

MOVIES: RARE AND SELDOM-SEEN

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 2017 POST

Laughter in Paradise (1951)

[Alastair Sim](#), [Fay Compton](#), [Guy Middleton](#)

An old man dies who has always played practical jokes. In his will he leaves to four relatives a large amount of money on the condition that they each accomplish a particular task. This is a light, British comedy that moves quickly and is highly entertaining. Charming, humorous and well worth watching. IMDB: [Laughter in Paradise](#)

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

[James Stewart](#), [Donna Reed](#), [Lionel Barrymore](#)

George Bailey's dreams are foiled, and he's stuck in his home town trying to keep his father's savings and loan afloat in spite of the efforts of the avaricious Mr. Potter to destroy him. A truly wonderful story, top-notch acting with a strong romantic subplot—a film in which the viewer becomes totally engrossed. A perfect film. The final scene is iconic—tear-jerker, feel-good, uplifting. This film is not only **must-see** viewing, but a film that everyone should have as a part of their film library. IMDB: [It's a Wonderful Life](#)

The Unforgiven (1960)

[Burt Lancaster](#), [Audrey Hepburn](#), [Audie Murphy](#), [Lillian Gish](#)

A young woman lives with her mother and brothers in an isolated home on the Kansas prairie. Unknown to her, and a life-long family secret, she was taken from an Indian tribe as a baby during a battle and raised as a white child in a white family. Now, the Indians want her back. This film builds slowly but is fascinating and suspenseful. Good acting, lots of action, and Audrey Hepburn shines in her pivotal role. Well worth watching. IMDB: [The Unforgiven](#)

Pressure Point (1962)

[Sidney Poitier](#), [Bobby Darin](#), [Peter Falk](#)

A black prison psychiatrist works hard to help a dangerous Nazi psychopath, who tries to connive his way into a parole. This film is an in-depth study of the making of a psychopath and the conflicts surrounding the patient/psychiatrist relationship. The film is slow-moving, edgy, and gratingly uncomfortable at times. The acting is superb. If you're a fan of Poitier, you should see this movie. Also, it's worth watching if you have an interest in this type of film.

IMDB: [Pressure Point](#)

Life Stinks (1991)

[Mel Brooks](#), [Lesley Ann Warren](#), [Jeffrey Tambor](#)

Real estate magnate, Goddard Bolt, makes a bet with a fellow millionaire regarding a blighted urban area inhabited by the homeless. Void of all resources, if Bolt can live among the homeless for a month, he can develop the area; if not, the other millionaire gets the prime real estate. This is a typical Mel Brooks film with sight gags and off-beat humor. There are a lot of funny moments and a decent plot. [Lesley Ann](#)

[Warren](#) stands out as a homeless bag lady. Light and breezy comedy worth watching. IMDB: [Life Stinks](#)

Separate But Equal (1991)

[Sidney Poitier](#), [Burt Lancaster](#), [Richard Kiley](#)

The schools for whites in the South in the '50s are beautiful buildings with trees and nice lawns, plentiful supplies, and bus transportation. The schools for blacks are, generally, one-room, ramshackle buildings with few supplies and no bus transportation. Prominent lawyers focus on one school district in South Carolina to force through the courts equal education for all. The fight gets ugly with white retaliation. This film is a well-acted and interesting portrayal of the historic incidents that took place leading up to equal education for all throughout the United States. This movie is well worth watching. IMDB: [Separate but Equal](#)

Cloak and Dagger (1946)

[Gary Cooper](#), [Robert Alda](#), [Lilli Palmer](#)

College professor becomes an undercover agent during WWII working in Switzerland and Italy behind German lines to thwart the German's attempt at creating an atom bomb. Succeeds in handling weapons and in hand-to-hand combat with veteran enemy agents. There's more romance between Cooper and Palmer in this film than there is action. The movie drags at times, and it's only serviceable as a film noir/war picture. Watch if you're desperate. IMDB: [Cloak and Dagger](#)

Pygmalion (1981)

[Twiggy](#), [Robert Powell](#), [Mona Washbourne](#)

Phoneticist Henry Higgins documents the speech of a London flower girl and bets Colonel Pickering he can make a lady of her in six months. A crisis occurs when the experiment ends, the flower girl, now a lady, can't return to the streets, and Higgins has made no provision for her future. This is a delightful rendering of the original Shaw script with Twiggy as Eliza Doolittle. Twiggy is adorable and handles the role admirably. This filmed TV production is worth watching for a well-done production of the play. I'd also highly recommend the 1938 classic version of Pygmalion starring Wendy Hiller—the best version of the play I've seen. IMDB: [Pygmalion](#)

Rope of Sand (1949)

[Burt Lancaster](#), [Paul Henreid](#), [Claude Rains](#)

South Africa. Diamonds. Everybody wants them, and everyone in this film uses unethical and illegal means to get them. Oh, and there is also beautiful girl that everyone wants. {Corinne Calvet is delightful to watch but difficult to listen to with her high-pitched, accent-heavy voice.) The major conflict is between diamond-seeker Lancaster and corrupt cop Henreid. Lancaster is a tough-guy, near superhero in this film. Not much action in the first half of the film—too much talk and low-level activity—but the last half provides enough action to make the film interesting enough to watch. IMDB: [Rope of Sand](#)

Thunderbolt (1947)

[James Stewart](#), [Lloyd Bridges](#), [Eugene Kern](#)

This movie is a documentary filmed in 1944 following a fighter squadron using the Thunderbolt fighter bombers based in Corsica. The mission was to strangle the supply routes to the Germans in Italy.

Cameras mounted in all parts of the planes were used to shoot the footage. This film is a fascinating look at the day-to-day lives of the airmen and their maintenance crews at the base and also the action during the missions they flew. This is an interesting film well worth watching. IMDB: [Thunderbolt](#)

Tropic of Cancer (1970)

[Rip Torn](#), [James T. Callahan](#), [Ellen Burstyn](#)

Based on his novel of the same name, this is a literary, erotic and humorous story of Henry Miller's exploits in Paris—sponging off friends and pursuing romantic liaisons. There is a lot of beautiful women, full frontal nudity, and vulgar language throughout. Weak plot and mediocre acting make this a movie you can skip without missing much [regarding a good film, at least]. If you choose to view this film out of curiosity, make sure the kids are out of the room. IMDB: [Tropic of Cancer](#)

A Double Life (1947)

[Ronald Colman](#), [Edmond O'Brien](#), [Signe Hasso](#)

The roles played by a renowned theater actor consume his life and transform his behavior and relationships. This is a dark thriller with superb acting and an intense character study. It also presents a detailed look at the backstage routines of the theater and the emotions and thoughts of the actors. This is a highly recommended film, particularly if you appreciate first-rate acting or have an interest in the theater. IMDB: [A Double Life](#)

Sidewalk Stories (1989)

[Charles Lane](#), [Nicole Alysia](#), [Tom Alpern](#)

A homeless street artist in New York witnesses the murder of a man in an alley. He takes the murdered man's toddler daughter, who was still nearby, and cares for her. He also attracts the attention of a beautiful and wealthy young woman. This silent movie is filmed in classic black and white with a jazzy/funky soundtrack that adds amusement—a unique, contemporary film. It is similar to Chaplin's *The Kid*, but even without *The Kid*'s pathos and Chaplin's artistry, it is still well worth watching. IMDB: [Sidewalk Stories](#)

Magnificent Doll (1946)

[Ginger Rogers](#), [David Niven](#), [Burgess Meredith](#)

Dolley's father forces her into an arranged marriage, and, as a result, she willfully hates her husband. After the death of her husband and child, she becomes the toast of Washington and the object of the most powerful politicians. She vows to truly love the next man she marries. This film is a political romance with Dolley looking for love and fulfillment among Washington's most powerful men. She proves to be their equal intellectually and politically. I've seen many Ginger Rogers films, and I've enjoyed them all. Some are frivolous and entertaining, some are musical and entertaining, and some are dramatic and entertaining. This movie is powerful and provides historical background to an intense drama. Just as Dolley's intellect and influence equalled the politicians of her time, Rogers' performance equals the skill of the other stellar actors in the cast. Some movies I can't wait to end, but with *Magnificent Doll*, I wanted it to continue beyond "The End." Captivating, entertaining, and a Rogers tour de force. **Must see viewing.** IMDB: [Magnificent Doll](#)

The January Man (1989)

[Kevin Kline](#), [Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio](#), [Susan Sarandon](#)

Firefighter hero tracks down a serial killer. This film is standard thriller fare. There's a murder in the first minute of the film, and then the action comes to a dead stop. Slow-paced until mid-way through the film when the action and the interest picks up to make the film interesting enough to watch. IMDB: [The January Man](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

OCTOBER, 2017 POST

The Bridge at Remagen (1969)

[George Segal](#), [Robert Vaughn](#), [Ben Gazzara](#), [E.G. Marshall](#), [Bradford Dillman](#)

The last, remaining bridge over the Rhine—the Germans want to blow it up to prevent the Allies from using it to easily cross into Germany, even though they will strand many German soldiers on the wrong side of the bridge. The Allies want to save the bridge for easy crossing into Germany. Most war movies include scenes that do not advance the plot, and even though this film includes such scenes (the captured French girl in the farm house with gratuitous semi-nudity, idle soldier chatter, etc.), there are a minimum of such scenes in this film. There's a lot of action, and a lot of five-star explosions. This is a well-done war film and well worth watching. IMDB: [The Bridge at Remagen](#)

The Devil's Brigade (1968)

[William Holden](#), [Cliff Robertson](#), [Vince Edwards](#) , [Claude Akins](#), [Richard Dawson](#)

A polished, professional squad of Canadian soldiers report to camp in perfect formation with bagpipes playing. An American squad reports to camp roughhousing, slovenly and undisciplined. They train together for an important mission. Most of the film takes place in camp with the factions training for their mission—competitions, hijinks, silliness. A lot of humor through the first 3/4 of the film with the hard-core action coming during the mission in the last 1/4. An interesting viewing experience. IMDB: [The Devil's Brigade](#)

Are You Listening? (1932)

[William Haines](#), [Madge Evans](#), [Anita Page](#), [Joan Marsh](#), [Wallace Ford](#)

Bill's wife is a shrew, but his girlfriend is an angel. How will Bill resolve a problematic love life? This film is a well-done PreCode with pretty girls and adult themes. It moves quickly and entertains. When tragedy strikes near the end of the film, the pace accelerates and the interest intensifies. Well worth watching. IMDB: [Are You Listening?](#)

The Tip-Off (1931)

[Eddie Quillan](#), [Robert Armstrong](#), [Ginger Rogers](#), [Joan Peers](#)

Radio repair man, Tommy, is terrified at being shamelessly pursued by the mistress of a jealous prize fighter, but then he falls in love with the girlfriend of the local mob boss. This PreCode romantic comedy/crime drama is engaging, humorous and entertaining. A highlight of the film is the featured performance of 20-year-old Ginger Rogers. Light, enjoyable entertainment. IMDB: [The Tip-Off](#)

Why Be Good? (1929)

[Colleen Moore](#), [Neil Hamilton](#), [Bodil Rosing](#)

Wealthy Winthrop meets a girl at a club. She was the life of the party and the center of everyone's attention. She's hot, she's beautiful, she's flirty, she's a dance contest winner—the ultimate flapper. He was instantly infatuated. The next morning Winthrop starts work as the Personnel Director at his father's department store where there are rules against dating the employees. (The store has over 1000 female employees.) One of his first acts as Personnel Director is to discipline a tardy sales girl—surprisingly, the girl he'd met the night before. Her father thinks she's a strumpet for accepting expensive gifts from a rich boyfriend. His father thinks she's a tramp because she's a working girl. The plot centers on whether or not she's a “good” girl.

