

The slices of Grinnell

by **Brian Clites and Elisa Lenssen**
 Staff Writers

New Year's weight-loss resolutions may come and go, but pizzerias are permanent. And for people seeking a place to fill-up rather than workout, Grinnell offers a lot of places to grab a slice. Where, then, to find the best slice for your tastes? We hit the streets and cased the pizza joints to give *S&B* readers a comprehensive dining guide to Grinnell pizza. We ate regular cheese pizza at each restaurant. Our reviews run the greeting, grease, and gullet gamut: we rated each restaurant from 1-10 on service, atmosphere, napkin-grease (an aesthetic test inspired by the Rorschach ink blot test), and taste. The overall rating is the average of the categorical scores.

Pagliai's

We headed toward Pagliai's knowing full-well students' soft spot for it; we definitely felt the taste and the atmosphere supported the popularity. And we saw other Grinnell people, so it was just like the Forum...only with better pizza and no academic buildings looming nearby. Eat here because you probably already do.

Service

Brian: Polite, friendly, accommodating, young. (7)

Elisa: Those young male workers clad in classic khaki and white get my vote! Overwhelming (10)!

Atmosphere

B: Everything a hometown pizzeria should be: warm wallpaper, dimmed lighting, natural wood tables, leather seats, and open-view pizza ovens. Classic big-band jazz playing over the speakers put me in a social mood while relaxing me into my comfy seat. (9)

E: Is this place owned by the mob? And why is the oven area so glaringly white? Its juxtaposition with the dark dining area is alarming and made me think of life (never go against the Family) and death (go swim with the fishes). Points for the cool mass of free-floating booths, swanky lighting, and let's-get-it-on jazz music. (7.5)

Grease blot

B: A clear night dotted with stars and accented with a crescent moon. (7)

E: A tuxedo-wearing symphony conductor. Swanky once again. (9)

Taste

B: An awesome crust starts it off right; perfectly crisp, both the thin and thick crust are excellent choices. The sauce is sweet and tangy, the cheese full-flavored. The oven-fired taste is brought out in every slice. (9)

E: Well, despite Brian trying to brainwash me into resounding enthusiasm, the verdict's still out. Maybe I'm too low-class for the mob, but the pizza felt too pristine to me. I missed the nice lingering taste of grease and mass-produced-products. Bring on the cement shoes, I guess. (6.5)

Pizza Hut

Our first stop and so we were tentative to give high marks, but it received and deserved them. This chain's been around so long it could be considered our 13th peer institution. So, eat it if you want to be a follower, refrain from risk-taking, and boost the confidence of a mostly-deservedly-so-confident pizza.

Service

B: Exceptional. Very attentive, extremely friendly, undeterred by our mission and the knowledge we were en route to the other five Grinnell pizzerias. (10)

E: Perfect. Even when we revealed our ulterior motives, our waitress was attentive and friendly. (10)

Atmosphere

B: Mmm...smells and looks like every other Pizza Hut, but it's smaller and emptier. Destiny's Child's "Say My Name" was blatin' as we rolled up. (7)

E: Well, I'll say a somewhat paradoxically wholesome-countrified-glowing neon red-70s-love-nest. Give points for the "vino" jug jutting out from the wall. Subtract points for "Say My Name"—I don't like that song. (7)

Grease blot

B: A full-coated bulldog, but still cute. (6)

E: An obese koala. Made me worry about caloric intake. (6)

Taste

B: Salty cheese with a great crust. (7)

E: Though visually pleasing, the cheese was sort of mealy. The crust was very good if you like butter. In fact, this pizza is a butter braggart. But I like that. (8)

The Forum Grill

A lot of us live, eat, and breathe at the Forum...but

maybe you should scratch that middle option. Even though we love Grinnell, we don't love its Monday night cheese pizza; maybe the Grill was recuperating after the wild weekend.

Service

B: Quick, polite, and friendly. (7)

E: Actually fast. And those uniform t-shirts and ball caps? The staple of any wardrobe. (8)

Atmosphere

B: It made up for a lot of what the pizza lacked—it was clean, bright, familiar, and felt like home. Cool reggae music coming from the billiards. (10)

E: Intelligent, innovative, non-assuming, self-governed...And a palpable sense of administrative desire to keep up with peer institutions. (9)

Grease blot

B: A near perfect outline of a U.F.O. from one side, and a flawless sketch of a pirate when flipped 180°. (9)

E: Fozzie Bear with an Afro. Think that would make the admissions booklet? (7)

Taste

B: Very disappointing. The crust was thick and dry, closely resembling a bunch of stacked raw pitas. The cheese was hard, and cold, and the unidentified spices scared me—they scared me a lot. (3)

E: The cheese gave off a glow that was redder than the sauce. Not good. I didn't like it so well. I guess it was okay. Oh god, do I need a thesis statement? (5)

Godfather's Pizza

When we first walked in, we had reservations about its emptiness and its littered tables, but the smell of pizza was wonderful. Eat at Godfather's if you don't value style over substance and don't need the life of the party to be happy.

