

Two amusing comedies; one commercialized flop

By Judith Trojan
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — "How I Got into College" (Fox) is an innocuous, rather pleasant little teen comedy about the agonies of college acceptance and rejection.

The film focuses on some likable Michigan high school students as they face the first big challenge of their short lives — college admission. Deadly SATs (Scholastic Aptitude Tests), competitive parents and jaded college admissions officers are just a few of the obstacles that stand between these college hopefuls and their schools of choice. Anyone who's ever faced this rite of passage will empathize with these kids.

The film tracks the upward mobility of formerly mediocre high school senior, Marlon Browne (Corey Parker), whose goal in life is to crack the unfathomable SATs and follow his secret heartthrob, Jessica Kailo (Lara Flynn Boyle), to fictional Ramsey College in Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, Marlon continually flubs his SATs, has blah grades and has never openly expressed his affection for Jessica, who also happens to be senior class president, head cheerleader, valedictorian and the most popular girl in school.

The most refreshing aspect of this film is its focus on genuinely nice kids and their believable anxieties. Director Savage Steve Holland ("One Crazy Summer") and writer Terrel Seltzer ("Chan Is Missing") also run a clever gag in which a fictional Guy A and Guy B enact the hilariously dense math problems confronting Marlon and his nervous friends on their SATs.

A jokey subplot about Ramsey's doxy admissions officer is less successful, but it does point out the subjectiveness often faced by youths seeking college admission.

"How I Got into College" will no doubt generate laughs of recognition in audiences of college-bound teens and their parents, current college audiences and adults who have good memories.

Due to mild rough language and sexual innuendoes, the U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-II — adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

'See No Evil'

"See No Evil, Hear No Evil" (Tri-Star) takes a new look at a worn-out movie genre, the buddy film, and makes it work, hilariously, despite much unnecessary profanity.

Dave (Gene Wilder) is deaf, and Wally (Richard Pryor) is blind. Both are New Yorkers overstuffed with pride that keeps them in the mainstream of life but blocks them from admitting their disabilities to others.

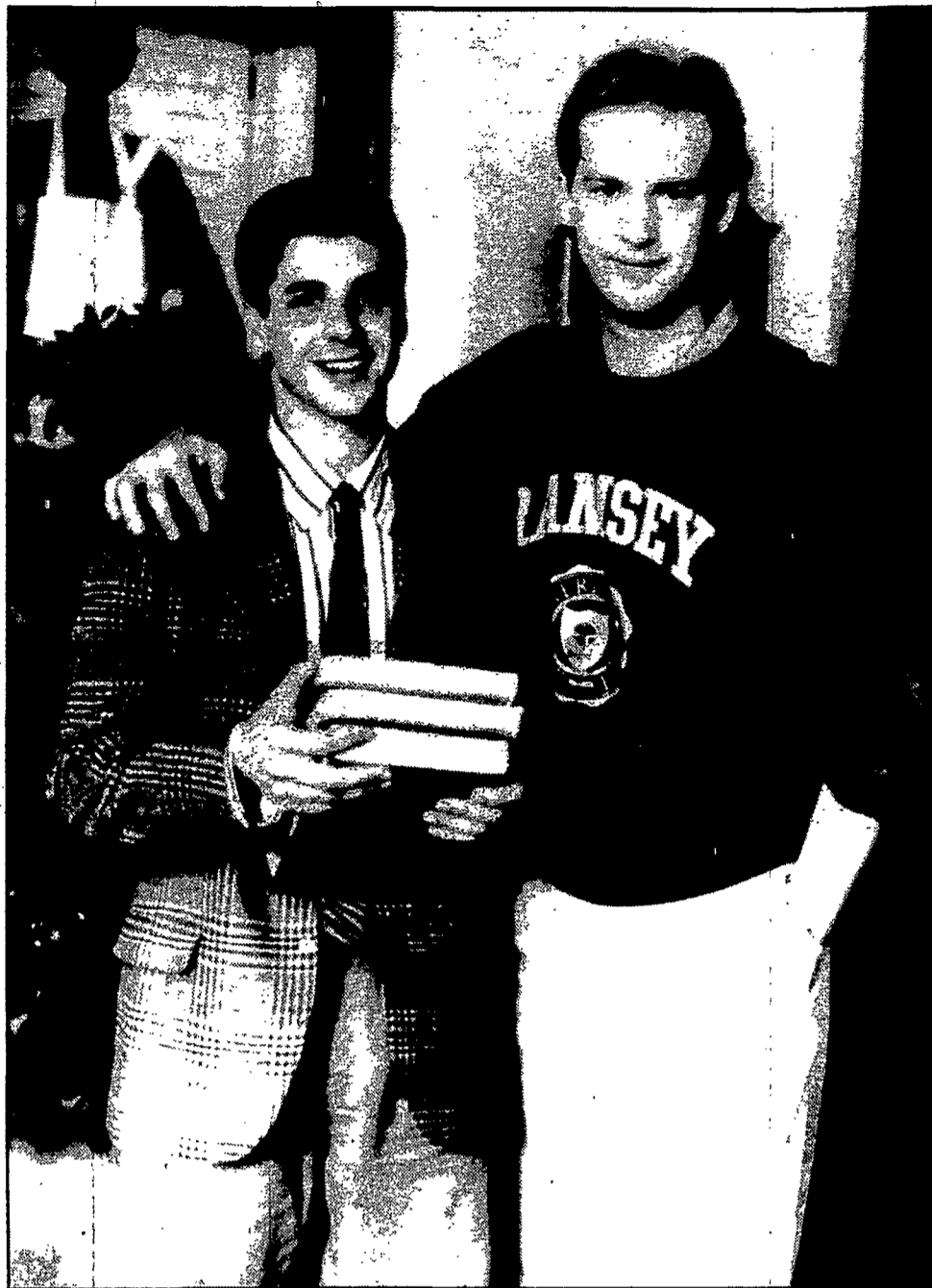
Former actor Dave runs a newsstand in midtown Manhattan and survives haphazardly in the hearing world by reading lips. Cocky Wally pretends to read the newspaper on the subway and catch his favorite race at the track with binoculars, but he's invariably got his paper turned upside down and his binoculars pointed in the wrong direction.

