Cancer Crusade

Dr. Michael Laskowski, American Cancer Society Lifetime Research Professor at Roswell Park Memorial Institute, Buffalo, will speak at the Rochester Cancer Crusade fund drive kickoff at the Sheraton Hotel, Tuesday, March 28. The campaign is scheduled April 1 to 4.

End is Seen Coming For 'Condemned' Films

By J. D. NICOLA

New York—The "condemned" movie rating — strongly associated with the old Legion of Decency but still retained by its successor, the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures — is undergoing an important transformation that will probably culminate in a re-naming of that famed category or its abolishment altogether.

The most significant change that has occurred, chiefly in the last three years, is that the "C" classification no longer means what it used to mean: namely, that any film placed in that category was judged to present great potential moral harm to the viewer.

Combined with this is the growing suspicion at NCOMP that however effective the threat of a condemned rating is in maintaining certain standards of morality in films, it may actually be doing the film office's apostolate more harm than good.

The transformation in the "C" category's meaning can be seen in the condemned ratings given to a number of films over the past several years, among them: "The Silence," "The Pawnbroker," and the more current "Loves of a Blonde" and "Blow-Up."

While at one time the film office suggested that all condemned films should be regarded as "positively bad," recent NCOMP commentaries indicate that this is no longer the film office's attitude. Indeed, NCOMP observations on some "C" films, such as the above four, have had more good things to say than NCOMP has said — or will say — about many innocuous films that receive "A-1" ratings.

The reason for this apparent contradiction — a "C" but some good words — appears complicated at first (and this is one of the factors that may speed up the category's demise), but goes like this: NCOMP believes that without the ever-present threat of a condemned rating, some moviemakers who turn out films for mass consumption will put in increasing amounts of nudity and love-play. The film office believes that without an effective classification system whereby under-age moviegoers would not be allowed to see certain films, NCOMP has (almost by default) the moral obligation to force the movie industry to "hold the line" on nudity and sensuous scenes.

Rather than get involved in fine hair-splitting with the movie industry over what constitutes "sex for sex' sake" and what scenes might be perfectly valid in an adult-theme film, NCOMP has adopted an "across-the-board" policy for all films, regardless of their intended audience.

But totally aware that films like Ingmar Bergman's "The Silence," Antonioni's "Blow-Up" and the Czech "Loves of a Blonde" will have appeal primarily to mature audiences who will view the sensual scenes in their proper context, NCOMP has groped for some way to assure this segment of Catholic moviegoers that their film office is not insensitive to honest, artistic expression geared for mature audiences, and that the film office does not regard their attendance at such films as betrayal.

Thus, NCOMP's condemnation of "Loves of a Blonde" carries the carefully worded observation: "This otherwise sensitive presentation of the lesson of life which a shy young girl learns from her first disillusioning experience with 'romance' is rendered unacceptable for general motion picture audiences because of an unnecessarily graphic seduction sequence."

Those who are aware of NCOMP's thinking in recent years know that the film office recognizes that there are film audiences other than "general" ones, and that "Loves of a Blonde" would have received at least an "A-4" rating (unobjectionable for adults, with reservations) if NCOMP were not in the middle of its nudity battle with the American film industry.

Notes film critic Moira Walsh, a long-time NCOMP consultant: "They condemned 'Blow-Up' because they didn't want to see films like 'The Swinger' (an Ann-Margaret film aimed at adolescents) in the form they would be if they didn't have the 'C' to hold over their heads."

Still, while officially objecting to 'Blow-Up' for "a sexual treatment which, in certain sequences of this film, will impress viewers as going beyond reasonable limits of moral acceptability for a public entertainment medium," NCOMP nevertheless cites its "brilliance of camera technique and beauty of image composition." As little as four years ago, the film office never said anything good about a film it was condemning, regardless of how brief the offending sequece.

NCOMP's distinction between films that are condemned in word and those that are condemned in spirit (there are still many of the latter, such as "Kiss Me, Stupid" and "Night Games") has been slow in reaching most Catholics, but in the last month two diocesan newspapers carried very favorable reviews of "Loves of a Blonde" and "Blow-Up" — both of them, significantly, by consultors on NCOMP's reviewing board.

In the Diocese of Paterson, N.J., "The Beacon" carried a review of "Loves of a Blonde" by George Keenen ("There isn't a slick, glib, or otherwise dishonest moment in the film") and "The St. Louis Review" went so far as to back up Brother George Wead's right to praise "Blow-Up." Said the newspaper in an editorial: "We do not subscribe to the idea that because of a 'condemned' rating a film has nothing more to be said for, or against, it."

