

# Some interesting films on US television, June 26-July 2

Marty Jonas (MJ), David Walsh (DW)  
26 June 1999

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

*Ace in the Hole* (1951)—Billy Wilder's highly bitter film about a down-on-his-luck reporter who exploits a man trapped in a deep cave for the sake of a big story. Fifty years later, with the media even more ravenous and cynical, the film is still timely. Kirk Douglas is outstanding in the kind of snarling role he perfected. With Jan Sterling. Also known as *The Big Carnival*. (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, June 26

6:00 a.m. (Cinemax)—*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)

9:00 a.m. (TCM)—*The Fountainhead* (1949)—King Vidor directed Ayn Rand's adaptation of her own reactionary novel in hyperbolic style, reaching extremes that are often hilarious. Gary Cooper plays the heroic, unbending, individualist architect, Patricia Neal the heiress who carries on a love-hate relationship with him. (MJ)

\*11:30 a.m. (Bravo)—*Children of Paradise* (1945)—Famous film begun during the Nazi occupation of France; director Marcel Carné and screen writer Jacques Prévert tell story of nineteenth century French acting troupe and its star (Arletty), loved by three men. Legendary Jean-Louis Barrault plays the mime who achieves great fame. (DW)

\*12:00 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)

\*12:30 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)

1:00 p.m. (A&E)—*In Cold Blood* (1967)—Good adaptation by Richard Brooks of Truman Capote's "non-fiction novel" about two men (Robert Blake and Scott Wilson) who kill an entire family in the course of a burglary. Filmed in stark black-and-white documentary style on location in Kansas. (MJ)

1:45 p.m. (Cinemax)—*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)

2:30 p.m. (AMC)—*Them!* (1954)—One of the extraordinary 1950s black-and-white science fiction films, products of Cold War paranoia and insecurity, among other things. This one is about giant ant mutations terrorizing the Southwest and ultimately Los Angeles. Directed by Gordon Douglas. James Whitmore and Edmund Gwenn co-star. (DW)

6:30 p.m. (HBOP)—*Tucker: The Man and His Dream* (1988)—The pioneer auto-maker (played by Jeff Bridges) and his company are destroyed by the giants of the auto industry. Director Francis Coppola obviously meant this as a parable about the independent artist versus the film industry, with Tucker standing in for Coppola. The whole thing seems oversimplified. Good performance by Martin Landau. (MJ)

\*8:00 p.m. (TCM)—*Dr. Strangelove* (1963)—Classic satire on nuclear annihilation. Though heavy-handed in parts, it still retains its incisive humor and impact. Peter Sellers is incredible playing several parts, including the President of the United States. Memorable line: "You can't fight in here—it's the War Room!" Directed by Stanley Kubrick. (MJ)

8:00 p.m. (FXM)—*Julia* (1977)—Vanessa Redgrave won an Oscar for her performance as the anti-fascist Julia based on Lillian Hellman's autobiographical work, *Pentimento*. With Jane Fonda, Jason Robards; directed by Fred Zinnemann. (DW)

\*9:00 p.m. (HBOF)—*Last Action Hero* (1993)—Arnold Schwarzenegger vehicle that proves to be a delight. A boy goes to a movie theater and meets his idol—an action hero—who steps out of the screen and takes him back in. A good action film that spoofs the genre and plays with the tension between movies and reality. It also includes hilarious send-ups of Olivier's *Hamlet* and Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*. Directed by John McTiernan. (MJ)

\*9:30 p.m. (Sci-Fi)—*Starman* (1984)—Basically the same story as Spielberg's *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982)—an alien creature tries to return to his home in another galaxy—but far superior to that children's film. Jeff Bridges, in another fine performance, plays the alien, who takes on the appearance of a woman's dead husband. During a long trip by car to find his spaceship, she (Karen Allen) falls in love with him. Sensitive and moving, this is probably John Carpenter's best film, many notches above his usual pulp output. (MJ)

1:20 a.m. (Cinemax)—*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)

\*2:30 a.m. (Sci-Fi)—*Starman* (1984)—See 9:30 p.m.

