

# Murdoch's A Sly Fox

Toads and toadies do the news

**OUTFOXED: RUPERT MURDOCH'S WAR ON JOURNALISM:** Produced and directed by Robert Greenwall. Cinematographers, James Curry, Will Miller, Glen Percy, Richard Perez, Luke Riffle, Bob Sullivan, Eugene Thompson. Editors, Chris Gordon, Douglas Cheek, Jane Abramawitz. Composers, Richard Gibbs, Nicholas O'Toole. Narrated by Douglas Cheek. Appearances include Walter Cronkite, Al Franken, Robert McChesney, Mark Crispin Miller, David Brock, Eric Alterman, Wally Bowen, James Wolcott, Jeff Chester, Malkia Cyril and Jeff Cohen. Released by members of MoveOn.Org and the Center for American Progress, 2004. NR. 78 minutes.

I sn't "toad" a great word to describe someone to whom you have an instinctive, intense aversion? Not a musical word, "toad" has a leaden thud to it. Fox Newspeople strike me as toads. The network's pseudo-experts and inflated, self-styled "commentators" pontificate, bully, out-shout and out-shut-up their unfortunate guests. They are not only toads but also toadies, sucking up to none other than Rupert Murdoch, the Australian megazillionaire who ate the media world and now wants to actively operate this news network his own way, politically speaking, on the far right fringe.

Thanks to moveon.org, the new documentary *Outfoxed* makes it amply clear that Murdoch and CEO Roger Ailes, once Nixon's and Reagan's consultant, do not run this news outlet in a "fair and balanced" manner. Reporting and opinion are one and the same; the network makes no distinction. Rather, directives selecting the news slant for

the day come down from corporate headquarters. For example, the documentary makes a good case that John Kerry's bogus Frenchness seems to be pure invention from Murdoch and his Bush administration cronies.

"Some say Kerry looks French," the news toadies piously intone. "Some say" is annoying code for "we make up this stuff." Each person repeats the phrase, so it's heard many times during the day. Sly Foxies — simultaneously proffering their opinion while pretending to be protecting a source other than their own. Out there in TV-land, couch potatoes blot up the message much as a sponge soaks up the "water" from an overflowing toilet.

Some newspeople who do Murdoch's dirty work appear to have serious problems with anger and control. *Outfoxed* shows a bullying, pretend-interview by talk show loudmouth Bill O'Reilly and his "guest," Jeremy Glick, whose father was killed in the World Trade Center bombing. O'Reilly was about to pop a gasket when Glick, a smart leftie, resolutely refused to back down from his position. O'Reilly warns Glick he'll hurt him the minute they're off the air. It's a pretty low point in American journalism. O'Reilly was puffed up like a disturbed Texas Horny Toad — daggers from his eyes, thunder from his mouth and hot-air bloat upon his body. Unlike the gentle lizard, now a threatened

Owner of Fox News, Rupert Murdoch.



species in Texas, O'Reily's a menace.

The best toady is Carl Cameron, a political reporter who sounds as if he learned reporting from reading *The National Enquirer*, an American Media, Inc. rival to Murdoch's former salacious property, the British super-market tabloid, *The Evening Star* (aka *The Star*). In this scene, Cameron and George W. are shooting the breeze, waiting to start their on-air interview, when bootlicker Cameron tells the Prez his wife is working on the Bush campaign. "She's a good soul," GWB has time to utter in a saintly tone before the interview begins.

This is not a pretty picture, but it is a cogent commentary on the state of Fox News. The "deregulation" of television began back in the Reagan administration, aided and abetted by Oregon's own bad-boy Republican

Senator Bob Packwood. Prior to that time, news organizations were required to provide free, equal time to candidates to rebut the slanted messages candidates with money could buy. If this topic is ancient history to you, Google it. You may be surprised to learn the airwaves used to belong to the people.

Besides running the network as if it were an extension of George Bush's re-election campaign, the foxes and toads come away with bragging rights to only one achievement: People who watch Fox News regularly come away from the experience less informed about current events than those who get their news from other sources. Maybe Fox should replace its ironic "fair and balanced" with "dumb and dumber."

*Outfoxed* is now playing at Cinema World. Highly recommended. **EW**

## movie clips

### OPENING OR RETURNING:

**Anacondas: Hunt for the Blood Orchid:** Horror thriller set in a jungle in Borneo where scientists travel down a river looking for a rare orchid said to be the source of a youth-preserving serum. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Archaeology Film Fest, Best of 2003:** Films include *The Lost Memory of Easter Island*, *The House of Hermogenes*, *Return to Belaye: A Rite of Passage*. Starts at 12 noon, Aug. 28, at the Bijou. \$6.

