

Madman says 'let 'em eat cake'

By Emerson Batdorff

When a madman stabs George Peppard in the back with a cake knife at the climax of "Pendulum," Peppard hollers. That's the difference between "Pendulum" and most other crime movies these days. "Pendulum" is very near to being realistic.

Certainly it is tense and

jolting. Peppard, playing a big, stolid police detective in Washington D. C., is suspected of murdering his wife and her boy friend.

He is tracked down, much as he himself had tracked down a killer a few months earlier.

THE KILLER is a madman, a sex oriented madman. Peppard ignored the killer's civil rights during the investigation. There being no new facts untainted by this blemish, the killer is set free by the Supreme Court to, obviously, rape and sin some more.

Robert F. Lyons as the psychotic killer is chilling. Without an overt act he could make you desire not to meet him on even a moonlit night.

With the law having freed one guilty man, and then

turned around to track down, on a different charge, the innocent policeman who jailed the guilty man, we have the makings of a moral. The moral comes very close to getting in the way of the story. One doesn't appreciate preaching during a murder mystery.

The moral is that even a

'Pendulum'

A suspense thriller in which the message almost obscures its medium, but fortunately not quite. George Peppard carries conviction as a big, bright police detective. Mature. 106 minutes.

Directed by George Schaefer. Written and produced by Stanley Niss. Columbia. Cast: Frank Matthews...George Peppard...Adele Matthews...Jean Seberg...Woodrow Wilson King...Richard Kiley...Chief Hildebrand...Charles McGraw...Mrs. Eileen Sanderson...M. Sherwood Paul Martin Sanderson...Robert F. Lyons

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policeman has civil liberties that must not be trampled.

Jean Seberg gives one of her unwooden performances as the straying wife and is quite enjoyable. Richard Kiley as the sterling defense attorney is awfully mealy mouthed but maybe that's the way the part is written. One senator depicted in the movie seemed to be right out of TV commercial land.

PROBABLY the finest job is done by Madeline Sherwood as the mother of the

madman. She is afraid to have him at home and afraid he'll get hurt and afraid he'll hurt someone and she comes right through the screen to show you how upset she is. It's one of those performances that linger in the memory like a scream in the night.

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