

Some interesting films on US television, August 14-20

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

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

High and Low (1962)—Kidnapers take a chauffeur's son, thinking he is the child of the chauffeur's rich employer. The industrialist (played by the great Japanese actor Toshiro Mifune) decides to pay the ransom, though the huge amount jeopardizes an important financial deal. This rarely seen film by Akira Kurosawa shows the great gulf between the classes in Yokohama as the police hunt down the kidnapers. Adapted from the crime novel *King's Ransom* by the American writer Ed McBain (Evan Hunter). Alternate title *Heaven and Hell*. (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, August 14

6:00 a.m. (IFC)—*Black Orpheus* (1958)—Much was made of this French-Brazilian film at the time, a version of the Orpheus-Euridice story, set in Rio during carnival. Romance between a street-car conductor and a country girl. Directed by Marcel Camus. (DW)

6:15 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)

*8:45 a.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)

*9:05 a.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)

11:00 a.m. (HBOS)—*Days of Wine and Roses* (1962)—Blake Edwards's somber film about alcoholic Jack Lemmon who drags Lee Remick into his orbit. (DW)

12:15 p.m. (IFC)—*Black Orpheus* (1958)—See 6:00 a.m.

*1:00 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)

2:05 p.m. (TMC)—*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)

3:55 p.m. (TMC)—*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. (TBS)—*High Plains Drifter* (1973)—Clint Eastwood directed (and stars in) this excellent spaghetti western tale of revenge, into which he poured everything he learned from his mentors Sergio Leone and Don Siegel. (MJ)

5:00 p.m. (TCM)—*The Search* (1948)—In post-war Germany, an American GI (Montgomery Clift) looks after a child; meanwhile his mother desperately searches for him. Fred Zinnemann directed. (DW)

*5:30 p.m. (HBOS)—*Enemies, A Love Story* (1989)—Set in post-World War II Brooklyn and the Catskills, Paul Mazursky's faithful adaptation of Isaac Bashevis Singer's novel has Herman, a Jewish intellectual married to the Polish woman who sheltered him during the war, carrying on an affair with a seductive married woman. Then his first wife, presumed dead in Poland, appears at his door. Mazursky's film is humorous and, at the same time, sad, with superb performances by Ron Silver, Anjelica Huston and Lena Olin. (MJ)

6:00 p.m. (FXM)—*Unfaithfully Yours* (1948)—Not Preston Sturges at his best, but still amusing. Rex Harrison is a symphony conductor convinced of his wife's (Linda Darnell's) infidelity. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (TCM)—*The Big Steal* (1949)—Crime drama, in which Robert Mitchum is chasing a payroll robber and is, in turn, chased by William Bendix. Jane Greer provides the love interest. Directed by Don Siegel. (DW)

9:15 p.m. (TCM)—*His Kind of Woman* (1951)—A lively tale, as Robert Mitchum heads off to Mexico for a routine pay-off and finds out a gangster boss (Raymond Burr) has plans to kill him and take his identity. Jane Russell is in top form and Vincent Price is amusing as a ham actor. Directed by John Farrow. (DW)

10:15 p.m. (AMC)—*The Naked Jungle* (1954)—Above-average jungle adventure directed by Byron Haskin, with Charlton Heston and Eleanor Parker. (DW)

10:30 p.m. (IFC)—*Crumb* (1994)—Remarkable portrait of family of cartoonist Robert Crumb. His two dysfunctional brothers prove to be considerably more interesting than he. Directed by Terry Zwigoff. (DW)

11:30 p.m. (TCM)—*Angel Face* (1952)—An extravagant Otto Preminger melodrama, about a murderous girl who does in her father and stepmother. With Jean Simmons, Robert Mitchum, Herbert Marshall. Described as "a lyrical nightmare" by one critic. (DW)

12:30 a.m. (TNT)—*American Graffiti* (1973)—A film that probably had a negative effect on the course of American film-making, this is director George Lucas's entertaining fantasy about teenage life in California in the 1950s. With Richard Dreyfuss, Ron Howard, Paul LeMat, Cindy Williams, Candy Clark. (DW)

2:45 a.m. (TCM)— *Undercurrent* (1946)—In the *Gaslight* genre: a woman (Katharine Hepburn) discovers her husband is evil and conniving. Robert Mitchum is her ultimate savior. Directed by Vincente Minnelli. (DW)

4:00 a.m. (IFC)— *Crumb* (1994)—See 10:30 p.m..

