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Courtesy photo

My Stepmother is an Alien, by '80s standards, could go down as a movie classic, to the chagrin of all movie lovers.

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Colorization What hath Ted Turner wrought? Now that we can own movies and see them on TV, media magnates will want us to buy as much as possible. And Turner believed there was a whole market of great American movies that people wouldn't buy because they were in black and white.

Of course, part of what made them great movies, even back then, was the way early directors took a limitation and turned it into a strength. Believe me, John Huston's monochrome classic *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) is better in shades of gray than pink and blue.

Turner should have noted that some of today's greatest directors, notably Martin Scorsese (*Raging Bull*), Woody Allen (*Stardust Memories*) and Jim Jarmusch (*Stranger Than Paradise*) still occasionally work in black and white.

Thankfully, the government intervened to something that could have turned truly ugly. Starting with the Historical Film Preservation

Act of 1987, the Library of Congress will select 25 American films every year that it considers to be of classic and enduring quality so that these films may not be tampered with.

The Library has adopted a truly admirable task here. But when it comes time to pick the enduring films of the '80s, expect there to be lots of bewilderment and grumbling. Who would have thought *My Stepmother is an Alien* one day would be a national monument?

And just because I, as a self-important entertainment critic, can't resist, here's my Top 10 list. I can't say they're the best films of the '80s, because I didn't see everything. But these were my favorites, in alphabetical order:

After Hours (1983), *Blue Velvet* (1986), *Bull Durham* (1988), *Do the Right Thing* (1989), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *Reds* (1981), *RoboCop* (1987), *Stardust Memories* (1980), *Stop Making Sense* (1984), *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (1985).

uncommon to see people walking on their hands, spinning on their heads and balancing on their shoulders. Even the walk became rhythmic, turning into what became known as the "moonwalk." The 1980s saw the rise — and fall — of breakdancing.

At about the same time, rap music moved from New York ghettos to MTV, and went from not being on the charts to being near the top of the charts.

Rap music tore down rock music barriers, proving that "rock" can be and is a collection of various styles and sounds. Ever since the 1984 airing of the first rap video, Run-D.M.C.'s *Rock Box*, rap music has done nothing but grow in popularity.

In addition, country music reached new heights with artists like Randy Travis and Alabama.

A lot has happened in the last ten years, but one thing hasn't changed: music was a large part of this last decade as it has been for many past decades.



Courtesy photo

Alabama is one of many country music groups that achieved popularity in the '80s.

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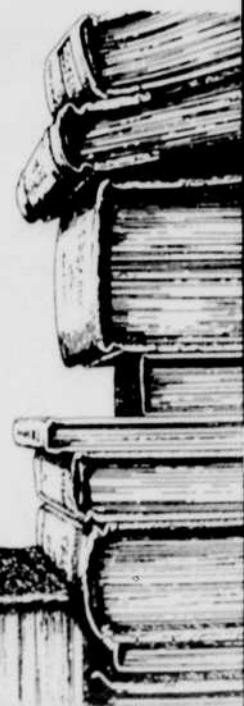
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