

POINTERS FOR PARENTS

How Families Can Screen Movies

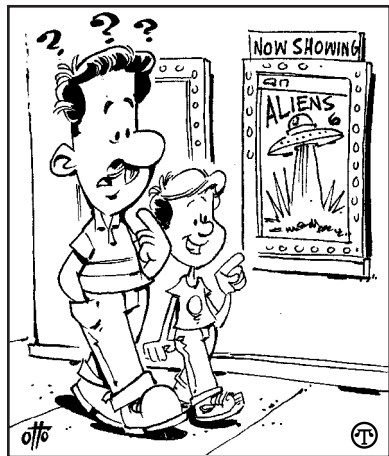
(NAPS)—If you want to enjoy more movies with your family, it may help to have a clearer picture of what different shows are about.

For example, some movies may be great for families, unbeknownst to parents, or some movies may be scarier than parents might have expected (turning a family night at the movies into a week of children's nightmares).

That's one reason a number of people now pay particular attention to movie reviews, but also consider their sources. For instance, one popular service—accessible by telephone or the Internet—features reviews from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The reviews include concise storyline summaries and an analysis of each film's moral values.

Films are also rated for age appropriateness according to a classification system developed by the USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting. The reviews, which are updated every Friday, also include a recommendation for a "Family Friendly Video," for those times when you can't make it to the theaters.

The group classifies movies according to the following system: "A-I" (general patronage), "A-II" (adults and adolescents), "A-III" (adults), "A-IV" (adults with reser-



Parents who know just how "family friendly" a movie really is—before going to it—may have more fun with their children at the cinema.

ventions) and "O" (morally objectionable). However, a movie that receives a certain classification isn't necessarily recommended or panned by the reviewers. For example, a recent movie, though classified as "A-I," was rated as "mildly pleasant," with a "pre-fab" quality that even a "good cast" couldn't overcome.

In addition to new reviews, family-film buffs can search the USCCB's archived reviews on the group's Web site.

To access the service call 1-800-311-4222 or visit www.usccb.org.