Some interesting films on US television, August 7-13

Marty Jonas (MJ), David Walsh (DW)
7 August 1999

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

The Ladykillers (1955)—A band of bank robbers plan their next job while staying at a rooming house and posing as a chamber music group. The landlord, a wonderfully innocent old woman (played by Katie Johnson), takes them at their word and keeps intruding on them good-naturedly, bringing them tea and asking them to play for her. This British comedy classic stars Alec Guinness (with grotesque teeth) as the group's leader and features Peter Sellers in his first important screen role. (MJ)

Note: August 13th marks Alfred Hitchcock's 100th birthday. So, throughout this week there will be a wealth of films on TV by the late, great director.

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, August 7

7:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Harper* (1966)—Competently made private eye film, with Paul Newman as detective hired by Lauren Bacall to find her missing millionaire husband. With Julie Harris, Shelley Winters, Arthur Hill, Pamela Tiffin. Directed by Jack Smight, based on Ross MacDonald's *The Moving Target*. (DW)

*7:15 a.m. (Showtime)— *The Shootist* (1976)—John Wayne plays a gunfighter dying of cancer who returns to his home town for a last bit of peace. James Stewart is the doctor. This excellent, moving film was Wayne's last. Directed by Don Siegel. (MJ)

11:05 a.m. (Encore)— *The Trouble with Harry* (1955)—Fair black comedy by Alfred Hitchcock about a dead body (Harry's) that keeps turning up in differents spots in a New England village. With Shirley MacLaine, Edmund Gwenn and John Forsythe. (MJ)

12:45 p.m. (HBOS)— *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. (MJ)

2:00 p.m. (Comedy)— *History of the World—Part I* (1981)—An example of Mel Brooks's 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)

3:45 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)

5:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Anna Karenina* (1935)—A superficial and turgid version of the Tolstoy novel. But anything with Greta Garbo is of interest. Clarence Brown, for some reason Garbo's favorite, directed the film. (DW)

5:30 p.m. (HBOS)— *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)

7:25 p.m. (TMC)— *Twilight* (1998)—Crisp dialogue and good plotting carry this film about an elderly detective (Paul Newman) solving murders in Hollywood. Excellent cast also includes Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon and James Garner. Many smart observations about growing old. Directed by Robert Benton, from a screenplay by Benton and novelist Richard Russo. (MJ)

*8:00 p.m. (Encore)— *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)

*8:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—One of John Ford's best films. The story of a man who rises to fame because he shot a notorious outlaw, though the shooting was done by someone else, embodies Ford's philosophy of myth and the West. Starring Jimmy Stewart and John Wayne, in fine performances. (MJ)

10:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Macao* (1952)—Not one of Josef Von Sternberg's finer efforts, but still worth watching. With Robert Mitchum as an adventurer and Jane Russell a singer, acting out a melodrama in the Portuguese enclave off the coast of China. (DW)

10:00 p.m. (FXM)— *Blood and Wine* (1996)—Jack Nicholson plays a bankrupt wine merchant pulling off a jewel heist with an over-the-hill, nerved-up safecracker (Michael Caine, in an unusual role as a murderous heavy). With Judy Davis and Stephen Dorff. Another neglected film by underrated director Bob Rafelson. (MJ)

*10:15 p.m. (AMC)— *My Darling Clementine* (1946)—John Ford directed this Western about the lead-up to the gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Henry Fonda is Wyatt Earp and Victor Mature is Doc Holliday. With Ward Bond, Tim Holt, Walter Brennan. (DW)

11:15 p.m. (HBOS)— *The Firm* (1993)—See 12:45 p.m.

11:25 p.m. (Encore)— *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)

1:55 a.m. (HBOS)— *Local Hero* (1983)—Peter Riegert is an American

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oil company agent commissioned to buy up a Scottish village whose land is needed for an oil refinery. Directed by Bill Forsyth; with Burt Lancaster, Fulton MacKay. (DW)

*2:00 a.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—See 8:00 p.m.

3:50 a.m. (HBOS)— *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)—See 5:30 p.m.

4:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Harper* (1966)—See 7:00 a.m.

*4:05 a.m. (AMC)— *My Darling Clementine* (1946)—See 10:15 p.m.