4:10 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Last Hurrah* (1958)—John Ford adapted this film about US big-city machine politics from the novel by Edwin O'Connor, which was based on the career of Boston's rogue mayor, James Curley. The great Spencer Tracy is perfect in the lead role, as Mayor Frank Skeffington. (MJ)

Sunday, August 15

*6:55 a.m. (Encore)— *Saboteur* (1942)—Excellent Alfred Hitchcock film, with Robert Cummings as an innocent munitions plant worker accused of sabotage. With Priscilla Lane. (DW)

8:00 a.m. (FXM)— *Unfaithfully Yours* (1948)—See Saturday at 6:00 p.m..

9:00 a.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)

10:00 p.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)

11:55 a.m. (TMC)— *Modern Romance* (1981)—Occasionally amusing film, directed by and starring Albert Brooks as a neurotic film editor obsessed with Kathryn Harrold. (DW)

12:55 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)

*5:00 (TMC)— *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)

*5:00 p.m. (Bravo)— *Indochine* (1992)—A fine film that sets its overwrought love story in the context of the developing revolution in Indochina. It spans the period from the birth of the Indochinese Communist Party to the defeat of the brutal French colonialists and the division of Vietnam at the 1954 Geneva Conference. Catherine Deneuve gives a remarkable performance as the owner of a rubber plantation. With Vincent Perez. Directed by Regis Wargnier. (MJ)

7:30 p.m. (FX)— *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. (TCM)— *Lolita* (1962)—Relatively daring film version of the Vladimir Nabokov novel about a middle-aged English academic who develops a passion for a young girl. Stanley Kubrick directed James Mason, Sue Lyon, Shelley Winters and Peter Sellers. (DW)

*4:00 a.m. (HBOS)— *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* (1957)—Spirited acting (by Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas) and direction (by John Sturges) make this one of the more memorable films of this legendary clash. (MJ)

Monday, August 16

6:00 a.m. (AMC)— *City Lights* (1931)—Chaplin's tramp in love with a blind flower girl. Sentimental, but unforgettable. (DW)

genre: a *Mildred Pierce* a.m. (1945)—(Revised) directed by Michael Curtiz, about a woman (Joan Crawford) who goes from rags to riches and her ungrateful daughter. Based on the novel by James M. Cain. (DW)

*6:30 a.m. (Cinemax)— *All the King's Men* (1949)—Classic film about the rise and fall of a demagogic, opportunist politician in the South. Based on the life of Huey Long, the Louisiana populist who wielded great power in the 1930s before he was assassinated. Written and directed by Robert Rossen, from the novel by Robert Penn Warren. Excellent performances by Broderick Crawford, Mercedes McCambridge and John Ireland. (MJ)

12:30 p.m. (IFC)— *Gray's Anatomy* (1996)—One of actor Spalding Gray's filmed monologues. This time he describes his efforts to find alternative treatments for an eye ailment. Directed by Steven Soderbergh. (DW)

2:30 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 boy-friend. Not a great film, but it has its moments. Directed by Jonathan Demme. (DW)

3:15 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)

4:15 p.m. (AMC)— *River of No Return* (1954)—Otto Preminger directed this interesting, relatively somber story. Robert Mitchum rescues a man (Rory Calhoun) and a woman (Marilyn Monroe) from drowning. Calhoun promptly steals his horse and takes off. Vengeful Mitchum, with his young son, and Monroe pursue him by raft. (DW)

6:30 p.m. (IFC)— *Gray's Anatomy* (1996)—See 12:30 p.m..

*8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *M* (1931)—Fritz Lang's gripping expressionist film about a German child murderer pursued not only by the police but by the underworld. With Peter Lorre. (MJ)

2:05 p.m. (FXM)— *Young Frankenstein* (1974)—See Saturday at 2:05 p.m..

8:00 p.m. (Bravo)— *Gas Food Lodging* (1992)—Amiable film about a waitress (Brooke Adams) at a diner in Laramie, New Mexico, trying to get by, with two daughters. Directed by Allison Anders; with James Brolin, Ione Skye, Fairuza Balk. (DW)

7:30 p.m. (FXM)— *Wall Street* (1987)—See Sunday at 7:30 p.m..