When Wally applies to Dave for a job, the match is heaven-made for a series of nutty high jinks that embroil the duo as chief witnesses and suspects in the murder of Wally's bookie and the theft of a mysterious gold coin. Dave sees the gorgeous gams of the murderess (Joan Severance); Wally smells her perfume and hears the gunshot.

The plot is dopey and so are the cops who attempt to keep Wally and Dave behind bars and indict them for murder. The oily crooks (Severance, Kevin Spacey and Anthony Zerbe) aren't much smarter, but Wally and Dave prevail over their handicaps and convince the cops and crooks in a riotous jailbreak and crime-busting chase.

Despite its see-through plot concocted by five screenwriters (including Wilder), the slapstick action involving the deaf and blind buddies is consistently hilarious and sensitive to the restrictions and limitations of their handicaps. This is no doubt due to the considerable talents and chemistry of Wilder and Pryor (teamed on screen for a third time) and to director Arthur Hiller, who directed the actors in their previous team hit "Silver Streak" as well as helming such notable buddy comedies as "Outrageous Fortune" and "The In-Laws."

While the film offers refreshing sensitivity to the very real physical and emotional problems faced by blind and deaf individuals, the film unfortunately is overdosed



Corey Parker as Marlon Browne (left) plans to follow his dream girl to college, and admissions officer Kip Hammet, played by Anthony Edwards, wants to help in "How I Got into College."

with Wally's profanity. Gentle Dave finally sidelines Wally for his tart tongue, but the profanity and a few sexually vulgar references limit what could have been a family film to adults and older adolescents. This is a pity for youngsters who will be forced to miss the film's classic comic bits, engaging buddy team and inoffensive treatment of disabilities.

Due to assorted comic-book violence, much profanity, some sexually vulgar innuendoes and brief nudity, the USCC classification is A-III — adults. The MPAA rating is R — restricted.

'Loverboy'

Director Micklin Silver ("Crossing Delancey," "Hester Street") has always favored classy independent projects dealing with relevant social and ethnic issues. With her latest film, "Loverboy" (Tri-Star), however, she sells out to commercialism and the lowest common denominator movie audience. One can only hope that this is not a career trend.

The otherwise tasteless "Loverboy" contains only a trace of social commentary — a backhanded statement on sexual double standards. When a doxy college student aptly named Randy (Patrick Dempsey) ends up earning next semester's tuition by sleeping with and entertaining affection-starved Hollywood wives, he turns the tables on their cheating husbands who are carousing with young bimbos.

Randy earns big bucks to get himself back to college — his father cut off support when Randy frittered away his first two years — but he reaps other rewards as well. Since Randy, at first, has only one thing going for him in the bedroom, he learns a lot about love and life from these older women (Carrie Fisher, Barbara Carrera, Kirstie Alley, among others), and is able to win back the college coed whom he really loves.

Basically, "Loverboy" is the unlikely story of how one uncouth college student parlays his pizza delivery route into a sex-for-hire service and somehow evolves from bumbling bozo to bon vivant in the

space of a few short weeks. He decides it's best to give up the job only when he's cornered by angry husbands and by one final pizza delivery to a woman who ends up being his unhappily married mother (Kate Jackson).

"Loverboy" trashes its refreshing younger man-older woman premise with an across the board acceptance of Randy's sexual promiscuity. It also contains a smirking running gag about homosexuality. Although everyone is reunited with proper mate in the end and Randy makes amends with his coed, no one ever questions the morality of partner switching and sex-for-hire. And the issue of safe sex is totally disregarded.

Dempsey's skinny body and rubbery legs would be better cast in higher-minded comedies since he shows promise as a slapstick comedian. And Micklin Silver had better forget the commercial-trash route and stick to respectable themes. Her filmmaking talents are invisible in "Loverboy."

Due to its across-the-board acceptance of adultery and sexual promiscuity, the USCC classification is O — morally offensive. The MPAA rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned that some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Trojan is on the staff of the USCC Office for Film and Broadcasting.

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Titles of the pamphlets include "30 Ways You Can Prevent Crime," "Senior Scams," "911" and "What Every Woman Should Know About Self Protection."

To obtain more information or to request pamphlets, contact Lucy Dechaine at Catholic Family Center, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, NY 14604, or call 716/546-7220.



Richard Pryor (left) and Gene Wilder star in "See No Evil, Hear No Evil." The U.S. Catholic Conference says the film "takes a new look at a worn-out movie genre, the buddy film, and makes it work, hilariously."