Sunday, August 8

5:45 a.m. (FXM)— *Carousel* (1956)—See Saturday at 3:45 p.m.

*7:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Detour* (1945)—Edgar G. Ulmer, German expatriate and legendary denizen of Hollywood's Poverty Row, directed this remarkable low-budget work. Tom Neal is a drifter who becomes tragically involved with Ann Savage—and Fate—while hitch-hiking from one coast to the other. Not to be missed. (DW)

10:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Berlin Express* (1948)—Spy drama set in postwar Germany, as agents from a number of countries attempt to rescue politician kidnapped by Nazi underground. With Robert Ryan, Merle Oberon and Paul Likas. Directed by Jacques Tourneur. (DW)

10:30 a.m. (Cinemax)— *Tin Men* (1987)—Barry Levinson's comedy-drama about the aluminum-siding business, set in Baltimore in 1963, with Richard Dreyfuss and Danny DeVito. (DW)

10:30 a.m. (TMC)— *At Long Last Love* (1975)—Burt Reynolds and Sybill 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)

11:00 a.m. (TBS)— *National Lampoon's Vacation* (1983)—Chevy 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)

*11:45 a.m. (Showtime)— *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)

12:05 p.m. (Encore)— *Family Plot* (1976)—Late and mild-mannered Alfred Hitchcock, but still worth watching. Barbara Harris is a fake medium who unwittingly gets involved in a murder plot. William Devane is the mastermind. (DW)

*1:30 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)

5:40 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)

*5:45 p.m. (Encore)— *Vertigo* (1958)—Pivotal Alfred Hitchcock film, one of his best, about murder, impotence and obsession. Must be seen. With James Stewart, Kim Novak and Barbara Bel Geddes. Great relentless score by Bernard Herrmann. (MJ)

*8:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Searchers* (1956)—John Ford classic. John Wayne and Jeffrey Hunter search for Wayne's niece, taken by Indians. Natalie Wood plays the girl. An essential American film. (DW)

9:00 p.m. (HBOP)— *Serial Mom* (1994)—Middle-aged suburban mom (played with relish by Kathleen Turner) kills to preserve traditional American values, like rewinding before you return your tape to the video store and not wearing white shoes after Labor Day. This hilarious satire was directed by John Waters. (MJ)

*9:30 p.m. (Cinemax)— *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 sendups of Olivier's *Hamlet* and Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*. Directed by John McTiernan. (MJ)

9:50 p.m. (Encore)— *Family Plot* (1976)—See 12:05 p.m.

*10:35 p.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)

12:30 a.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)

*3:45 a.m. (AMC)— *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940)—See 1:30 p.m.

4:00 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)

*4:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Detour* (1945)—See 7:00 a.m.

Monday, August 9

*6:00 a.m. (AMC)— *Modern Times* (1936)—Chaplin on the machine age. Consistently funny and perceptive, with Paulette Goddard. Chaplin's last silent film. (DW)

8:15 a.m. (HBOS)— *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)—See Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

10:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Yolanda and the Thief* (1945)—Fred Astaire is a con man in this Vincente Minnelli musical, trying to convince Lucille Bremer, a Latin American heiress, that he is her guardian angel. With Frank Morgan. (DW)

12:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Lady in the Lake* (1946)—Robert Montgomery directed himself as Raymond Chandler's private detective Philip Marlowe. The camera, as a novelty, takes the first-person (Montgomery's) point of view. (DW)

2:00 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)

2:30 p.m. (Showtime)— *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (1943)—One of Preston Sturges's wonderful comic looks at American morals and manners. Eddie Bracken, Betty Hutton and William Demarest. (DW)

7:30 p.m. (Bravo)— *Finian's Rainbow* (1968)—Petula Clark sings beautifully, Fred Astaire is miscast as her dreamy dad, and Tommy Steele quickly wears out his welcome as the broad-smiling, hyperactive leprechaun in Francis Copplola's flat version of the hit populist Broadway musical. In the course of this unrelentingly upbeat film, a tobacco-growing commune struggles for survival and a bigoted Southern senator is turned into an African-American. However, the songs by E.Y. Harburg retain their charm. (MJ)