But the "condemned" classification itself, close observers of NCOMP are certain, is being examined by NCOMP officials with a view to possible revision. A re-naming or abandoning of the "C" rating — perhaps within a year — could be forthcoming for at least five reasons:

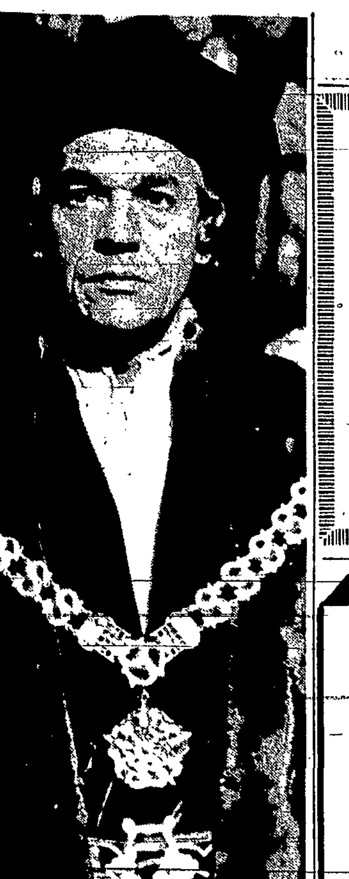
1. The "condemned" category has fostered among Catholics a simple-minded approach toward films, making them more concerned about a film's rating than its content and value to them as individuals. The "C" category has backfired by giving Catholics a preference for what NCOMP officials call "safe, but mindless" films.

2. The "condemned" classification is too strongly associated with the old, negatively-oriented Legion of Decency. It's felt that the condemnations, infrequent though they may be, are taking too much attention away from what NCOMP really regards as its prime function: to educate filmgoers and create a climate for superior films.

3. The condemnations are even taking attention away from NCOMP's "B" category (morally objectionable in part for all), which contains many films that are much more serious threats to public morality than many "C" films — i. e., thoroughly sadistic films like "A Fistful of Dollars." Ironically, NCOMP places many films in "B" rather than "C" because "we don't want to give them that much notoriety."

4. The "condemned" category long ago became associated primarily with "sin" and the film office has, as a result, never been able to fully get across the concept of voluntary Christian witness in the filmgoer's selection of motion pictures.

5. Finally, there is the theory that the Catholic fiilm office may have a more positive long-range effect on the movie industry if the industry is able to look upon NCOMP without thinking of it primarily as a box-office threat — which the "condemned" rating now represents. (Catholic Press Features)



Film on More

PARISHIONERS of St. Thomas More Church have reserved the Regent Theater on April 21 for a Family Movie Night performance of the prize-winning film, "A Man For All Seasons." Pictured is Paul Scofield in the role of Thomas More. Tickets are available by calling 244-4656.

CLIP and SAVE

Current Film Ratings

National Catholic Office For Motion Pictures

CLASS A, Section 1 — Unobjectionable for General Patronage

A Man For All Seasons
Fastest Guitar Alive
Batman, The
Beau Geste
Bible, The
Billie the Kid vs. Dracula
Birds Do It
Bolshoi Ballet, The
Born Free
Cat, The
Christmas That Almost Wasn't, The
Country Boy
Daydreamer, The
Dr. Who and the Daleks
Evening with Royal Ballet, The
Fighting Prince of Donegal
Endless Summer, The
Frankenstein Conquers the World
Frontier Hellcat
Gambit
Goal!
Gospel According to St. Matthew, The
Gulliver's Travels Beyond the Moon
How to Steal a Million
I Deal in Danger
Is Paris Burning?
Jack Frost (Rus.)
Khartoum
Last of the Renegades
Las Vegas Hillbillies
Lt. Robin Crusoe, U.S.N.
Man Called Flintstone, The
Monkeys Go Home
Munster Go Home
My Fair Lady
Namu, the Killing Whale
Plainsman
Reluctant Astronaut, The
Return of the Gunfighter
Rings Around the World
Romeo and Juliet (Br.)
Run, Appaloosa, Run
Russians are Coming, The
Russion Adventure, The
Smoky
Snow White
*Sound of Music
Spinout, The
Tarzan and the
Texas Across the River
Thunderbirds Are Go
That Tennessee Beat
Valley of Gold
Tiko and the Shark

*This film is recommended to the patronage of the entire family as superior entertainment.