**Corporation, The:** Documentary directed by Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott, is a professional work about the powerful forces and resources today's corporations wield. It's a call to educated activism. Highly recommended. NR. Bijou. **See review this issue.**

**Harry Potter & the Prisoner of Azkaban:** Brilliantly directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Harry (Daniel Radcliffe), Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (Emma Watson), now teenagers, return to Hogwarts, where they confront an escaped prisoner, Sirius Black (Gary Oldham), who poses a great threat to Harry. They must also contend with the Dementors, who are sent to protect them from Black. PG. Movies 12.

**Hero:** Jet Li, Tony Leung, Chiu Wai, Maggie Cheung, Zhang Ziyi and Donnie Yen star in this rousing martial arts epic. Set in a war-torn China at the violent dawn of the Qin dynasty more than 2,000 years ago, three opponents plan to assassinate the king, but one loyal subject stands in their way. PG-13. Cinemark.

**Napoleon Dynamite:** Jared Hess' indie comedy stars Jon Heder as a high schooler, who lives in Idaho with his grandmother. The *Village Voice* says, "the film is an epic, magisterially observed pastiche on all-American geekhood, flooring the competition with a petulant shove." PG. Movies 12.

**Shrek 2:** Mike Myers returns as Shrek, Cameron Diaz is his new wife, Princess Fiona, and Eddie Murphy's his sidekick, Donkey. Now the newlyweds face Queen Lillian (Julie Andrews) and King Harold (John

Cleese). Fairy godmother (Jennifer Saunders), Prince Charming (Rupert Everett) and the ferocious Puss in Boots (Antonio Banderas). Sequel is so-so. PG. Movies 12.

**Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2:** PG. Cinemark.

**Suspect Zero:** As murder victims pile up, the FBI sends two agents against a killer who taunts them with his ability to get into the minds of his victims. Directed by E. Elias Merhige, film stars Aaron Eckhart, Ben Kingsley and Carrie-Anne Moss. R. Cinemark.

**Vanity Fair:** Mira Nair's version of William Makepeace Thackeray's classic novel. Stellar cast includes Reese Witherspoon as Becky Sharp, with Eileen Atkins, Jim Broadbent, Gabriel Byrne. Opens Wed. 9/11. Cinemark.

**White Chicks:** Comedy about FBI agents who go undercover as high school debutantes to investigate a kidnapping ring. Stars director Keenen Ivory Wayans, Shawn and Marlon Wayans. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)**

### CONTINUING:

**Alien vs Predator:** The scary monsters from earlier film franchises duke it out on Earth. Wow! PG-13. Cinemark.

**Around the World in 80 Days:** Jackie Chan and Steve Coogan star in this remake. PG. Movies 12.

**Benji Off the Leash:** Written and directed by Joe Camp, 17 years after the first, *Benji The Hunted*. Now Benji is on a mission to save her mother from the clutches of an unprofessional breeder. PG. Cinemark.

**Bourne Supremacy, The:** Paul Greengrass (writer, director of *Bloody Sunday*) directs Matt Damon as assassin Jason Bourne in the second installment of Robert Ludlum's espionage thrillers. Also stars Joan Allen, Brian Cox, Julia Stiles, Kurt Allen, and Franka Potente. One of the summer's best films. Highly recommended. PG-13. Cinema World.

Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Collateral:** Michael Mann's thriller stars Tom Cruise as an LA hitman and Jamie Foxx as his taxi driver, who's surprised to discover he's a hostage. Together, they're like fire and ice, feeling and nothingness. A character study in action, the film is one of the best movies of the year. Very highest recommendations. Don't miss. R. Cinema World. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Day After Tomorrow, The:** Roland Emmerich directs Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal, Emmy Rossum, Sela Ward. Climatologist tries to save the world from abrupt global warming as New York is being overtaken by a new ice age. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story:** Social rejects save their local gym from gentrification in this goofy comedy directed by Rawson Thurber and starring Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn, Christine Taylor and Rip Torn. Inspired lunacy recommended for your summertime enjoyment. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Exorcist: The Beginning:** The backstory to the 1973 blockbuster commences in 1940s Africa with a disillusioned Father Merrin's (Stellan Skarsgard) first meeting with the demon Pazuzu. The film was bedeviled, too. It ran through directors John Frankenheimer and Paul Schrader before Renny Harlin came in and basically reshot the whole shebang. Also stars James D'Arcy and Izabella Scorupco. R. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Garden State:** Zach Braff wrote, directed and stars in this funny, resonant romantic comedy, which co-stars Natalie Portman, Peter Sarsgaard and Ian Holm. Braff and Portman help the film get to a truth about what it is to be 20-something in the early years of the 21st century. Highest recommendations. R. Bijou. **Online archives.**

**Garfield, The Movie:** Garfield, the smarty pants kitty, makes his film debut. PG. Movies 12.

**Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle:** A comedy about room mates who get stoned and go out for a few burgers but end up on a long,

strange trip. Stars John Cho (American Pie) and Kal Penn (Van Wilder). R. Movies 12.

