

THE CINEFILE

Rate It Sugar-Free

By David Salcido

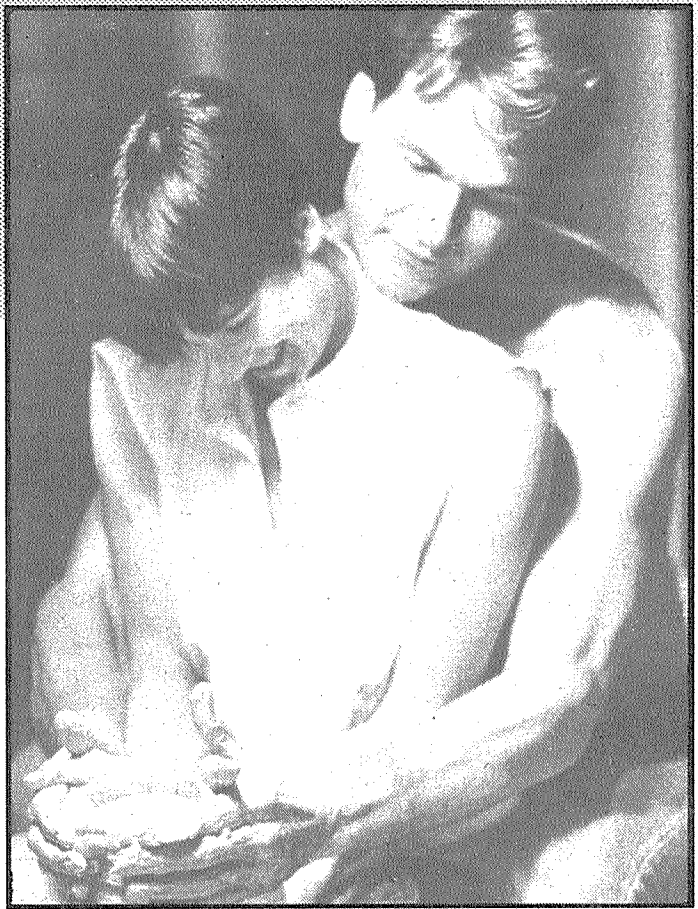
I like movies. Especially good movies. Granted, there have been times when my idea of what is good has caused more than a few eyeballs to roll and oaths to be uttered. Let me now say that such unseemly displays have no effect on my professional bearing whatsoever. What can one expect from people whose only claim to taste lies solely in their mouths?

But I digress. As I was saying, I like movies. And so, it makes sense that the recent flap over the rating system would grab my attention. To rate or not to rate, what seems to be the problem?

Personally, I don't think that the MPAA is going far enough. Is it enough to know how many bare bottoms and/or crushed craniums there are in a film? I don't much care about those things anyway. I see a lot of movies, and as such, consider myself to be an above average

cinemagoer. It's only natural, therefore, that I would have an above average tendency to be numbed by all that excess sex and violence. No, I think there are more important issues to be addressed.

Take for example the slush factor. I can't be the only one who's noticed the recent influx of movies oozing with sloppy emotionalism. Movies like *Ghost* and *Pretty Woman* just dare audiences to leave the theater with dry tearducts. I ask you, is that fair? I go to the movies to be entertained, not to hand out hankies and furtively dab at my nose with my shirt sleeve while complaining about eye strain. Why do they call these "feel good" movies anyway? Filmmakers should have to warn audiences of such overt sniffle mongering. Don't get me wrong, I'm as romantic as the next guy, but two hours of heartbreak and yearning is enough to give anyone a bad case of the Tammy Fayes. Who wants to exit a thea-



Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore would rate high on the three-hankie slush scale in *Ghost*

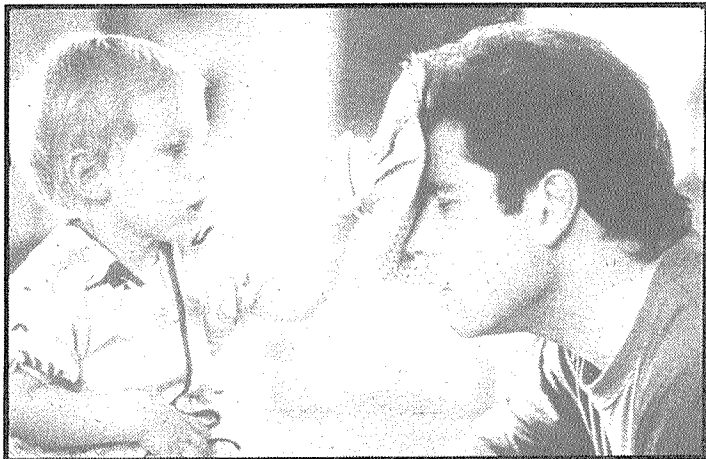
ter with eyes all puffed up, looking like a Mike Tyson challenger, holding hands with a racoon?

And what about the cuteness which inevitably goes along with such displays? A person could contract diabetes from movies like *Look Who's Talking*, *Parent Hood* and *Three Men And A Baby*. Diabetes and moss of the eyelids from all that excess moisture. They used to put disclaimers on movies which read, "You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll go into insulin shock." Not anymore. The system's become corrupted. So much so that cute and slushy are being passed off as comedy. Sure, we know what we're in for if we go to see the sequels, but that's only because we've been subjected to them once before. There was no warning the first time! Even the trailers played them for belly laughs. My answer: Rate It! Put it on a Saccharine Scale from lightly glazed to syrupy. The public has a right to know!

Now, I don't know what these new ratings would look like. All of the good letters have been

taken. But then again, it wouldn't have to be a very creative symbol. Just look at NC-17. Does anybody really know what it stands for? It could be anything. No Cretins under the age of 17. Naughty Cinema for those over 17. 17-year-old Naked Catburglers. 17 Nasty Cavities. See what I mean? I suppose our new symbol could be something like S&M, for Sweet and Mushy. Or T&T for Tender and Torrid. The symbol isn't really important. It's the thought that counts.

As I said before, I like movies. But I also like to know what I'm in for. A simple disclaimer to help me save face (and Kleenex) isn't too much to ask for, is it? I don't think so. And while I'm at it, I just thought of another potential ratings offender. What about movies with cute animals in them? You know the ones; movies with titles like *The Bear* and *The Adventures Of Milo And Otis*. Too cute, and definitely high on the slush scale. The public should be warned. Why, the possibilities are endless.



Cuteness Alert! Jason Schaller and John Travolta in *Look Who's Talking*

Editor's Note: The opinions in this editorial are not necessarily those of store management.