This silent film is fascinating. Plenty of beautiful flappers throwing around a lot of Jazz Age slang and partying hard. It's a close look at dating, partying, and the social mores of the time. It's a great peek into the Roaring Twenties. The soundtrack is jazzy and amusing. Colleen Moore as “Pert” is beautiful and utterly irresistible. This film is highly entertaining and **must see viewing**. IMDB: [Why Be Good?](#)

Day of Reckoning (1933)

[Richard Dix](#), [Madge Evans](#), [Conway Tearle](#), [Una Merkel](#), [Stuart Erwin](#), [George 'Spanky' McFarland](#)

Wealthy businessman, John Day, is sent to prison for two years for embezzlement, leaving behind a beautiful wife and two young children. He hears stories of wives not being faithful while their husbands are in prison, and he has reason to worry about his wife. This film is entertaining with a lot of action, suspense, romance and conflict. Spunky

Una Merkel plays a pivotal role and adds panache to the film as the maid. Well worth watching. IMDB: [Day of Reckoning](#)

Westfront 1918 (1930)

[Fritz Kampers](#), [Gustav Diessel](#), [Hans-Joachim Möbis](#)

This silent film gives a realistic portrayal of warfare in the trenches and hardship on the home front during The Great War—from the German perspective. No glorification of war in this film. Gripping drama. Very well done. This is a German film by G. W. Pabst, and is well worth watching. IMDB: [Westfront 1918](#)

Cry Danger (1951)

[Dick Powell](#), [Rhonda Fleming](#), [Richard Erdman](#)

Rocky is released from prison for a crime he didn't commit. The action focuses on Rocky trying to track down who framed him and how to get his friend, still in prison, released. This is a routine film noir with Dick Powell and Rhonda Fleming doing well in their roles, but the film moves slowly and there is not enough action/suspense to make this a standout noir. You can pass on this one without missing much.

IMDB: [Cry Danger](#)

The Buccaneer (1938)

[Fredric March](#), [Franciska Gaal](#), [Akim Tamiroff](#), [Walter Brennan](#), [Anthony Quinn](#)

The adventures of the pirate, [Jean Lafitte](#), and his involvement in the War of 1812. Elaborate sets, great costuming, plenty of action, romance, humor. This is a Cecile B. DeMille production done on a grand scale. More romance than most pirate film fans care for, but this is a good adventure movie with enough action to please any viewer. The scene that stands out most vividly for me is a heart-wrenching scene when the ship's captain makes the beautiful, child-like Gretchen walk the plank. In fact, [Franciska Gaal](#), as Gretchen, highlights this film with her feminine touch, with romance and with humor. Well worth watching. IMDB: [The Buccaneer](#)

The Buccaneer (1958)

[Yul Brynner](#), [Claire Bloom](#), [Charles Boyer](#), [Inger Stevens](#), [E.G. Marshall](#), [Charlton Heston](#), [Lorne Greene](#)

Jean LaFitte's involvement in the War of 1812, in pirating, and in romance constitute the plot for this film. Glorious color, amazing costumes and great sets, but too many silly fights and poor acting—seriously, too many actors are stiff and unnatural. Brynner, Heston and Stevens are particularly disappointing. Claire Bloom, however, is outstanding. Not as much pirating and action as adventure film fans would expect, and the entertainment value for this film is average. IMDB: [The Buccaneer](#)

MOVIES: RARE AND SELDOM-SEEN

SEPTEMBER, 2017 POST

The Life of Jimmy Dolan (1933)

[Douglas Fairbanks Jr.](#), [Loretta Young](#), [Aline MacMahon](#)

Champion prizefighter Jimmy slugs a reporter and accidentally kills him. To beat the rap, he goes into hiding and changes his identity. Loretta Young plays the cool, calm, beautiful girlfriend and balances out the hot-headed Jimmy. Any movie with Loretta Young is interesting, the plot of this movie is intriguing, and the film moves quickly. Good entertainment. IMDB: [The Life of Jimmy Dolan](#)

My Dear Secretary (1948)

[Laraine Day](#), [Kirk Douglas](#), [Keenan Wynn](#)

A famous author keeps hiring and losing beautiful secretaries until he hires one he falls in love with and marries. Turns out she's a better writer than he is. Unfortunately, this comedy strains to get laughs and falls flat. Keenan Wynn is annoying. If you're looking to see the worst film Kirk Douglas made, this could be it. Laraine Day performs well, and is a bright spot in the film. The best part of the film, though, is "The End." IMDB: [My Dear Secretary](#)

Sensations of 1945 (1944)

Eleanor Powell, Dennis O'Keefe, C. Aubrey Smith, W. C. Fields, Sophie Tucker, Cab Calloway, Woody Herman, The Les Paul Trio

This paper-thin plot features an actress who continues to come up with publicity stunts that don't turn out as expected. The plot is an excuse to present singing, dancing, and circus acts of the time. Historically, this film is interesting in that the viewer has a chance to see many of the popular stars and acts of the period. Low point—W. C. Field's totally unfunny skit. Oddity—the tap dancing horse. High points—Eleanor Powell and the singing and dancing acts. Entertaining enough to watch. IMDB: [Sensations of 1945](#)

Ship of Lost Men (1929)

[Fritz Kortner](#), [Marlene Dietrich](#), [Robin Irvine](#)

The plane of a rich socialite crashes in the ocean. She is rescued by a ship with a crew of sex-crazed, drunken, mutineers. The conflict revolves around whether she can survive among these thugs. This is an historically significant German silent starring Marlene Dietrich. The film is well-done but predictable and moderately entertaining. IMDB: [Ship of Lost Men](#)

The Undesirable (1915)

[Lili Berky](#), [Victor Varconi](#), [Mari Jászai](#)

A dying old man tells his daughter that he is not her father. Her father was an old, overbearing man killed by his suffering wife. The daughter is told that her mother is in prison or dead. When the old man dies, the young girl has to make her own way in the world—a harsh, cruel world. This film is a stage play transferred to the screen. The acting is stilted, and the story is simple. The film is watchable. IMDB: [The Undesirable](#)

Anna Karenina (1935)

[Greta Garbo](#), [Fredric March](#), [Freddie Bartholomew](#), [Maureen O'Sullivan](#), [Basil Rathbone](#), [Reginald Owen](#), [Joan Marsh](#), [May Robson](#).

Wealthy, aristocratic and beautiful Anna lives a loveless marriage. She falls in love with the dashing Vronski and must choose between passionate love and giving up everything—including her young son. This film is an abbreviated version of the ponderous classic novel, but it

hits the highpoints of the plot and tells the story well. This is a well-crafted film, but there are some lapses in acting and there is no heat, no natural passion between Garbo and March—basic weakness in the film. However, the movie stars Garbo, and her classic beauty, her expression, and her incomparable screen presence make this film **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Anna Karenina](#)

The Affair (1973)

[Natalie Wood](#), [Robert Wagner](#), [Bruce Davison](#)

Handsome, divorced lawyer, Marcus pursues 32-year-old Courtney, who is crippled and on crutches. She's insecure, but he's older and persistent. They have an affair and move in together, but can their romance succeed? It's hard to find anything positive to write about this movie. The plot is not well-developed or interesting. There are awkward pauses throughout the film, and the acting is abominable. Simply a very bad movie. IMDB: [The Affair](#)

Anna Karenina (1967)

[Tatyana Samoylova](#), [Nikolai Gritsenko](#), [Vasiliy Lanovoy](#)

Rich and beautiful Anna falls in love with the dashing soldier, Vronsky and must choose between true love and her husband and child. This Russian film features great cinematography with colorful costumes and beautiful scenery. Visually stunning. Well-done film with good acting. The film at times races through parts of the novel's plot with little nuance or detail. It's interesting to see a Russian-made version of the classic Russian novel. Worth watching. IMDB: [Anna Karenina](#)

Variety (1983)

[Sandy McLeod](#), [Will Patton](#), [Richard M. Davidson](#)

A young girl, desperate for a job, starts work as a ticket taker at an adult movie theater. She becomes intrigued by the seamy underbelly of the sex world in New York and becomes increasingly involved. This film has the production value of a home movie, but the movie is intriguing. Slow moving and focused on details, suspense keeps this film interesting. Worth watching. IMDB: [Variety](#)

Tchaikovsky (1970)

[Innokentiy Smoktunovskiy](#), [Antonina Shuranova](#), [Kirill Lavrov](#)

This film is a Russian biopic of Tchaikovsky from childhood to death. (In Russian with English subtitles.) The film features people important and influential in his life as well as his musical masterpieces. The film portrays Tchaikovsky as a troubled soul living only for his music and maintaining no socially conventional relationships with others. This is a cinematically and musically beautiful film. It features Tchaikovsky's music throughout, with an emphasis on his operas. This is an important, interesting, and well-done film. Highly recommended. IMDB: [Tchaikovsky](#)

633 Squadron (1964)

[Cliff Robertson](#), [George Chakiris](#), [Maria Perschy](#)

A bomber squadron practices for the big mission scheduled to take place in a Norwegian fjord. This film is a standard war drama with good aerial scenes and quite a bit of action. There are several subplots—captured airman, love interests, bar scenes. Nothing spectacular, but interesting enough to watch. IMDB: [633 Squadron](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

AUGUST, 2017 POST

[Too Much Vacation; Too Few Movies]

Marked Woman (1937)

[Bette Davis](#), [Humphrey Bogart](#), [Lola Lane](#)

The mob takes over the night clubs in town, and the hostesses are enslaved in a system they can't escape. The mob boss has those who don't cooperate killed, and others fear talking to authorities. Bette Davis plays dramatic roles so well, and, although it's not one of her best roles, she's captivating. Bogart is solid as the DA. This is an engrossing film throughout and well worth watching. IMDB: [Marked Woman](#)

Madame Bovary (1949)

[Jennifer Jones](#), [James Mason](#), [Van Heflin](#)

Beautiful, young farm girl falls in love with the concept of love she finds in romance novels and marries the local doctor. Her life is not as satisfying as she had wished, and she seeks the romance and excitement she misses in her marriage. Top stars and top talent in this film, and the movie is dramatic and entertaining—over-dramatic and over-acted at times. Still, this is a good movie. If you are interested in dramatizations of classic literary works, this is an excellent movie to view. IMDB: [Madame Bovary](#)

The Major and the Minor (1942)

[Ginger Rogers](#), [Ray Milland](#), [Rita Johnson](#)

Susan fails at a career in New York City and decides to return home. She doesn't have enough money for train fare, so she impersonates an 11-year-old in order to purchase a half-fare ticket. Fleeing the conductors on the train, who suspect her deception, she ducks into Major Kirby's state room. He feels compassion for this little girl, and takes her under his wing. Complications multiply. Ginger Rogers is exceptional in this breezy comedy, and Ray Milland is appropriately gallant. They play off each other well. The only negatives are that some viewers may not buy into a 31-year-old actress playing an 11/12-year-old little girl or the fact that Major Kirby sets little "Sue Sue" up on dates with high school boys at his military school. Other than that, this is an incredibly engaging comedy with the versatile Ginger Rogers delivering a stellar performance. This is a film one can sit back and thoroughly enjoy. I have to rate this chucklefest **must see** viewing. IMDB: [The Major and the Minor](#)