CLASS A, Section 2 — Unobjectionable for Adults and Adolescents

After the Fox (Br.)
Appalooosa, The
Brides of Fu Manchu, The
Brown Eye-Evil Eye
Come Spy With Me
C'mon Let's Live a Little
Counterfeit Constable
Deadly Bees, The
Defector, The (Gr.)
Die, Monster, Die
Doctor Zhivago
Eye for an Eye
Fahrenheit 451
First to Fight
Fort Utah
Gunfight in Abilene
Gypsy Girl
Hostile Guns
It Happened Here
Jokers, The (Br.)
Marco, the Magnificent
Mystery of Thug Island, The
O.S.S. 117, Mission for a Killer (Fr.)
Poppy Is Also A Flower, The
Projected Man, The
Red Tomahawk
Secret Agent Fireball
Shadow of Evil
Snameless Old Lady, The
Shameless Old Lady, The (Fr.)
Sweet Light in a Dark Room
Texican, The
To Sir, With Love
Tobruk
Traitor's Gate
Tramplers, The
Uncle, The
Wrong Box, The
Warning Shot

CLASS A, Section 3 — Unobjectionable for Adults

Ambush Bay
Any Wednesday
Alvarez Kelly
Bang, Bang You're Dead
Blues for Lovers
Busy Body, The
Chamber of Horrors
Contest Girl, The
Crazy Quilt, The
Deadly Affair, The
Devil's Own, The
Dirty Game, The
Dead Heat on a Merry-Go-Round
El Greco
Eldorado
Enough Rope (Fr.)
Fortune Cookie, The
Fireball 500
Funny Thing Happened On the Way To the Forum, A
Funeral in Berlin
Grand Prix
Haill Mafia
Hawaii
Harper
Hotel
Hotel Paradiso
Hot Rod To Hell
Idol, The
Inside Daisy Clover
Island of Terror
Kaleidoscope
Kiss the Girls and Make Them Die
La Vista (The Visit) (Ital.)
Main Chance, The
Man Called Adam, A
Modesty Blaise
McGuire, Go Home
Not With My Wife You Don't
Naked Prey, The
Night of the Generals
Pad and How to Use It
Penelope
Pawnbroker, The (Revised)
Professionals, The
Picture Mommy Dead
Quiller, Memorandum, The
Rage
Return of the Seven
Sandra (Ital.)
Secret Agent Super Dragon
Shoot Loud, Louder . . . I Don't Understand (Ital.)
Spirt Is Willing, The
Shop on Main Street, The
Spy With a Cold Nose
Study in Terror, A (Br.)
Sucker, The
Sweet Love, Ritter
Three on a Ccuch
Thunderball
Time Lost and Time Remembered (Br.)
To Trap a Spy
Trunk to Cairo
Up To His Ears
Venetian Affair, The
Walk, Don't Run
Weekend at Dunkirk
Where The Bullets Fly, (Br.)

Class A, Section 4—While not morally offensive in themselves, these films require caution and some analysis and explanation as a protection to the uninformed against wrong interpretation and false conclusion.

Alfie
Darling
Easy Life
Flame and the Fire
Georgy Girl
Girl with the Green Eyes
Knack, The
Life at the Top
Lord Love a Duck
Love a la Carte
Moment of Truth, The
Red Desert
Servant, The
Strangers in the City
Taboos of the World
This Sporting Life
Too Young To Love
Victim
Visit
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?
Young and The Willing
Zorba, the Greek

CLASS B — Objectionable in part for all

Arrivederci, Baby
American Dream, An
Beautiful Swindlers, The
Blue Max, The
Boeing Boeing
Casanova 70
Corrupt Ones, The
Duel at Diablo
Fistful of Dollars
Fine Madness, A
From Russia with Love
Covenant with Death, The
Doctor, You've Got to Be Kidding
Group, The
Lady L
Last of the Secret Agents
Male Hunt
Murderer's Row
New Angels, The
Night Must Fall
Oscar, The
Our Man Flint
*Once Before I Die
Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feenilg So Sad
Pistol for Ringo (Ital.)
Prehistoric Women
Rasputin
Red Line 7000
Return of Mr. Moto,
Sandpiper, The
Seconds
Shot in the Dark
Silencers, The
Sleeping Car Murder, The
Small World of Sammy Lee, The
Space Flight I-C
Spy with My Face
Swinger, The
Tenth Victim, The
Three Bites of the Apple
This Property is Condemned
Time of Indifference
Torn Curtain
Viva! Maria
Way . . . Way Out
Welcome to Hard Times
What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?
What a Way to Go
What's New Pussycat?
Who Killed Teddy Bear
Who's Been Sleeping in My Bed
Wild Angels, The

Peter Pan Playhouse Slates 'Young Mozart'

A New York production of the musical, "Young Mozart", will be presented by Peter Pan Playhouse at Theatre East, Friday, March 31, at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. It will be the last presentation of this season's children's series.

