

## Shallow film disappoints

BY TYLER GEORGE  
Reviewer

From the director of "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants," Ken Kwapis, comes another book-turned-movie "He's Just Not That Into You," probably one of the biggest disappointments in film since 1996, when he directed the cinematic joke "Dunston Checks In." I feel obligated to apologize to everyone who wasted their time on this terrible production.

Never has one single film made men appear so shallow and women appear so insane at the same time. The film itself is a pitiful attempt at making sense of something that never will be understood. Guys never will understand why girls act the way they do, and the same thing can be said about girls never being able to understand guys and why they do what they do. We just are not created to understand each other, and the topic in and of itself does not have enough merit to have a whole movie made about it.

"He's Just Not That Into You"

epitomizes one of my rules about movie viewing: Never judge a movie by its cast. Never. With the acting talents of big Hollywood stars such as Ben Affleck, Jennifer Aniston, Drew Barrymore, Jennifer Connelly, Bradley Cooper, Justin Long and Scarlett Johansson, at the end of the movie I wondered how a film that sounded so right could have gone so wrong. The fact that a lot of Hollywood's A-list appears in the film reveals that even the buoyancy of their combined talents was not enough to keep this awful movie afloat.

In this way, "He's Just Not That Into You" reminded me of a recent movie titled "Charlie Wilson's War." With actors such as Tom Hanks, Amy Adams, Julia Roberts and Philip Seymour Hoffman, I thought the movie looked great on the surface. Sadly, the movie ended up being terribly boring and disenchanting to the point where I began to wonder if I would have been better off not putting the disc in the DVD player.

The cinematic failure of "He's

Just Not That Into You" can be attributed to a couple of factors. The script was very poorly written and evoked laughter from the audience in even the most serious of moments. It was often difficult to tell if the character was being serious or merely making a pathetic attempt at wooing his or her potential date. It was remarkable how some of these lines even worked, considering the fact that the character very well could have been joking when the cheesy line was delivered. Also, the cast was too old for the story. Maybe if most of the cast had been under 30, it would have given the audience a better feel of the immaturity found in adolescence suggested by the book.

Usually if a movie isn't anything special I'll say that you should go rent it or Redbox it when it comes out, but with this one it's different. Don't even waste your time. It certainly is not worth it, and although it might appear to be pretty with all those famous faces on the cover, one is forced to remember that beauty is only skin deep.



Photo Courtesy of [www.demetrimartin.com](http://www.demetrimartin.com)  
Demetri Martin brings out all of his tricks and jokes for his new show "Important Things with Demetri Martin" which airs on Comedy Central.

## Martin's show breeds laughter

BY JOHN HITZEL  
Reviewer

Demetri Martin now has his own TV show, and it addresses the most vital information in the universe. "Important Things with Demetri Martin" airs at 9:30 p.m. Wednesdays on Comedy Central, as well as every other night and throughout the day because Comedy Central repeats all its shows all the time. Among Martin's claims to fame are appearances on "The Daily Show" and "Flight of the Conchords." Martin also performed at Truman last spring.

Martin was once a student at Harvard, but dropped out to pursue comedy, and here he is, with his own show. Congratulations. Maybe that's what all soon-to-be college grads should do to get those jobs nobody is willing to give out anymore: pursue a career in comedy, or maybe try to work for Martin as his show is most likely here to stay.

Martin's new show resembles his stand-up — its peculiarity somehow breeds laughter. He uses the same delivery for every joke, and somehow it's always perfect, like Steven Wright or Mitch Hedberg. The show begins with a few minutes of stand-up, followed by pre-filmed skits. Then Martin does his trademark bit: He plays guitar, harmonica and foot-chimes while he uses his large white flip-paper marker-pad to tell jokes that combine visual humor and cleverness.

Martin is quite the comedy anomaly, but college students like him for some reason — probably because a good chunk of his material comes from stuff people encounter in college: people peeing outside of bathrooms, characters like Shakespeare and Ben Franklin or "Demetrocles," time travel, ecstasy boy too early for the party, superheroes, drinking, farts, numbers, graphs, comparisons and clever doodles. As a college student, I appreciate Martin's comedy because he succeeds in finding humor in strange places, a technique we enjoy because of the sheer unpredictability of college life and overexposure to Adult Swim.