Brewster's Millions (1985)

[Richard Pryor](#), [John Candy](#), [Lonette McKee](#)

A wealthy relative dies and leaves Brewster 300 million dollars IF he can spend 30 million in 30 days without telling anyone why he's spending. Richard Pryor is one of the funniest comedians ever, and he plays comedy and pathos well in this film. It's a straightforward comedy with John Candy generating extra laughs. It's well worth watching if you're in the mood for light comedic fare. IMDB: [Brewster's Millions](#)

The Inn of the Sixth Happiness (1958)

[Ingrid Bergman](#), [Robert Donat](#), [Curd Jürgens](#)

Based on a true story from the 1930s, Gladys Aylward is a poor English woman who is determined to be a missionary in China despite the impossible conditions and the threat of war. Although this film may be too long and drawn out for contemporary tastes, it is well done and spectacular in its scope. The movie is a truly inspiring story of a woman of substance who perseveres, changes lives, and saves lives through courage and grit. Well worth watching. IMDB: [The Inn of the Sixth Happiness](#)

The Paleface (1948)

[Bob Hope](#), [Jane Russell](#), [Robert Armstrong](#)

Dentist Painless Potter has a history of getting run out of town for incompetence. Calamity Jane is on a government mission to identify those smuggling guns to the Indians and chooses Painless as a patsy to pose as her husband in the wagon train west. This film is a good comedy featuring Bob Hope in his typical role as a bumbler who always comes out on top. Fast-paced with truly funny bits, this is a comedy well worth watching. IMDB: [The Paleface](#)

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (1942)

[Roger Livesey](#), [Deborah Kerr](#), [Anton Walbrook](#)

This film focuses on the life of a soldier over a 40-year period—his exploits, friendships, and romances. Filmed during WWII, this film is viewed by some as a classic. It's a comedy/drama/romance/war movie with a why-we-fight theme, but I could not get into this movie. The comedy in this British film falls flat in most cases with only a few chuckles. There is no straight narrative since the plot flashes back to different time periods in the life of the main character. A positive is that

it is beautifully filmed in Technicolor, and Deborah Kerr is engaging in the three roles she plays. In the opinion of a casual viewer, though, I feel I wasted nearly three hours of my life. [It's a long film.] IMDB: [The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp](#)

Framed (1930)

[Evelyn Brent](#), [Regis Toomey](#), [Ralf Harolde](#)

Rose's gangster father is killed in a shootout by the cops, and she vows revenge against the police inspector. She gets her chance when the inspector's son visits the casino where she works and falls in love with her. The inspector tries to frame Rose, Rose's casino owner boyfriend tries to frame her, but the ultimate frame-up comes at the climax of the film. This is a poorly acted, amateurish PreCode crime film with an interesting plot—which makes it watchable. IMDB: [Framed](#)

The Pay-Off (1930)

[Lowell Sherman](#), [Marian Nixon](#), [Hugh Trevor](#)

Young sweethearts sleeping on a park bench after midnight are robbed of their wedding money by a rich racketeer walking through the park. Later, wearing masks, they enter the racketeer's night club to re-rob him of their stolen money. He's among other gangsters, and the mob boss rescues them from their failed robbery attempt, sets them up in a nice apartment, and promises them jobs. Why? He's fallen in love with the teenage girl. This is a light-weight PreCode crime drama with competent acting and an interesting story line. Entertaining. IMDB: [The Pay-Off](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

JULY, 2017 POST

Painted Veil (1934)

[Greta Garbo](#), [Herbert Marshall](#), [George Brent](#)

A beautiful woman marries a doctor and finds that the doctor loves his profession more than he loves her. His absence feeds her loneliness and desire for romance. This film features imaginative, elaborate Chinese costuming and pageantry. It's a slow moving romance, but Garbo's screen presence is so strong, that alone carries the movie. Mildly interesting but a must for Garbo fans. IMDB: [Painted Veil](#)

Strangers May Kiss (1931)

[Norma Shearer](#), [Robert Montgomery](#), [Neil Hamilton](#)

Jilted Lisbeth feels she can live as freely as the philandering men. She becomes very popular. This is standard pre-Code fare. Mildly interesting story with good acting. An interesting glimpse of the era of early talkies. Watchable. IMDB: [Strangers May Kiss](#)

Dark Hazard (1934)

[Edward G. Robinson](#), [Genevieve Tobin](#), [Glenda Farrell](#)

Compulsive gambler, Jim, marries and tries to go straight. Interesting domestic drama with Robinson as the loving husband who tries to get his life together. Good drama worth watching. IMDB: [Dark Hazard](#)

Hi, Nellie! (1934)

[Paul Muni](#), [Glenda Farrell](#), [Ned Sparks](#)

Newspaper columnist is saddled with the advice column but eventually gets his big break with a local corruption case. Muni and Farrell play well off each other in this film filled with sarcastic banter. There is decent acting but a weak script. Watchable but a waste of Muni's talent. IMDB: [Hi, Nellie!](#)

Road to Paradise (1931)

[Loretta Young](#), [Jack Mulhall](#), [Raymond Hatton](#)

Mary discovers in a restaurant her identical twin. Because her twin is wealthy, her companions decide to rob her mansion when she's out using Mary as a substitute decoy. This is a simple story heaped in suspense concerning Mary being discovered. Loretta Young plays dual roles in this film. She is fascinating to watch, and doubly fascinating when she plays twins. You'll enjoy this lightweight but thoroughly engaging film. IMDB: [Road to Paradise](#)

Week-End Marriage (1932)

[Loretta Young](#), [Norman Foster](#), [Aline MacMahon](#)

Ken's reluctant to marry Lola because he doesn't make enough to support her properly, but Lola connives him into marriage and makes him promise to let her work to help out. Turns out she's much more successful than he, and that creates a serious conflict. Loretta Young is beautiful and an accomplished actress. If she stars, the movie is well worth watching. This film is a fascinating look at the conflict women of the time face between being independent or taking the role of devoted wife and mother confined to the home. The end of the film may be a

moral for the times, but will disappoint modern sensibilities. This movie is an enjoyable viewing experience, and I consider it **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Week-End Marriage](#)

Daughter of Shanghai (1937)

[Anna May Wong](#), [Charles Bickford](#), [Buster Crabbe](#)

Ruthless smugglers traffic in Chinese immigrants and make big money forcing businesses to pay for their illegals. Anna May Wong tries to track down the smugglers who had killed her father. Anna May Wong is a beautiful, accomplished actress and dancer. One, maybe the only, highlight of the film is a dance she does in a saloon. This film is standard crime drama fare and is only of interest if you appreciate Anna May Wong in a starring role. IMDB: [Daughter of Shanghai](#)

Dishonored (1931)

[Marlene Dietrich](#), [Victor McLaglen](#), [Gustav von Seyffertitz](#)

Harlot Marie attracts the head of the spy agency in Austria and cleverly has him arrested as a spy. Realizing her potential, he then recruits her to spy for Austria. Using her beauty and her body, she is very successful. The final scene of the movie is classic Dietrich, and is well worth the price of admission. Although this film has its weak moments, von Sternberg's powerful, creative directing is evident throughout the movie, and Dietrich's beauty and amazing screen presence make this a film worth watching. IMDB: [Dishonored](#)

And Justice for All (1979)

[Al Pacino](#), [Jack Warden](#), [John Forsythe](#)

A lawyer is blackmailed into defending a hard-nosed judge accused of rape. I was looking forward to this film because it stars Pacino and sounded like a good courtroom drama. It's a mess. There are comedic scenes which aren't that funny, and there are so many subplots the viewer never knows where the plot is going next. The climax is unrealistic and falls flat. A big disappointment. IMDB: [And Justice for All](#)

Shanghai Express (1932)

[Marlene Dietrich](#), [Clive Brook](#), [Anna May Wong](#)

A train trip aboard the Shanghai Express in the midst of a civil war focuses on the intrigue and romance surrounding the notorious courtesan, Shanghai Lily. This is a simple film that starts slowly but builds in suspense and interest. Dietrich is superb, the cinematography enhances Dietrich's beauty and mystique, and von Sternberg's direction makes this film a classic. There are many excellent Dietrich films, but this is quintessential Dietrich and **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Shanghai Express](#)

Possessed (1947)

[Joan Crawford](#), [Clark Gable](#), [Wallace Ford](#)

Rural factory worker Marion yearns for a better life, and on the invitation of a rich drunk moves to New York to do whatever it takes to have the life she wants. When she arrives, the drunk doesn't even remember her, but she seeks other wealthy men and lives as a kept woman for a man she loves but who will not marry her. This is a great pairing of Joan Crawford and Clark Gable early in their talking picture

careers. Poignant story, great acting, creative cinematography. Although not a classic, I'd rate this as **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Possessed](#)

Smilin' Through (1941)

[Jeanette MacDonald](#), [Brian Aherne](#), [Gene Raymond](#)

A child in England loses her parents and is raised by her uncle, who adores her. As a young woman she enters a taboo romance with an American soldier going off to war. The uncle, hiding family secrets, forbids her to see the soldier once he finds out about the romance. This is a beautiful movie filmed in technicolor with colorful costumes and settings. The story starts slowly but increases steadily in interest. There is good acting, intense emotions, and inspiring singing by Macdonald. If you're in the mood for a classic romance, this is an excellent choice. It's a full-box-of-tissues experience. IMDB: [Smilin' Through](#)

Blood Money (1933)

[George Bancroft](#), [Judith Anderson](#), [Frances Dee](#)

Bail bondsman, Bill Bailey, makes it big taking advantage of others. When he's torn between two girls, one girl's jealousy may ruin him. This film is a routine crime drama with substandard acting and a mediocre story. It's watchable but not worth the effort. IMDB: [Blood Money](#)

Penthouse (1933)

[Warner Baxter](#), [Myrna Loy](#), [Charles Butterworth](#)

Lawyer for the defense, Jackson, thrills at winning a case for a gangster, but his law firm fires him and his girlfriend dumps him. He later uses the gangster's network to help him solve a murder his ex-girlfriend's fiancée is convicted of committing. This is a witty, fast-paced crime drama/murder mystery with Myrna Loy teaming up with Warner Baxter in a pairing similar to her later roles as William Powell's partner in the Thin Man series. No classic here, but a fun movie to watch with Loy as the center of everyone's attention. IMDB: [Penthouse](#)

Pleasure Cruise (1933)

[Genevieve Tobin](#), [Roland Young](#), [Ralph Forbes](#)

A wife in a stale marriage suggests separate vacations. She chooses a pleasure cruise, and he chooses a fishing trip. He, however, secretly takes the cruise as a barber's assistant in order to spy on her. This is as light a fare as you're likely to see. Fluff. Mildly interesting and watchable, but the most (or maybe only) point of interest is the watchability of Genevieve Tobin. IMDB: [Pleasure Cruise](#)

Lucky Star (1929)

[Janet Gaynor](#), [Charles Farrell](#), [Guinn 'Big Boy' Williams](#)

