

# Clumsy Lovers Best Boxoffice, Showman Says

By JAMES BACON  
HOLLYWOOD, Jan. 12 (AP)—The other day a man who owns a string of movie houses made an observation that will startle even Rock Hudson.

Hudson, the showman observes, is the only major screen hero wholly developed by the movie industry in the last five years. There have been Brando, Clift, Sinatra, Presley, Borgnine and others, but all came from the stage, television or records. It's a statement that is bound to provoke howls from the followers of Tony Curtis, Tab Hunter, Bob Wagner and other bobby sox idols who were movie spawned.

**Clumsy Lovers Best**  
"I've been a showman for 35 years," the exhibitor argues, "and if there is one box office fact I'm sure of, it's this: that the biggest ticket sellers are big, handsome men who are shy, even clumsy, in their screen lovemaking."

"They appeal to all sexes and all ages. I give you Cooper, Wayne and now Hudson."

The theater man, a friend of many actors, asked that he not be identified by name. He does not know Hudson.

Is Hudson in the tradition of the Coopers and the Waynes? He's about as handsome as a big man can be. Black, wavy hair tops a 6-foot-4, 220-pound frame. Physically, he looks like an All-America tackle.

**Shyness Not Acting**  
If he's shy with his screen lovemaking, it's not acting because he basically is a shy man. "He is a rarity—a modest actor."

Some, on first meeting, might tab him big and dumb—but he's far from that. The way he has handled himself in his career disproves that.

"Rock has known his directions ever since he first started here," a long-time friend at Universal-International reports. "He knows what he's doing every minute and he's never needed a psychoanalyst to help him through a picture, like some others we know."

**Married Secretary**  
Phyllis Gates, his agent's secretary, was his best girl for a long time even though columnists repeatedly linked him with famous stars. He often said he wouldn't marry until he was 30. A week before that birthday, a year ago last November, he married Phyllis.

Hudson is taciturn like Cooper, friendly like Holden and considerate like Gable.

Hudson's emergence as a major star must be laid to two things:

1. A professional respect for his job, which means hard work, concentration and study.  
2. Timing and luck.

On the latter, Hudson started at a time when the movies, in a box-office fight with television, turned to ready-made stage names for much of its talent.

Only U-I, geared to an output of low budget Westerns and so-called family pictures, stuck to the old Hollywood policy of developing its own stable of players. Hudson thus was destined to become the most successful alumnus of the U-I talent school.

**'Made' by 'Giant'**  
When Director George Stevens picked Hudson for the part of Ben Benedict in "Giant," Hudson was made. Even before "Giant," his home studio starred him in the two biggest money pictures of the year—"Written on the Wind" and "Battle Hymn." MGM borrowed him for "Something of Value."

Now Hudson, only a few short years out of U-I's talent school, is being touted as an Academy award contender.

But there was a turning point even before "Giant." Back in 1953, U-I offered Jane Wyman a healthy percentage to star in a remake of "Magnificent Obsession." To keep the budget within reason, the studio selected one of its low-salaried contract players for the male role.

**Biggest Money-maker**  
The teaming of Wyman and Hudson was a boxoffice chemistry that produced an 8 million dollar gross, the studio's biggest money-maker of the year.

More important, Jane, a top professional, taught Rock more about acting than a dozen dramatic schools.

For years, Hudson went along with the publicity story that he was discovered for the movies while working as a letter carrier. As the story went, Hudson had composed a letter telling why he wanted to become an actor and then delivered it personally to Agent Harry Willson who arranged a screen test that changed Roy Fitzgerald of Winnetka, Ill., into Rock Hudson.

There is some basis in fact. Willson did meet Hudson, did get him a screen test and did change his name. And as Hudson adds: "I once did help deliver mail during the Christmas rush in Winnetka."

Willson tips that Rock's next big one will be the remake of "Farewell to Arms," the Hemingway work that gave a big boost once to Gary Cooper.

## Army Seeks 14,000 Men

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12 (AP)—The Army Friday issued a draft call for 14,000 men during March. The quota is the same as that previously announced for February. Monthly draft calls were for 17,000 men from last October through this January. The new call brings to 2,180,430 the total number drafted or earmarked for induction since the resumption of Selective Service in September 1950.

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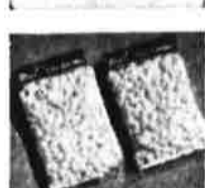
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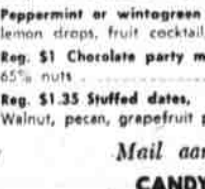
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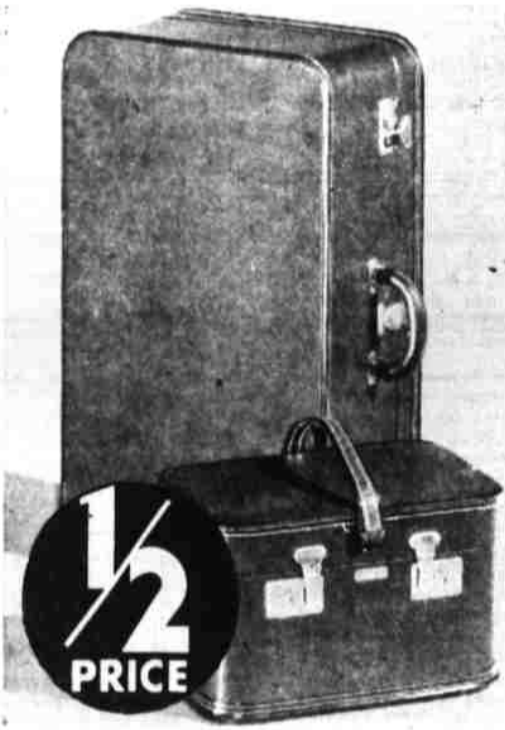


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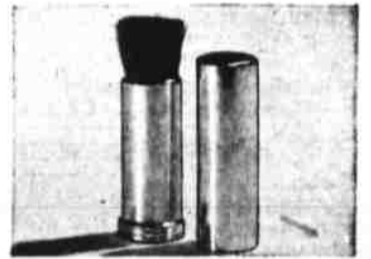
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