Service

B: Very polite, down to earth, and accommodating. (9)

E: The cashier seemed anxious for us to pay the bill, but he was nice and apologized for the wait. (7)

Atmosphere

B: As I enter, I breath-in and think, "this place smells like heaven—or at least what I hope heaven smells like." It looks like a downtown pizzeria, nothing fancy, but a little

Pizza, cont. on p.10

Disney invades Grinnell!

Watch *Lilo & Stitch* as the hordes of conquering men in Mickey Mouse suits pillage North Campus!

Bradley: The beginning of a new semester is a sad thought for most. Next time you're bummed about a killer Chem Lab, remember that at least Films Chair Tony O. Pham will be bringing you three fine films from around the world this weekend.

Jeremy: Brad's right, every movie this weekend is worth checking out, especially when you can see them for free!

Lilo & Stitch (PG)

B: Tonight, Grinnell has a reprieve from the cold, depressing winter with this colorful comic Disney movie. Lilo is a socially inept Hawaiian orphan, and Stitch is a blue alien criminal genetically engineered to destroy civilization. With their powers combined, they will either end life as we know it, or create a happy, well-functioning family.

J: And crazy action like that is definitely not a good thing for Lilo's older sister, who struggles to take care of and provide for Lilo, especially when a social worker is lurking.

B: And what a terrible social worker he is! Mr. Bubbles, the home-wrecking social worker who's the closest thing to a villain in this movie, offended both of my social worker parents. For the record, my parents would like to say that social workers make families happy and fun. Despite that, my family found this movie about families very enjoyable and family friendly.

J: The movie succeeds by being just plain fun. Of course, there are touches of heartwarming family and friend mo-

ments and a few lessons to be learned, but the final product escapes Disney's recent overwhelmingly lame streak. Nothing in this movie takes itself too seriously and the best way to enjoy it is to do the same. *Lilo & Stitch* never reaches the level of the great Disney animated classics, but it is a solid, enjoyable picture.

B: This movie works well because the characters are quite flawed. Lilo is an obnoxious brat, and you can almost understand why Mr. Bubbles wants to take her away from her volatile sister. Still, there is genuine, believable love between the sisters, at least when they aren't fighting each other.

Jeremy's Last Word: Aliens and Elvis, sun and fun. A welcome alternative to the cold outside.

Brad's Last Gasp: Hawaii sure looks pretty right about now.

Brother (R)

B: Actor/writer/director "Beat" Takeshi Kitano is Japan's foremost chronicler of the Yakuza gangs. Basically, he's the Japanese equivalent of Martin Scorsese. *Brother* is his first English-language film, but stays with the Yakuza theme. Yamamoto (Takeshi), a Yakuza member, is exiled to America. Culturally isolated, he seeks out his half-brother, and starts up a new gang, featuring the handsome Omar Epps. Much violence ensues.

J: Much violence. Yamamoto, or Aniki (Big Brother), takes his brother from dealing drugs under bridges and leads the group to total power in their area of L.A. But getting power is one thing, keeping power another. Aniki's luck can only hold out so long.

B: Did my last comment make it seem like I saw this movie? Because I totally haven't! Anyway, here's Jeremy with

some informed commentary.

J: *Brother* is an interesting revision of the typical American action movie. Aniki is radically different than most action movie heroes. He rarely speaks and is often found sitting and watching rather than taking charge. But, at the same time, he has a powerful presence. He is, perhaps, the anti-Jackie Chan; his violence is subtle and powerful, he is suave and always in control. What most struck me, however, is his apparent lack of motivation for any of his actions. He takes power because it is there to be taken, not because he derives pleasure or profit. And in the end, when the tide turns, the existentialism underlying the action refuses any more resolution than "this is just the way things are."

Brad's Last Gasp: Guns 'n Drugs—always a fun time at Harris.

Jeremy's Last Word: Not an incredibly substantial movie and the ideas take some seeking, but I enjoyed it.

24 Hour Party People (R)

B: This music-filled biopic comedy detailed the Manchester music scene, which launched bands including The Sex Pistols, New Order, Stone Roses, and Happy Mondays, through the eyes of Tony Wilson, a journalist turned club owner and record producer. Steve Coogan, Britain's foremost young comic, plays the witty Wilson. People who like music probably will like this movie.

Derrida (NR)

B: A documentary following a French philosopher (Jacques Derrida) in his daily routine. Sweet! We can see whether his breakfast cereal of choice is Cap'n Crunch or Frosted Mini Wheats!



bradley iverson-long
& jeremy blodgett

cheap two-hour thrills

Movie times

Lilo & Stitch (Harris)
 Fri. 4:30 & 7:30 p.m.
 Sat. 1:30 p.m.

