



Pretty In Pink: The Golden Age of Teenage Movies

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Jon Bernstein, film critic for Spin magazine critiques his favorite teen movies from the golden age of the '80s. The Brat Pack and their contemporaries have grown up, but celluloid has them flickering forever, angst-ridden, haunted, guileless, cocky, stripped to their briefs, and all dressed up pretty in pink. 25 photos, 8-page color insert.

Pretty In Pink: The Golden Age of Teenage Movies Details

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Erin says

It was lots of fun to revisit some of the most-loved movies of my young-adulthood, but I was somewhat disappointed in that Bernstein didn't seem to like many of these movies very much - you would think that someone who wrote this book would be a big fan, and, though he has his favorites ("Pretty in Pink", "Clueless"), he's rather dismissive of some of the big ones ("Sixteen Candles", "The Breakfast Club"). The writing was a bit amateurly done, and the author is a BIG fan of certain phrases that he repeats multiple times throughout the book.

Sometimes fun, sometimes grating.

Ryan says

It's slightly embarrassing how much I really enjoyed reading this book when it came out. But it has really insightful essays on why teen movies in the 80s meant so much to people, what made them great and what made them ridiculous, and what it says about that generation.

Cat Springer says

A fun, if completely subjective guide to the overblown, big hair, MTV-generation movies of the 1980s geared squarely at teenage audiences of that decade. Not terribly informative, but a great shopping list of nostalgic, sentimental, goofy, even embarrassing videos. If you ever got oogly over the likes of Demi Moore, Ally Sheedy, Rob Lowe, Judd Nelson or Molly Ringwald (she's even on the cover and the title is from one of her films!), you'll enjoy this alright. Really could have used a working index and filmography at the end, however. Still waiting for the be-all, end-all film book of the 80s.

Jamie says

I thought that this would be an homage to movies like Pretty in Pink, Sixteen Candles and the like, but was I wrong. The author basically tears the movies and the actors apart. I really didn't enjoy this book very much. Not even any behind the scenes secrets or anything like that.

Ann says

Top 5 Pop Culture - PLA

Sarah Giovanniello says

Very thorough analysis of ALL the 80s teen movies; Heathers, Lost Boys, a chapter devoted to John Hughes, even Just One of the Guys! Nothing is better.

billy says

Pretty in Pink started out a lot of fun, reveling in just how much of a shock to the zeitgeist's system a movie like Porky's was and how glorious it was to have John Hughes at the controls of Hollywood for a few short years. But somewhere along the way, things go off the rails and it just begins to feel like one giant list of brief synopses of every teen eighties movie there is. Bernstein also seems to get more and more comfortable with his wisecracking tone throughout and lame potshots at Tina Yothers-level figures quickly started to wear thin on me.

Awesome cover though--holding it up with pride on the L train may have been what kept me churning thru it.

Patrick says

Enjoyable collection of essays on 80's teen movies, split into different genres, and what they said about that generation.

Chris says

80's films were a genre of their own, and if you add into the mix teen 80's movies, you get an explosion of taste that has no comparison. Teen 80's films were about sex, drugs, skipping school, staying out late, cruising the streets at night, talking on your own phone (land)line to your friends, getting pregnant, and getting caught smoking in the boy's or girl's bathroom at school. Yes, those were some fun times, and only if you grew up during that time will you be able to say that they were really fun times.

Most people who didn't grow up during those times would say, "how awful that must have been to see and deal with that everyday", but those people or kids probably grew up under helicopter parents, so they probably don't know what it means to have fun and be a kid at the same time.

The author of this books attempts to bring the reader in to this world where kids rule and the parents are always out of town for the weekend or some business trip. He breaks up the book by the type of movies, so for those horny 14 year old's there were the T&A films (or for the adult virgin ears Tits and Ass), for the hopeless teenage romantics there were the sappy romantic films where the girl always gets her secret crush, then there were the teens always running from danger in the bloodbath/zombie/slasher films, and for those that lived the real drama of high school there were the John Hughes films which brought light to every teenagers existence and why they were in the caste system they were, and for those that felt life was perfect there were the valley girl and Clueless films. He made sure to cover every category there was of teens based on the films that were made for them.

The nice thing about this book was getting to find learn about movies that I never heard of and thanks to the wonderful world of YouTube, I was able to watch a lot of them. I have a couple of new favorite 80's films now. The thing I didn't like about this book was that it was written from someone who must have thought they were better than everyone else by how they wrote this book. The author would use rare words when a less difficult GRE or SAT level would have done just fine. It was like this author was told to write this book and so instead of appealing to his audience, he wanted to vent his frustration by injecting difficult words so that the reader would get thrown off of their pace. That was not helpful, especially when explaining a film that has nothing more than tits and ass to talk about.

His frustration also went so far as to say how much he hated certain films and why the director even bothered to waste his time. So it was like a well written college paper but with personal notes thrown in, so for someone who loved most of the teen 80's films, you will find his choice of words and explanation difficult to swallow.

Other than that, I have a new list of 80's films to watch now. The one thing I miss though from 80's films was how true teens lived their life, there weren't so many restrictions and kids actually had fun back then. In a rare film that I watched, "Little Darlings," it was interesting to see how many kids smoked at camp and how young they were, but not only that, but the topic of sex and such were more rampant. It is good that smoking is not allowed, nor was it ever, but kids today talk about very different things, boys still talk about girls and vice versa, but never to the extent that they did back in the 70's and 80's. I don't think a kid growing up today would be able to survive one day with kids back in that time. They would get eaten up and taken advantage of before they even knew what happened to them. And for those that think otherwise, read the book, "Camp Camp" which is a nostalgic trip back to what camp life was like in the 70's and 80's and you will see what I am talking about.

The movie, "The Wild Life," showed what kids were like then, most of the kids went out and had fun, even if the sun had already gone down. That was something I enjoyed watching and seeing. Again, for those that grew in that time, they will understand what I mean.

So if you want a trip down memory lane, or just a true film buff that you want to learn about films of every genre and decade, make sure to put this on your list of books to read. You will be very surprised to find out some great films to watch.
