

"The Breaking Point"

Paramount

As a Whole.....FREQUENT COINCIDENCE IN PLOT DEVELOPMENT MAKES THIS A BIT ABSURD AT TIMES BUT QUICK COMEDY RELIEF USUALLY SAVES THE SITUATION. GOOD CAST AND WILL LIKELY PLEASE THEM.

Cast....Nita Naldi decorates various scenes capably but her role does not permit her any real acting opportunities. Matt Moore gives a satisfying performance as the hero whose various memory lapses provide him with unusual adventure and romance. Patsy Ruth Miller pretty as the eventual bride. George Fawcett has one of his typical characterizations and Theodore von Eltz is the conventional "missing link" in the plot.

Type of Story.....Mystery drama. There is good drama in Mary Roberts Rinehart's "The Breaking Point" but the mystery element, as brought out in the picture is considerably lacking since there is no doubt at all in the spectator's mind as to who committed the actual killing. During the scuffle in which the actress' husband is shot, there are intermittent cuts of her business manager peeping through a curtain and since the audience is acquainted with his state of mind, it is quite natural that this would be an appropriate moment for him to aim at the other man, his half-brother and enemy, and satisfy his own revenge. The fact that he hits the wrong man affords further complications, to be sure, but in no way causes any suspense with regard to the actual murderer. The plot will prove interesting, however, to the average picture audience and even some very bold coincidence in the development may not be classed as absurd if the quick comedy relief is as successful as it seemed to be with the Rivoli audience. The story covers a lot of ground and includes a variety of situations that should fill a big order.

Box Office Angle....Pretty good audience picture in spite of the flaws that may be picked in it.

Exploitation....Naturally you'll want to boost Mrs. Rinehart's name and should find a book-store tie-up and display of her books of considerable advantage in exploiting the picture. Talk about the murder sequence in which a hero with a dual personality plays an important part. Play up the stage atmosphere in connection with Nita Naldi and her role of Broadway favorite. Run a trailer consisting of the sequence in which the actress' husband is killed and cut it off with the query: "Who killed Beverly Carlyle's husband? See 'The Breaking Point' here on (dope) and learn the answer." Use the names of Nita Naldi, Patsy Ruth Miller, Geo. Fawcett, Matt Moore.

Direction.....Herbert Brenon; usually good.

Author.....Mary Roberts Rinehart
Scenario.....Julie Herne-Eldrid Bingham.

Cameraman.....James Howe
Photography.....Good
Locale.....N. Y.—Wyo.
Length.....6,664 feet

Laura La Plante in

"Excitement"

Universal

As a Whole.....STAR VERY PRETTY AND SHOULD MAKE GOOD IN MODERN GIRL ROLES BUT HASN'T MUCH OF A CHANCE IN THIS SILLY BURLESQUE STORY THAT HASN'T EVEN A DREAM ENDING TO EXCUSE IT.

Star....Photographs splendidly and is always very good to look at but needs much better material than this if they want to build up a reputation for her.

Cast....Adequate; includes Edward Hearn, William Welsh, Frances Raymond, Fred De Silva, Margaret Cullington, Albert Hart, Rolfe Sedan, Bert Roach, Lon Puff.

Type of Story.....Farce comedy. Farce that borders on burlesque can be comical without being silly but "Excitement" gets way out of bounds and becomes almost foolish. Evenly this highly exaggerated business might be excused somewhat if they had passed it off with a dream ending. When the young wife decides that her year of married life has been dull and plans to go off on a vacation by way of becoming a companion to a crazy woman things begin to happen. The woman isn't insane, merely a "bug" on Egyptian stuff and it is a scheme of her brother to cure her of this and marry her off to his business partner. The plan of the girl's husband to cure her of her passion for excitement consists of a round of mild thrills including an airplane ride with the girl confined in a dummy case. The case slips out of the plane, the pilot makes a nose dive and the case lands back in the plane. All this may be amusing and probably will get some laughs but most of the stunts are so farfetched and silly that it's difficult to get laughs out of them. It would have been a big improvement for the picture to have had a dream ending, with the wife waking up and then being satisfied with her husband and a quiet existence.

Box Office Angle.....In case you don't find it hard to amuse your folks you might consider "Excitement." Where they laugh easy the picture will undoubtedly satisfy. Laura La Plante is pretty and they'll like her even if they do wonder that she wasn't given a better story for a start.

Exploitation....Title will get their attention no doubt. Use advertising lines such as: "Excitement" at the blank theater with Laura La Plante, Universal's latest star." Use stills of the star and get them interested in her. Your women patrons might be invited to see some of her pretty gowns. She wears clothes well. Catchlines: "Wives, Attention. Are you dissatisfied? See 'Excitement' and you'll never be dissatisfied again."