3:00 a.m. (TCM)—*Alice Doesn't Live Here Any More* (1975)—Martin Scorsese directed this film about a widow, with a young son, who longs for a singing career and ends up a waitress in Phoenix. With Ellen Burstyn, Kris Kristofferson, Harvey Keitel, Jodie Foster. (DW)

## Sunday, June 27

\*6:00 a.m. (TCM)—*Lady for a Day* (1933)—Frank Capra directed this

story about an apple vendor transformed into a society lady by a kindhearted hoodlum. With May Robson and Warren Williams. (DW)

\*7:00 a.m. (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. (DW)

7:00 a.m. (AMC)— *Land of the Pharaohs* (1955)—Howard Hawks' historical epic is full of the typical Hollywood hokum, but the scenes of the building of the pyramids are truly impressive. William Faulkner helped write the screenplay. With Jack Hawkins and Joan Collins. (MJ)

\*9:15 a.m. (TMC)— *Five Easy Pieces* (1970)—Early Jack Nicholson film that helped define his sardonic screen persona. He plays a concert pianist from a wealthy family who opts to work on an oil rig. Watch for the memorable scene in the diner between Nicholson's character and a waitress. Directed by the underappreciated Bob Rafelson. With Karen Black, Billy "Green" Bush and Susan Anspach. (MJ)

\*10:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Cape Fear* (1962)—Robert Mitchum is the best thing about this film, playing a menacing ex-convict in a Southern town who blames lawyer Gregory Peck for his jailing, and plots revenge. Directed by J. Lee Thompson; with Polly Bergen and Martin Balsam. Based on a John D. MacDonald novel, music by Bernard Herrmann. (DW)

10:00 a.m. (TBS)— *For a Few Dollars More* (1966)—The sequel to *A Fistful of Dollars*. One of the more memorable "spaghetti Westerns"; with Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef and Gian Maria Volonte, directed by Sergio Leone. (DW)

\*2:10 p.m. (Encore)— *Touch of Evil* (1958)—One of Orson Welles's greatest films. He plays a corrupt police chief in a border town who plants evidence to convict the "guilty"—in this instance a hapless young Mexican. A tale of moral, physical and political corruption that is rich in every way. With Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, Joseph Calleia and Akim Tamiroff, and uncredited cameos by Joseph Cotten, Marlene Dietrich and Mercedes McCambridge. (MJ)

\*6:00 p.m. (TCM)— *To Have and Have Not* (1944)—Howard Hawks classic, based (very loosely) on a short story by Ernest Hemingway, with Bogart as an apolitical fishing boat captain who gets dragged in to French Resistance efforts. Lauren Bacall is outstanding in her debut. Dialogue by William Faulkner and Jules Furthman. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (Comedy)— *History of the World—Part I* (1981)—An example of Mel Brooks' scattershot humor. Many jokes are forced and lame, and most routines just limp along, but the Spanish Inquisition sequence, staged as a Busby Berkeley water ballet, is hilarious and worth staying for. (MJ)

8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Father of the Bride* (1950)—Spencer Tracy is the father and Elizabeth Taylor the bride in Vincente Minnelli's look at the American marriage ritual. Amusing, and sometimes pointed. With Joan Bennett. (DW)

10:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Father's Little Dividend* (1951)—Amusing follow-up to *Father of the Bride*, with Spencer Tracy as the father and Elizabeth Taylor as the bride. Vincente Minnelli directed. (DW)

\*1:25 a.m. (Encore)— *Touch of Evil* (1958)—See 2:10 p.m.

\*4:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Robin and Marian* (1976)—See 7:00 a.m.

#### **Monday, June 28**

\*8:15 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)

\*1:45 p.m. (AMC)— *Band of Angels* (1957)—A remarkably complex look at black-and-white relations in Civil War America. Clark Gable plays a Southern gentleman with a past as a slave trader, Yvonne DeCarlo is a Southern belle who discovers she has black ancestors and Sidney Poitier is

an educated slave. Directed by Raoul Walsh, from the novel by Robert Penn Warren. (DW)

\*2:15 p.m. (Showtime)— *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (1943)—One of Preston Sturges' wonderful comic looks at American morals and manners. Eddie Bracken, Betty Hutton and William Demarest. (DW)

3:30 p.m. (Cinemax)— *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)

4:00 p.m. (FXM)— *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)

4:00 p.m. (Showtime)— *Young Frankenstein* (1974)—One of Mel Brooks's funnier and more successful parodies, this time of the classic horror film by James Whale. Particularly effective because it uses many of the original sets. With Peter Boyle (as the monster) and Gene Wilder (as Dr. Frankenstein). (MJ)

6:00 p.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 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)

\*11:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Parallax View* (1974)—An exceptional, haunting conspiracy film from director Alan Pakula. Journalist (Warren Beatty) investigates a political assassination and the murders of all witnesses to it. He finds himself completely involved and his life in peril. Marvelous beginning at the top of the Space Needle in Seattle. With Paula Prentiss, Hume Cronyn, William Daniels. (MJ)

\*11:20 p.m. (Starz)— *Deconstructing Harry* (1997)—Woody Allen's film is mean-spirited, misanthropic, bitter, cynical, crude and foul-mouthed, but it is deliberately provocative, often funny, and one of his best films of recent years. A writer (Allen) confronts the friends and family members that he has cruelly featured in his novels, as well as their fictional representations. Also, Allen and his character confront their horror at growing old. Compare this film with the one preceding it, the light-hearted romantic musical *Everyone Says I Love You* (1996), which this film seems to rebut. (MJ)

1:00 a.m. (AMC)— *Nothing Sacred* (1937)—See 6:00 p.m.

