

# The Last Picture Show

(Drama) ( 1970)

© 2002 by Raymond Weschler

## Major Characters

- Sonny Crawford**.....**Timothy Bottoms**  
A gentle high school athlete who lives in the very small and dusty town of Anarene, Texas.
- Duane Moore**.....**Jeff Bridges**  
Sonny's friend, often jealous and mean-spirited, who decides to join the army.
- Jacy Farrow**.....**Cybill Shepherd**  
Duane's girlfriend, who is beautiful but naïve and dishonest, and who loves to manipulate boys with her looks.
- Sam the Lion**.....**Ben Johnson**  
The main businessman in Anarene, who owns the local movie theatre and pool hall, and who is admired as a man of kindness and wisdom.
- Ruth Popper**.....**Cloris Leachman**  
The lonely 40 year old wife of the local high school's football coach.
- Lois Farrow**.....**Ellen Burstyn**  
Jacy's beautiful, unhappy and sexually promiscuous mother.
- Genevive**.....**Eileen Brennan**  
A hard-working waitress who tries to give Sonny good advice.
- Abilene**.....**Clu Gulager**  
A local construction worker who is having an affair with Lois.
- Billy**.....**Sam Bottoms**  
A very gentle and sweet boy who never speaks, who Sam takes care of and who is a friend of Sonny's.
- Charlene Duggs**.....**Sharon Ullrick**  
Sonny's first girlfriend, who is conservative and immature.

## Plot Summary

This film is the story of life in Anarene, a small and dusty town in the middle of nowhere (in the state of Texas). It takes place in the early 1950s, during the Korean war. The only economic activity on the main streets seems to be a small restaurant, pool hall and movie theatre, but the theatre (or picture show) is struggling to survive because of the growing influence of television. For the young people of Anarene, there does not seem to be much of a future, which is perhaps the way high school graduates often feel in small and isolated towns. And like all such places, Anarene is filled with very conservative and religious people, yet because they are often very lonely, there is plenty of scandalous and sexually promiscuous behavior.

Specifically, the film tells the story of Sonny, a gentle high school graduate who is not sure what to do with his life. After he breaks up with Charlene, he finds himself very attracted to Jacy, who is the most beautiful girl in town. Unfortunately, she is also dangerous, manipulative, and in theory, still the girlfriend of his best friend, Duane. For Sonny, though, there are other possibilities, since Anarene seems to be filled with women who are married and frustrated.

A Quick Note on the English Spoken in this Movie: Much of the grammar you will here is technically incorrect, but is still common among certain groups, including the working class people of small Southern towns. Some of these variations will be pointed out in the glossary, but you should be especially aware of the use of double negatives, badly conjugated verbs and the widely used “ain’t,” which is a very ungrammatical way of conjugating the negative form of “to be.” Understand it, but don’t say it!

## Some Words and Expressions that You May not Know

***Sonny and Charlene celebrate their anniversary...and then break up.***

President Truman will be here tomorrow,  
so you **folks** in Dallas **turn out**, **you here**.

“Folks” is a word for both parents, and people. “To turn out” is to show up or come out. “You here” is used in the Southern US to mean listen.

This is cowboy **rhythms** or KTRN, Wichita Falls.

“Rhythm” is the speed, accent or beat of music (Note that radio stations are identified by four letters. Wichita Falls is the nearest relatively big town to Anarene).

Here's Hank William's hit tune, "Cold Cold Heart."

A "hit tune" is a popular song, especially one played a lot on the radio.

You ain't ever going to amount to nothing. Already spent a dime this morning, ain't even had breakfast.

If a person won't "amount to nothing," they will not do anything useful with their lives. A "dime" is a 10 cent coin. Remember to avoid double negatives and "ain't," which is a very ungrammatical way of conjugating "to be."

Give me the chalk.

A soft white rock, sold in stick form, that is used to write on green boards at schools.

I'm surprised you had the nerve to show up this morning after that stomping you took last night.

If a person has "the nerve" to do something, they have the courage to do it (or in some cases, the arrogance). "To show up" is a very common phrasal verb meaning to arrive. "To stomp" is to strike or hit repeatedly with great force, and thus if a football team is given a stomping, they have been badly beaten.

A few football teams have had some luck with tackling ...it keeps the other team from scoring so often.

"To tackle" is to stop a person and throw them down to the ground. It is one of the most important verbs in American football!

Sounds too rough for me.

If something is too "rough," it is too hard, mean or violent.

Where's your school spirit?

Pride in, and love for, the school that a student goes to.

The truck's being greased.

"Grease" is a lubricant or oil that is used to make mechanical parts run smoothly, though this verb is rarely used.

I ought to have better sense. :: It wouldn't hurt if you had a better home town.

If a person has "good sense," they have common sense or basic intelligence when dealing with life's everyday problems.

Mind pointing that at the floor till I get by? Don't want my eye poked out.

"To point" is to show something, by extending a finger or other long object. Note that "until"----> "till" in rapid speech. "To poke out" an eye is to remove it with a stick or other long object. A horrible image!