Young teen, Mary, works the family farm with her abusive mother. When she falls in love with the neighbor, who's a crippled war vet, her mother refuses to let her see him again because she doesn't want Mary to waste her time on a cripple. Meanwhile, the local rogue stalks Mary. Janet Gaynor plays the teen role well, much as Mary Pickford played child/teen roles. This is a sweet, sad story and a well-crafted silent. Great directing and beautiful cinematography. The emotion and suspense will

keep you focused on this film. The Gaynor/Farrell matchup is perfect, and this film is **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Lucky Star](#)

They Had to See Paris (1929)

[Will Rogers](#), [Irene Rich](#), [Owen Davis Jr.](#)

Pike hits it big with his oil well investment, and his wife insists the family tour Paris for culture. Pike doesn't fit in at all in Paris, and his family fractures. This is an early talkie with very awkward and amateurish acting. Some historical interest in the cars of the time, the fashion of the time, and some exterior shots of Paris. The draw in this film is Will Rogers, but you'll come away from this film with a negative impression of Rogers. Skip this one. IMDB: [They Had to See Paris](#)

Piccadilly (1929)

[Gilda Gray](#), [Anna May Wong](#), [Jameson Thomas](#)

A London nightclub owner sees the Chinese scullery maid, Shosho, dancing in front of the other maids and fires her for goofing off and distracting the other maids. When business tails off, he hires her to bring an exotic act into the club. Her success fires jealousy in the featured dancer, and tension becomes central to the plot. This movie starts out slow and has some slow scenes. The modern soundtrack and title cards don't quite fit a movie from the 20s, BUT when Anna May Wong becomes more prominent in the plot, the film sizzles. Her dance in the night club is the highlight of the film. Anna May Wong could not get leading roles in America because the studios would not feature a Chinese woman as a leading lady. She, therefore, went to Europe and was able to get leading lady parts. This film is one of her most successful and features her talent and beauty. Although the film is very good but not

great, Anna May Wong's performance is classic. This is **must see** viewing for her talent and beauty alone. IMDB: [Piccadilly](#)

A Face in the Fog (1936)

[June Collyer](#), [Lloyd Hughes](#), [Lawrence Gray](#)

A fiend terrifies the city by killing one person after another. This is a "B" movie which should actually be a "D." It's horrible. The acting is primitive and awkward. The fight scenes desperately need stunt doubles. The plot is silly and clichéd. Viewing this movie may seriously damage precious brain cells. Don't go near it. IMDB: [A Face in the Fog](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

JUNE, 2017 POST

The Affairs of Annabel (1938)

[Jack Oakie](#), [Lucille Ball](#), [Ruth Donnelly](#)

Studio publicist puts movie star Annabel in demanding publicity stunts to publicize her upcoming movies. One stunt gets her involved with killers. This film is a first-rate comedy with Oakie and Ball at their best. There are so many little bits of business that elicit laughs, I have the urge to immediately watch the film again. You will enjoy this movie. IMDB: [The Affairs of Annabel](#)

La vérité (The Truth) (1960)

[Brigitte Bardot](#), [Paul Meurisse](#), [Charles Vanel](#)

Teen Dominique is the opposite of her perfect older sister. She fails in school, is rebellious, fights with her parents, and is promiscuous. She succeeds, however, in mesmerizing her sister's boyfriend. And then there's a murder. This film goes back and forth between courtroom drama and flashbacks of action leading up to the murder. This is a fascinating movie that is engrossing from beginning to end. High drama, lots of action, and suspense. Bardot is at her best. Her acting is mostly outstanding punctuated with a few weak moments. But Bardot and the film itself are classic. If you see only one Bardot film, I would recommend this one. It is **must see** viewing. IMDB: [La Verite](#)

King and Country (1964)

[Dirk Bogarde](#), [Tom Courtenay](#), [Leo McKern](#)

A British soldier in World War I walks away from his unit and is tried for desertion. Although this film has some explosive dramatic moments, it is all talk in British English. Slow moving, dreary. I challenge you to stay awake during this snooze fest. IMDB: [King and Country](#)

Boomerang (1947)

[Dana Andrews](#), [Jane Wyatt](#), [Lee J. Cobb](#)

A pastor is shot to death in broad daylight in the middle of town. A number of suspects are considered, but the police are convinced they have their man. Political pressure is put on the state's attorney to convict the accused, but he is not convinced the man on trial is guilty. This is a good, true crime/courtroom drama. Clever script with good acting. Nothing spectacular, but a good viewing experience. IMDB: [Boomerang](#)

A Dry White Season (1989)

Donald Sutherland, Janet Suzman, Zakes Mokae, Susan Sarandon, Marlon Brando

The whites live separately from the blacks in South Africa, and once Ben, a white, middle class school teacher with a family, fully understands the horrors of apartheid, he involves himself in the struggle. This is a brutal movie with explicit displays of the torture and murder of blacks of all ages—including children and the complicit behavior of the whites in supporting the criminal behavior of the authorities. The movie certainly makes its point about apartheid, but its a sluggish story with explosive moments of violence and a few horrifying scenes. Sutherland shows no passion and seriously underplays his part. Sarandon has only a bit part in the film, and Brando returns from retirement to play a courtroom lawyer for a few scenes of the movie. Entertainment value is average. IMDB: [A Dry White Season](#)

The Enforcer (1951)

Humphrey Bogart, Zero Mostel, Ted de Corsia

DA Bogart is frustrated in trying to get witnesses to testify at the trial of a mob boss. This is an above average crime drama with an interesting build up to a clever conclusion. Bogart is great in his tough guy role, and Zero Mostel adds interest in his role as a fat flunky trying to make it in the mob. Very entertaining and worth watching. IMDB: [The Enforcer](#)

The Juror (1996)

Demi Moore, Alec Baldwin, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Anne Heche

Demi Moore serves on a jury to put away a mob boss, but Baldwin terrorizes her into giving a ‘not guilty’ verdict. The terror doesn’t stop

after the trial. This is Baldwin at his most psychotic and most clever. Moore is solid in her role. This is a thriller that moves quickly with plenty of action and extreme violence. If you like suspense and thrillers, this is for you. **Must see viewing.** [IMDB: The Juror](#)

Rules of Engagement (2000)

[Tommy Lee Jones](#), [Samuel L. Jackson](#), [Guy Pearce](#), [Ben Kingsley](#)

Colonel Childers is on trial for not following the rules of engagement when under fire at the embassy in Yemen resulting in the deaths of many demonstrators, including women and children. This is an excellent action/war movie and tense courtroom drama. The film is well worth watching. [IMDB: Rules of Engagement](#)

Devil's Advocate (1997)

[Keanu Reeves](#), [Al Pacino](#), [Charlize Theron](#)

Southern lawyer wins all his cases and becomes wrapped up only in himself and his success. When he joins a New York law firm, everything gets turned upside down. Clutch-the-chair-arm thriller. Intensely interesting. Great entertainment. [IMDB: Devil's Advocate](#)

Murder in the First (1995)

[Christian Slater](#), [Kevin Bacon](#), [Gary Oldman](#)

Lawyer Slater defends Alcatraz prisoner Bacon who tried to escape and was held in solitary and tortured for so long the prison system essentially turned him into a murderer when he subsequently killed a fellow inmate

in the cafeteria. This film is based on fact and makes its point about prison abuse. Bacon turns in an admirable performance. The film, however, is one long cliché. Weak acting at times, improbable scenes, uncomfortable scenes, weak script. It's one of those films during which I kept asking myself, 'Should I bail on this one?' Watched it, but I'm not a fan. IMDB: [Murder in the First](#)

Sacco e Vanzetti (Sacco & Vanzetti) (1971)

[Gian Maria Volontè](#), [Riccardo Cucciolla](#), [Cyril Cusack](#)

In the early 20s, the government/police cracked down on labor unions, communists, and immigrants. On circumstantial evidence, Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested for robbery and murders at a shoe factory. The trial was a political sham intended to serve as an example to immigrants and anarchists. This film is a very literate representation of the Sacco and Vanzetti trial and the events prior to and subsequent to the trial. Newsreel footage is interspersed with the dramatic presentation. Issues of police brutality, racism, injustice, and prejudice are well presented. If you have an interest in this case and the circumstances surrounding the issues at the time, this is must see viewing. An exceptional film!

IMDB: [Sacco e Vanzetti](#)

Sacco and Vanzetti (2006)

[Henry Fonda](#), [Arlo Guthrie](#), [David Kaiser](#), [Studs Terkel](#), [John Turturro](#)

This is an exceptional documentary covering everything Sacco and Vanzetti. Watching this film will give you a full understanding of their lives and the issues surrounding their arrest and trial. Lots of newsreel

footage and still photography along with interviews with relatives, historians, and other experts. IMDB: [Sacco and Vanzetti](#)

The Story of Mankind (1957)

Ronald Colman, Hedy Lamarr, Groucho Marx, Harpo Marx, Chico Marx, Virginia Mayo, Agnes Moorehead, Vincent Price, Peter Lorre, Charles Coburn, Cedric Hardwicke, Cesar Romero, John Carradine, Dennis Hopper

The High Council of Outer Space holds a trial to determine whether Man should continue to exist. The devil argues for destruction based on Man's evil deeds throughout history while the Spirit of Man argues for the continuation of Man based on his many noble deeds throughout history. The arguments are represented by vignettes presenting historical events from the cave man through World War II. There are

colorful costumes, elaborate sets, and many of hollywood's top stars participate. Although some of scenes are powerfully dramatic, many of the scenes are hokey. The final scene of the film makes a serious point about the state of Mankind throughout history. Few viewers today would sit through this movie. It is interesting to view only as a unique feature and a film curiosity. IMDB: [The Story of Mankind](#)

Dear Heart (1964)

[Glenn Ford](#), [Geraldine Page](#), [Angela Lansbury](#)

Ditzy, warmhearted, middle-aged Evie attends the Postmasters' convention in New York and falls in love with a traveling salesman who says he has a wife. This film is slow-moving at first but builds in interest as the film progresses. Edie is one of those characters everyone loves,

including the viewer. Kind-hearted, simple, overly courteous to everyone. The movie is an in-depth character study wrapped in a romantic comedy. Some genuine laughs, but this is mostly a tender romance. It's well worth watching. IMDB: [Dear Heart](#)

Autumn Leaves (1956)

[Joan Crawford](#), [Cliff Robertson](#), [Vera Miles](#), [Lorne Greene](#), [Ruth Donnelly](#)

Middle-aged and lonely Millie falls in love with a much younger, lonely man. They impulsively marry. Then things turn crazy. Although Joan Crawford is a good actress, she is not that attractive, and it seems unrealistic that a handsome and much younger man would fall desperately in love with her. This is simply a film of average interest with some melodrama, some good acting, some unrealistic situations, and a soft ending. Worth a watch, but nothing exceptional. IMDB: [Autumn Leaves](#)

MOVIES: RARE AND SELDOM-SEEN

MAY, 2017 POST

Midnight (1939)

Claudette Colbert, Don Ameche, John Barrymore, Mary Astor, Hedda Hopper, Monty Woolley, Francis Lederer

A penniless beauty arrives in Paris and, because of the kindness of strangers, quickly mingles with the wealthy. A millionaire sets her up in an apartment with clothes, an allowance, and a chauffeur. She rebuffs what she thinks is an immoral proposition, but his intention is for her to

lure away his wife's lover. She is also romantically pursued by a Paris taxi driver. This is a romantic comedy gem! It's easy to smile your way through the entire film. Colbert is at her absolute best here. She's beautiful, funny, witty, and delightful. The cast works so well together, and the story is engaging and highly entertaining. Don't miss this. It's **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Midnight](#)

Railroded! (1947)

John Ireland, Sheila Ryan, Hugh Beaumont

Thieves steal a laundry van, rob a beauty shop, and frame the young driver of the van. The 'railroded' young man is headed for the gas chamber. This is an above-average crime drama with plenty of action, suspense, and even romance. No academy awards here, some weak performances, but a solid film that entertains. IMDB: [Railroded](#)

Pocketful of Miracles (1961)

Glenn Ford, Bette Davis, Hope Lange

Alcoholic street vendor Apple Annie has secretly supported her daughter's education and travel from a distance, with her daughter believing her mother was a wealthy woman of prominence. When her daughter returns from Europe with her aristocratic fiancée and his father to meet her mother, the street people pull together to pull off a major ruse. Bette Davis shines, as usual, and this is an early movie for Ann Margret. [Those are the highlights.] The plot is based on a Damon Runyon story, and the Runyonesque characters are colorful. If you're a fan of Runyon, you will probably like this film, but it's too long-winded and hokey for contemporary viewers. IMDB: [Pocketful of Miracles](#)

Something Wild (1986)

Jeff Daniels, Melanie Griffith, George 'Red' Schwartz

Coming out of a restaurant a brash, young girl offers a conservative-type guy a ride. He accepts, and she kidnaps him. He's in for an incredibly wild time. I didn't hold much promise for this film when I started watching it, but as it developed, it turned out to be very entertaining. It's a crime drama, comedy, romance, thriller with nudity, sex, and violence. Worth watching for mindless entertainment—and Griffith is hot.

