

Mum is the word

by Daniel W. Duffy

The best kept secret in Hollywood in recent history has been Neil Jordan's *The Crying Game*. With *The Crying Game*, both critics and fans alike kept their collective traps shut so as to not reveal any of the film's main plot twists. Why people don't take this approach with all films is one of the greatest mysteries known to man.

In the age of oversaturation of film promotion and propaganda on both TV and

in print media, it is possible for the average viewer to know nearly the entire plot before they've even seen the movie.

"By the time viewers reach their seats today, they are privy to the most memorable moments and images of the film they are about to see," said film studies professor Francisco Menendez. "This is due to the proliferation of advertisements, TV programs, cable channels and entertainment magazines that focus on selling current films.

"Over the past few years,

Hollywood has realized that a movie's box office is dependent on a strong opening weekend, thus the shameless use of new technology to push current films onto the public. This is deadly for the seasoned viewer who needs only minimal imagery to piece together the story thus destroying the possible impact of the new work."

Hollywood Rob, film critic of *Tempest* said "If it's a well made film, I won't need to know anything in advance. But some films depend on their

marketing campaign for part of the story."

Film student Marc May offered a similar sentiment.

"Ultimate secrets should be kept at all costs. Lesser secrets should be advertised in order to pack 'em in."

Previews can be a way for the average viewer to see what movies are coming to the local movie house, but for some, trailers—especially extensive ones lasting in upwards of five minutes—can be a nightmare.

Menendez said public relations people and ad execs

want to grab the most exciting moments and put them on the preview.

"I would argue that Hollywood has no interest in you enjoying the film you're paying money for. They want you to be disappointed. Then you'll be stupid enough to go to the movie theater the next weekend and be disappointed again. They way they do it is through previews—through extensive abuse of images.

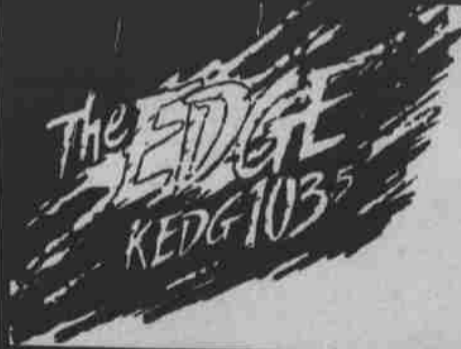
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