

THE BEDLAM FILES SWAG STORE is OPEN!

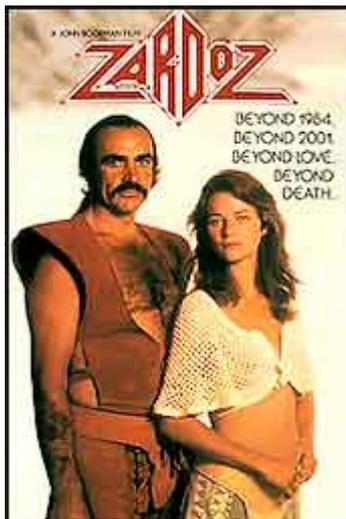
THE BEDLAM FILES

With Adam Groves

“When in doubt, you bring in relatives. Nepotism is a part of my work.”

— Garry Marshall

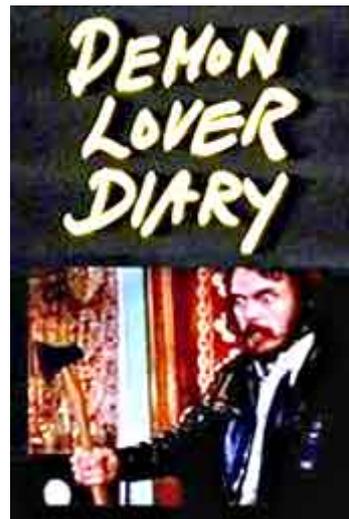
Streaming Now



1. ZARDOZ

Visionary brilliance or complete nonsense? Honestly, I can't decide. The UK's John Boorman has made some crazy-assed movies, such as LEO THE LAST (1970) and EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC (1977), but the Jodorowskian spectacle **ZARDOZ** (1974) is undoubtedly his nuttiest-ever concoction, and one of the absolute wildest sci fi films to emerge from the 1970s. It's certainly the *only* film you'll find with a giant floating stone head that vomits rifles, Sean Connery in a wedding dress, dialogue like “The gun is good, the penis is evil” and an omnipotent ruler named

Adam's Picks

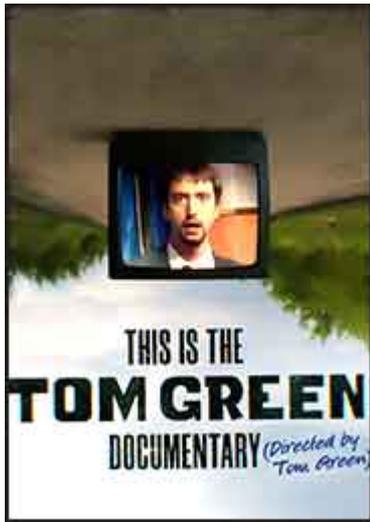


1. DEMON LOVER DIARY

Sad news: documentarian Joel DeMott recently passed away. DEMON LOVER DIARY (1980) was her first and best nonfiction film, a deeply corrosive look at the making of Donald Jackson's grade-Z anti-classic THE DEMON LOVER. What we're shown is dark, ugly, and outrageous, and concludes with DeMott and her BF/co-conspirator Jeff Kreines literally running for their lives as the fed-up Jackson fires a gun in their direction.