IMDB: [Something Wild](#)

Ladies Love Brutes (1930)

George Bancroft, Mary Astor, Fredric March

Wealthy but brutish real estate developer tries to be more refined in order to become a gentleman and fit in with high society. This film started out looking like a comedy, but it turned into a crime drama. Primitive, early talkie with uneven acting all around. [Mary Astor is always solid, however.] The story is interesting, and the movie is very watchable.

IMDB: [Ladies Love Brutes](#)

Ladies Should Listen (1934)

Cary Grant, Frances Drake, Edward Everett Horton

An apartment complex switchboard operator listens in on the tenants' calls. She interjects herself into the life of a wealthy bachelor with whom she's in love. This is a silly farce that moves quickly and is actually fun to watch. Cary Grant is the same in this early film for him as he was in

later films—more of a personality than an accomplished actor. The film is mindless fluff but worth a view. IMDB: [Ladies Should Listen](#)

Liliom (1930)

Charles Farrell, Rose Hobart, Estelle Taylor

A poor working girl, Julie, rebuffs the interest of a gentlemanly carpenter and, instead, idolizes a womanizing, scamming carousel barker. Against everyone's advice, she moves in with him and gets pregnant. Worst acting ever, a primitive script, and simple sets, but there's something fascinating about this film. The empathy one feels for Julie provides the overwhelming interest. (This film actually justifies spousal abuse.) Lots of moralizing at the end. I can see where most viewers would hate this film, but I watched it to the end and didn't regret it. There is usually some good even in a bad movie. Watch at your own risk. IMDB: [Liliom](#)

Alias French Gertie (Love Finds a Way) (1930)

Bebe Daniels, Ben Lyon, Robert Emmett O'Connor

Common girl and thief Gertie works for wealthy families posing as a French maid. She falls for a burglar/safecracker and tries to help him go straight so they can live a normal life together. Competent acting but nothing exceptional with this film. It's a subpar B movie. There are so many other good movies available, this is not worth viewing.

IMDB: [Alias French Gertie](#)

Behold My Wife (1934)

Sylvia Sydney, Gene Raymond, Laura Hope Crews

Because wealthy Michael plans on marrying a stenographer, the family feels disgraced and sabotages the marriage. The jilted girl commits suicide, and Michael vows revenge against his family. He sees his opportunity when he meets Tonita, an American Indian who falls in love with him. He marries her and takes her home to meet the family and exact what he believes to be the perfect revenge. This is a cruel plot with a lot of cruel characters. If there's a moral, it's that the "white" man is contemptible. Silvia Sydney is beautiful and accomplished in her role as Tonita. The plot moves quickly, and the film becomes more interesting the further into it one gets. Although an odd story with cruel intentions as the focus, the film is well worth viewing. IMDB: [Behold My Wife](#)

Diary of a Chambermaid (1946)

Paulette Goddard, Burgess Meredith, Hurd Hatfield

Celestine works as a chambermaid but is dismissed or leaves jobs frequently. She sets her sights on improving her situation by taking advantage of men whenever possible. Paulette Goddard is certainly a glamorous chambermaid in this curious, imaginative drama. It's of average entertainment value, but it's more interesting the longer one watches. IMDB: [Diary of a Chambermaid](#)

Dramatic School (1938)

Luise Rainer, Paulette Goddard, Alan Marshal, Lana Turner, Ann Rutherford, Hans Conried

Impoverished drama student, Louise, attends school during the day and works in a factory at night. She fantasizes about a wonderful life for herself and spins her fantasies for her peers. Because she's different, the mean girls try to humiliate her. This is an uneven film, with good acting

and interesting conflicts, though. It should be particularly interesting, however, for those interested in the theater or for those fans of Academy Award winning actress Luise Rainer. This film has its good moments and is worth watching. IMDB: [Dramatic School](#)

Forbidden Daughters (1927)

Clarice Conwell, Gladys DeLores, Kathryn Kay

Alva receives a telegram that her husband has been located in Africa and is being held captive by a native girl. Alva travels to Africa to find and reclaim her husband. This silent film has an improbable, goofy plot with subpar acting. This movie, however, features full nudity, nearly throughout the entire film. It's worth watching only as a curiosity. IMDB: [Forbidden Daughters](#)

I am Suzanne (1933)

Lilian Harvey, Gene Raymond, Leslie Banks

A puppeteer falls in love with the star of a musical review, but her agent also has designs on her. This is a unique movie in that it combines drama, romance, singing, dancing and puppetry. Some lavish musical set pieces as well as lavish marionette performances. The puppetry is incredibly artistic and imaginative. Acting and dancing are uneven, but Lilian Harvey's singing is enchanting. It took me a while to get into this film, but the longer I viewed, the more engaged I became. It's a one-of-a-kind production and worth seeing for its uniqueness. IMDB: [I am Suzanne](#)

Kitty (1945)

Paulette Goddard, Ray Milland, Patric Knowles

In 18th century London, while getting out of his carriage, the painter, Gainsborough, has his shoes stolen by a guttersnipe. When she's captured, he sees she has natural beauty and has her pose for a portrait. His friend sees the potential in her to help him gain status in society and boost his career. He then trains her as Henry Higgins trained Eliza Doolittle in Pygmalion. This is a standard romantic comedy/costume drama with good acting and an interesting story. Nothing extraordinary, except Paulette Goddard, but well worth watching. IMDB: [Kitty](#)

The Night Before the Divorce (1942)

Lynn Bari, Mary Beth Hughes, Joseph Allen

A husband can no longer tolerate his 'perfect' wife, falls in love with a conniving young woman, and files for divorce. The wife then connives to win back her husband. This is a cute screwball comedy with twists and turns that serves as light entertainment. Worth watching. IMDB: [The Night Before the Divorce](#)

The World Accuses (1934)

Vivian Tobin, Dickie Moore, Cora Sue Collins

A mother-in-law who supports her son and his wife and her grandson insists her son choose between being supported by her or separating from his wife, whom she despises. Subsequently, the husband is killed and the mother-in-law gets custody of the child. This is a B movie with cute kids, an improbable plot with too many coincidences, and subpar acting. If you can cringe your way through the acting, the movie is watchable. IMDB: [The World Accuses](#)

Three Girls About Town (1941)

Joan Blondell, John Howard, Binnie Barnes, Robert Benchley

Two girls work as hostesses in a convention hotel. Complications arise when a body is discovered in their adjoining room. This is a witty, fast-paced comedy with standouts Blondell and Benchley. Lively entertainment. IMDB: [Three Girls About Town](#)

Night World (1932)

Lew Ayres, Mae Clarke, Boris Karloff

The varied life in a night club and the many relationships and entanglements. The entire movie takes place in the club with a ruthless manager, cheating girlfriends, drunken patrons, and murderous gangsters. Plenty of alcohol, pretty girls, legs, dancing, singing, gangsters, violence. This is a simple Pre-code drama, but it holds the viewer's interest and is worth watching. IMDB: [Night World](#)

Our Betters (1933)

Constance Bennett, Violet Kemble Cooper, Phoebe Foster, Anita Louise

A young American girl intent on being an adoring wife marries British royalty. On her wedding day she spies her new husband with his mistress. She then determines to be scandalous herself and become a powerful socialite. Power becomes more important than love. This is a well done drawing room drama with many conflicts and interesting twists, but there may be too much idle chatter for many viewers.

Nonetheless, it's interesting enough to provide light entertainment.
IMDB: [Our Betters](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

APRIL, 2017 POST

Drive a Crooked Road (1954)

Mickey Rooney, Dianne Foster, Kevin McCarthy

Auto mechanic and race car driver, Eddie Shannon, is groomed by a beautiful woman to be the driver for a bank heist. Mickey Rooney, famous for his musicals and comedies, plays a straight dramatic role to perfection in this film. Although slow moving in parts, there is plenty of drama, suspense and action to make this a worthy addition to the film noir genre. This taut film makes good viewing. IMDB: [Drive a Crooked Road](#)

Tight Spot (1955)

Ginger Rogers, Edward G. Robinson, Brian Keith

The district attorney takes prison inmate, Sherry Conley, to a fancy hotel under heavy guard. He tries to convince her to testify against a mobster while also protecting her life. There are a few interesting subplots in this well-done film noir. Acting in this film varies but is generally good. Ginger Rogers was probably not the best choice for this role. She seems to be working too hard to play the prison inmate with a rough past. The story is suspenseful, and this slightly above average movie is worth watching. IMDB: [Tight Spot](#)

My Little Girl (1986)

James Earl Jones, Geraldine Page, Mary Stuart Masterson

Rich girl goes to work in a shelter for homeless girls. She faces resistance from all around her and becomes too emotionally involved with the girls. This is a well-intentioned film, and Masterson is usually a solid actress, but she's not at her best here. The movie is clichéd and boring. IMDB: [My Little Girl](#)

Romeo and Juliet (1936)

Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, John Barrymore

Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard star in this version of the famous play, which is faithful to the original plot and dialogue. Sword fights, elaborate sets and costumes highlight this film. Howard is an accomplished actor, and Shearer...not so much. Both stars are too old for their parts. [Big mistake.] This is an average presentation of, perhaps, the most famous play ever written. View, instead, the much better 1968 version of Romeo and Juliet starring Leonard Whiting and Olivia Hussey. IMDB: [Romeo and Juliet](#)

ZouZou (1934)

Josephine Baker, Jean Gabin, Pierre Larquey

Circus sideshow barker raises a boy and girl abandoned by their parents. The grown boy joins the Navy and then works in the theater. The girl, ZouZou, becomes a laundress. She delivers laundry to the theater, becomes discovered, and becomes the star of a musical review. This dramedy showcases the legendary Josephine Baker's talent as a

comedienne, actress, singer and dancer. It's a treat to watch Baker in a film that is entertaining and historical. The movie is in French with subtitles and is worth viewing. IMDB: [ZouZou](#)