8:00 p.m. (Encore)— *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956)—An American couple (James Stewart and Doris Day) become involved in an international conspiracy when their child is kidnapped in London and they try to find him. Good remake by Alfred Hitchcock of his 1934 film has its high points (the assassination attempt during an Albert Hall concert) and its low points (Ms. Day singing "Que Sera, Sera"). (MJ)

10:00 p.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

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Faustian bargain and suffers for it. A very funny horror film that trades on the public's distrust of the legal profession. (MJ)

11:40 p.m. (Encore)— *Night and the City* (1992)—Fair remake of the superb 1950 film noir by Jules Dassin. In this version, directed by Irwin Winkler, Robert De Niro takes the Richard Widmark part, and the scene is shifted from London to New York City. The shady world of boxing promotion is well captured in the screenplay by Richard Price. (MJ)

12:30 a.m. (Showtime)— *The Tall Guy* (1989)—Moderately funny film about an American actor (Jeff Goldblum) trying to make it in British theater. Highlights are the daffy musical version of *The Elephant Man* and Rowan Atkinson's inspired mugging. Also with Emma Thompson. Directed by Mel Smith. (MJ)

1:30 a.m. (Bravo)— *Finian's Rainbow* (1968)—See 7:30 p.m.

1:30 a.m. (Encore)— *The Warriors* (1979)—Walter Hill's bizarre and exciting retelling of Xenophon's ancient Greek classic *The March Up-Country*. Set in nighttime New York City, the film shows members of a juvenile gang fighting their way back to the Bronx. (MJ)

2:30 a.m. (TCM)— *High Society* (1956)—Glossy musical version of *The Philadelphia Story* has music and lyrics by the great Cole Porter. Starring Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly and Louis Armstrong. Directed by Charles Walters. (MJ)

3:15 a.m. (HBOS)— *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 a.m. (AMC)— *Pete Kelly's Blues* (1955)—Underrated film about a jazz band in the 1920s and its fight against being taken over by the mob, as told by the trumpet player (Jack Webb, who also directed). Excellent jazz score. Director Webb made good use of the wide screen, so the film is best seen in letterbox format. With Peggy Lee (who won an Academy Award). (MJ)

Tuesday, August 10

6:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Dinner at Eight* (1933)—A collection of individuals from various social classes, all facing a crisis, prepare to dine at eight. George Cukor directed this MGM version of the George Kaufman-Edna Ferber play, with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, Wallace Beery and John Barrymore. (DW)

*8:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Some Came Running* (1958)—Remarkable melodrama, directed by Vincente Minnelli, about disillusionment in a small town after World War II; more generally, this is an extraordinary film about disillusionment with postwar America. With Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Shirley MacLaine, Martha Hyer. (DW)

12:00 p.m. (Bravo)— *Finian's Rainbow* (1968)—See Monday at 7:30 p.m.

2:15 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. (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)

2:45 p.m. (Encore)— *An Affair to Remember* (1957)—Leo McCarey directed this remake of his own 1939 *Love Affair* (Irene Dunne and Charles Boyer), this time with Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr. A shipboard romance has unexpected complications on land. Sentimental, but it has something. (DW)

*4:00 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)

6:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Queen Christina* (1933)—Greta Garbo is memorable as the 17th-century Swedish queen who gave up her throne for love. John Gilbert, one of her real-life amours, plays her aristocratic lover. Rouben Mamoulian directed. (DW)

*9:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—See Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

10:30 p.m. (TCM)— *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* (1941)—Amusing tale of a boxer (Robert Montgomery) called to heaven too soon, who has to return to earth in another body. With Evelyn Keyes, Claude Rains, Edward Everett Horton. Confusingly, Warren Beatty and Buck Henry's 1978 *Heaven Can Wait* is a remake of this film and not Ernst Lubitsch's 1943 *Heaven Can Wait*. (DW)

*11:00 p.m. (Bravo)— *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. (DW)

*2:00 a.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—See Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

2:00 a.m. (TCM)— *A Guy Named Joe* (1943)—Spencer Tracy is a World War II pilot who is killed and comes back to earth to whisper advice in the ear of his replacement, Van Johnson, in the affections of Irene Dunne. Sentimental as can be, but affecting. Directed by Victor Fleming. (DW)

Wednesday, August 11

6:00 a.m. (AMC)— *The Circus* (1928)—Underrated film, with Chaplin accidentally joining a circus troupe and falling in love with the bareback rider. (DW)

7:00 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. (DW)

8:30 a.m. (HBOS)— *Local Hero* (1983)—See Saturday at 1:55 a.m.

9:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Marie Antoinette* (1938)—Lavish MGM spectacle about the life of the doomed queen of France. Criticized in its time, it stands up to a certain extent. Robert Morley is memorable as Louis XVI; Norma Shearer is Marie. Directed by W. S. Van Dyke. (DW)

*9:45 a.m. (Showtime)— *All About Eve* (1950)—See Sunday at 11:45 a.m.

*12:30 p.m. (Bravo)— *Foreign Correspondent* (1940)—See Tuesday at 11:00 p.m.

5:45 p.m. (TMC)— *At Long Last Love* (1975)—See Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

6:45 p.m. (HBOP)— *Marathon Man* (1976)—Exciting, convoluted spy thriller about stolen jewels, Nazis hiding out in the US, and the CIA. Starring Dustin Hoffman and Roy Scheider. Laurence Olivier is particularly effective as a sadistic Mengele-type dentist. Directed by John Schlesinger. (MJ)

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)

10:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Spirit of St. Louis* (1957)—James Stewart, a little long in the tooth, plays Charles Lindbergh in this mediocre Billy Wilder film about the first trans-Atlantic flight in 1927. (DW)

10:15 p.m. (TCM)— *Bells Are Ringing* (1960)—Delightful Comden-Green musical about an operator at a telephone answering service who falls in love with one of her clients. Starring Judy Holliday, whose early death robbed us of a significant musical talent. With Dean Martin. Directed by Vincente Minnelli. (MJ)

*11:20 p.m. (Encore)— *Wag the Dog* (1997)—See Saturday at 8:00 p.m.

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1:00 a.m. (Encore)— *Deconstructing Harry* (1997)—See 11:25 p.m.

3:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Till the Clouds Roll By* (1946)—A highly embellished biography of composer Jerome Kern (played by Robert Walker). Rich with musical numbers, well performed by MGM stars such as Judy Garland, Lena Horne and Frank Sinatra. The shortened version of *Show Boat* is especially good, far better than the full-length version made by MGM several years later. Directed by Richard Whorf. (MJ)

3:05 a.m. (HBOP)— *Serial Mom* (1994)—See Sunday at 9:00 p.m.

4:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Algiers* (1938)—John Cromwell directed this remake of the French *Pepe Le Moko*, about an elusive criminal living and loving in the casbah in Algiers. Police official uses Hedy Lamarr to lure Pepe (Charles Boyer) out of the quarter. (DW)

4:30 a.m. (AMC)— *The Spirit of St. Louis* (1957)—See 10:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 12

5:05 a.m. (HBO)— *Ulee's Gold* (1997)—Peter Fonda gives a strong, sensitive performance as a Florida beekeeper who struggles to keep his troubled family from spinning apart. The film is weakened by a neat, uplifting ending. Directed by Victor Nunez. (MJ)

2:00 p.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)

2:40 p.m. (Encore)— *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)

4:00 p.m. (Cinemax)— *John Grisham's the Rainmaker* (1997)—See Sunday at 5:40 p.m.

5:00 p.m. (HBOS)— *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* (1969)—See Sunday at 4:00 a.m.

6:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Camille* (1937)—Perhaps Greta Garbo's finest film. She plays Dumas' tragic courtesan, forced to give up her love, a young man from a "good family," for the sake of his family's honor. Robert Taylor and Lionel Barrymore are adequate, but Henry Daniell enlivens the proceedings as the villain. Directed by George Cukor. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (Encore)— *This Boy's Life* (1993)—Based on the novel by Tobias Wolff, about a young boy, his mother and his volatile stepfather, set in remote Washington state in the 1950s. With Robert DeNiro, Leonardo DiCaprio and Ellen Barkin. (DW)

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)

