

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/four_samosas

CATHERINE CALLED BIRDY: CATHERINE CALLED BIRDY takes a medieval setting and populates it with modern people. Well, that is not quite fair. But while the attitudes of most of the people around Birdy are (mostly) accurate to the period, Birdy's own attitudes and actions are modern, and the language everyone speaks is definitely modern. (They're not using slang like "hashtag" or "women's lib", but there are no "thee"s or "thou"s, no "Yield, you varlet!") And the director went for color-blind casting, which makes it look more modern or urban or something. The whole idea is that the screenwriter uses the film to draw a connection between our modern life and the medieval life in the castle. The only problem is that the attitudes of some of the people are modernized in order to produce the desired ending. Still, it's amusing enough for its comedic elements.

Released 23 September 2022. Rating: +2 (-4 to +4) or 7/10

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11727866/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/catherine_called_birdy

HONK FOR JESUS. SAVE YOUR SOUL: HONK FOR JESUS. SAVE YOUR SOUL is billed as a "mockumentary" about a fallen pastor of a megachurch and his attempt to get his congregation back. The "humor" is that the pastor and his wife ("First Lady") are not repentant (big surprise!) but concerned about their image, position, and money. One major stumbling block is that it is not a true mockumentary--there are scenes that clearly could not have been filmed by the documentary crew (e.g., scenes of the couple in bad), and other scenes that are shot from multiple angles, or even show the filming crew in the shot. Another is that HONK FOR JESUS SAVE YOUR SOUL does not really go anywhere; it just sort of peters out.

Released 02 September 2022. Rating: low +2 (-4 to +4) or 7/10

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12655436/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/honk_for_jesus_save_your_soul

[-mrl/ecl]

THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH (letters of comment by Fred Lerner and Sam Long):

In response to [Evelyn's comments on THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH in the 12/16/22 issue of the MT VOID](#), Fred Lerner writes:

[You wrote about the Epic of Gilgamesh. My favorite version is that offered by John Myers Myers, who summarises it in the form of a six-stanza drinking song \("Orpheus' Song" in SILVERLOCK\).](#) [-fl]

[And Sam Long writes:](#)

[Whenever I run across a reference to Gilgamesh, I can't help but be reminded of Jimmy Durante's popular song "Inka Dinka Doo".](#) [-sl]

Baggage (letters of comment by Hal Heydt and Jeff Jonas):

In response to [Peter Trei's comments on baggage](#) in the 12/09/22 issue of the MT VOID, Hal Heydt writes:

[Peter Trei writes,] "Does your 'baggage' rejoice in the name Hilda, by any chance?" [-pt]

Shades of Flanders & Swann description of their tour of Canada. "Coming back, he had 120 lbs. of excess baggage. In the end, he had to leave her behind." [-hh]

And Jeff Jonas adds:

There's a "Twilight Zone" episode with that punchline: a prisoner on a far away asteroid cannot take his robot companion back home. [-jj]

Evelyn notes:

Its title is "The Lonely". [-ecl]

GUILLERMO DEL TORO'S PINOCCHIO (letter of comment by Gary McGath):

In response to [Mark and Evelyn's review of GUILLERMO DEL TORO'S PINOCCHIO](#) in the 12/09/22 issue of the MT VOID, Gary McGath writes:

Given the massive-sounding changes, they should have called it "Carlo Collodi's Pinocchio," in the spirit of "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein" and "Bram Stoker's Dracula." [-sd]

DC LEAGUE OF SUPER-PETS (letter of comment by Jay E. Morris):

In response to [Mark and Evelyn's review of DC LEAGUE OF SUPER-PETS](#) in the 12/09/22 issue of the MT VOID, Jay R. Morris writes:

It's a DC project, not Marvel, and in the MCU the Deadpool movies did receive R ratings. [-jem]

Evelyn responds:

Mea maxima culpa. I wrote that in what was either a brain fart or a senior moment. But then again, I don't know which characters are in which universe anyway (even if the title does give it away). :-) [-ecl]

This Week's Reading (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

THE BOOK OF BOOKS by Jessica Allen (Black Dog & Leventhal, ISBN 978-0-316-41755-6) is the companion book to the PBS series "The Great American Read". As such it is more designed as a "read-once", or even a "just-flip-through-once", book rather than an on-going reference (unless you count using the list of books as a reading "bucket list." So I will give comments on a couple of individual articles, rather than trying to review the book as a whole.

Allen lists ten "famous first lines". I'm clearly not as well-read as I thought: I recognized only four of them.

In the write-up about Mark Twain for THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER, Allen doesn't even mention his role in getting General Ulysses S. Grant's memoirs, though he does cover Twain's financial troubles. (And why TOM SAWYER instead of HUCKLEBERRY FINN?)

Of James Patterson, Allen says, "Patterson has had more than 50 New York Times' bestsellers, a world record. So he doesn't just write fast, he writes well." Maybe, but the "New York Times" best seller list reports popularity, not quality. Erich Segal's LOVE STORY was on the list for 41 weeks, and is not considered a paragon of quality.

In the description of Agatha Christie's AND THEN THERE WERE NONE, Allen gives the original title of the book, TEN LITTLE N*****S", explaining that was how the rhyme was known at the time, but does not mention the interim title, TEN LITTLE INDIANS.

Prince Edward Island in Canada is known for two things, potatoes and ANNE OF GREEN GABLES. The former does not draw nearly as many tourists as the latter.

In contrast to the large numbers of novels by some writers (such as Agatha Christie or James Patterson, we have others, such as J. D. Salinger or Margaret Mitchell, who had but a single novel to their name. (Mitchell was killed in a car accident relatively early, but had already decided that she could never match the success of GONE WITH THE WIND and determined never to write another book. And John Kennedy Toole committed suicide when he couldn't manage to sell his first novel, A CONFEDERACY OF DUNCES. Salinger continued to write, just not novels.)

Of THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME, Allen writes, that author Mark Haddon is "demonstrating sensitivity toward those with mental and physical disorders." The protagonist is universally accepted as being autistic (or "being on the spectrum", if you prefer), yet Allen never uses either term, and there is much debate about whether autism is a disorder or disability.

Allen claims that by the conclusion of Isaac Asimov's complete "Foundation" series, "he was widely recognized as perhaps the greatest sci-fi writer ever to pick up a pen." Hardly, and it's statements such as this that made this book irritating.

Since this is a 2018 book, the chapter on THE GREAT GATSBY has no mention of Nghi Vo's THE CHOSEN AND THE BEAUTIFUL.

And the decision to print some pages with white print on blue background means this is aimed at the "Wired" generation rather than people with vision problems. [-ecl]

Mark Leeper
mleeper@optonline.net

Quote of the Week:

We all declare for liberty, but in using the same word
we do not all mean the same thing.
--Abraham Lincoln

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