

ENTERTAINMENT

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ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY NOT JUST AN INSECT

Technology Square, with its restaurants and retail stores, marks its one-year anniversary. **Page 7**

Learn the techniques and rules for playing cricket from Tech's own cricket club members. **Page 14**

Overloaded with stupidity, *Anchorman* sinks

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The new movie *Anchorman* left something to be desired—like the 90 minutes that would have been better spent doing homework, or the brain cells that withered away from the predictable plot and all the immature gags that Will Ferrell and company kept dishing out.

However, if you're in the mood for mindless humor or a blatant and silly parody movie, or if you are just easily amused, then don't cross this off your list just yet.

The movie starts out with the following disclaimer: "The following events are based on a true story. However, the names, places, and events have all been changed." The story revolves around KVWN, the most highly rated news station in San Diego in the 1970s, and its evening news team, headed by main anchor Ron Burgundy (Ferrell), a well-known personality throughout the city.

At a pool party, Burgundy catches sight of a beautiful blonde woman, only to have all of his painful attempts at hitting on her flatly rebuffed. True to the formulaic nature of the movie, in the next scene, KVWN decides to get with the changing times and promote diversity among its all-male news staff as a way to maintain its dominance over the rival networks, and hires a woman to join the news team.

The woman? None other than Veronica Corningstone (Christina Applegate), the same woman that had caught Burgundy's attention.

As the story pushes onward, Corningstone puts up with simple

assignments that insult her intelligence, as well as out-and-out sexual harassment by the rest of the news team, and she inexplicably falls for Burgundy despite his childish and self-absorbed personality.

There's an incredibly random CG scene of the two frolicking around a land of rainbows and pretty shiny things, which is supposed to symbolize their night together, but it just leaves the viewer staring slack-jawed at the screen and wondering if the theater slipped drugs into the popcorn.

Eventually, Corningstone's hard work pays off and she is promoted to co-anchor alongside Burgundy—only to break up with him when he pitches a fit because he thought she was joking when she told him that she, like him, wanted to someday become a network anchor.

One fateful day, due to a mishap with Burgundy throwing a half-eaten burrito out of his window, which causes an accident with a motorcyclist who throws Burgundy's dog over the side of the bridge they are on to get revenge, Corningstone has to do the news show as the solo anchor, which results in soaring ratings.

Tensions get worse between the co-anchors, and they finally result in Corningstone editing the TelePrompTer feed to make Burgundy—whose fatal flaw is that he reads anything and everything on the TelePrompTer—cuss out all of San Diego, forcing their boss to fire him on the spot.

The synopsis ends here, so as not to ruin the ending, but suffice it to say that there's a generally pleasing resolution and everybody lives happily ever after, as expected.



Photo courtesy of Dreamworks Pictures

Brian Fantana (Paul Rudd of *Clueless* and *Friends*) and Ron Burgundy (Will Ferrell) enjoy the aesthetically pleasing perks that come along with being TV anchors for San Diego's #1 news team.

It is worth mentioning that all throughout the movie there is at least one joke per minute on average, nearly all of them being either sexually slanted or just plain dumb, if not both. This movie definitely caters to the lowest common denominator.

Besides Jack Black's appearance, several other actors make cameos, such as Tim Robbins, Luke Wilson, and Ben Stiller, and there is a reference to the rumbles of historic New York, reminiscent of the famous West Side Story snarl. The major

difference is that this time, there are only four Jets (the KVWN news team) while there are at least twenty Sharks (every other major San Diego network's news team).

Another part worth seeing is the bloopers reel shown during the end credits—though the presence of a completely arbitrary *Smokey and the Bandit* blooper is a bit puzzling.

Considering that the movie set out to be nothing more than a mindless comedy from the very beginning, it was very successful. Will Ferrell

did a great job portraying the self-centered, predictable, 1970s-heavy character of Ron Burgundy, and Christina Applegate generally did a good (if sometimes overdone) job at portraying the independent, sassy Veronica Corningstone.

The major question presented, though, is whether or not what was expected is even worth the \$6.50 to see it in theaters. I would kindly suggest that you'd probably be better off just waiting until you can rent it at Blockbuster instead.

Spidey 2 spins winning web

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Spider-Man 2, a.k.a. *The Amazing Spider-Man* (sounds so much catchier, don't you think?) hit theaters last week, fulfilling the hopes and dreams of Spidey fans around the nation. It seems that director Sam Raimi, the same guy who brought us the likes of television's *Xena, Warrior Princess* and the *Evil Dead* movie franchise (yes, they're the same person), has outdone the previous record setting blockbuster of 2002 by adding a little more of everything.

There is more web swinging and web slinging, more chase scenes, car crashes, subway hijackings and...pizza deliveries? (See the movie to get what I mean). But has adding more to the movie made a difference this time?

The good news is this movie gets off to a running start. Raimi decided not to waste any time re-introducing any characters that the audience should already be familiar with.

There are action sequences aplenty in this movie, and ample opportunity for Spidey to show off his newfound web slinging skills. There are some periods in the course of this movie

where the action slows down considerably and the drama takes over. But Raimi uses these periods to develop the plot and show other aspects of the characters, which enables him to hold onto the audience as the story develops.

In addition to the expected summer blockbuster formula of having more special and visual effects added to the movie, this flick attempts to delve even deeper into the character

"There is more web swinging and web slinging, more chase scenes, car crashes, subway hijackings..."

of Peter Parker, played by *Seabiscuit*'s Toby Maguire.

We see some sides of Peter's personality that moviegoers have not seen before, but certain comic book fans know all too well. For one thing, Peter's spider powers have begun to mysteriously wane—and not in the subtle sense of the word, either. He'll be happily swinging from building to building one second, then—*snap*, and he will lose his powers mid-

swing.