Confession (1937)

Kay Francis, Basil Rathbone, Ian Hunter

The movie is a scene-by-scene mirror image of the 1935 German film "Mazurka," which was based on actual events in Europe. An opera star is pursued by a womanizing musician who ruins her marriage. The opera star seeks revenge and goes on trial for her actions. This is a fascinating story with good acting and intrigue throughout. Viewing "Confession" is time well spent. IMDB: [Confession](#)

Dark City (1950)

Charlton Heston, Lizabeth Scott, Viveca Lindfors

Bookies and card sharks get in trouble with the law and there's messy infighting among the crooks. There's a love interest and also a murderer knocking off one crook after another. This is a so-so noir with mediocre acting and a simple story. Heston is unlikable as a stiff, stoic, and Scott is unlikable as a clingy, needy wannabe girlfriend. This is Heston's first starring role. If you have to see all the noir films, watch this, but there are far better noirs to view. IMDB: [Dark City](#)

Silver Lode (1954)

John Payne, Lizabeth Scott, Dan Duryea

A marshall and his deputies come to town to arrest a respected citizen on his wedding day for the murder of the marshall's brother. This a great western with tension from beginning to end. It's focus is mob mentality. Good acting, a good story, and plenty of action. If you're a western fan or just a fan of good movies, this is **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Silver Lode](#)

Tender is the Night (1962)

Jennifer Jones, Jason Robards, Joan Fontaine

Rich expatriates on the French Riviera. Psychiatrist, Dick Diver falls in love with his fabulously wealthy, extremely beautiful, and psychotic patient. Beautiful scenery, beautiful people, and a complicated love story. The film is uneven, and I have a hard time with Jason Robards as a romantic lead. But the movie has its good points and is emotionally rewarding at the end. Not the best, but worth watching. IMDB: [Tender is the Night](#)

True Believer (1989)

James Woods, Robert Downey Jr., Margaret Colin

A seedy lawyer who represents mostly guilty drug dealers responds to the pleading of a prisoner's mother to retry his case because she says he was falsely imprisoned for murder. This is a fairly standard crime/thriller-courtroom drama. Woods' acting is over the top, and Downey, Jr., as the young, new hire is engaging and provides some humor. Nothing special here, but it's worth watching. IMDB: [True Believer](#)

MOVIES: RARE AND SELDOM-SEEN

MARCH 2017 POST

The Brothers Karamazov (Der Mörder Dimitri Karamasoff) (1931)

Fritz Kortner, Anna Sten, Fritz Rasp

Dimitri is enraged that his aged father wants to marry the beautiful, young prostitute, Gruschenka. He visits Gruschenka to threaten her and convince her to leave his father alone. He's enchanted with her, falls in love, and is obsessed with her forever after. Then there's a murder, a trial, and a mystery as to who committed the murder. This is an exceptionally well done movie. Some melodramatic acting, but great cinematography, fast-paced, interesting story. Watching this movie is a good way to understand the plot of the Brothers Karamazov without reading the ponderous Russian novel. This is a film well worth watching. IMDB: [The Brothers Karamazov](#)

She Married Her Boss (1935)

Claudette Colbert, Melvyn Douglas, Michael Bartlett, Edith Fellows

Julia is Richard's long-time, hard-working secretary. When she finally gets him to marry her, she tries to be a loving wife but finds his business is his life and he actually has no room for a woman. This is a pleasant romantic comedy with good acting and a story that moves quickly. Richard's daughter from his previous marriage [Edith Fellows] is a talented actress stealing the scenes she's in. This is good entertainment. IMDB: [She Married Her Boss](#)

Corruption (1933)

Evalyn Knapp, Preston Foster, Charles Delaney

Straight-arrow mayor tries to clean up politically corrupt city. Things don't go well. This is a primitive Precode with amateurish acting and a clunky screen play, but with a little Precode naughtiness, a spunky leading lady, and a decent story, this film is actually entertaining.

IMDB: [Corruption](#)

Manslaughter (1922)

Leatrice Joy, Thomas Meighan, Lois Wilson

Wild, out-of-control rich girl, Lydia, parties without restraint and has no respect for those who are not rich. She's responsible for the death of a cop, and her life changes dramatically. This film is a morality tale and very preachy. There are extravagant DeMille scenes and costumes. Despite melodramatic acting and an improbable, coincidental plot, this film is imaginative in many ways and is very watchable.

IMDB: [Manslaughter](#)

The Wedding Night (1935)

Gary Cooper, Anna Sten, Ralph Bellamy

Washed-up writer, Tony, moves back to his ancestral home in Connecticut with his wife. She can't stand the country life and returns to New York. In the meantime, Tony falls in love with the Polish farm girl next door. This is a very good love story that is touching, suspenseful and tragic. There's a major focus throughout on Anna Sten's beauty. This is well worth watching. IMDB: [The Wedding Night](#)

Coney Island (1917)

Roscoe 'Fatty' Arbuckle, Buster Keaton, Joe Bordeaux

Fatty Arbuckle and Buster Keaton engage in slapstick antics at Coney Island—mostly centered on chasing pretty girls and fights with rivals. Fatty dresses as a girl for half of this film, and it's interesting to see Coney Island functioning as it was at the time. Fatty at his best here with Buster not far behind. Good fun. IMDB: [Coney Island](#)

His Wedding Night (1917)

Roscoe 'Fatty' Arbuckle, Buster Keaton, Al St. John, Alice Mann

Fatty Arbuckle works at the soda fountain/gas station and proposes to the pharmacist's daughter. This is funny from start to finish. Lots of illegal humor—horse stealing, kidnapping, and chloroforming girls in order to kiss them. And, of course, slapstick fights throughout. Inventive humor and a ton of clever laughs here. IMDB: [His Wedding Night](#)

Exile Express (1939)

Anna Sten, Alan Marshal, Jerome Cowan

Nadine works as an assistant to a research scientist working on a secret project. Foreign agents are interested in stealing the formula for the project, and they kill the scientist to get it, but not before he spills acid on the formula papers to destroy them. They then pursue Nadine to help them restore the formula. This is a so-so mystery/thriller that drags at times, but shines whenever Anna Sten is on the screen. Watchable but not a high priority for viewing. IMDB: [Exile Express](#)

Dragnet Girl (Hijôsen no onna) (1933)

Kinuyo Tanaka, Jôji Oka, Sumiko Mizukubo

Tokiko loves her criminal boyfriend but is also pursued by her rich boss to serve as his mistress. She and her boyfriend decide to carry out one last heist before retiring to a normal life of happiness. This is a classic Japanese silent film by the master, Ozu, and it features many cinematic innovations. It's well done for the time, but for the casual viewer it's not compelling enough to keep one's interest. All around average. View only if you're interested in this type of film or this film maker.

IMDB: [Dragnet Girl](#)

An Inn in Tokyo (Tôkyô no yado) (1935)

Takeshi Sakamoto, Yoshiko Okada, Chôko Iida

Kihachi and his two sons are homeless, and, during a good part of the movie, they sit in a field. They go to the inn for food and shelter. They also meet a homeless woman with a little girl. This is a Japanese silent movie of people in poverty and the moral decisions they make to stay alive. The film moves slowly but develops more of an emotional impact as the simple story progresses. It's worth seeing once, unless you're a film scholar. IMDB: [An Inn in Tokyo](#)

Passing Fancy (Dekigokoro) (1933)

Takeshi Sakamoto, Nobuko Fushimi, Den Obinata

Illiterate Kihachi is not a good father to his son, and, as an older man, he foolishly pursues a young girl. This is a Japanese silent comedy with some unusual, funny moments and with a bit of pathos built in. It's a very engaging film, and well worth watching. IMDB: [Passing Fancy](#)

Tokyo Chorus (Tôkyô no kôrasu) (1931)

Tokihiko Okada, Emiko Yagumo, Hideo Sugawara

This is the story of a family's life in Tokyo. The father is a young insurance salesman who gets fired for arguing with the boss about an older employee he fired. He also has to deal with three kids (one really bratty boy) and his wife, who hospitalizes her daughter by feeding her spoiled cake. There's a mix of drama, comedy and pathos in this film. This is quite interesting as a Japanese silent film and worth watching. IMDB: [Tokyo Chorus](#)

Nana (Lady of the Boulevards) (1934)

Anna Sten, Phillips Holmes, Lionel Atwill

From poverty Nana rises in society and becomes wealthy using her beauty and her body. She makes fools of old men in the process. There's some silliness and some marginal acting, but the film follows the plot of the classic novel by Zola. It's a real treat to watch a movie starring Anna Sten. Regardless of any other film features, her beauty and screen presence alone carry the film. This movie is enjoyable and well worth watching. IMDB: [Nana](#)

The Tale of the Fox (Le roman de Renard) (1930)

Claude Dauphin, Romain Bouquet, Sylvain Itkine

The sly fox tries to attract his victims through flattery and deceit, but his victims seek revenge. This is an early stop-action animation using models and is interesting and creative enough to watch as a historical curiosity. IMDB: [The Tale of the Fox](#)

Limite (1931)

Olga Breno, Tatiana Rey, Raul Schnoor

This is a Brazilian silent film with only two dialogue cards. Simply three people floating in a row boat with images of their recent past. Avant Garde. This movie requires multiple viewings to fully appreciate the filmmaker's vision, and I would recommend it for film scholars only. IMDB: [Limite](#)

Mazurka (1935)

Pola Negri, Albrecht Schoenhals, Ingeborg Theek

This is a German film with subtitles and is based on a 1930 European court case. Vera's perfect life is ruined by a womanizing concert pianist. She kills him, and the rest of movie presents the backstory, her trial, and her motives. This film is fascinating from beginning to end. Gripping drama with an emotional performance by Pola Negri. (For what it's worth, this was Adolph Hitler's favorite movie.) I would consider this film **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Mazurka](#)

The Heartbreak Kid (1972)

Charles Grodin, Cybill Shepherd, Jeannie Berlin

Leonard marries Lila but falls in love with Kelly on his honeymoon. Jeannie Berlin is perfect for the role of the annoying wife. She's funny and garners some of the best laughs in the film. Cybill Shepard is beautiful, of course, and does well in her role as the love interest. Charles Grodin has some funny moments but can be irritating. The plot of the film is unrealistic, but there are some laugh-out-loud moments. Worth watching. IMDB: [The Heartbreak Kid](#)

G. I. Jane (1997)

Demi Moore, Viggo Mortensen, Anne Bancroft

A senator argues for the integration of women into field combat, and Jordan is the test case for the first woman to go through training to become a Navy Seal. No one expects her to succeed. I was so impressed with this movie. It explores the politics involved behind the scenes of a controversial move and the intense training involved in becoming a Seal. Demi Moore is perfect in her role—a major badass. There is a lot of action in this film including an actual combat mission. If you enjoy action movies and war movies, you will love this film. Extremely well done. IMDB: [G. I. Jane](#)

Mikey and Nicky (1976)

Peter Falk, John Cassavetes, Ned Beatty

Psychologically unbalanced man is on the run from an assassin for embezzling from the mob. His friend tries to help him. I wanted to like this movie, however, after waiting, waiting and waiting for my ‘like’ to kick in, the credits rolled and I was still waiting for a positive feeling about the movie. Skip this one. IMDB: [Mikey and Nicky](#)