Brother (Harris)
 Sat. 4:30 & 7:30 p.m.
 Sun. 1:30 p.m.

24 Hour Party People
 Fri. 10:30 p.m. (Harris)
 Sat. 8:00 p.m. (South Lounge)

Derrida (ARH 302)
 Fri. & Sat. 8:00 p.m.
 Sun. 2:00 p.m.

*Free soda is available at the Harris Center before each movie.
 Free popcorn is available at the Harris Center before each 7:30 p.m. movie.*



Picky people pick primo pizzas!

Pizza, cont. from p. 9

dirty, with un-bussed tables. No music was playing when we entered, but eventually, "Life of the Party" (*country*) broke the silence. (7)

E: Chucky Cheese minus the happy kids and plus suffocating silence. Add points for reminding me of the hang-outs on Saturday morning NBC teen comedies. Subtract points for the unexpected blasting of the really morose country music. That was just depressing. (6.5)

Grease blot

B: An alligator with chops wide open, eating a wabbit. (5)

E: Eeyore and Winnie-the-Pooh hovering above ancient Greece. Pretty tame. (7)

Taste

B: A full, satisfying flavor with great cheese and good sauce. The crust, however, is too soggy to deserve the adjective "crusty." (5)

E: Excellent sauce. Points for its seasoning and confi-

dent cheese. Though a crunchy-chewy combo has taste-suicide potential, here it actually works. A nice, blue-collar honest and humble slice. (8.5)

Michael's

We walked in and wanted to leave. We felt out-of-place and struggled to separate Micheal's mediocre pizza from its menacing posse. We actually ate our slices hiding out in our car. You shouldn't eat in if you're a student, but deliveries might be OK.

Service

B: Uh, what service? They were polite on the phone, but would not allow us to eat our pre-ordered pizza inside their snobby elevator-deco restaurant. Perhaps out of spite at this request, they did not slice our pizza at all. (2)

E: Bad. Also, subtract more points for the mysterious troops of young-looking workers crammed into the small kitchen (code violations?). (1)

Atmosphere

B: It looked like a nice interior, with white tablecloths, but no booths. The lighting and wallpaper reminded me of an elevator. (6)

E: Again, I felt like it was some fraternal organization and I wasn't a member. Stifling, yet oddly pastel—a cheap hotel lobby. Points for weird long slit windows fitted with cool custom blinds. (5)

Grease blot

B: The earth from outer space, but with most of the land flooded. Be ready for a coronary bypass. (4)

E: A dew-covered Ying-and-Yang. It isn't in harmony with my relationship with the restaurant. (4)

Taste

B: Sweet sauce, salty cheese, crispy thin crust, loads of grease — somehow these all fit together to make a surprisingly ok pizza. (4)

E: Despite not being sliced and so appearing as an ugly and flattened-by-a-semi Frisbee, it wasn't bad. (7)

Final pizza verdict

Name	Overall rating	Price per slice*
Pagliai's	8.125	\$1.45
Pizza Hut	7.625	\$1.05
Forum	7.250	\$1.69
Godfather's	6.875	\$1.20
Michael's	4.125	\$1.57

* based on price for a large pizza, except for the Forum



2002 Year in Movies

by **Jeremy Blodgett**
 Staff movie reviewer

The past year was a spectacular one at the movies. There was rarely a weekend when a decent movie couldn't be seen, anywhere in the country. That said, it was also a spectacular year for critics with their conflated opinions, for comic book heroes leaping to the silver screen, for epics celebrating cinematic spectacle, and for the indie film set who found plenty of movies to adore simply because no one else can understand them.

What was incredible about this year was the variety. There were, of course, the summer blockbusters and lame star vehicles—films with a specific audience of dollars in mind—but there was also a mainstream influx of independent film (led by *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*) and cinematic spectacles that, even when they didn't work (think *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*), were a reminder of all things great about the cinema, which is, after all, about sitting in a dark room with your friends, eating popcorn, and cheering at the action on-screen.

Looking back on the year, I hesitate to construct the list that follows. There were so many good movies and too many of those I haven't had the chance to see (*Far From Heaven*, *Punch Drunk Love*, *About Schmidt*, *The Pianist*, *Rabbit Proof Fence* are all on my list). But such is the plight of the poor college film critic. The list that follows, therefore, is not a "Best of" list, in the familiar ranked critical format, but rather a list of my highest recommended movies out of all new films I saw during the past year. In no particular order:

Chicago

The kind of spectacle that the movies are all about, with nary a sword, lightsaber, explosion, or magic wand! *Chicago* grabs the audience and never lets go. The songs, Richard Gere, the sets—all brilliant. A couple of scenes were a bit annoying, and the movie moved almost too fast, but it still ranks among the best movie musicals I've seen.