**I, Robot:** Alex Proyas (Dark City, The Crow) directs Will Smith as a police detective investigating a crime thought to be perpetrated by a robot. Also stars Bruce Greenwood, James Cromwell, Chi McBride and Bridget Moynahan. Based on Isaac Asimov's classic sci-fi stories. Recommended for its strange ambiance. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**King Arthur:** Excellent cast includes Clive Owen, Keira Knightley, Stellan Skarsgard, Stephen Dillane, Ray Winstone, Ioan Gruffudd. Directed by Antoine Fuqua and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, this revisionist history, action adventure is Open recommended for its performances. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Little Black Book:** Offbeat romantic comedy directed by Nick Hurran stars Brittany Murphy as a wannabe newswoman who decides to check up on her boyfriend (Ron Livingston) at the instigation of her co-workers Holly Hunter and Kathy Bates. PG-13. Cinemark.

**Manchurian Candidate, The:** Psychological thriller stars Denzel Washington as an ex-career officer disturbed by his experiences in Desert Storm. Liev Schreiber plays a former squad sergeant, now a vice-presidential candidate and son of a powerful senator (Meryl Streep). An especially fine performance from Jeffrey Wright as a damaged vet suffering hallucinations. Very highest recommendations. R. Cinemark.

**Online archives.**

**Mean Girls:** Lindsay Lohan plays a high-school student raised by zoologist parents in the African bush, who falls for a popular girl's ex-boyfriend. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Notebook, The:** Nick Cassavetes directs Gena Rowlands, James Garner, Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams. Depicts real first love, with a great performance by McAdams. Recommended. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Online archives.**

**Open Water:** Chris Kentis directs this thriller based on real events. A couple get left behind by a scuba diving group, in the middle of a shark-filled ocean. Blanchard Ryan and Daniel Travis spent 120 hours in the water with real sharks to make this movie. R. Cinemark. Cinema World.

**Outfoxed:** Ed Halter for The Village Voice writes: "Robert Greenwald's sharp, skillful exposé of Rupert Murdoch and Fox News, will have a ...stomach-churning effect upon those who avoid tuning in to the aggressively conservative news channel, or don't consult television news at all." The network's self-styled "fair and balanced" reporting has created the widespread impression that John Kerry waffles on issues that he seems to be "French." What jerks! NR. Cinema World. **See review this issue.**

**Princess Diaries 2 Royal Engagement:** Anne Hathaway is being groomed to be queen of Genovia, but she has to land a husband before she can be crowned. Garry Marshall directs. Julie Andrews costars. G. Cinemark.

**Spider Man 2:** Peter Parker aka Spidey (Tobey Maguire) returns as a college student by day who still loves Kirsten Dunst and a superhero when needed against his new nemesis, Otto Octavius (Alfred Molina). Sam Raimi directs. Excellent film! See it. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

**Stepford Wives, The:** Frank Oz directs Nicole Kidman, Matthew Broderick, Bette Midler, Christopher Walken, Faith Hill and Glenn Close in this updated comedy-thriller about a perfect, 1950s-era community. Recommended for its entertainment value. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Troy:** Wolfgang Petersen directs ancient Greek tale of war between Troy and Sparta. Stars Brad Pitt. R. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

**Village, The:** M. Night Shyamalan's new suspenseful film stars Joaquin Phoenix, Bryce Dallas Howard, Adrien Brody, William Hurt and Sigourney Weaver. PG-13. Cinemark.

**Without a Paddle:** High-speed comedy adventure stars Seth Green, Matthew Lillard and Dax Shepard as clueless adventurers who go into the Oregon wilderness in search of lost treasure. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

**Yu-Gi-Oh:** Japanese, animation for the kiddies. Yugi and friends play a new game called Dual Monsters. PG. Cinemark.

Bijou Art Cinemas (686-2458)  
Cinema World 8 (342-6536)  
Cinemark 17 (746-5202)c  
Movies 12 (741-1231)

## Video Clips

### New Releases on Video

Releases subject to change. Available the Tuesday following date of EW publication, sometimes sooner. See archived movie reviews at [www.eugeneweekly.com](http://www.eugeneweekly.com)

**Passion of the Christ (2004):** Mel Gibson film opened amid charges (denied) of anti-Semitism. A.O. Scott of *The New York Times* wrote, "The

Passion of the Christ' is so relentlessly focused on the savagery of Jesus' final hours that this film seems to arise less from love than from wrath, and to succeed more in assaulting the spirit than in uplifting it." Others call the graphic torture unwatchable. R.

**Twisted:** Philip Kaufman directs Ashley Judd, Samuel L. Jackson and Andy Garcia in a policier involving a female serial killer. R.