

'Gentleman' probably not Murphy's boomerang back to the top

by Hollywood Rob

The *Distinguished Gentleman* which promised to be one of the biggest comedy hits of the holiday season, appears not to be distinguishing enough to keep the movie afloat. Considering lackluster box office sales last weekend this one will probably sink fast.

The *Distinguished Gentleman* had been billed as Eddie Murphy's return to the style of *48 Hrs.* and *Trading Places*. While the movie doesn't live up to that expectation, it is a marked improvement over *Harlem Nights* and the like. It's more along the lines of *Coming to America*. It's not that Murphy doesn't try hard, but he hasn't really had the comedic Midas touch since *Beverly Hills Cop*.

Murphy stars as Thomas Jefferson Smith, a Florida con man who runs a phone sex scam. This portion of the movie is the old Murphy—cocky, smart-mouthed and arrogant. He's also extremely funny.

I think Murphy is suffering from a serious identity crisis. He wants to make more classically styled movies, but all people want to see are

Distinguished Gentleman
Starring Eddie Murphy
Directed by Dale Launer



the fast, funny comedies. In this movie, he tries to create the best of both worlds.

In *The Distinguished Gentleman* he incorporates Axel Foley and the semi-serious Eddie. It works well too. He proves he is still the old Eddie, even if for only a quarter of the movie.

The only thing that might have helped these proceedings to any noticeable degree is a darker tone to the political side of the story.

Gentleman makes an attempt to say something about Washington D.C. dealmakers, but does so with a sappy sentimentality that whitewashes its real message. Earlier this year Tim Robbins wrote, directed and starred in *Bob Roberts* which has the edge *The Distinguished Gentleman* needs.

Despite *Gentleman's* imbalances it manages to be entertaining which has been lost to the last few Murphy pictures. The storyline is fairly unpredictable, however, the ending is greatly expected.

The similarities to *Mr. Smith Goes to Wash-*








Eddie Murphy stars in *Distinguished Gentleman* as a small-time con artist who gets elected to congress. Murphy and Grant Tinker (Photo Left, shirt torn) have a midnight conversation regarding UNLV's tuition increases near the Reflecting Pool.

ington, which this movie had been said to be based on, lie in a total reversal of the Mr. Smith story with a contemporary cynicism mixed into the stew.

Believe it or not, it's worth seeing, but it's probably not too far from the discount theaters at this point so give it a few weeks.

Ratings Scale

		
The Goods-Creme of the Crop	Solid Flick	Flawed, but worth watching
		
Doesn't cut the mustard	Monsieur Le Potté say "oui-oui, the film, she ees stinky, like that of pee-pee"	

LARGER THAN LIFE WITH X-TRA LARGE

by Tricia Romano

"I'm eating pretzels," said Josh Freese of Xtra Large. Not exactly the breakfast of champions, considering the drummer is 6 feet tall.

Not to worry, because if the bands' past successes

have anything to say for them, it's that they will have many plentiful meals ahead. Various members have already played with the likes of Infectious Grooves, School of Fish, Suicidal Tendencies and Paul West-erberg, to name a few.

The members of Xtra

Large are now gearing up for a tour in support of their debut *Now I Eat them*, which is headed to Favorites Saturday night.

Freese and the other members first met each other while playing the local Orange County circuit in California. The existence of

Xtra Large became possible when, as Freese said, "We all finally started quitting all of the other bands we were in." Freese along with singer Darren McNamee, guitarist Warren Anthony Fitzgerald, and bassist Robert Melrose Thomson IV, have created a sound that is in the vein of the straight ahead rock with a punk influence.

"We're not really alternative," said the drummer, "I think right now it's more alternative not to be alternative."

Consequently, the band steered clear of the ever popular grunge and funk scene, because of the trendiness that surrounds those types of bands.

"It's such a trend it bugs me out," said Freese of grunge music. "Every L.A.

rocker type that used to wear cowboy boots and jeans went out and traded it in for combat boots and shorts."

What's a guy to do, when everyone looks like you? "I just try to look as normal as possible," laughed Freese.

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