Direction.....Robert F. Hill; fair
Author.....Crosby George
Cameraman.....Jack Rose
Photography.....Good
Locale.....Suburbs
Length.....4,913 feet

Carlyle Blackwell in

"The Beloved Vagabond"

Film Booking Offices

As a Whole.....EXCELLENT HEART INTEREST AND SPLENDID CHARACTERIZATION WORTH WHILE FEATURES IN ENGLISH PRODUCTION. STORY AN ADAPTATION OF FAMOUS NOVEL.

Star....Gives a performance that is at times striking and again fails somewhat to measure up to expectations, but on the whole his characterization is effective and played with a certain amount of restraint.

Cast....Next to Blackwell, young Albert Chase does the best work. He's a likeable chap and has already well mastered the art of pantomime. Phyllis Timms rather pretty but not always photographed correctly. Sydney Fairbrother fine in small part of cockney washwoman. Madge Stuart suitable and others appropriate though not familiar to American audiences.

Type of Story....Romantic drama. There's a strong heart interest in the pathetic love story of the violinist Gaston de Nerac who signs an agreement whereby he must give up the girl he loves to save her father from disgrace. His rival then provides the necessary money while Gaston, without a word to his sweetheart (part of the agreement) goes out of her life hoping that her faith in him is strong enough to hold her affection until the two years will have elapsed. How he sinks to the lowest level offers interesting detail and provides unusually fine characterization, plus a forceful heart interest that runs right along through the whole story. Granville tells the story nicely and holds the attention well except for occasional over stressed points. The production might have been more attractive. The story is a really beautiful romance and might have been given a more colorful background.

Box Office Angle....For those who appreciate a picture that gets away from the routine and offers a really interesting story with a very definite heart appeal, "The Beloved Vagabond" will be good entertainment. It shows a serious effort to do something worth while.

Exploitation....If your folks are crying for better pictures you would do well to put this one on your list. If they are tired of the conventional, cut-and-dried "movie" formulas let them see this one and it may help to restore their faith in pictures. It is a step in the right direction. Talk up the title and get them interested in it by recalling the novel and putting it over in conjunction with book store tie-ups. Do your best to get them interested through unusual exploitation, if necessary.

Direction....Fred Leroy Granville; a worth while effort.

Author.....William J. Locke
Scenario.....Carlyle Blackwell
Cameraman.....Walter Blakely
Photography.....Usually good
Locale.....London-Paris
Length.....6,217 feet

John Barrymore in

"Beau Brummel"

Warner Bros.

As a Whole.....OUTSTANDING STRIKING PERFORMANCE OF STAR LIFTS THIS PICTURE TREMENDOUSLY. DELIGHTFUL LOVE STORY SHOULD INTEREST YOUR WOMEN PATRONS. PICTURE RUNS ENTIRELY TOO LONG.

Star....There isn't an actor working before the camera who could not profitably take lessons from John Barrymore as a result, the efforts of little Mary Astor, sweet and pretty as she is, fail to a tremendous extent. Barrymore almost perfect in his characterization.

Players....Alec Francis gives an outstanding performance, ranking next to Barrymore. He is delightful. Wilford Louis excellent as Prince Regent. Irene Rich has little to do. Carmel Meyers too vanilla. Others unimportant.

Type of Story....When his sweetheart is compelled to marry another, George Bryan Brummel, an officer of the guards, plans a revenge during which he becomes an outstanding figure of the social world of England. There is stark tragedy in the end when broken and poverty-stricken he dies and meets the spirit of his sweetheart. This brief outline fails in its entirety to tell of the excellence of the many incidents which are exquisitely portrayed in this production. In this connection it should be mentioned that the production is one of unusual beauty and excellence.

Box Office Value.....Where John Barrymore is popular—like in New York—his name alone is sufficient to bring them in. But regardless of his general standing the production is so lovely, the story so beautiful that it should prove worth-while at the box-office.

Exploitation....You have much to work with. You first have John Barrymore who ranks as the best and if not one of the very best actors of the day. You also have the name of Clyde Fitch who will be remembered by your older patrons as a playwright of distinction and note.

In addition you have the names of several players well-known to fans including Irene Rich, Alec Francis and Mary Astor all of whom might easily have a following in your community. Unfortunately John Barrymore doesn't make enough pictures to insure a great fan clientele. You can also talk about the production which is beautiful. You can easily promise that John Barrymore gives the greatest performance of his screen career. He does.

Director....Harry Beaumont; usually excellent. Allows some sequences to run too long.

Author.....Clyde Fitch
Scenario.....Dorothy Farnum
Cameraman.....David Abel
Photography.....Excellent
Locale....England during the reign of George III
Footage.....9,900 feet.