8:00 p.m. (TNT)— *The Sting* (1973)—A pair of con men (Paul Newman and Robert Redford) pull an intricate scam on a gangster during the Depression. Good, playful, with lots of surprises. Memorable score made up of Scott Joplin ragtime music. With Robert Shaw. Directed by George Roy Hill. (MJ)

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)

10:45 p.m. (TNT)— *The Horse Soldiers* (1959)—Another classic John Ford western, with John Wayne as a cavalry officer leading Union troops into Confederate territory during the Civil War. (DW)

*12:00 a.m. (Encore)— *Frenzy* (1972)—An innocent man is accused of being the "necktie murderer" in London. Suspenseful film by Alfred Hitchcock has great menace and wonderful moments, but is marred by some cheap effects. With Jon Finch and Barry Foster. (MJ)

12:30 a.m. (AMC)— *Land of the Pharaohs* (1955)—Howard Hawks's 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)

Saturday

12:30 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Sun Also Rises* (1957)—Star-filled adaptation of the Hemingway novel. Glossy and inadequate. Directed by Henry King. (MJ)

1:15 a.m. (HBOP)— *The Cotton Club* (1984)—See Monday at 3:15 a.m.

2:00 a.m. (Encore)— *Topaz* (1969)—A lesser Hitchcock film involving US intelligence, French intelligence, Cuba, and the Soviet Union—muddled but still worth watching. It contains an unfortunate cartoonish sequence of Fidel Castro's stay at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem right after the revolution; he and his followers are presented as crude, ignorant buffoons. (MJ)

*4:25 a.m. (Encore)— *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. (DW)

Friday, August 13

*7:00 a.m. (Cinemax)— *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. (DW)

7:45 a.m. (Encore)— *The Trouble with Harry* (1955)—See Saturday at 11:05 a.m.

*9:00 a.m. (TCM)— *The Birds* (1963)—Alfred Hitchcock's terrifying drama about swarms of birds attacking humans in a small northern California town. With Rod Taylor, Tippi Hedren and Jessica Tandy. (DW)

10:00 a.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)

*11:00 a.m. (Cinemax)— *Last Action Hero* (1993)—See Sunday at 9:30 p.m.

11:20 a.m. (Encore)— *Family Plot* (1976)—See Sunday at 12:05 p.m.

11:30 a.m. (TCM)— *Marnie* (1964)—Tippie 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. (DW)

*12:30 p.m. (Showtime)— *The Shootist* (1976)—See Saturday at 7:15 a.m.

1:25 p.m. (Encore)— *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1956)—See Monday at 8:00 p.m.

*2:00 p.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)

2:15 p.m. (HBOP)— *The Firm* (1993)—See Saturday at 12:45 p.m.

3:30 p.m. (AMC)— *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* (1941)—Alfred Hitchcock's somewhat misguided effort at screwball comedy. Robert Montgomery and Carole Lombard discover their marriage is invalid; mayhem ensues. At least one marvelous scene in a restaurant, in which Montgomery, attempting to impress Lombard, from whom he is now estranged, pretends to speak into the ear of a woman seated next to him. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Dial M for Murder* (1954)—A lesser film by Alfred Hitchcock, with Ray Milland as a husband who plots his wife's death. Grace Kelly is the wife who, when the plot fails, falls under suspicion of murder. With Bob Cummings. (DW)

*5:45 p.m. (Encore)— *Vertigo* (1958)—See Sunday at 5:45 p.m.

*6:00 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)

6:45 p.m. (HBOP)— *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge* (1990)—See Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *He Walked by Night* (1948)—Officially credited to

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Alfred L. Werker, Anthony Mann directed some of the most visually interesting scenes in this film noir about the police hunt for a psychotic killer, excellently played by Richard Basehart. (DW)

10:45 p.m. (TCM)— *Border Incident* (1949)—US and Mexican officials team up to crack down on smuggling of immigrants across the border. Anthony Mann directed, with Ricardo Montalban, George Murphy, Charles McGraw. (DW)

12:00 a.m. (FXM)— *Julia* (1977)—see 10:00 a.m.

12:30 a.m. (TCM)— *Side Street* (1949)—Anthony Mann directed this story about a young man driven to theft, whose troubles multiply. The same stars as Nicholas Ray's *They Live By Night* (1949): Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell. (DW)

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