You're damn more dangerous in a pool hall than on a football team.

“Damn” is a somewhat crude filler word to express anger or other emotion. A “pool hall” is a place where people play pool, or billiards, that often has a bar or café attached to it. Popular in small towns.

Why the hell can't you kids learn to tackle?

“The hell” is added to WH questions to show anger, frustration or other emotion. “To tackle” is to stop and force to the ground, as is done in American football.

Toss me one!

An alternative way of saying to throw,

Feisty sons-of-bitches, ain't they?

“Feisty” is an excellent adjective meaning full of lively energy or having an overly assertive or aggressive attitude. A “son-of-a-bitch” is a crude insult expression for a mean or abusive person.

Team wasn't worth a kiss-my-ass this year.

“Kiss my ass” is a crude insult (though softer than “fuck you”), but here it is used as a noun, which is rarely if ever done.

Cut it out!

An excellent expression which simply means “stop it!”

Down payment on breakfast. Let somebody prosperous play the jukebox.

A “down payment” on a house or car is the money that is paid immediately in order to get the bank to loan the rest of the cost. If a person is “prosperous” they are doing well financially. A “jukebox” is a machine that has lots of recorded songs that people pay to have played.

You want the pickup tonight?

A “pickup” is a small truck.

I got lots of deliveries to make.

A “delivery” is anything that needs to be transported from one place to the other, though the word is usually used in a business context.

My goodness, Sunny, Frank oughtn't work you so late on weekends.

“My goodness” is a gentle way of expressing surprise or other emotion. Note that the negative of ought is indeed “oughtn't,” but this is almost never used in the US (People say “shouldn't” instead).

You missed the newsreel, too, and the main show's done started, so I'll just charge you about 30 cents.

"Newsreels" were short programs on recent world events that were played in movie theatres before the main movie was shown, before TV made them unnecessary (Note "done started" is awful grammar!).

I decided you had a wreck.

A "wreck" is the result of a bad auto accident when the cars are destroyed, but here it is also used to describe a very bad haircut, because it looks so terrible!

You're not wearing your usual deadpan look, your "how did I ever get into this family?" look.

If a person's look or facial expression is "deadpan," it is very calm or unemotional, often despite the fact that there is much to be excited or emotional about (Note that "how-did-I-ever-get-into-this-family" actually functions as an adjective).

I'll get it. Deliah!

Note that when a phone or door bell rings, the only correct verb tense in which to respond is the contracted form of the pronoun+ will.

What's wrong? :: She looks kind of queer.

"Queer" used to only mean odd or strange, as it is used here. Today, however, it's also an insulting slur referring to homosexuals, and a word homosexuals use among themselves to describe other gay people.

Guess what! It's our anniversary.

Note that an "anniversary" can be a date that marks a wedding, or in this case, just the beginning of a romantic relationship.

We've been going steady a year tonight.

"To go steady" is an old fashioned way of saying to be romantically involved ("Steady" means constant or not easily moved or upset).

What are y'all doing back here in the dark?

"Y'all" is a way of saying "you all" when talking to two or more people, but it is really only used in the Southern United States.

All they ever want to do is neck, anyway.

"To neck" is an old-fashioned way of saying to passionately kiss, often in the back seat of a car or theatre ("To make out" is used today).

Crack your window and leave the motor running.

An interesting verb meaning to open something just a crack, or just enough to allow a little air or light in.

You cheapskate!

An insulting slang word for a person who is very cheap, or does not like to spend money.

One thing leads to another! My mama told me how that old stuff goes.

“One thing leads to another” is a useful expression which means that one action can eventually lead to other actions or results that you were not originally expecting. “Stuff” refers to physical things in general, though here it is Charlene’s way of referring to sexual activity.

You wasn’t no livelier than me. :: Because you ain’t good-looking enough! You ain’t even got a ducktail!

If a person is “lively,” they have a lot of energy. “Good-looking” is the most common way of referring to a person who is either pretty or handsome. A “ducktail” is a hairstyle in which the hair on each side is greased back to meet in a ridge at the back of the head

Some anniversary. If that’s the way you feel about it, I just as soon break up.

Note that “some” can be used as way of expressing anger or disappointment (“This anniversary has been terrible”).

“Just as soon” is a grammatically curious way of saying to prefer.

I don’t want to spoil no more anniversaries for you.

“To spoil” something is to seriously damage it (Although to spoil a person is to treat them better than they should be).

I might have known you wasn’t dependable.

If a person is dependable, they are reliable and you can count on them (Note the very ungrammatical verb conjugation).

Give me back my pictures, too. I don’t want you showing them to all the other boys and telling them how hot I am.

In a sexual context, a girl (or boy) who is “hot” is very sexy, and perhaps very good in bed.

*Jacy considers life with Duane...  
and Sonny meets Ruth for the first time.*

I hope you ain’t down in the mouth about Charlene.

An old-fashioned expression meaning sad or depressed.

She doesn't even have a good disposition. What are you blue about?