*12:00 a.m. (TCM)— *They Drive by Night* (1940)—Intense, vivid portrait of two truck-driving brothers (Humphrey Bogart and George Raft) and their lives, and the woman they come up against, played passionately by Ida Lupino. With Ann Sheridan and Alan Hale. Directed by Raoul Walsh. (DW)

*1:30 a.m. (TCM)— *Badlands* (1973)—Terrence Malick's strangely idyllic recounting of a killing spree in the 1950s Midwest. Martin Sheen plays the main character, based on killer Charles Starkweather, and Sissy Spacek plays his teenaged girlfriend, who narrates the film with naive, romantic passages from her diary. Beautifully photographed. (MJ)

2:15 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 different spots in a New England village. With Shirley MacLaine, Edmund Gwenn and John Forsythe. (MJ)

2:30 a.m. (Bravo)— *Gas Food Lodging* (1992)—See 8:00 p.m..

Tuesday, August 17

*7:00 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Last Hurrah* (1958)—See Saturday at 4:10 a.m.

8:00 a.m. (Cinemax)— *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. (DW)

9:20 a.m. (Encore)— *Love with the Proper Stranger* (1963)—Natalie Wood is pregnant and Steve McQueen is her musician boy-friend in this occasionally affecting film shot on location in New York's Greenwich Village. Directed by Robert Mulligan. (DW)

*9:30 a.m. (TCM)— *Rio Grande* (1950)—One of John Ford's great cavalry films. John Wayne is an officer with family problems. Claude Jarman, Jr., is his son, Maureen O'Hara his wife. (DW)

10:30 a.m. (IFC)— *Gray's Anatomy* (1996)—See Monday at 12:30 p.m..

11:30 a.m. (TCM)— *The Quiet Man* (1952)—John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara star in this John Ford film about an Irish-American boxer who goes back to his native country. (DW)

*1:00 p.m. (AMC)— *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956)—Don Siegel's classic parable about conformity in 1950s America. After a meteor lands nearby, inhabitants of a small town are quietly replaced by "pod people" who look like them but act mindlessly as members of a communal hive. With Kevin McCarthy and Dana Wynter. (MJ)

1:15 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)

2:00 p.m. (TCM)— *The Wings of Eagles* (1957)—John Ford directed this biographical film about Frank "Spig" Wead (John Wayne), an aviator who turned to screenwriting (for Ford and others) after an accident. With Maureen O'Hara, Dan Dailey, Ward Bond. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (Bravo)— *Gas Food Lodging* (1992)—See Monday at 8:00 p.m..

4:00 p.m. (FXM)— *At Long Last Love* (1975)—See Saturday at 3:55 p.m..

4:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Now, Voyager* (1942)—A well-done melodrama with a remarkable cast. Bette Davis is an isolated, neurotic woman helped by psychiatrist Claude Rains, and falling in love with Paul Henreid. Directed by Irving Rapper. (DW)

*4:15 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)

5:15 p.m. (HBOS)— *The Firm* (1993)—See Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

5:45 p.m. (AMC)— *How Green Was My Valley* (1941)—John Ford's powerful film about Welsh coal miners. With Walter Pidgeon, Maureen O'Hara, Donald Crisp and Roddy McDowall. (MJ)

*9:00 p.m. (AMC)— *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940)—Thoroughly enchanting version of the tale of magic and heroism based on *The Arabian Nights*. Dazzling Technicolor, superb Miklos Rosza score. With Sabu, Conrad Veidt and Rex Ingram (as the genie). Directed by Ludwig Berger, Tim Whelan and Michael Powell. One of the fine films produced by Alexander Korda. (MJ)

10:45 p.m. (TMC)— *Young Frankenstein* (1974)—See Saturday at 2:05 p.m..

*11:00 p.m. (HBOS)— *Enemies, A Love Story* (1989)—See Saturday at 5:30 p.m..

1:30 a.m. (TCM)— *Gunga Din* (1939)—If one sets aside the history and politics of this film, about the heroic British army fighting off thuggee cult in nineteenth century India, "the most entertaining of the juvenile Kipling movies." Directed by George Stevens. (DW)

*2:00 a.m. (AMC)— *The Thief of Bagdad* (1940)—See 9:00 p.m..

3:35 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)

4:00 a.m. (AMC)— *How Green Was My Valley* (1941)—See 5:45 p.m..

Wednesday, August 18

6:00 a.m. (FXM)— *At Long Last Love* (1975)—See Saturday at 3:55 p.m..

*6:00 a.m. (TCM)— *On the Town* (1949)—Memorable MGM musical—three sailors with 24 hours' leave in New York City. Based on the show by Betty Comden-Adolph Green-Leonard Bernstein, with Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Vera-Ellen and Betty Garrett. Directed by Stanley Donen and Kelly. (DW)

7:30 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)

*7:45 a.m. (IFC)— *The Baron of Arizona* (1950)—See Tuesday at 4:15 p.m..

