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“Movie: E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial”

Steven Spielberg’s 1982 sci-fi fantasy remains one of the most beloved films of modern times, with the bug-eyed title alien character and his 7-year-old co-star, Drew Barrymore, sharing the prize for adorability. Henry Thomas (“Legends of the Fall”) stars as the little boy who bonds with the stranded alien and helps him “phone home.” Dee Wallace and Peter Coyote also star.



“Range Rider”

Post-World War II Hollywood stuntman Jock Mahoney starred this 1951-53 syndicated Western that cast him as a character known only as Range Rider, who had a reputation for fairness, fighting ability and shooting accuracy that was known far and wide, even by local tribes. Dickie Jones, Al Wyatt Sr. and Bob Woodward also starred in this black-and-white series.



“Movie: Patriots Day”

Mark Wahlberg and director Peter Berg teamed up for their third collaboration for this 2016 fact-based thriller based on a 2013 American tragedy, when sibling terrorists detonated two bombs during April’s Boston Marathon. Wahlberg stars as Boston Police Sgt. Tommy Saunders, who was involved in the subsequent investigation. Kevin Bacon, John Goodman, J.K. Simmons and Michelle Monaghan also star in the action thriller.

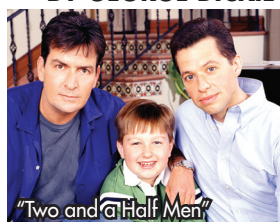


“Them”

Terror in America is the focus of this anthology series from executive producers Little Marvin and Lena Waithe, with its first season being set in 1950s Los Angeles, where a Black family faces malevolent forces both earthly and otherworldly after moving there from North Carolina. Deborah Ayorinde, Ashley Thomas, Alison Pill, Shahadi Wright Joseph, Melody Hurd and Ryan Kwanten head the cast. (ORIGINAL)

best of ...

BY GEORGE DICKIE



The Tanners, “Full House” (ABC, 1987-95) Bob Saget starred as a young widower who needed his rock musician brother-in-law (John Stamos) and comedian best friend (Dave Coulier) to move in and help raise his three small daughters. That they did it largely without a woman in the house (at least in the early seasons) and in San Francisco, a city not known to be child-friendly, was a small miracle.

The Sopranos, “The Sopranos” (HBO, 1999-2007) A mob boss, killer and sociopath for a dad – what’s unusual there? But James Gandolfini made Tony Soprano, the well-intentioned paternal figure who often fell short of the mark, believable – and sometimes funny – which was the skill of the actor and the show’s writers.

The Harpers, “Two and a Half Men” (CBS, 2003-15) Following his divorce, uptight chiropractor Alan (Jon Cryer) moves into his

Hollywood jingle-writer brother Charlie’s (Charlie Sheen) Malibu beachfront bachelor pad, and with the help of tart-tongued housekeeper Berta (Conchata Ferrell), they endeavor to raise the former’s young son Jake (Angus T. Jones) amid a steady stream of female companionship. Then Charlie dies, the house is sold to tech billionaire Walden (Ashton Kutcher), the survivors stay put, and the “half-man” rearing continues. A little formulaic, don’t you think?

The Henricksons, “Big Love” (HBO, 2006-11) By definition, anywhere where polygamy is occurring, that family has to be considered unconventional. But where Utah state senate candidate Bill Henrickson (Bill Paxton), his three wives (Chloe Sevigny, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Ginnifer Goodwin) and offspring were concerned, his family life also happened to be considered immoral and fodder for political opponents. Which is why he tried to keep it under wraps.

The Whites, “Breaking Bad” (AMC, 2008-13) When he wasn’t being henpecked by his demanding wife (Anna Gunn) or caring for his cerebral palsy-stricken son (RJ Mitte), milquetoast New Mexico high-school chemistry teacher Walter White (Bryan Cranston) could be found cooking up a batch of crystal meth and selling it to secure his family’s financial future after his death from terminal lung cancer. And being wildly successful at it.

The Gregsons, “United States of Tara” (Showtime, 2009-11) Some might not find a mother with multiple personality disorder anything to laugh about, but Toni Collette made the character of Kansas mother and wife Tara Gregson sympathetic, believable and sometimes funny in this underrated dramedy. She won Emmy and Golden Globe awards for best actress which confirmed her deft performance.

BEST UNCONVENTIONAL TV FAMILIES