--Oliver Stone directed this film about Wall Street sharks and their comeuppance with his usual subtlety and restraint. With Charlie Sheen, Martin Sheen and Michael Douglas. (DW)

\*1:45 a.m. (AMC)-- *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940)--See 5:45 p.m.

2:00 a.m. (Comedy)-- *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975)--A cult film that is actually quite good, in a campy way. The performance by Tim

Curry is particularly outrageous. (MJ)

\*2:00 a.m. (TCM)-- *The 400 Blows* (1959)--François Truffaut's semi-autobiographical film about a young boy in Paris suffering the slings and arrows of everyday, lower middle-class life. With Jean-Pierre Leaud. (DW)



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