Thirteen Conversations About One Thing

A film about a group of people seemingly removed from each other whose lives interconnect in strange and interesting ways (sound familiar?). But the reason this film works, apart from some of the best acting of the year and a careful attention to detail, is that the film grows organically into the complex structure rather than being gimmicky.

The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys

There's something about being an altar boy and going to Catholic school. There's something about comic book heroes. And there's something about discovering girls that changes everything. Fresh treatment, emotional depth and sincerity, and great use of animation make this an incredibly enthralling coming of age drama.

About A Boy

Another coming of age story, of sorts. This film proves once again that

Nick Hornby stories (see *High Fidelity*) make excellent film material. The pieces in *About A Boy* fit together perfectly. It has the right amount of humor and drama without being cloying or obnoxious. And with Hugh Grant prodded into his proper place—that is, neither obnoxious nor cloying—he's thoroughly enjoyable.

Gangs of New York

The power of Daniel Day-Lewis is undeniable, but I was equally impressed with director Martin Scorsese for underplaying Cameron Diaz and Leonardo DiCaprio. The visual style, storytelling, and symbolism carried the rest of the film. It was not Scorsese's most polished or powerful work, but his ambition, cinematic knowledge, and belief in the power of an image over snappy dialogue or star power make this the best foreign film made by an American since Stanley Kubrick.

The Fast Runner (Atanarjuat)

If I did have to pick a best film of the year, this would probably be it. Made in the Inuit language, the story is an epic journey, the myth of Atanarjuat, that weaves the religion, customs, survival, and humanity of the Inuit people with deceptively simple, surreal storytelling completely void of pretention. Weighing in at nearly three hours, the film takes the time to completely engage the world of the story. Nothing is lacking.

Igby Goes Down

I resist calling this a coming of age tale, because Igby is already grown up, and he's intriguing and brilliant and beautiful, just like the rest of this film.

Y Tu Mamá También

A wild ride with a visceral, intimate, classic style. Full of erotic tension and exploration, the real value of this film is the examination of friendship and of our ability to know and understand other people. Director Alfonso Cuarón walks a fine line between artsy, intelligent, and gratuitous; for the most part, irresistible.

CQ

This movie seems to have been completely forgotten, but I stand by it. *CQ* is, above all perhaps, stylish, but always in logical and appropriate ways. At times it slips into pretentiousness, although that's probably par for a film that is, essentially, an examination of pretentiousness.

Adaptation

The inclusion of *Adaptation* in this list is questionable. The ending of the film was a huge let down for me, and I'm not saying this because I didn't understand it but because I wanted it to push the concept further. Once the film sunk in a bit, I was willing to recognize that it is original and daring enough to make this list. It's experimental, and where it succeeds it succeeds brilliantly.

Top ten lists

Bradley Iverson-Long '05 Reviews Editor

1. *Far from Heaven*
2. *Punch-Drunk Love*
3. *Y Tu Mamá También*
4. *Spirited Away*
5. *Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*
6. *Adaptation*
7. *Secretary*
8. *Road to Perdition*
9. *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys*
10. *Signs*

Pam Iverson Mother of Bradley Iverson-Long '05

1. *Far From Heaven*
2. *Talk to Her*
3. *Adaptation*
4. *The Hours*
5. *Y Tu Mamá También*
6. *The Fast Runner (Atanarjuat)*
7. *Bowling for Columbine*
8. *About Schmidt*
9. *Monsoon Wedding*
10. *About a Boy*

Katie Mears '03 S&B Editor-in-Chief

- 1) *Monsoon Wedding*
- 2) *Bowling For Columbine*
- 3) *Kissing Jessica Stein*
- 4) *Tadpole*
- 5) *About A Boy*
- 6) *Igby Goes Down*
- 7) *The Lord Of The Rings: The Two Towers*
- 8) *Thirteen Conversations About One Thing*
- 9) *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*
- 10) *Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets*

Kirsten Tretbar '89 Documentary Filmmaker

1. *Frida*
2. *Bowling for Columbine*
3. *Y Tu Mamá También*
4. *Far From Heaven*
5. *CQ*
6. *Dogtown and Z-Boys*
7. *Adaptation*
8. *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*
9. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*
10. *The Ring*

Want to watch a movie?

- *Monsoon Wedding*, *Spirited Away*, and *Y Tu Mamá También* are all available in the Listening Room.
- *Bowling for Columbine*, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, and *Punch-Drunk Love* will come to Harris this semester.
- *About a Boy*, *CQ*, *The Dangerous Lives of Altar Boys*, *Dogtown and Z-Boys*, *Kissing Jessica Stein*, *Tadpole*, *Signs*, and *Thirteen Conversations About One Thing* should be available for rent in town.