

# Movies: Looking back on 1986

By Kathy Amen

1986 gave us only a couple of indisputably great movies, but a fair number of good ones and a few very good ones as well. The first two on my list, an unlikely pair to share the honor, are the best of the year. The remaining titles follow in non-committal alphabetical order.

**Aliens.** This first-class science fiction thriller joins that rare company of sequels that were better than their originals. Sigourney Weaver gave an excellent performance as a hero we can all identify with. And her supporting cast, both of space-age foot soldiers and super-creepy creatures, was practically perfect.

**Hannah and Her Sisters.** Arguably Woody Allen's best movie, this one belongs on everybody's list. We expect Allen's movies to be stylish, witty, innovative and, usually, funny. *Hannah* was all of these, plus joyous and optimistic. A bundle of great performances was led by Dianne Wiest's as the sister with the most problems, who ends up the happiest.

**Children of a Lesser God.** Outstanding performances by William Hurt and Marlee Matlin make this romantic movie with an unusual angle. The lady is deaf and conveyed all her thoughts and emotions with sign and body language.

**The Color of Money.** Acting is superb here, too, in another good



Marlee Matlin (left) is inspired by the achievements of deaf economist Linda Bove in Paramount Pictures' *Children of a Lesser God*. (Courtesy photo by Takashi Seida)

sequel (to *The Hustler*). The pool-hall realism and the absorbing, intelligent story help make this one a winner.

**The Fly.** This surprisingly affecting science fiction/horror story was well made all around and dominated by Jeff Goldblum's compelling performance. The special effects repulsed some viewers and attracted others, but the story had universal appeal.

**The Name of the Rose.** This movie wins in the "most unusual" category hands down. A murder mystery superimposed upon the conflict between early Renaissance rationalism and medieval superstition, it was visually stunning as well.

**Nothing in Common.** Tom Hanks shone in this realistic family story, which managed to exploit his natural, effortless comic style and bring out his unsuspected dramatic talents at the same time. The supporting cast was excellent, too, especially Jackie Gleason.

**Peggy Sue Got Married.** Time travel was big on the big screen again this year, although to a more serious purpose than in last year's

fine *Back to the Future*. Peggy is thoughtful and thought-provoking as well as funny and entertaining. Kathleen Turner will win some awards for the title role.

**Stand by Me.** The strong point of this story of boys beginning to grow up is the fine acting by its young ensemble cast. It also wins in a special category: best oldie soundtrack.

**Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home.** Who could resist this most charming and upbeat of the *Star Trek* movies? It revives the spirit of the lighter T.V. episodes, such as "The Trouble with Tribbles," instead of taking the more dramatic route, as with parts I through III.

Several of the spots on my list could just as well have been occupied by some runners-up: the ridiculous but enjoyable *Legal Eagles*, the comedy original *Jumpin' Jack Flash* and the imaginative *Labyrinth* -- not to mention the little ones' candidate, *The Great Mouse Detective*.

There were certainly more possibilities for a 10-best list than a 10-worst in 1986. May 1987 fare as well.