





At the movies

Spooky comedies popular

Since movies began in the late 1800s, spooks, monsters and the supernatural have been popular feature subjects. In the last 15 years, however, the trend has escalated to mammoth proportions.

It was only a matter of time before the supernatural comedy would come of age.

"Ghostbusters" and "Gremlins" are not the first comedies to deal with the unexplainable, but they are the first to enjoy critical and popular success.

"Ghostbusters" stars funnymen Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Harold Ramis as professional poltergeist exterminators in the Big Apple.

Originally paraspychology professors at a New York university, they are booted out and their funding is yanked when it is found that Dr. Venkman (Murray) has been us-



Photo courtesy Columbia Pictures

Ghost exterminators Bill Murray (left) and Dan Aykroyd (center) succeed in making comedy out of the supernatural in "Ghostbusters."

ing the experiments to meet women. Just before they get the shaft, however, associate Drs. Stantz (Aykroyd) and Spengler (Ramis) discover the first physical evidence of actual supernatural activity.

Turned loose in the real world, the men become the only thing they are really trained for — Ghostbusters. And with all the technology that science can provide, they stage a frontal assault on the spiritual world — for a fee, of course.

Co-stars Aykroyd and Ramis, fine actors in their own right, have found their true niche as the co-writers of this tale. Alternately hilarious and even more hilarious, the script includes everything from "The Exorcist" to "Poltergeist" with "King Kong" in between.

As a tribute to their professionalism, they give the best lines not to themselves, but to star Bill Murray, probably the funniest film comedian today next to Eddie Murphy.

Murray's delivery is impeccable and his physical humor perfect. His character, Venkman, is the perfect vehicle for Murray's talents: a smoothtalking operator whose integrity is questionable but whose understanding of the media and human gullibility is near perfect.

"Gremlins," a film presented (but not directed) by Steven Spielberg, is a tenuous mix of comedy and horror directed by horror alumni and film buff Joe Dante. The premise of the film is a mystical creature known as

a Mogwai who must be kept away from water, out of the light and never fed after midnight.

The creature, dubbed Gizmo, is the most appealing creation to hit the screen since the Ewok in last year's "Star Wars" entry. This cloyingly cute furball from Shanghai is bought by inventor Rand Peltzer (Hoyt Axton) for his son Billy (Zach Galligan). True to form, Gizmo gets wet and he multiplies into five new creatures. These creatures then get fed and turn into the nastiest demons you can imagine.

The film begins with a gentle Frank Capra tone to it. Dante throws a clip of "It's a Wonderful Life" in for good measure. He presents a sleepy little town with an assortment of fun characters and a Scrooge-like businesswoman who bears more than a passing resemblance to Margret Hamilton in "The Wizard of Oz." She even goes as far as to threaten Billy's dog!

With this gentle beginning as a starting point, Dante turns the film upside down when the gremlins go on a rampage.

This is where the film loses its magic. At first these creatures seem to have a muppet-like sensibility to them, fearful-looking and humorously dangerous but never really a threat. These creatures do pose a serious threat, though, and because of that they are hard to take with a chuckle.

By Sean Axmaker



What a Famous Psychiatrist Says About **Burton's Hamburgers** CARL JUNG: "I actually developed my theory of the collective unconscious when I glanced under the top prime beef of Burton's mushroom burger (one of nine varieties!) and noticed sour cream and sauteed mushrooms, blanketed by melting imported cheeses, a thick red tomato sitting firmly astride simmering grilled onions (the latter perhaps indicating a too-heavy touch of animus) - but all forming an obviously evolutionary, rare taste pattern that I recognized the only archetypical sandwich in the universe! I have recommended the hamburger to Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Reich and will let Emerald readers know of their response next week." EDITOR'S NOTE: We suggested to Burton that Jung, Freud, and Reich have all left this jeopardized globe and he answered that he has occult connections. What can we say? Burton's Restaurant 854 E. 13th 342-2241

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