

# Hugh Jackman does jack, ma

Robb Egan  
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Fans of the classic Universal Studios monster movies and Hugh Jackman fanboys alike will derive either great pleasure or terrible pain from the release of "Van Helsing," a movie that proves long on potential but short on delivery.

Jackman (Wolverine from the X-Men movies) plays Bram Stoker's character Van Helsing, a nineteenth-century monster hunter in the employ of the Vatican. It seems Van Helsing has been doing their dirty work, killing all the monsters in Europe and gaining himself a reputation as a murderer, while searching for clues to his missing past (oh, he has amnesia).

When Van Helsing is told the answers he seeks can be found in Transylvania, he accepts a mission from the Church to free Romania from the tyrannical rule of Count Dracula (Richard Roxburgh) and save the last survivors of a royal family cursed to kill Dracula or never enter the gates of Heaven.

So Van Helsing sets off, along with his friar/ weapons inventor/sidekick Carl (played decently by David Wenham). After receiving a less-than-friendly welcome from the citizens of Transylvania, including the vivacious and tightly-clothed Anna Valerious (Kate Beckinsale), princess and last surviving member of the family Van Helsing was sent to save, the vampires show up and start trying to kill the heroes. After a tortuous action sequence involving way too

many CGI scenes of Dracula's brides flying around and screeching like-banshees, Van Helsing finally manages to kill a vampire.

What follows is scene after scene of Van Helsing and Anna being confronted by one monster after another, including a werewolf that used to be Anna's brother Velkan (Will Kemp), as they struggle to find Dracula's lair and kill him before he can kill the girl (thus dooming her family to Purgatory for all of eternity), find Frankenstein's monster and use him to unleash a horde of his progeny on the world.

It's readily apparent that the film's director, Stephen Sommers ("The Mummy," "The Mummy Returns," etc.), spent the majority of the film's budget on ambiance. The set design and costumes of "Van Helsing" are excellent; the only exception is the title characters '80s hairstyle and stupid hat. Sadly, the backdrops prove to be the only thing really pleasing to the eye (aside from Kate Beckinsale in form-fitting breeches, of course), as the computer-rendered characters are nowhere near what audiences have come to expect from Hollywood.

While overall "Van Helsing" does prove for an entertaining movie, the mostly mediocre visual effects and a story full of unanswered questions detract heavily from its overall enjoyability.



Hugh Jackman as legendary monster hunter Van Helsing

INTERNET

## iPrepare yourself for Mac-attack

Michael Cooper  
ÜBER NERD

From first-grade typing lessons all the way to twelfth-grade graphics class, I've worked with Macintosh computers. I've heard all the objections, insults and stereotypes that go along with using a Mac, and I'm here to say that, despite it all, I'm a proud owner of an Apple iBook G3.

First of all, let me say that I don't mean this to be a rant about Microsoft products. I'm not particularly fond of Windows, nor do I really despise it, but my work with Mac OS, especially in recent years, has increased my affinity for the alternative system. New editions are not only more stable, but also more efficient than certain Microsoft products. In addition, Mac laptops don't have the heating issues that I've witnessed in other models, even high-end ones like Toshiba and Sony Vaio.

When I asked my dad for a Macintosh for my high school graduation present, he looked at me as if I were crazy. His objections were ones that I had heard before.

"Why would you want a Mac? They're totally incompatible with everything else!" he said. Objection number one: compatibility.

With the help of CD burners, the Internet and a program called Virtual PC for Mac, compatibility is no longer a problem. Almost every computer now comes with a CD burner, and all have had CD ROM drives for the past ten years. With the Internet and e-mail, it doesn't matter what OS created the file, since a program's format is compatible across platforms as long as one has the software to support it. Therefore, major formats like PDF, DOC and JPEG are universal. Greatest of all is Virtual

PC. It lets a user run many Windows applications on a Mac and blows the compatibility argument out of the water.

After I rolled my eyes at his ill-informed objection, he conceded that he would buy whatever computer I wanted if it was within his price range. After all, he was talking to the computer guru of the household. However, once we got to Fry's Electronics, he began his ill-informed questions again.

"Is Mac here to stay? Won't it get bought out by Microsoft soon?" he asked the Fry's employee. Objection number two: are Macs around to stay?

The simple answer is yes. The complicated one is that while Apple only directs 5 percent of the market, they have a strong market base. The entire Graphics Arts industry runs on Macintosh because, of the great software and hardware specifically designed for graphic arts. This in particular was especially important to my decision considering my major is Graphic Design.

"Is there a big price difference between Mac and Windows?" was my dad's next question of the salesperson. Objection number three: price.

The one big concern to students about Macintosh is, like everything else, the price of software and hardware. I get around this problem by reminding myself of an old business saying: "The bitterness of poor quality stays long after the sweetness of low price fades."

In the end, after my dad had embarrassed me in front of the unusually knowledgeable Fry's employee, he bought me my iBook, and all was well. I can honestly say that it's something that I never regretted, and I would encourage anyone to invest in a Macintosh if you enjoy quality and stability.



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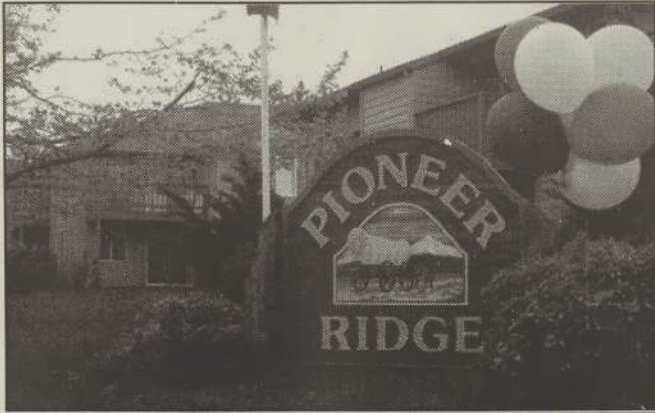
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