Back Street (1932)

Irene Dunne, John Boles, June Clyde

Ray Schmidt is the ‘toniest’ girl in Cincinnati—beautiful, flirty, and every boy’s desire. She falls in love with a married man, though, and becomes a ‘back street girl’-the mistress of a millionaire. If you like an old-style romance/drama, you will love this film. Excellent acting,

engaging story, emotional ups and downs. Enjoy this film and keep the tissues handy. **Must see** viewing. IMDB: [Back Street](#)

Broadway Bad [Her Reputation] (1933)

Joan Blondell, Ricardo Cortez, Ginger Rogers

Showgirl Toni impulsively marries a college boyfriend, but the marriage is short-lived when her husband assumes she is having an affair with the show's financial backer. Because of the scandal and notoriety, she becomes the talk of the town and very wealthy. Other secrets and complications emerge as the film progresses. This is a highly entertaining precode drama. Joan Blondell and a young Ginger Rogers help make this a hit. Plenty of showgirls in underwear and lots of sexual situations and banter make this a quintessential precode film. The movie is totally engaging, well-acted, great story, and a very satisfying viewing experience. IMDB: [Broadway Bad](#)

Riders of the Purple Sage 1925

Tom Mix, Beatrice Burnham, Arthur Morrison

Lew Walters loves Millie, the pretty wife of Frank Erne and continues to ask her to run away with him. She continues to refuse. He returns with three companions. They kidnap Millie and her young daughter and shoot her husband. Millie's brother (Tom Mix) comes from Kansas to hunt down the kidnappers and save his sister and niece. There are enough conflicts and twists in this film for four movies. Lots of fast-moving action with Mix as a Western super hero. Although fights are not authentic and the plot at times is coincidental and unrealistic, this is an interesting movie to watch. IMDB: [Riders of the Purple Sage](#)

The Only Son (Hitori musuko) (1936)

Chôko Iida, Shin'ichi Himori, Masao Hayama

A widower works in the mills, and her only ambition is to support her young son's education so he can become a great man. This movie is from the master Japanese filmmaker, Ozu. There are stark settings and a microscopic look at everyday life in Japan during the depression. It's a tender, emotional film and well worth watching. IMDB: [The Only Son](#)

The Black Room (1935)

Boris Karloff, Marian Marsh, Robert Allen

Twins are born with a family prophesy that the younger brother will kill the older in the Black Room of a huge estate. To prevent the tragedy, the Black Room is bricked over and sealed. Despite a few moments of weak acting and some improbable plot twists, this is a solid thriller. The action moves quickly, and the story is engaging. Cliches like 'rip-roaring tale' and 'on the edge of your seat' apply here. Boris Karloff in dual roles plays both brothers. Marian Marsh's beauty radiates. She truly has porcelain doll features. I'd recommend adding this to your collection with other early 30s thrillers/horror/mystery films such as Frankenstein and the Wolf Man. **Must See** viewing. IMDB: [The Black Room](#)

The Man They Could Not Hang (1939)

Boris Karloff, Lorna Gray, Robert Wilcox

Dr. Savaard is conducting an experiment to use an artificial heart apparatus on a volunteer to revive him after he dies. Dr. Savaard first kills the young man and then starts the revival process. His nurse, who is

also the young man's girlfriend, panics and contacts the police. They come and interrupt the revival process before the young man comes back to life. Dr. Saavard is convicted of murder and hanged. He's brought back to life and ingeniously seeks revenge on all who wronged him. This is a very interesting, very engaging science fiction/thriller. Similar at times to *And Then There were none* as the doctor tries to eliminate his enemies one by one. Acting is generally solid (Karloff is always stellar) but his nurse, Ann Doran, would get a Razzie if they had the awards at that time. This is a good movie, though, that will keep your interest. Very entertaining. IMDB: [The Man They Could Not Hang](#)

Tom Dick and Harry (1941)

Ginger Rogers, George Murphy, Alan Marshal, Burgess Meredith

Janie dreams of the perfect guy. She dates and gets proposed to by three different fellas. She has a hard time deciding who to marry. This is a light, quirky romantic comedy. Ginger Rogers is one of favorite actresses and has done wonderful work. However, this film is a low point for her. Her quirkiness doesn't suit her well, and there's something oddly out of whack with this film. It's entertaining enough to watch, and Ginger Rogers is always mesmerizing, but you might find viewing this film to be painful. IMDB: [Tom Dick and Harry](#)

My Name is Julia Ross (1945)

Nina Foch, Dame May Whitty, George Macready

London resident Julia accepts a job as a live-in secretary, but after she arrives at the estate where she is to live, she is drugged, kidnapped and taken far from the city. She is imprisoned by psychopaths with mysterious intentions. 'How can she possibly escape' is the focus of the

film. This is a standard thriller with everything about the film being simply 'average.' It's entertaining enough for a view, but nothing exceptional. IMDB: [My Name is Julia Ross](#)

The Mob (1951)

Broderick Crawford, Betty Buehler, Richard Kiley

Off-duty cop, Johnny Damico, witnesses a murder, holds a gun on the killer and bends over to help the victim when the killer shows a badge and a police revolver. The killer escapes. He wasn't a cop. The chief doesn't suspend Johnny but sends him under cover to track down the killer and what turns out to be his mob connections. Broderick Crawford is at his best here in what is a first rate noir. Fast moving action, suspense and all the noir characteristics. If you like film noir, you'll love this movie. IMDB: [The Mob](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

FEBRUARY, 2017 POST

Kelly's Heroes (1970)

Clint Eastwood, Telly Savalas, Don Rickles, Carroll O'Connor, Donald Sutherland

Kelly plans a gold bullion bank robbery in the midst of WWII action. Comedy, drama, war film. Great plot, interesting characters, good acting. Lots of explosions, lots of action, lots of absurd situations, lots of entertainment. On the one hand this is an action-packed war drama, and on the other, it's a wacky comedy. Strange combination, but a great film.

Lot's of fun. [Did I really say that about a war film?] Regardless of your taste in films, you'll enjoy this one. IMDB: [Kelly's Heroes](#)

Tammy and the Bachelor (1957)

Debbie Reynolds, Walter Brennan, Leslie Nielsen, Fay Wray, Louise Beavers

A pilot crashes near Tammy and her Grandpa's cabin in the swamp, and she nurses the bachelor back to health. When Grandpa goes to prison for bootlegging, Tammy moves in with a wealthy family—the bachelor, engaged to another, lives there. Of course, unschooled and naive Tammy's in love with him. Think this movie is sappy and not worth watching? Give it a try. Debbie Reynolds is amazing, the acting is superb, wonderful color and cinematography, tender and emotional story. There's an iconic film moment when Debbie Reynolds wistfully sings 'Tammy' while sitting in her window seat. Wonderful movie experience. **Must see** viewing. IMDB: [Tammy and the Bachelor](#)

They Won't Forget (1937)

Claude Rains, Gloria Dickson, Edward Norris, Lana Turner

Mild-mannered business teacher is accused of murdering one of his students—beautiful and sexy Lana Turner. [Sorry for the spoiler.] Community hysteria clouds the question of guilt or innocence. Wow. Powerful and suspenseful murder mystery here. Strong acting and fast-paced action. Good courtroom drama. You'll be engrossed with this film and come away with a rewarding viewing experience. IMDB: [They Won't Forget](#)

The Honeymoon Killers (1970)

Shirley Stoler, Tony Lo Bianco, Mary Jane Higby

This is the true story of a gigolo who preys on rich, older women. When he teams up with one of his victims, who's a psychopath, things go downhill. This film is low-budget with bad audio. It's a very disturbing film with amateurish acting and documentary-style cinematography. Interesting enough to watch if you can tolerate gruesome, cringe-worthy, uncomfortable scenes. Don't let young people near this one. If you are looking for an entertaining, uplifting, or relax-and-enjoy type movie—this ain't it. IMDB: [The Honeymoon Killers](#)

The Story of G.I. Joe [Ernie Pyle's The Story of G.I. Joe]

Burgess Meredith, Robert Mitchum, Freddie Steele

This war film has a no plot and some action but focuses rather on the daily lives of the soldiers of WWII. It's a realistic look at what a G.I. endures each day during the war. Lots of time in the rain and mud. This film has some historical interest in that it features soldiers still in the service, it was filmed right at the end of the war, and it features some of Ernie Pyle's original writing when he was embedded with the troops. It is, however, dated, slow-moving and of only average interest.

IMDB: [The Story of G.I. Joe](#)

Don't Change Your Husband (1919)

Elliott Dexter, Gloria Swanson, Lew Cody

Gloria's husband is getting on her nerves after several years of marriage. (He is pretty rude and insensitive.) A friend's nephew makes a play for her. How she responds is the focus of the film. This is a well-done silent by DeMille—with some elaborate sets and costumes. It's a simple story

but a satisfying hour's worth of entertainment. IMDB: [Don't Change Your Husband](#)

Brute Force (1947)

Burt Lancaster, Hume Cronyn, Charles Bickford, Yvonne De Carlo, Ann Blyth

Film Noir in prison. The grit and desperation of prison life, the backstories of some prisoners, and the plans for the big break. Add a sadistic prison guard, and you've got a great story. This is a well-made film with great acting and suspenseful action. Well worth the time spent viewing. IMDB: [Brute Force](#)

Tammy and the Doctor (1963)

Sandra Dee, Peter Fonda, Macdonald Carey, Beulah Bondi, Reginald Owen, Adam West

Tammy accompanies her elderly friend to the hospital for an extended stay, and they put her to work. She falls in love with a young doctor. Weak script, a few laughs, average entertainment value. Peter Fonda is wooden, and it's hard to endure Sandra Dee's grating, fast-talking, unsophisticated, faux Southern accent. No Fonda/Dee chemistry. After watching Debbie Reynolds in the original movie of this series, it's difficult to accept Dee in the role. Can't recommend this film. There's better entertainment elsewhere—anywhere. IMDB: [Tammy and the Doctor](#)

A New Leaf (1971)

Elaine May, Walter Matthau, Jack Weston, James Coco, Doris Roberts

Wealthy Mr. Graham lives on an inheritance but runs out of money. He feels his salvation is to marry a wealthy woman and then murder her. This is a witty, sophisticated comedy. Elaine May is talented and uniquely funny. (She also wrote the screenplay and directed the film.) Walther Matthau gives a solid, grumpy performance. This is an engaging comedy highlighting the talents of May. **She shines.** This is a pleasant and amusing film. You'll enjoy it. IMDB: [A New Leaf](#)

Julie (1956)

Doris Day, Louis Jourdan, Barry Sullivan, Frank Lovejoy

Julie suspects her current husband killed her first husband and is terrified he will kill her. Heart-stopping beginning to this movie! Continued and unrelenting suspense to the closing credits. You'll be on the edge of your chair throughout this movie. If you like thrillers, this is one of the best. **Must see** viewing. IMDB: [Julie](#)

Sons and Lovers (1960)

Trevor Howard, Dean Stockwell, Wendy Hiller, Mary Ure

Complicated story of Paul's search for love and a life free from the possessiveness of mother, father, and lover. Excellent acting, good screenplay and intense drama. This is a very good rendering of the classic novel by D. H. Lawrence. View if you like dramatic literary classics, outstanding acting, or taut drama. IMDB: [Sons and Lovers](#)

Designing Woman (1957)

Gregory Peck, Lauren Bacall, Dolores Gray, Jesse White, Chuck Connors

Peck is a sports writer on the road where he meets Bacall, falls in love and marries her—despite the fact that he has a fiancée at home. The rest of the movie focuses on his efforts to hide the relationship from his new wife. Oh yeah, and he is in trouble with the mob for writing unfavorably about them. Gregory Peck as the lead actor in a comedy—whose idea what that? He's not good. Bacall, however—she's good in anything. The film is a standard farce. Unless you are a huge fan of Peck or Bacall and have to see everything they're in, skip this one. IMDB: [Designing Woman](#)

Enter Laughing (1967)

José Ferrer, Shelley Winters, Elaine May, Reni Santoni, Jack Gilford, Janet Margolin, Don Rickles, Richard Deacon, Rob Reiner

Despite resistance from those around him, David wants desperately to be an actor. When he finally gets a role, things get crazy. This is a unique comedy with an all-star cast. The lead, Reni Santoni, is new, but he does a remarkable job. Each actor in this film makes a significant contribution. There's an equal distribution of talented, comedic bits. There are no weak performances. Elaine May—sultry, seductive and the focus of the funny in this film. And this film is funny—quirky, jokey, slapstick. You will enjoy this film. IMDB: [Enter Laughing](#)

The Wheeler Dealers (1963)

Lee Remick, James Garner, Phil Harris, Chill Wills, Jim Backus, Louis Nye, John Astin, Pat Harrington Jr.