\*3:00 a.m. (AMC)— *My Fair Lady* (1964)—See 8:00 p.m.

#### **Tuesday, June 29**

6:00 a.m. (FXM)— *At Long Last Love* (1975)—See Monday at 4:00 p.m.

7:45 a.m. (Showtime)— *Rebecca* (1940)—Alfred Hitchcock's first US-made film, with Joan Fontaine as the second wife of nobleman Laurence Olivier. The first wife's presence hovers over the place. Judith Anderson is memorable as the sinister housekeeper, loyal to the first wife. (DW)

\*8:00 a.m. (IFC)— *The Steel Helmet* (1951)—Gene Evans stars in this Samuel Fuller war drama about US troops behind enemy lines in Korean War. (DW)

10:30 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)

\*12:20 p.m. (Encore)—*Sorcerer* (1977)—Three trucks desperate men run all kinds of hazards to bring volatile shipments of explosives to an oil field fire in Latin America. William Friedkin directed this underrated, highly suspenseful remake of the French classic *The Wages of Fear*. Starring Roy Scheider. (MJ)

2:00 p.m. (HBOS)—*A Place in the Sun* (1951)—A George Stevens film based on Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*. Not very faithful to the book, but valuable in its own right. Elizabeth Taylor is extraordinary as Montgomery Clift's dream girl. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (AMC)—*Heaven Can Wait* (1943)—Don Ameche stars as a dead man seeking entry to hell, who recounts in flash back what he thinks has been a life full of sin. With Gene Tierney and Charles Coburn. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch. (DW)

\*11:25 p.m. (Encore)—*Sorcerer* (1977)—See 12:20 p.m.

\*2:25 a.m. (TBS)—*Point Blank* (1967)—A brilliant crime thriller, directed by John Boorman. Robber (Lee Marvin) seeks revenge on those who left him for dead. A challenging film, often nonlinear in form. With Angie Dickinson, Carroll O'Connor and John Vernon. (MJ)

### Wednesday, June 30

\*6:00 a.m. (IFC)—*I Shot Jesse James* (1949)—Samuel Fuller's remarkable film—done mostly in close-ups—about the shooting of Jesse James by Robert Ford, "that dirty little coward." With Reed Hadley and John Ireland. (MJ)

\*7:15 a.m. (Showtime)—*Spellbound* (1945)—Psychiatrist Ingrid Bergman attempts to unravel patient Gregory Peck's dilemmas. Has he committed a murder? Alfred Hitchcock directed. (DW)

11:05 a.m. (TMC)—*Duel in the Sun* (1946)—King Vidor's intense Western psychodrama. Jennifer Jones, a "half-breed," is caught between two brothers (Gregory Peck and Joseph Cotten). With Lionel Barrymore, Lillian Gish, Herbert Marshall, Charles Bickford and Walter Huston. (DW)

\*1:15 p.m. (IFC)—*I Shot Jesse James* (1949)—See 6:00 a.m.

\*1:30 p.m. (TCM)—*The Lusty Men* (1952)—A film about rodeo cowboys, with Robert Mitchum as the ex-champion who becomes a mentor to newcomer Arthur Kennedy. Mitchum then falls for Kennedy's wife, Susan Hayward. Full of moral ambiguities, directed by Nicholas Ray. (DW)

1:30 p.m. (Showtime)—*At Long Last Love* (1975)—See Monday at 4:00 p.m.

\*7:00 p.m. (HBOF)—*Last Action Hero* (1993)—See Saturday at 9:00 p.m.

\*8:00 p.m. (Bravo)—*Ju Dou* (1990)—Young peasant woman (Gong Li) is forced to marry an elderly factory owner and commences an affair with his nephew, in this story about China in the 1920s. Directed by Zhang Yimou, the film was banned in China. (DW)

\*11:00 p.m. (TCM)—*The Merry Widow* (1934)—Ernst Lubitsch directed this version of the Franz Lehar operetta. Described by one critic as "the last musical of a certain spirit and style to be made on this planet." (DW)

\*12:30 a.m. (TNT)—*Excalibur* (1981)—John Boorman directed this lush adaptation of the King Arthur legend at fever pitch. As with all of Boorman's work, it is carefully made and embodies his unique, fantastic vision. Starring Helen Mirren, Nigel Terry and Nicol Williamson (outstanding as a sardonic, antic Merlin). (MJ)

\*2:30 a.m. (Bravo)—*Ju Dou* (1990)—See 8:00 p.m.