He even finds an opportunity for humor while going to commercial breaks by presenting the audience with

a note card with many odd options, and then his finger clicks on the button that says "go to commercial."

Each show revolves around one theme, and his material touches upon the theme in some way. For example, the "Timing" episode featured a skit about a gigolo who time-traveled to "bang" many famous women throughout history, a skit about anger at appropriate times and stand-up featuring a graph that plots peeing in bathrooms versus age.

To give you a sense of his comedy style, here's some bits from his routine:

"I think the worst time to get amnesia would be like Halloween. 'What is your name?' 'I don't know, but I'm pretty sure I'm a hobo with a sweet tooth.'"

"I remember when I was in school, my teacher said 'Can you name the Presidents?' I was like, 'Sure, they already have names, but if you want me to do that.'"

"Man is the most powerful creature on the planet, and we're arrogant. I mean, people own birds. It's like 'There's a creature with the gift of flight. I want it. I'm gonna put it in my kitchen and make it crap on old information.'"

Sounds somewhat lame, right? But Martin's magic touch turns these petty observations into gut-busters. I would love to describe the depth and breadth of more skits, but I only would ruin it and take up more of your time by forcing you to read jokes that only work when they are told and shown. Check out the diamond commercial skit on Hulu.

Martin's show is entertaining but relies on cleverness and awkwardness, like many other modern comedy acts. Is this a drawback? I can't say. Although Martin draws on old school comedy, he is part of the new school. He's dry but inventive. He's creative and predictable. He takes what you saw coming and flips it on its head. I like his style, but I wouldn't want my parents to know I enjoy it — they might think I'm dumb and wonder how I have spent my time in college if they saw me rolling on the floor after a Demetri Martin joke. Check him out if you can keep your affection for him a secret from older, prying eyes.

## U2's music ambitions are heroic, unsuccessful

BY HARRY BURSON  
Reviewer

It seems as if the lads in U2 are trying to rewrite history.

Their big comeback in 2000, "All That You Can't Leave Behind," saw the boys returning to the grandiosity of their "Joshua Tree" heyday, disregarding the heavily ironic consumerist shtick that left many fans cold in the '90s. When was the last time Bono mentioned "Zooropa" or "Pop" in an interview?

Of course there's nothing wrong with a band changing directions — let's not forget that U2 is not simply a one-note band. They've done other things that, even if they weren't always super-successful, were at least sort of interesting.

And that brings us to "No Line on the Horizon," U2's latest disc produced by the trio of Brian Eno, Daniel Lanois and Steve Lillywhite with some help from, no joke, will.i.am. Here, U2 is doing the same thing they've been doing for an entire decade — enormous songs about love and life with strong Christian undertones.

Most disheartening is the lead single, "Get on Your Boots," which, like "Vertigo," sees U2 trying to rock. The thing about U2 is even at their peak, they never exactly were famous for bringing the rock, so why they've decided to go for it in their late 40s (early 50s?) is beyond me. Not to mention that "Get on Your Boots" is a complete mess of a pop song. It's ostensibly about sex but with no coherent lyrics — or hooks for that matter.

Elsewhere, U2 keeps it epic with interminable tracks like "Moment of Surrender," "Magnificent" and "Unknown Caller." The lengths and ambition of these songs are undeniably heroic, but the slow build that worked so well on "With or Without You" or "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" does not work here, as the new songs slowly lurch forward without getting anywhere. Pleasant, but not engaging.

So I think of the numerous young bands that have made their reputations channeling U2, and Coldplay comes to mind. Brian Eno also produced their recent disc, yet it managed a level of



Photo Courtesy of [www.kayneuniversity.com](http://www.kayneuniversity.com)  
Kanye West appears on VH1's "Storytellers" series and performs songs from his older albums.

sonic experimentation and songcraft that is missing here. If given the choice between "Viva La Vida" and "No Line on the Horizon," choose the former. Both bands are imitating "The Joshua Tree" — U2 just isn't doing it as well.

