There are a few, good, isolated bits which deserve mention. Aubert Pallas-clo’s impersonation of Trudeau is amusing, complete with the arrogant shrug, as he arbitrarily hands the crisis over to Shatner and tells him to keep it quiet. The nicest unintentional irony in the film is that the police refer to Jackie Burroughs as “our actress”; she could have done much to help the drama if she had been more than a “woman agent”. Gary Reineke is effective as Shatner’s rival Deitrich, the small-minded ass from the CIA. There is one, strong, tragi-comic vignette when Shatner shoots an English Jesus freak, Pat Holbrook are just getting out of the truck. The next thing we know, they’re behind sandbags at a safe distance, breathing calmly as the flames light up Nathan Phillips Square.

Really, George. You watch too much T.V.

Chris Lowry

George Mihalka’s Pinball Summer

Pinball Summer is more like a Mr. Clean version of the few 1979 Canadian features which made it out of the can and onto the screen.

Here are all the clichés of this genre: suburbanite kids cruising in cars, bad boy greasers on motorcycles, bumbling police chases, mooning, flashing, burping, petting, but no fornication. If there’s any moral, it’s that jiggling and comely breasts in T-shirts are for fondling, but good girls don’t.

In scene after scene of this mindless puerile pab, producer Jack Murphy and director George Mihalka hope to titillate with gags and giggles. In fact, Pinball Summer is more like a Mr. Clean version of a 42nd Street peep show. The tempo is set by the frequency of appearance of nubile breasts and limbs, all orchestrated for fondling, but good girls don’t.

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lesbianism. The story is a combination of *The Wild Ones*, minus dramatic tension, *American Graffiti*, minus the cool cars and *Gumball Rally*, minus the race.

But who cares? The plot, about a pinball championship where the winner is to get a trophy and the pinball queen, is all quite incidental to the froth which these young cineastes are trying to celebrate. I wonder what kind of impact a film like this would have on an alien being — armed with a Classics Illustrated Freud — who was looking for symbolic meanings?

First, the oral gratification aspect. Repeated scenes in the suburban hamburger joint show the cast stuffing their faces with junk food while washing the glop down with cola and a background of imitation Beach Boys. (Was Coke a sponsor of this long commercial?) How about anal fixation? Two suburban heroes stuff more abominable food into the tail pipe of the smart rich kid's car at a drive-in. The car regurgitates (evacuates?) it onto the window of the town alderman's Cadillac as he and a female object fondle each other before a backdrop of Hollywood's forgettable Krakatoa, East of Java.

The greaser Burt tries to steal away the suburbanite Greg's girl. So Greg steals Burt's motorcycle, which he drives off a pier and into a lake, to the tune of Burt's idiotic, plaintive cries — "You drowned my bike! It doesn't even know how to swim!" Later they duel it out at the pinball contest, where Burt's fraudulent victory is exposed by Wimp, a wimp. A chase ensues. Burt see his shack demolished, and Sally the waitress (of whose mountainous breasts everyone is waiting for another peek) is left sexually straddling a talking pinball machine in the middle of a highway. Curious creatures these North Americans.

The scene of the pinball contest typifies the film's ambience. In the contest audience, a mindless mute (line producer Bob Presner) throws handfuls of popcorn into the air, catching only a few kernels in his open mouth — the rest scattering helter-skelter on all those about him, including a peripatetic flasher. The scenes of this film are so many popcorn kernels falling around us too. Only a few are ingested.

If *Pinball Summer* is supposed to be fun and mindless, despite all the grass smoke wafting across the screen (both in the film itself, and in the theatre) there just weren't enough laughs. Amuse-
Whether or not Pinball Summer reaches the adolescent, and postadolescent market it aims down for, is a moot point. I heard one fiftyish matron reach the adolescent and postthought she was bemoaning the film's frightening if you have young kids. "Ifs reflection of the adolescent's neverhormones and unrequited sexuality. the worst film that John Huston has directed (remember, we have here the director of such yawm-inducers as The Misfits, Night of the Iguana and Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison), it is not the worst Canadian film of the year (there's Prom Night, for starters), and although it is certainly negligible as art or commerce, it has a few things going for it.

Despite the rather Hobbesian reviews, Phobia has received in the Toronto press, it isn't that bad. Despite what Jay Scott would have you believe, it is not the worst film that John Huston has made (remember, we have here the director of such yawm-inducers as The Misfits, Night of the Iguana and Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison), it is not the worst Canadian film of the year (there's Prom Night, for starters), and although it is certainly negligible as art or commerce, it has a few things going for it.

Despite the singularly dull performances of Paul Michael Glaser, Susan Hogan and John Colicos in the leads, there are some good performances from: Alexandra Stewart, who is unfortunately killed off in the first reel; David Bolt, as a timid acrophobic; and most memorably, David Eisner, who in one brief description of his lack of courage, gives one of those oddly angled, jittery bits that have been an Hustonian hallmark since Peter Lorre's entrance in The Maltese Falcon almost forty years ago.

The story concerns a group of five phobic patients under the treatment of Dr. Ross (Glaser): an agoraphobe (Stewart), a claustrophobe (Eisner), an acrophobe (Bolt) an ophlophobe (Rob­ert O'Ree), and a girl terrified of men (Lisa Langlois). One by one they are killed off in ways appropriate to their fears. Enter a scen­ery-chewing detective (Colicos, of course), determined to get to the bottom of things. Scattered about are Ross's old and current girlfriends (Hogan, and, in a nicely underplayed turn, Patricia Collins). Of course, at the bottom of it all is Doctor Ross (This becomes apparent about half-way through the film).

The narrative inconsistencies could fill several volumes. Ross, for example, is from California, but his accent is pure Brooklyn. The detectives take their suspect for the first murder and brutalize him for no apparent reason. Ross's "radical" technique, of helping his patients overcome their fears by exposing them to what they fear, is almost as old as psychotherapy.

Phobia's real significance, however, comes from the very precise ways in which it demonstrates exactly what is

An alien being exposed to this supermarket of sexual innuendo with no sex might conclude that play, fantasy and consumption with no consummation is what earth creatures do. Or perhaps suburban survival from junk food overdose is the latest adaptation of the Margaret Atwood "survival is Canadian" litany.

Gary Evans