8:45 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Sun Also Rises* (1957)—Star-filled adaptation of the Hemingway novel. Glossy and inadequate. Directed by Henry King. (MJ)

8:45 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)

*9:15 a.m. (Showtime)— *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek* (1943)—See Saturday at 8:45 a.m.

11:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Executive Suite* (1954)—A power struggle erupts after the death of a major executive. Interesting to compare the corporate culture of the 1950s (and Hollywood myths about them) with today's. With William Holden, Barbara Stanwyck, June Allyson, Fredric March, Walter Pidgeon. Robert Wise directed. (DW)

11:00 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)

*1:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Lolita* (1962)—See Sunday at 1:45 a.m.

1:40 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)

*4:00 p.m. (TCM)— *The Shop Around the Corner* (1940)—James Stewart and Margaret Sullavan are co-workers who, unbeknownst to themselves, have entered into a romance through letters. Marvelous Ernst Lubitsch film, occasionally precious, but deeply felt. (DW)

8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *The Clock* (1945)—A charming wartime story set in New York City. Robert Walker, a soldier on two-day leave, meets and falls for Judy Garland. They spend the day and night (innocently) together. Vincente Minnelli directed with extraordinary style. (DW)

9:00 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)

9:30 p.m. (FXM)— *The Name of the Rose* (1986)—A murder mystery set in a medieval monastery (the MacGuffin is a lost book by Aristotle).

Though lacking much of the rich detail of Umberto Eco's fine novel, the film stands well on its own. Sean Connery is perfect as the monk-detective, John of Baskerville. With Christian Slater, F. Murray Abraham and William Hickey. Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud. (MJ)

9:45 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)

10:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Undercurrent* (1946)—See Saturday at 2:45 a.m.

*12:00 a.m. (TCM)— *Madame Bovary* (1949)—Vincente Minnelli's film version of the Gustave Flaubert novel about a bored provincial wife who thinks she has found true love. Jennifer Jones is Emma Bovary, with Van Heflin, James Mason. (DW)

1:30 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)

*3:00 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)

3:50 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Firm* (1993)—See Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

4:00 a.m. (A&E)— *Body Double* (1984)—Another homage to Hitchcock by the talented Brian De Palma—this time, however, unnecessarily violent, especially in the early scenes. (MJ)

Thursday, August 19

5:00 a.m. (AMC)— *Deadline U.S.A.* (1952)—Humphrey Bogart as a crusading editor, trying to keep a big city newspaper alive. Ethel Barrymore plays the paper's owner. Directed by Richard Brooks. (DW)

*6:30 a.m. (HBOS)— *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral* (1957)—

9:30 a.m. (HBOS)— *Days of Wine and Roses* (1962)—see Saturday at 11:00 a.m.

10:50 a.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)

12:00 p.m. (TCM)— *A Woman's Face* (1941)—Joan Crawford is a vengeful woman, whose face has been disfigured. Not a consistently good film, but it has some moments. With the wonderful Conrad Veidt. George Cukor directed. (DW)

12:45 p.m. (TNT)— *High Plains Drifter* (1973)—See Saturday at 4:00 p.m..

1:50 p.m. (TCM)— *Humoresque* (1946)—A remarkable performance by John Garfield, as a classical violinist from the slums, who falls for a wealthy society lady. With Joan Crawford, Oscar Levant. Directed by Jean Negulesco. (DW)

*2:15 p.m. (AMC)— *His Girl Friday* (1940)—Marvelous film version of Ben Hecht-Charles MacArthur's *The Front Page*, co-scripted by Hecht, with Cary Grant as scheming editor and Rosalind Russell as his star reporter trying to get married to Ralph Bellamy. Directed by Howard Hawks. (DW)

4:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Flamingo Road* (1949)—Michael Curtiz directed this political melodrama about a stranded carnival performer who runs up against a corrupt local politician when she marries into a distinguished family. With Joan Crawford, Zachary Scott and Sydney Greenstreet. (DW)

*4:15 p.m. (Cinemax)— *Last Action Hero* (1993)—See Sunday at 5:00 p.m..

*8:00 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. (TNT)— *High Plains Drifter* (1973)—See Saturday at 4:00 p.m..