Raimi doesn't really elaborate with details on why Peter's powers have developed a mind of their own. He probably chose to save the explanations for the next set of sequels—Tobey Maguire has signed on for at least three future Spider-Man movies.

Peter has also begun to question his role as a friendly neighborhood Spider-Man, and throughout the movie he has to choose between using his powers for personal gain and using them to help others.

The rest of the characters are given the proper character development as well, with Mary Jane Watson (Kirsten Dunst) having finally started her acting career. The movie actually opens with a close up of MJ on a billboard in Times Square in a perfume advertisement.

But the relationship between Peter and MJ is strained throughout the movie, especially when Peter misses Mary Jane's performance as Cecily in a Broadway production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* (see DramaTech article on page 9 for more info on the play).

Mary Jane and Peter seem to have

DramaTech Earnest-ly delivers

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"It is a terrible thing for a man to find out suddenly that all his life he has been speaking nothing but the truth." — Jack Worthing, Act III.

In DramaTech's production of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, flawless execution is a goal honestly achieved. Coined by the author as "A Trivial Comedy for Serious People," the play is delightfully humorous while exploring the consequences of honesty or the lack thereof.

Set in England during the last decade of the 19th century, this satire tells a story of two upper-class friends who, through the use of guised personalities, escape from social commitments or live pretentiously to obtain the favor of beautiful young women.

Jack Worthing is a wealthy young bachelor who resides in the country with a young ward named Cecily, but makes trips as often as possible to London. These frequent excursions are excused by Jack's invention of

an ill-behaved younger brother named Ernest.

In London, Jack frequents a friend of equal disposition by the name of Algernon Moncrieff, also known as "Algy." Trouble arises when Jack falls for Algy's cousin, Gwendolen Fairfax, who knows him and loves him solely as "Ernest" Worthing.

These lovers' bliss is in disarray because Gwendolen's mother, Lady Bracknell, refuses to grant Jack (or Ernest, as they know him) her daughter's hand in marriage due to the mystery of his family origins. This turns out to be the least of Jack's problems when he finds out that Algernon has arrived at his country home pretending to be his younger brother Ernest, in order to court and propose to Jack's fair young ward, Cecily.

Meanwhile, Gwendolen arrives at the country house as well, and has a marvelously enchanting discussion with Cecily over which of the two is rightfully engaged to Mr. Ernest Worthing. Hilarity and calamity ensue in this tale of mistaken identity, when the

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moved past the intimacy that they shared in the first Spider-Man and their friendship is tense at best. She has found another boyfriend in the form of John Jameson, an astronaut, and Jonah Jameson's son.

Dr. Otto Octavius (Alfred Molina) is also given the attention he deserves. Doc Ock is introduced as one of Harry Osborn's research scientists who is trying to develop a new form of fusion energy. Octavius is driven, but is not even remotely insane when we first meet him.

Like most comic book villains, the new character is introduced as a normal individual, only with the insanity to be added in later on.

The real villain, it turns out, is not Doc Ock per se, but rather the four cybernetic arms that are developed by Octavius during the course of his research into fusion. The arms

actually have minds of their own, possessing an advanced AI that allows them to interact directly with Octavius' mind in a seamless and deadly way.

This concept of machine controlling man may seem a bit contrived, but for the purposes of the movie, it seems to work in avoiding a lengthy technical explanation on why Octavius goes insane.

Harry Osborn (James Franco, *Freaky and Geeks*), having been made the new head of Oscorp, has taken on the role of a master of industry well.

He still holds a huge grudge against Spidey, for whom he holds responsible for what happened to his father, but he never actually suspects that the spider in question has really been his best friend Peter all along.

This dynamic between Harry, Spider-Man and Peter is kept up for most of the movie, and how

this conflict is resolved at the end of the movie raises some important questions, such as how Harry's character will develop in the next installment.

For our viewing pleasure, Raimi has included various cameos and sequences that fans of his work will recognize. There is a cameo early in the movie featuring Dr. Curt Connors, whom fans of the comic know as The Lizard.

In what appears to be an effort to pay homage to his work on the *Evil Dead* movies, Raimi also included a sequence in a hospital scene where Octavius is strapped to an operating table in an effort by hospital staff to remove his cybernetic arms, which have become fused to his body.

The arms, of course, come to life, and wreak havoc on the hospital staff, whom flail and struggle helplessly to escape, but to no avail. There are chain saws, flying eyeballs, and other clues that fans of Raimi's work will

recognize as he seems to be paying respect to his previous days as a B-movie director.

It seems that Raimi has made a movie that is a rarity these days. He has made a comic book movie that really captures the atmosphere and action of the comic while refusing to sacrifice any visceral drama or action.

There are few comic book movies that have come out in recent times that capture both the comic quality of the story while not sacrificing any of the qualities of the action or drama. *Blade* or the first installment of *Batman* may come to mind as examples of movies that have pulled off the same effect in the past.

It seems these types of movies are hard to make without crossing the line that separates a classic movie from generic cheese. Raimi has done just that. He has managed to push this movie to the edge of that line, without crossing over.

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men are forced to reveal their true identities and the women they are pursuing both dream of marrying a man solely named Earnest.

The players are magnificent, wrapping you in the story so much that one can't help but feel bad for the deceptive yet comical beaus, or laugh hysterically at Algy's quips about marriage and relationships.

Costume design and props are appropriate and convincing, but the most spectacular aspect of this production is the performances of the actors and the delivery of their lines.

For those who are familiar with Wilde's work, this is an adaptation that you won't want to miss. The play is being performed on July 9-10 and 15-17 at the DramaTech Theater. Tickets may be purchased at the DramaTech box office.

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