"Young Mozart" is one of the Preludes to Greatness Series co-produced by Jay Harnick and Robert Adams. Recently it was selected by the Children's Theatre Conference for its New York Showcase as an example of outstanding plays for the young.

The story is Mozart's life as a young man in Salzburg and Vienna. The music, of course, is Mozart's taken from his great operas "Don Giovanni", "Marriage of Figaro", "The Magic Flute" and "Cosi Fan Tute."

Playing Mozart will be Jerry Grasse, who appeared on the Theatre East stage in 'Life with Father", "Hay Fever", "She Loves Me" and "Twelfth Night." Prior to stock and repertory experience, Jerry was soloist with the Milwaukee Symphony and Interlochen National Music Camp. Also he toured in two Harnick - Adams productions, "Young Mozart" and "Magic in King Arthur's Court".

Nancy Cheevers, who plays Mozart's sister, appeared in New York in "Morning Sun" and off-Broadway in "Cindy". She has played leading roles in numerous stock productions, including "High Spirits", "Once upon a Mattress" and "The Unsinkable Molly Brown."

Tickets for "Young Mozart" are priced at $1 each and are on sale at the Theatre East box office, Monroe Co. Fairgrounds.

Canada Shrines Trip Slated

Seventeenth annual pilgrimage to the shrines of Canada will leave from Newark, N.Y. on July 31, returning Aug. 5.

Shrines to be visited include St. Anne de Beaupre, Our Lady of the Cape and St. Joseph's Oratory. While in Montreal a visit will be made to Expo 67. Group will travel via Trailway's rest-room and air conditioned buses.

Reservations are limited and will be accepted until June 15. Telephones: Newark, 331-3859; Auburn, AL-39304 or AL-35924. Chairman: Mrs. C. DeRyke, 108 Elm St., Newark, N.Y. 14513.

'Hawaii' Movie To be Sponsored

Two presentations of the movie "Hawaii" at the Towne Theatre are being sponsored for a scholarship reserve fund at the Notre Dame Retreat House.

A percentage of all ticket sales for the April 19 and 26 showing will benefit high school and young adult participants in Christian Family Seminars.

Tickets may be obtained from Mrs. Joseph Filippone, 6 Smith Road, West Webster, 671-6421.

Jazz Program At Eastman's

The Civic Music Association will present a jazz program Saturday, March 25 with performances at 6:30 and 9:30 p.m.

Three of the great names of jazz will perform: songstress Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington and his orchestra, and the Oscar Peterson trio.

Williams Drama, Glass Menagerie At Theatre East

Tennessee Williams' drama masterpiece, "Glass Menagerie," will be the closing production of Theatre East's inaugural season, March 30 - April 9.

An early writing of one of the world's most distinguished playwrights, "Glass Menagerie" is still one of Williams' most moving and beautiful plays.

Unfolded with delicate nostalgia are the illusions and dreams of the Wingfield family . . . the dominating mother, a shy girl and the son who longs for adventure. Gradually their dream worlds partly open to reality when they have a gentleman caller.

Theatre East's cast for "Glass Menagarie" will be Ann Driscoll as Mrs. Wingfield, Myra Mailloux as Laura, Robert Blackburn as Tom and Bernie McInerney as the Gentleman Caller.

Playing at Theatre East through March 26, is the comedy, "Under the Yum Yum Tree." Tickets may be reserved by calling 334-9500. Subscriptions for next year are on sale at the theater, with a bonus of two tickets for "Glass Menagerie" for those who act now.