Failed oil man James Garner heads to New York to try his hand in shady investments. He falls in love with Lee Remick, and she comes to think he's wheeling and dealing with her as well. James Garner is handsome, and Lee Remick is beautiful. Those are the only two good things I can say about this movie. Garner and Remick lack chemistry. For a romantic comedy, there are no laughs and just a glimmer of romance. Garner's over-the-top charm and faux Texas accent are annoying. This is one of those movies I thought about not finishing—which I rarely do. Skip this one. IMDB: [The Wheeler Dealers](#)

Paris Holiday (1958)

Bob Hope, Fernandel, Anita Ekberg, Martha Hyer, Preston Sturges

Bob goes to Paris to get rights to a play. While pursuing a beautiful blonde, he is pursued by assassins. This is a typical Bob Hope comedy with many corny one-liners and a few lines that are genuinely funny. Add two beautiful girls and another comedian to play off of, and you've got a movie—a weak one, though. Sub par entertainment here.

IMDB: [Paris Holiday](#)

I Was Born, But (1932)

Tatsuo Saitô, Tomio Aoki, Mitsuko Yoshikawa

(Japanese Silent Film) A family moves to the suburbs of Tokyo, and the two young boys keep skipping school because of bullies and violence at school. The two boys also have a conflict with their father, thinking he is a loser. It's fascinating to view lives from another time and another culture, regardless of the plot. [One lesson from the silents of other countries is that people and their daily lives are the same the world over.] This silent is as well done as many of the American films at the

time. There are poignant moments and funny moments. There's a gang of young boys in this film reminiscent of the Our Gang kids (without blacks or girls), and, unlike the mischievous kids in the Our Gang group, there are some mean boys in this group. This is most interesting to view for historical and cultural reasons. It's an easy going movie by a Japanese master. You should enjoy this film. IMDB: [I Was Born, But](#)

MOVIES: RARE, SELDOM-SEEN AND CLASSIC

JANUARY , 2017 POST

The Best Man (1964)

Henry Fonda, Cliff Robertson, Edie Adams

Inside politics at a fictional 1964 presidential convention based on Gore Vidal's novel. Scruples vs. no scruples. Excellent acting with some powerful dramatic moments. An interesting movie about political infighting. Explores central, controversial political issues which are still relevant in today's politics. This is a good movie to watch, particularly if you have an interest in politics. IMDB: [The Best Man](#)

Hot Saturday (1932)

Cary Grant, Nancy Carroll, Randolph Scott

Lots of nosy old ladies and 'friends' gossiping about the young people, who heat it up on Saturday night. Ruth's reputation is ruined by mean-spirited people. Good PreCode dating-focused movie. Great plot with interesting conflicts and good acting. Very early Cary Grant. A good look at relationships and mores in the early '30s. Very entertaining. IMDB: [Hot Saturday](#)

Torch Singer (1933)

Claudette Colbert, Ricardo Cortez, David Manners

Sally gives birth in a hospital for unwed mothers but has to give up her baby. Without her child, she becomes the most popular and most notorious torch singer in town, but she still yearns for her baby. There's a lot of heartbreak and a lot of drama here. Colbert is exceptional in her role, and the movie is engaging from beginning to end. You'll enjoy this movie. It's **must see** viewing. IMDB: [The Torch Singer](#)

Merrily We Go to Hell (1932)

Sylvia Sidney, Fredric March, Adrienne Allen

Veteran, alcoholic newspaper reporter marries a wealthy, naive debutante. What could possibly go wrong? Acting is shaky at times and the plot is coincidental, but this film is entertaining. IMDB: [Merrily We Go To Hell](#)

Steel Magnolias (1989)

Shirley MacLaine, Olympia Dukakis, Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Daryl Hannah, Julia Roberts

The antics and experiences of this strong cast of women center on the life of Shelby—her marriage, her pregnancy and her weaknesses. This is a busy movie—lots of subplots, characters and nonstop action/talking. For Southern women, the implausible Southern accents are grating at times, and Dolly Parton is the only actor with an authentic Southern accent. A lot of star power here, but variable acting quality. Sally Field seems miscast as Julie Roberts' mother even though her performance is

admirable. Julia Roberts is strong, and Dolly Parton and Darryl Hannah shine. The beauty shop is gossip central. Lots of quirky comedy, intense drama, and heart-breaking moments. It's hard to dislike this cast and their exploits. This is an exceptional movie—**must see** viewing.

IMDB: [Steel Magnolias](#)

The Music Box (1989)

Jessica Lange, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Frederic Forrest

A Hungarian immigrant lives life for 37 years as a model American citizen but is then put on trial as a Nazi war criminal. His lawyer daughter, convinced of his innocence, defends him. A negative of this movie is that there is too much whispering that is hard to hear. The film is just average. Lots of cliches and a lack of energy and true suspense. Watchable but it falls flat. IMDB: [The Music Box](#)

Straight Time (1978)

Dustin Hoffman, Theresa Russell, Gary Busey

Max is released from prison for burglary and tries to go straight, but circumstances work against him. This film is a very realistic view of the life of a burglar/criminal. The viewer can feel the thrill and the fear of the burglar during the crimes. Interesting and suspenseful film. Well worth watching. IMDB: [Straight Time](#)

The Green Berets (1968)

John Wayne, David Janssen, Jim Hutton

Elite Green Berets train for combat and are deployed to Vietnam. It takes a long time to get to any combat in this film. Lots of talking leading up to battle. Fairly standard war drama. Heavy-handed pro-Vietnamese War propaganda. If you're a big fan of war pictures, you should like this film. If you have to see every movie John Wayne was in, see this. Otherwise, there's better entertainment elsewhere. IMDB: [The Green Berets](#)

The Emigrants (1971)

Max von Sydow, Liv Ullmann, Eddie Axberg

This film is a realistic portrayal of rural life in Sweden in 1844 and dreams of the peasants to emigrate to America. This movie portrays a hardscrabble life with hardship and tragedy in Sweden and the arduous journey to a new life in America. The viewer hears, feels, and sees close up what it is to work a farm by hand during this period and the details of the emigration to America. I am fascinated with this film. It's a true work of art. Incredible cinematography with imaginative use of close ups—iconic faces and images. It's poetry on celluloid and **must see** viewing. IMDB: [The Emigrants](#)

New Land, The (1972)

Max von Sydow, Liv Ullmann, Eddie Axberg

This film is part 2 of the Emigrants. A beautiful, artistic film detailing realistically the struggles of the Swedish peasants in their New Land in Minnesota. Many left Sweden not only because of the hard life but because of religious persecution. One of the hardships the immigrants faced was that other immigrants carried the persecution from Sweden to the New Land. This movie also details younger brother Robert's ill-fated

journey to California seeking gold. This is a beautiful film filled with tragedy and is **must see** viewing. IMDB: [The New Land](#)

Jane Eyre (1943)

Orson Welles, Joan Fontaine, Margaret O'Brien

Jane is an orphan raised to adulthood in a life of cruelty. As a young adult she becomes governess at a manor on the English moor owned by a strange and strident master. This film is a faithful rendition of one of the greatest novels in the English language. It's a dark, brooding tale with accomplished acting and an excellent screenplay. This film moves quickly and is engaging from the first frame to the last. This film is definitely **must see** viewing. IMDB: [Jane Eyre](#)

Brother Orchid (1940)

Edward G. Robinson, Humphrey Bogart, Ann Sothern

Mob boss Robinson decides to retire and pursue a life in search of 'class.' It doesn't work out, and when he returns years later to reclaim his business and his girlfriend, everything has changed. Anne Sothern is perfect as the ditzy girlfriend, and Robinson gives his usual solid performance in this comedy/drama. There is also an epic fist fight between Robinson and his rival, Humphrey Bogart. This is a well-made and entertaining movie. IMDB: [Brother Orchid](#)

Thin Ice (1937)

Sonja Henie, Tyrone Power, Arthur Treacher

A prince visits a Swiss resort and (under an assumed name) falls in love with the skating instructor. Incredible skating performances by Sonja Henie with scores of backup skaters and accompanied by a full orchestra and chorus. Breathtaking. Thin plot with musical numbers, dancing and skating featured. Henie tops the charts for cuteness, and she actually give a credible performance as an actress. If you like musicals from this period, you will like this movie—a pleasurable, artistic experience.

IMDB: [Thin Ice](#)

The Dolly Sisters (1945)

Betty Grable, John Payne, June Haver

The Dolly sisters work professionally as dancers and singers from childhood into young adulthood. Betty faces a problem when she falls in love with a struggling song writer and is conflicted as to whether she should marry and leave her sister act or be loyal to her sister and continue with the act. The plot in this film is thin, and the singing and dancing are the focus. Acting is sketchy at times, but the singing and dancing are outstanding, and the scenery and costumes are colorful and add appeal to the film. (This is a visually beautiful film.) [Of historical interest is the production number, *Dark Town Strutters Ball*, in which all participants perform in black face.] This musical is pretty good and well worth watching. IMDB: [The Dolly Sisters](#)

The Grifters (1990)

Anjelica Huston, John Cusack, Annette Bening

Three people make a living by cheating others. Conflicts and double-crossing ensue. The acting is top-notch in this film, and you'll see Annette Bening at her best here. This is a bizarre thriller, which is slow

going at times and cringe-worthy at others. Of average interest.
IMDB: [The Grifters](#)

Winslow Boy, The (1948)

Robert Donat, Cedric Hardwicke, Basil Radford, Margaret Leighton

A 12-year-old boy is expelled from military school without due process. His father goes to extreme lengths to prove his innocence. This is a stuffy English movie based on a classic play. Excellent acting, interesting story, but I missed many details because the dialogue in this film is hard to hear clearly much of the time. The British English is spoken so quickly and in lowered tones at times I missed what was said. Nevertheless, it's worth a look but not a necessity. IMDB: [The Winslow Boy](#)