



Courtesy Of Buena Vista Pictures
Sparks fly when Rabbi Ben Stiller and Father Edward Norton are reunited with childhood friend Jenna Elfman in "Keeping the Faith."

'Faith' less than fantastic

■ Based on an unoriginal story line, 'Keeping the Faith' doesn't do much to keep your interest



MOVIES

"Keeping the Faith"

Starring: Edward Norton, Ben Stiller and Jenna Elfman

Directed by: Edward Norton

Rated PG-13

★☆☆☆☆

By Joe Walsh

Oregon Daily Emerald

If you like Ben Stiller ... if you liked "There's Something About Mary" ... if you just like a good comedy, you'll hate "Keeping the Faith."

Edward Norton's directing debut is disappointing, to say the least. It's a schmaltzy romantic comedy about the love-lives of a priest, a rabbi and a blonde. Sounds like a bad joke, doesn't it?

Well, the movie is a joke, and unfortunately it's not a very funny one.

Best friends since childhood, Jake Schram (Stiller) and Brian

Finn (Norton) are successful, single men living in New York City. The two are reunited with Anna Reilly (Jenna Elfman), another childhood friend who has become a beautiful corporate executive. Of course, sparks fly and a complicated love triangle is formed.

The twist is that Jake is a rabbi and Brian is a Catholic priest.

As a rabbi, Jake faces enormous pressure from his mother (Anne Bancroft) and his congregation to marry a Jewish woman. In fact, his job depends on it.

As a Catholic priest, Brian is not allowed to date or marry. And as best friends, Jake and Brian know that a relationship with Anna would jeopardize, or at least complicate, their friendship.

But can the two remain true to their faiths and friendships when the lovable Anna reenters their lives?

From the beginning, we watch the two jockey for position to get close to Anna, even though she is out-of-bounds for both of them.

When Brian tells Jake that Anna called him and she is moving back to the city after being in California since the three were eighth-graders, Jake is excited at first. But then that funny little emotion

called envy kicks in and he wonders why she chose to call Brian instead of him. He concludes that she must have chosen alphabetically.

"Keeping the Faith" adds a bit of a new spin on the age-old story of two friends in love with the same girl. It makes for a cute romantic comedy, but it is really aimed at an older audience.

It's the kind of movie that your grandparents will love.

On the positive side, always-comical Stiller has his moments. But for the most part, he is shackled by a boring, too-polite script.

The same can be said about two-time Academy Award nominee Norton. The movie just doesn't allow him to do the great acting that he is capable of.

As for Elfman, the hilarious star of the ABC sitcom "Dharma and Greg," she seems confined to an eye-candy role despite being the perfect actress to play the role of Anna, "the coolest girl" Jake and Brian have ever known.

All in all, "Keeping the Faith" is funny at times, but not much more than a mushy rehash of a tired old tale. For those of us in the under-50 crowd, it's the can-miss movie of the week.

'Psycho' a disappointing follow-up

■ The message of the film never makes itself visible, and the movie is taken over by gore and sex scenes



MOVIES

"American Psycho"

Starring: Christian Bale, Reese Witherspoon, Cloë Sevigny, Samantha Mathis, Jared Leto and Willem Dafoe

Rated R

★☆☆☆☆

By Joe Walsh

Oregon Daily Emerald

"American Pie" made me laugh. "American Beauty" made me think. But "American Psycho" just made me sick.

Of course I'm comparing apples and oranges to a lemon, but I couldn't help but expect the same level of excellence that I had seen in previous "American"-titled films. There's "American Werewolf in London," one of the all-time classic horror tales, and "American History X," which raised serious questions about racism in our society. The only question "American Psycho" raised was: Can I have my money

back?

Often pointless and drifting, "American Psycho" falters in its attempt to make a point about greed, envy, egotism and male chauvinism. Deep within the film there's a good message, but it's masked behind an onslaught of gratuitous violence and sex scenes.

Christian Bale plays Patrick Bateman, the highly successful but Machiavellian 27-year-old vice president of a large corporation. Bateman is a steely, cold-blooded shell of a man who attempts to achieve personal perfection, but can never really rise above those in his social ring (I hesitate to call them friends). He lives in a posh high-rise, but is disgusted that one of his colleagues' apartments has a better view. He buys the best suits, the best reading glasses and even the best business cards, but everyone has the same ones.

Through his daily regimen of sit-ups, health food and skin products, he tries to set himself apart, but he ends up looking just like everyone else. In an ongoing joke, he is actually mistaken for one of his co-workers, even by his own lawyer.

Quickly, we see Bateman's com-

petitive nature turn against him as he becomes uncontrollably homicidal. Ironically, his drive toward perfection leads to his biggest flaw as he begins killing everyone who stands in his way, challenges his efforts to stand out or just plain irritates him.

Based on Bret Easton Ellis' 1991 best seller, "American Psycho" is more than just another bloody slasher film. To its credit, the movie is somewhat thought-provoking as it exposes the ugliness of the American ideal that "he who dies with the most toys wins."

Not to say it makes some sort of deep connection with the serial killer in all of us — it doesn't. But it does question the dog-eat-dog world we live in and are often a part of.

Also worthy of praise is Bales' performance. He plays the despicable, calculating Bateman with ease and never breaks character.

Unlike Patrick Bateman, "American Psycho" stands out among the crowd. It is amazingly disturbing and distinguishes itself from other horror films with its attempt to make a meaningful statement. Unfortunately, there is too much gore and not enough plot to make it worth recommending.

Dr. Drew gives love medicine

■ The 'Loveline' co-host will share his insights on drugs, sex and health issues

By Rory Carroll

Oregon Daily Emerald

On Friday, April 21, the doctor will be in.

Dr. Drew that is, and McArthur Court will serve as his office from 7-8:30 p.m.

The Cultural Forum and the University Health Center have banded together to bring this free event to the campus, which they hope will be at once educational and entertaining.

"My hope is that he will address social health issues and not just sexual health questions," said Joanne Frank, director of health

education at the University Health Center. Dr. Drew appeals to students because he tackles contemporary issues, according to Frank.

Dr. Drew Pinsky, of MTV's "Loveline" fame, will begin with a 45-minute talk before fielding questions from the audience.

"It's a great opportunity to see someone that is nationally known and who is also insightful and helpful," said Ian Clayman, performing arts coordinator for the Cultural Forum. "Dr. Drew has an educational perspective without alienating young people."

Dr. Drew will be appearing sans "Loveline" co-host Adam Carolla. That's because the focus of the show is more educational and less entertainment-based, Clayman

said. The two hosts were expected to attend a similar event at Oregon State University, but Carolla's flight was canceled and Drew was forced to conduct the show solo. The event worked out great at OSU without Carolla, Clayman said, so the health center decided to take that approach for the Mac Court event.

Byron McCrae, assistant dean of student life, expects close to 2,000 students to attend on Friday. McCrae cites Dr. Drew's knowledge of sexual health issues and his popularity among students as the reason that he is the perfect candidate for the event.

The event begins at 7:00 p.m. and is free to UO students, faculty and staff.

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