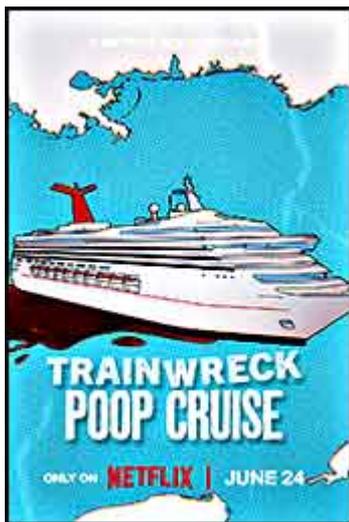
FILM

after the final letters of THE WIZARD OF OZ.
AMAZON



2. THIS IS THE TOM GREEN DOCUMENTARY

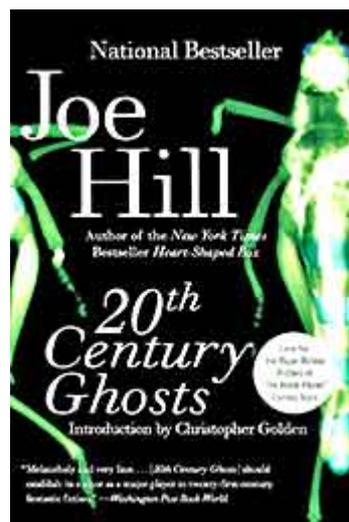
Canada's Tom Green appears to be an afterthought these days, but 20 years ago he was all the rage, having headlined a popular MTV comedy show that predated JACKASS, enjoyed a high-profile romance with Drew Barrymore, underwent a widely publicized cancer treatment and pioneered what are now known as podcasts. This docu-memoir, directed by Green himself, is fun, well rounded,¹ and informative, but I'd have liked a bit more info on the skateboarding subculture that inspired Green (as it did Spike Jonze and Harmony Korine) and the "unsettled" sentiment he claims drove him away from LA and back to his secluded Ottawa hometown. AMAZON



2. BLOOD IN, BLOOD OUT/BOUND BY HONOR

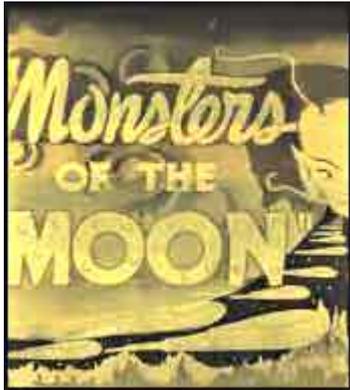
This 1993 crime epic was and continues to be shamefully neglected (not least because its distributors can't seem to decide on a title), yet it's one of the most interesting films made by director Taylor Hackford. The core narrative, involving three Chicano family members finding themselves on opposite sides of the law, is admittedly clichéd, but LA's Hispanic subculture is depicted with great vibrancy, and a standout cast that includes Benjamin Bratt, Damian Chapa, Tom Towles, Billy Bob Thornton, Danny Trejo, Ving Rhames, SPEED's Carlos Carrasco and BACK TO THE FUTURE's Tom Wilson. Another cast member, Delroy Lindo, does his job a little too well, dominating the final third as a black convict to whom Hackford can't help but devote the majority of his attention.

FILM



3. TRAINWRECK: POOP CRUISE

An exploration of the widely publicized 2013 Carnival cruise disaster, in which a cruise ship lost power and became a floating septic tank. Utilizing verité iPhone footage and retrospective interviews with several passengers and crewmembers, this short doco offers up a day-by-day recounting of the calamity, with a queasy (but appropriate) focus on bodily excretion. NETFLIX



4. MONSTERS OF THE MOON

Enthusiastically **touted by Forrest J. Ackerman back in 1940**, MONSTERS OF THE MOON is a 5½ minute trailer, made to drum up interest for a feature that never came to fruition. Said trailer has been considered lost for some time but this, allegedly, is it. I'm not entirely convinced of its authenticity, as the film presented here seems a little too self-aware in its overt 1930s kitsch, which is precisely the type of thing AI renders with painstaking exactitude. But then again, I have no proof that AI was involved, meaning I'll have to accept that the pic is indeed genuine, and as such offers up a fair amount of archaic fun. YOUTUBE

3. 20th CENTURY GHOSTS

The first book by Joe Hill, a.k.a. Joe Hillstrom King (as in the son of Stephen King), which just turned 20. 20th CENTURY GHOSTS is a well-rounded collection of Ray Bradbury-esque tales of horror and fantasy, with two bonafide masterpieces that are by themselves worth the purchase: "Voluntary Committal," a wistful and dark-hued depiction of a schizophrenic man creating labyrinthine structures with empty boxes, and "Pop Art," about the short life of an inflatable boy.

