

“Almost Famous” turns 25!

LAURA MOORE

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

Twenty-five years ago, the beloved film “Almost Famous” was released in theaters. Despite a slow start at the box office, critics and audiences talked highly about this film.

The film’s ability to provide an accurate look into what life was like for musicians in the 1970s Rock n’ Roll era is what initially captured people’s attention. As time passed, “Almost Famous” was given the status of cult-classic and still makes a lasting impact on newer generations today.

“Almost Famous” follows the story of William Miller and his path to becoming a rock journalist. His work lands him an opportunity to write for Rolling Stone magazine and he goes on tour with a band called Stillwater. The cast includes Billy Crudup (Russell Hammond), Kate Hudson (Penny Lane), Patrick Fugit (William Miller), and Frances McDormand (Elaine Miller).

Classified as a semi-autobiographical film, a large portion of the story is inspired by the director’s (Cameron Crowe) life when he was a writer for Rolling Stone and went on tour with a band. That band was Led Zeppelin.

Throughout the film, there are nods to Led Zeppelin and other major artists such as David Bowie, Bob Dylan, Simon & Garfunkel and more. The mention of rock bands from the 1970s, known as classic rock by older generations, allows newer generations to be introduced to a whole new world of music.

How music journalism is portrayed in the film differs

from music journalism of today. Music journalism involves writing and reporting on all aspects of music.

William writes an article about Stillwater’s behavior on and off stage which causes anger within the band because William did not hold back. Today, some critics aren’t as critical toward music because they don’t want to step on any toes.

Having harsh yet constructive criticism helps artists to take a better look at what they do and inspire more creativity. Evidence of this takes place in the film when William finally gets Russell to sit down and complete the interview which leads to Stillwater making the cover of Rolling Stone.

William’s ability to persevere through the hardships of getting this story is inspiring to many.

So, how does this film hold up twenty-five years later? Some may argue that it aged poorly and some call it their comfort film.

The common ground that can be found is music. Music brings people together.

There is a specific scene from the film that stands out, which occurs on the tour bus after a huge argument has taken place. Elton John’s “Tiny Dancer” begins to play and the bandmates sing along, bringing them back to what connected them in the first place: music. Music is the soul of Almost Famous.

If you are interested in watching a film that completely immerses you in the messy and chaotic life of 1970s rock stars, this is the one for you.

“The Conjuring: Last Rites” is a terrifying ending to a great series

AMELIA YOUNG

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

The world was first introduced to the “The Conjuring” film franchise in 2013, having since gone on to earn over \$2.3 billion at the global box office.

In the fourth and final installment of the series, directed by Michael Chaves, paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren (Patrick Wilson and Vera Farmiga) are confronted by the same demon they met in one of their very first cases. It also happened to be the last case the real Ed and Lorraine Warren ever investigated, so it’s a real full-circle moment.

As someone who loves the first two Conjuring movies but doesn’t think anything special about the third, I was ready to see if number four would go back to its roots, or be as disappointing as the third.

Spoiler: I was not disappointed, though I was a little underwhelmed at the very end.

The movie begins, and we go back in time to see the Warrens investigate one of their very first cases, one where the possessed artifact is a mirror adorned with three cherub angels at the top.

When Lorraine, who is pregnant with their daughter, touches the mirror, she immediately feels something



POSTER COURTESY OF IMDB

Official poster for “The Conjuring: Last Rites.”

is wrong with the baby. They rush to the hospital where the baby, Judy, is stillborn, but as Ed and Lorraine pray over her she takes her first breath.

We then jump to 1986, where the same mirror is gifted to Heather Smurl. You can only guess what happens next. Something begins haunting the Smurl family and Lorraine begins to see things

surrounding her daughter. Oftentimes, when we get to the fourth movie in a franchise, it starts to go downhill. That is not the case for “The Conjuring: Last Rites.” This movie is full of jumpscare and suspense and even though it is 2 hours and 15 minutes long, I never got bored.

Unlike in the other movies, Ed and Lorraine aren’t the ones who originally want to help the

Smurl family with their demon infestation; it’s Judy who goes to meet the family and convinces her parents to stay.

As always, in the midst of all the horror and possession and the terrible things that are happening to this family, there are still some scenes that show that the family experiencing this haunting and the one investigating it are still just two families. The scenes of Ed’s birthday party and playing ping-pong with friends are just what you need to put your guard down before you are horrified by the hideous demon on the screen.