### Troubadour

Born in Somalia during a period of serious civil unrest, rapper K'naan immigrated to Harlem as a teenager, and he began rhyming as soon as he picked up the language. Initially rising to prominence a few years ago for criticizing the U.N.'s involvement in his homeland, K'naan has toured with conscious hip-hopers like Talib Kweli and Mos Def, who makes an appearance here.

As his heritage might suggest, K'naan has an Afro-pop sound, layering samples of what could best be described as a mix of world music and jazz. He's clever — he's obviously informed about world events, but he spikes his verses with enough humor to keep him entertaining, not just socially conscious. He's fun to listen to, regardless of whether or not you even know what happened in Somalia.

In addition to Mos Def, the record features guest spots from Damian Marley, Metallica's Kirk Hammett

and Maroon 5's Adam Levine. Obviously K'naan is courting a wider audience. The production on this record might be a little too eclectic to court the T.I. crowd, but anybody who still digs Wyclef should find plenty to like here. I don't know if he's great, but he's definitely good. Let's wait until the next disc to make up our minds.

Finally, some readers might be wondering about Kanye West's appearance on VH1's "Storytellers" series. The consummate showman, Kanye West performs some cuts from "808s and Heartbreak" and his older albums while jumping around on a futuristic Star Trek-meets-Las Vegas stage.

Backed by an orchestra wearing what I think are welding helmets, Kanye West rambles about his inspiration in between songs and at one point gives a shout-out to Michael Phelps and threatens to kill someone who is writing a tell-all book about his late mother. If VH1 isn't replaying it enough for you, it's available on the Internet. Check it out, and have a great Midterm Break.



Courtesy of [www.moviepicturedb.com](http://www.moviepicturedb.com)

## "Doubt" leaves audience questioning morals

BY TYLER GEORGE  
Reviewer

With five Oscar nominations and an outstanding cast, I had a feeling that "Doubt" would blow me away. The film starred Meryl Streep, Amy Adams and Philip Seymour Hoffman, the rumored Penguin for the next Christopher Nolan-directed Batman film.

"Doubt" left the award show empty-handed, but this is not a fair way to judge how good the movie actually was. Hoffman was nominated for best actor in a supporting role, but everyone knows (and knew months in advance) that Heath Ledger won that one. Streep also was nominated for her performance as leading actress, but Kate Winslet's performance in "The Reader" was not to

be challenged. Next, both Adams and Viola Davis were nominated for best supporting actress, but two rookies could not hope to beat out red carpet veteran Penélope Cruz. "Doubt" also was nominated for best adapted screenplay. This year that Oscar went to "Slumdog Millionaire," 2008's picture of the year. "Doubt" was a great film, but who can compete with that?

Now showing at Kirkville's Downtown Cinema 8, "Doubt" tells the story of Father Flynn (Hoffman), who is accused of having sexual relations with Donald Miller (Joseph Foster), the strict Catholic school's first African-American student. There is no proof, and there are no witnesses of any such action, but Sister Aloysius Beauvier (Streep) has no doubt that it is true. Adams

portrays Sister James, a fresh, innocent and young light at the Catholic school, which seems to still be living in the dark ages as far as policy. Sister James appears to be the only sister under the age of 50.

The movie is full of Flynn and Baurier shooting snide and witty comments back and forth that cause the viewer to question the legitimacy of the Catholic church. I was surprised at the film's ability to draw an audience. The movie just seemed to suck you in and not let you go until it was over. The script is very well written and is enough to keep viewers intrigued despite the lack of explosions and nudity, which seem to be featured more and more in productions as Hollywood skirts the thin line between decency and vulgarity.

Originally written as a play, "Doubt" was

adapted as a screenplay and blew audiences away nationwide. I am anxious to see the play someday because the story was well portrayed, even on the silver screen.

This week's outstanding acting award goes hands down to Adams for her portrayal of Sister James. Also appearing in Disney's "Enchanted," Adams definitely stretched her character dynamics to play the role of quiet little Sister James, to whom the film is dedicated. In "Doubt," the audience catches Sister James at highs and lows, going from a very sweet, accepting history teacher to an ornery woman not afraid to stand up for what she believes in.

A somewhat brief 104 minutes, "Doubt" will raise just that: doubt. Don't be surprised if you walk out of the theater seriously thinking about your morals and ethics.