BOOK



4. WHALE MUSIC

In light of the recent demise of Brian Wilson, I say this 1994 Canadian drama warrants a viewing. It's a fictionalized depiction of Wilson's post-BEACH BOYS existence, with Maury Chaykin (in a role that was intended for John Candy) as a mentally unstable ex-rock star residing in a dilapidated mansion, located in an especially scenic portion of British Columbia. The story, involving a young stripper (Cynthia Preston) initiating a most unlikely romance with Chaykin, is scarcely believable, but in its GRAY GARDENS-like depiction of opulent decay the film is rather fascinating.

FILM



5. PLANE

A surprise: a Gerard Butler vehicle I skipped when it was released in 2022, but which turned out to be a crackerjack actioner. PLANE, which is essentially FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX meets THE DELTA FORCE, isn't exactly a model of intelligence or plausibility, but it works. Butler plays an airline pilot forced to land his plane, whose passengers include a violent felon (Mike Colter), on a tropical island ruled by gun-toting warlords. There follows a lot of ass-kicking, bloodshed, and unchecked machismo, all reasonably well handled by director Jean-Francois Richet (of the two-part MESRINE gangster epic, which you're urged to check out if you haven't already done so). NETFLIX



5. ZARDOZ

The novelization of ZARDOZ, credited to John Boorman and Bill Stair. I'm tempted to call this book a surreal fever dream, but that would be giving it too much credit. Prose fiction was never Boorman's specialty, as is evident in the scant 130-page length, which with its perfunctory exposition and fumbled attempts at hallucinatory prose fails to do the story justice. In other words: *see the movie.*

BOOK



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Also New

- **TICK TOWN** (Book)
- **CANADIAN BACON** (Film)
- **BEER BLOOD AND ASHES** (Nonfiction)
- **ROCK N ROLL HIGH SCHOOL** (Film)
- **AND MORE!**



Insider Info

One especially annoying aspect of getting older is having to watch my successors discover things I figured out decades ago. Case in point: Hollywood nepotism, which appears to have gotten Gen-Z in a snit, so much so that they've invented a term for it: nepo-babies, which are apparently **"everywhere in entertainment these days"** and have **"been a thing in the culture for a little while now."** A *little* while?



Nepotism has been a dream factory mainstay since forever. Hollywood, in fact, views itself as a monarchy and its offspring as industry anointed. This is evident in a future set scene in *BACK TO THE FUTURE PART II* (1989) depicting a **holographic advert** for "JAWS 19," which is "Directed by Max Spielberg." The real-life son of the film's executive producer, Max Spielberg was just four years old at the time of *BACK TO THE FUTURE PART II*'s release yet was evidently being groomed to not only assume his father's profession but continue a movie franchise the old man initiated.

Another Spielberg offspring, one Destry Allyn, made waves when she was announced as director of the 2022 short film **LET ME GO THE RIGHT WAY**, scripted by Stephen King's son Owen and starring Sean Penn's son Hopper. Quite a nepo-fest, I will admit, but the situation was far from unprecedented; think back to *ORANGE COUNTY* (2002), directed by Jake Kasdan and starring Colin Hanks and Schuyler Fisk (Jake and Colin's last names

should clue you in on their parentage, while Schuyler is the daughter of Sissy Spacek).

It's my belief that the 2000s and 2010s marked a high point in filmic nepotism. A major factor in the ascension of Jennifer Lawrence was the mere fact that she had no famous relatives, quite an unusual factor in the 2010s. More standard was the cast of Quentin Tarantino's **ONCE UPON A TIME IN HOLLYWOOD** (2019), which was so packed with nepo babies—Margaret Qualley, Maya Hawke, Rumer Willis, Harley Quinn Smith, etc. — that it **caused a mini-outcry**.

Yet after five years the most prominent young actors to emerge from ONCE UPON A TIME HOLLYWOOD are the non-nepo'd likes of Sydney Sweeney, Austin Butler and Mikey Madison. There's also the fact that the biggest name associated with ORANGE COUNTY happens to be Jack Black (who was cast not because he had famous relatives but **because he lived next door to the film's screenwriter Mike White**



Check out Adam's
recommendations in the
NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE.

I'm done reading. To the website!

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