*9:00 p.m. (AMC)— *Sunset Boulevard* (1950)—Billy Wilder's classic about illusions hanging on, and the old Hollywood versus the new. A once-glamorous star of the silent screen living in a gothic Hollywood mansion takes a younger, cynical screenwriter as a lover. One of the great films. With Gloria Swanson, William Holden, Eric von Stroheim and Buster Keaton. (MJ)

9:00 p.m. (USA)— *Casino* (1995) [Part 1]—Martin Scorsese directed this story about gambling and thugs in Las Vegas in the 1970s. The first ten minutes are spectacular. The drama never really gets going, in the director's typical fashion. With Robert De Niro, Sharon Stone, Joe Pesci, James Woods. (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. (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)

12:15 a.m. (TNT)— *Two Mules for Sister Sara* (1970)—The formerly blacklisted Albert Maltz wrote the script, from a story by director Budd Boetticher, about a drifter (Clint Eastwood) who helps a "nun" (Shirley MacLaine) stage an uprising in Mexico. Veteran action filmmaker Don Siegel directed. (DW)

*2:00 a.m. (AMC)— *Sunset Boulevard* (1950)—See 9:00 p.m..

2:00 a.m. (USA)— *Dazed and Confused* (1993)—Richard Linklater's evocative, unsentimental portrait of the last day of school at a suburban Texas high school in 1976. A variety of narrative strands, too many to mention. With Jason London, Milla Jovovich, Ben Affleck, Matthew McConaughey, Parker Posey, among others. (DW)

Friday, August 20

7:45 (IFC)— *Black Orpheus* (1958)—See Saturday at 6:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. (TCM)— *How the West Was Won* (1963)—An "epic" saga, with more weaknesses than strengths, about three generations of western pioneers. Henry Fonda, Carroll Baker, Gregory Peck, George Peppard and countless others star. Co-directed by John Ford, Henry Hathaway and George Marshall. (DW)

*8:45 a.m. (Encore)— *Saboteur* (1942)—See Sunday at 6:55 a.m.

10:40 a.m. (Encore)— *Imitation of Life* (1959)—Douglas Sirk directed this work, "A big, crazy film about life and death. And a film about America." Lana Turner is a career-driven actress; Juanita Moore is her black maid. Moore has a daughter (Susan Kohner) who wants to pass for white. The characters' thoughts, wishes and dreams "grow directly out of their social reality or are manipulated by it" (R.W. Fassbinder). (DW)

*10:45 a.m. (HBOS)— *The Last Hurrah* (1958)—See Saturday at 4:10 a.m.

11:00 a.m. (TNT)— *Two Mules for Sister Sara* (1970)—See Thursday at 12:15 a.m.

*12:30 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)

12:45 p.m. (HBOS)— *Local Hero* (1983)—Peter Riegert is an American 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)

1:45 p.m. (IFC)— *Black Orpheus* (1958)—See Saturday at 6:00 a.m.

4:00 p.m. (IFC)— *La Strada* (1954)—Federico Fellini directed this work about a brutal carnival strongman (Anthony Quinn), his long-suffering girlfriend (Giuletta Masina) and a kindhearted acrobat (Richard Basehart). (DW)

5:00 p.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)

*5:45 p.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—See Saturday at 1:00 p.m..

8:00 p.m. (TCM)— *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957)—A remarkably frank look at the public relations and gossip column rackets, with Tony Curtis as a press agent who makes a deal with an egomaniacal columnist (Burt Lancaster) to break up the romance of the latter's sister. Directed by the talented Alexander Mackendrick (DW)

8:00 p.m. (Encore)— *Frantic* (1988)—Roman Polanski's failed attempt to make a Hitchcock-type suspense film. With Harrison Ford. (MJ)

*8:00 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)

9:00 p.m. (USA)— *Casino* (1995) [Part 2]—See Thursday at 9:00 p.m..

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. (TNT)— *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)

*11:30 p.m. (TCM)— *The Big Knife* (1955)—Robert Aldrich turns Clifford Odets' overheated play about the ruthless treatment by a Hollywood producer of a talented screen star into a fine film. Jack Palance gives a good, intense performance as the star; Rod Steiger goes all out as the venomous, manipulative white-haired producer (apparently based on Sam Goldwyn); and Wendell Corey plays the producer's weaselly flunky. With Ida Lupino. (MJ)

*2:10 a.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)

3:05 a.m. (TBS)— *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (1982)—A lightweight film, but some lively performances by a remarkable group of young actors: Sean Penn, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Robert Romanus, Phoebe Cates, Forest Whitaker, Anthony Edwards, Nicholas Cage. (DW)

*3:30 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)

*3:45 a.m. (AMC)— *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)—See Saturday at 1:00 p.m..

3:50 a.m. (TMC)— *Modern Romance* (1981)—See Sunday at 11:55 a.m.

4:00 a.m. (IFC)— *La Strada* (1954)—See 4:00 p.m..



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