This film definitely has a family feel. I mean, the family experiencing the haunting is a family of eight plus a dog, and they really play out the family dynamics. So when something happens to one of them, for example, when someone starts throwing up blood and mirror shards, you can’t help but feel for the family.

In my very professional opinion, I think this film could make its way to being my second favorite film in the series. Sorry but nothing could ever beat “The Conjuring 2” for me. I think while this film could have done a few things better, overall it is still one of my new favorites.

Official Score: 8.5/10

Disney remakes aren’t always bad

ALLIE CARSON

NEWS EDITOR

Some Disney remakes deserve the pushback they get, but saying all remakes are bad neglects the remakes that are just as good, if not better than, the original.

Remakes are important. And they can succeed, when done the right way. They get newer audiences to watch older movies that have been slightly changed for a different time. This can be through small plot changes, taking things out that have become taboo, or making the film actually appropriate for the intended audience.

Many of the recent Disney remakes deserve the hate they get. The live-action “Lion King” is a perfect example. However, the Beauty and the Beast live-action remake is the perfect example of a good Disney remake. It was just as good as the original and made the necessary changes for this time period.

I enjoyed Emma Watson as Belle and the song “Evermore” was the perfect addition to the movie. While I will say the live action wasn’t needed, it wasn’t

a complete dumpster fire. Staying on theme with Disney remakes, the 2016 version of “Adventures in Babysitting” was a good creation. It turned an already good movie into a child-friendly version with the same storylines and great actors. The review sites have even scored the remake higher than the 1987 original.

The 2003 version of “Freaky Friday” is still the best version after multiple recent attempts by Disney. I even thought it was the original until I learned the first “Freaky Friday” film actually appropriate for the intended audience. The 2003 rendition is just perfectly

crafted and has a far higher score than the 1976 version on all review sites to boot.

The best movie remake of all time, however, is “The Parent Trap.” Thirty years after the original, Lindsay Lohan made her film debut portraying both twins in the 1998 remake.

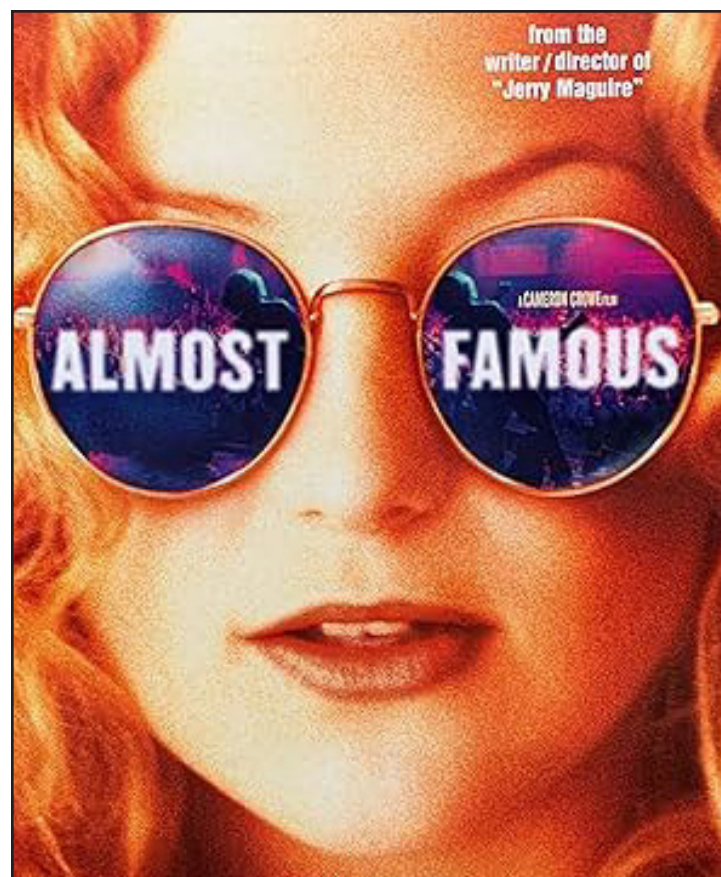
Even though there are many great remakes, most people cherry pick the bad ones or complain that the remake dared to change the plot for the better.

For example, the “Lilo and Stitch” live-action remake wasn’t terrible. But people attacked it anyway because Nani went off to college and quote unquote “left Lilo

with the social workers.” Nani did not leave Lilo with the social workers, she left her with David and his family and would come and visit via teleportation every chance she got. Lilo also told Nani to leave and follow her dream of going to marine biology school.