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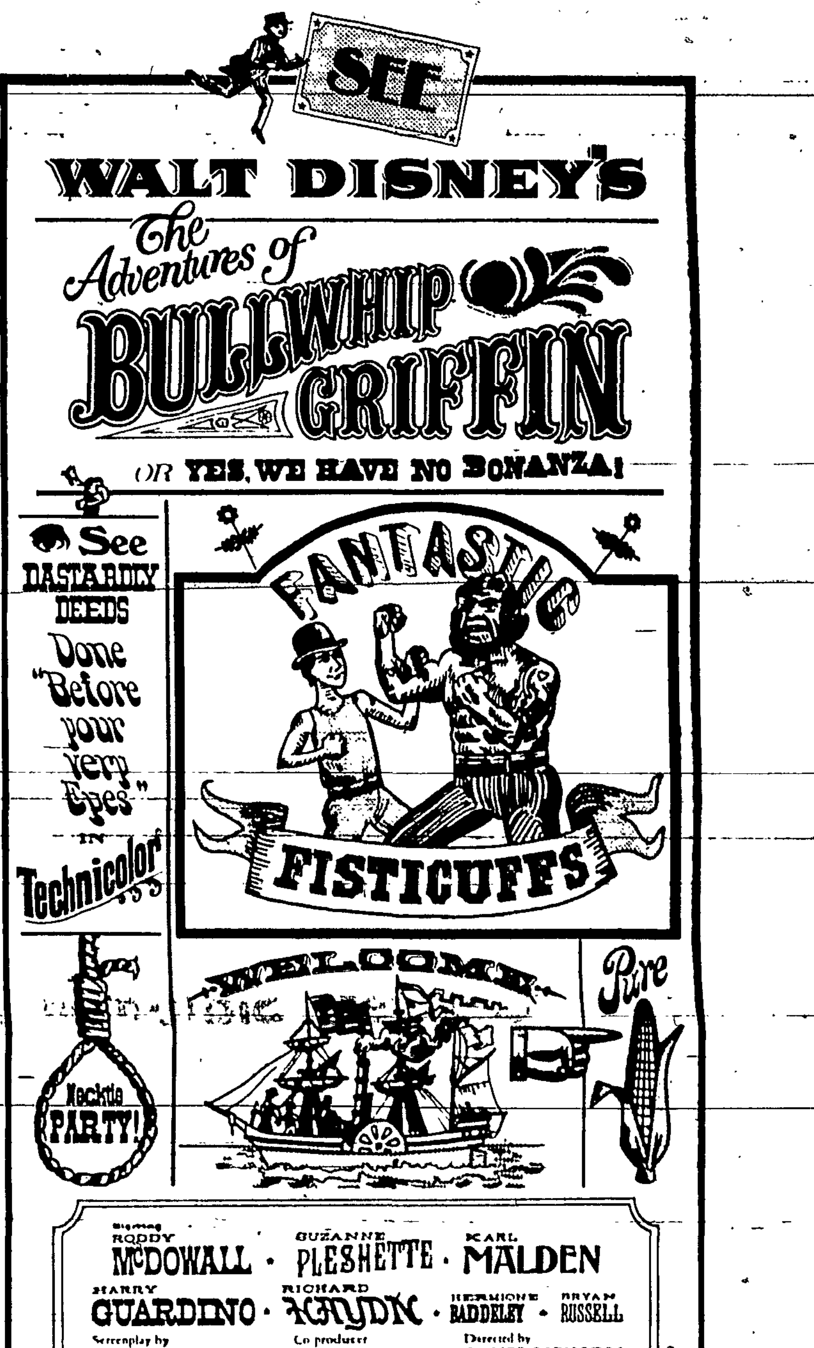

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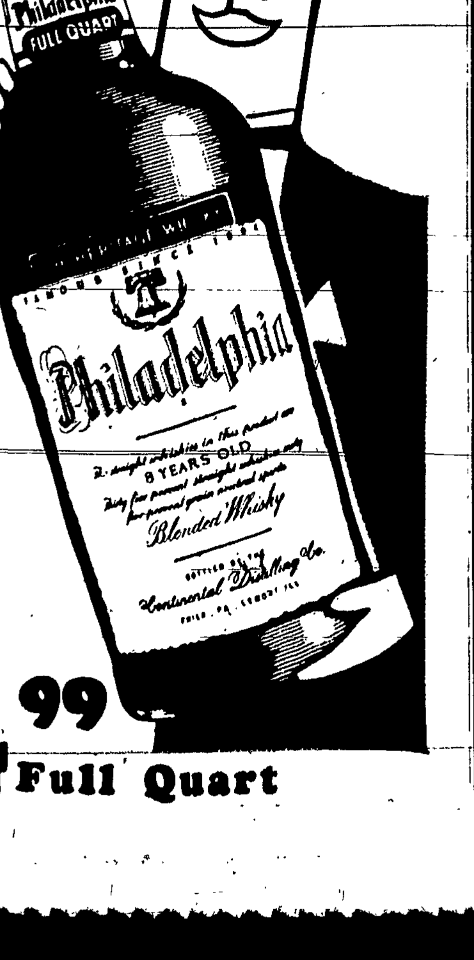

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