2:30 a.m. (Encore)—*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)

\*3:00 a.m. (TMC)—*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)

### Thursday, July by

\*8:00 a.m. (FXM)—*To Be or Not to Be* (1942)—Ernst Lubitsch's 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)

10:30 a.m. (Starz)—*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)

10:45 a.m. (TMC)—*Touch* (1987)—Interesting but disappointing film written and directed by Paul Schrader about faith healing in the South. With Christopher Walken and Bridget Fonda. (MJ)

\*4:00 p.m. (TCM)—*An American in Paris* (1951)—Classic MGM musical directed by Vincente Minnelli and built around its Gershwin score; Alan Jay Lerner wrote the screenplay. Gene Kelly is an artist torn between gamine Leslie Caron and wealthy Nina Foch. With the irrepressible Oscar Levant. (DW)

\*4:00 p.m. (Bravo)—*Ju Dou* (1990)—See Wednesday at 8:00 p.m.

5:45 p.m. (HBOP)—*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)

\*10:00 p.m. (TCM)—*Ninotchka* (1939)—Greta Garbo is an unlikely Soviet official in Paris, who gets seduced by Melvyn Douglas and the pleasures of capitalism, in Ernst Lubitsch's comedy. (DW)

\*11:05 p.m. (AMC)—*The Parallax View* (1974)—See Monday at 11:00 p.m.

\*11:15 p.m. (HBOS)—*The Graduate* (1967)—Important coming-of-age film about a young man (Dustin Hoffman, in his first big role) deciding whether to throw in his lot with the adult world. Should he cast off his rebelliousness and join the prospering middle class of the late sixties—i.e., go into "plastics"? Anne Bancroft is the memorable middle-aged seductress (and mother of his fiancée) Mrs. Robinson. Excellent music by Simon and Garfunkel. Directed by Mike Nichols. (MJ)

### Friday, July 2

\*6:00 a.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)

\*7:05 a.m. (AMC)—*The Court Jester* (1956)—Classic Danny Kaye farce of confused identities in the Middle Ages. Lots of witty verbal humor. Directed by Melvin Frank and Norman Panama. (MJ)

\*8:55 a.m. (TMC)—*All About Eve* (1950)—Joseph Mankiewicz wrote and directed this classic about backstabbing in the world of the theater. The dialogue is nonstop witty and incisive. Memorable performances by George Sanders and Bette Davis. (MJ)

12:00 p.m. (TCM)—*As You Desire Me* (1932)—Fairly inept version of a Pirandello play, directed by George Fitzmaurice, about an amnesiac returning to a husband she doesn't remember. Greta Garbo has some memorable moments as the woman, with Melvyn Douglas and Erich von Stroheim. (DW)

1:15 p.m. (Showtime)—*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)

\*2:45 p.m. (HBO)—*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. (TCM)— *Casablanca* (1942)—The Michael Curtiz classic about life and love in wartime Morocco, with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (FXM)— *Carousel* (1956)—Hollywood turned a great dark Broadway musical into a perky feel-good film. Most of the Rodgers and Hammerstein songs are intact, however. Starring Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones. Directed by Henry King. (MJ)

\*6:00 p.m. (HBOP)— *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)

6:00 p.m. (HBOS)— *Night Falls on Manhattan* (1997)—Another of Sidney Lumet's tales of police corruption. They are usually incisive, with a good feel for urban realities, but this one, with Andy Garcia as a cop turned crusading DA, is a bit paint-by-numbers. (MJ)

7:30 p.m. (Showtime)— *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977)—See Thursday at 10:30 a.m.

\*8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *The Maltese Falcon* (1941)—John Huston classic, based on the Dashiell Hammett novel, with Humphrey Bogart as private detective Sam Spade. Sydney Greenstreet, Mary Astor and Peter Lorre brilliantly co-star. (DW)

\*10:00 p.m. (TCM)— *In a Lonely Place* (1950)—Nicholas Ray film in which Humphrey Bogart plays a tormented, abusive Hollywood screenwriter. With Gloria Grahame and Frank Lovejoy. (MJ)

\*12:00 a.m. (TCM)— *High Sierra* (1941)—Wonderful, hard-boiled Raoul Walsh film about an ex-convict (Humphrey Bogart) and the two women in his life, a lame girl, Joan Leslie, whose treatment he pays for, and the tough, no-nonsense Ida Lupino. Final chase sequence in the mountains captures something essential about America. Written by John Huston and W.R. Burnett. (DW)

1:00 a.m. (HBOP)— *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)



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