This happens all the time with Disney remakes where people harp on insignificant issues for nostalgia’s sake. While some complaints are valid, many just hate change.

Disney remakes aren’t always terrible. They can correct mistakes made in the original and sometimes even fix the script and make it even better.



POSTER COURTESY OF IMDB

Official poster for “Almost Famous” upon release in 2000.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF WRIGHT STATE GUARDIAN

Graphic depicting various recent Disney remakes.

Magic: The Gathering club hosts tutorial night for new players

ERIC FLUKE

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

Thursday, A-State's Magic: The Gathering club held a tutorial night for new players wanting to get into the card game. The event was held from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the Student Union, with around a group of ten or fifteen at a time all gathered to play.

The students all divided up into groups of three or four to play individual games, while some of the beginners sat by and watched to get their first taste of Magic.

Rounds went on for 30 minutes up to an hour, with quite a few of them being in the latter range. During these long matches, the time between turns was made enjoyable with

banter between the players.

While each player took their turn, the others waiting for their chance to play their hand were chatting up a storm and getting to know each other better or trying their best to get under their opponents' skin. Lillie Hamm, a first year attendee from Mountain Home, said this was her favorite part of the experience.

"I kind of like how everyone can pick on each other and be kind a mean, but at the same time still be friends," Hamm said.

Dakota Kain, a junior from Lepanto and the vice president of the club, said they shared a similar sentiment.

"I really like the community

aspect. I like playing games online with people; it's a lot of fun, but I like being able to be there in person with other people. [Online play] fails to make a sense of community," Kain said.

While some love the community aspect the most, others value the strategy behind the game a little bit more. Brady Jones, a junior from Rogers who frequently attends the club and has been playing Magic for around five and a half years, is one of these folks. He explains how changing his strategies with his different decks of cards played into his love for the game.

"Oh man, every game is

different...it might [get stale] if you use the same deck over and over again, but when you have five decks like I do, you can swap every single game and you never get bored," Jones said.

Even for beginners, this love of strategy is shared, even if they only play with a single deck. James Barnett, another first-time attendee from Lake City in his first year of graduate school, had his first experience with the game that night. Barnett said how easy it was to get used to the mechanics.

"[It was] really fun. I think I did okay for the first time playing. It was a lot at first, but then you kinda get used to it," Barnett said.

While getting his bearings of Magic, he said that he liked the resource management aspect of the game, specifically of choosing which cards to play based on the land cards that were already placed earlier on the battlefield.

"I like the resource management aspect of choosing what to play, [mainly] trying to see if you can get a better hand than your opponent," Barnett said.

What was evident from this tutorial night at the Magic: The Gathering club was the love for the game that was shared between everyone and how that brought them all together. The beginners fit

right in from the start and everyone was willing to help them learn the game they've been playing for a long time.

After learning from the veterans and taking their own shot at a game, the new club members seemed to be excited to return for the next meeting on Monday.

If you've ever been interested in playing Magic, there seems to be no better place in this town to learn than at this club. Those who are interested can get involved by visiting the club on alternating Mondays and Thursdays from 6-11 p.m. in the White River Room of the Student Union.



SCAN QR CODE FOR MORE INFO



Attendees at Magic: The Gathering club's tutorial night on Thursday.

Photo by Eric Fluke | Special to The Herald

Student Speaks: "If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be?"



Photo by Ella Dobson | Special to The Herald
Maliyah Merryman is a first year biology major from Jonesboro.

"Alexander Hamilton, there was an amazing musical written about him, and I want to ask him how he would feel about Lin-Manuel Miranda. I need to know what he would've thought."



Photo by Ahtziry Zuñiga | Special to The Herald
Aubrey Shalk is a first year history major from Jonesboro.

"Probably Abigail Adams, so that I could pick at her brain. But for childhood nostalgia, then Laura Ingalls Wilder, because I was obsessed with those books."



Photo by Ahtziry Zuñiga | Special to The Herald
Jacob Wewers is a first year business administration major from Jonesboro.

"I would probably say Jesus Christ, because there are a lot of questions I'd want to ask him about his life in general. So I just feel like that'd be a very informative conversation. Just sit down with somebody like that."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CEAZIA WILLIAMS
Ceazia Williams is a junior elementary education major from Blytheville, Arkansas.

"Probably Martin Luther King Jr. to ask for more detail about the dream that he had and what gave him the confidence to act on it."