A person's "disposition" is their general mood, temperament, or the way they behave (A person with a good disposition is friendly or pleasant). If a person is "blue" about something, they're sad or depressed about it.

Ain't nobody to go with in this town.

If a boy is "going with" a girl, they are dating and romantically involved with each other.

Jacy'd bring you more misery than she'll ever be worth.

A powerful word meaning great unhappiness.

You and Duane are both in a boarding house.

A house where meals are served, and often where teenagers live who no longer live with their parents.

I'm no one to talk. I never did get on with Mama. Still don't.

"I'm no one to talk" is a way of saying you don't really have the right to criticize or comment because your life has been as bad as other people's concerning the subject you're talking about. "To get on" with a person is another way of saying to get along with them.

I read that poem of his about the nightingale...I didn't think it was so good.

A "nightingale" is a type of bird, and the title of a famous poem by John Keats.

All you have to do to be immortal is lead a good Christian life. Anyone can do it if they love the Lord.

If a person is "immortal," they will live forever. The "Lord" is a Christian word for Jesus or God.

"A friend to man, to whom thou sayeth, 'Beauty in truth, truth, beauty.' This is all ye know on earth."

Words from "The Nightingale" by Keats ( In old English, "thou sayeth" meant you say, and "ye" also meant you).

Run, you little piss-ants, run! Tough it out!!

A "piss-ant" is a cruel insult for a small, weak or unimportant person. "To tough it out" means to keep working and survive, despite the pain and exhaustion that you have to endure.

Quit flapping your arms! You look like a god damn goose.

"To flap" is to move loosely up and down, like a bird moves its wings. A "goose" is a large bird, distantly related to ducks and swans.

Even for a preacher's boy, you ought to be in better shape.

A “preacher” is a religious official who gives a sermon or other religious speech, usually in a church.

If you all didn't jack off so much, maybe you could stay in shape.

“To jack off” is a slangy but widely used way of saying to masturbate. To be “in shape” is to be in good physical health.

My old lady has got to go to the doctor tomorrow.

A truly stupid expression that means wife or possibly girlfriend.

Take it from me...

One way of saying “I have experience, so you trust me when I say....”

If you do this for me, I'll get you out of civics class. :: I'll be glad to.

In school, “civics” is the study of the rights and duties of citizens.

**Come on**, Jimmy Sue. We're hungry in here too!

The most versatile phrasal verb in the English language, here expressing frustration, and more specifically, meaning please.

I'm coming! Hold your horses!

A curious expression that means “Be patient!”

Jacy, were having supper at home tonight.

An old-fashioned but still used word for dinner.

OK, mama, I was just giving the boys a ride.

A “ride” is the act of transporting a person in a car.

You're rich and you're miserable. Sure don't want to be like you.

A powerful adjective meaning very unhappy.

You slept with him? :: Mama!

“To sleep with” a person is a colloquial way of saying to have sex with them.

Go to the doctor some time and arrange something so you don't have to worry about babies.

“To arrange” something is to plan or make preparations for it.

Mama, it's a sin, isn't it, unless you're married?

A word used by Christians and other religious people to describe those acts that they think are considered morally wrong by God.

Don't be so mealy-mouthed.

An interesting word for not completely honest or straight forward in speaking, or perhaps evasive or devious.

If you want to find out about monotony real quick, marry Duane.  
The condition of boring sameness.

Drill hard. You're better at oil wells anyway.

"To drill" is to forcefully drive a hole into the ground or other surface, often using steel tools. An "oil well" is a hole in the ground that is drilled in order to get the oil out of it.

He didn't mention it. I guess he just couldn't get off.  
In this case, "to get off" is to leave work.

It was nice of you to drive me. :: It beats sitting through civics.  
In this case, "to beat" something means to be better than it.

Wouldn't you like to come in and have a soda,  
if you can stand me for a few more minutes?

A "soda" is another word for a soft drink like Coke or 7-Up. In this case, "to stand" a person is to be able to tolerate or get along with them, (though note if you say "I can't stand" him, that means you hate him).

I hate these Northerners.

A wind that comes from the North (All four directions have winds that are named after them).

I'll have a Dr. Pepper.

A well known soda that's still around!

I'll guess you'll be glad when basketball season is over.

If a person is "glad," they are happy about something in particular.

I met him at the country club.

A place where wealthy people go to golf.

His folks are gone again, so it will probably be pretty wild.

If a party is "wild," it often has lots of alcohol, drugs, loud music and various types of sexual activity.

Don't go off without me.

In this case, "to go off" is to leave.

He's such a bore.

A strong word for a person who has a boring personality.

Hey Arleine! What do you say, buddy?!

“What do you say?” is a very slangy way of greeting a person.

“Buddy” is a common word for a friend or pal.

What do you mean, kissing her like that?!

One way of saying “You have a lot of nerve to kiss her like that!”

I ought to slap your face! :: Why don't you just kiss my ass?

“To slap” a person is to hit them with an open hand. “Kiss my ass” is a very insulting expression, though not as bad as “fuck you.”

I never come here to referee no fight.

“To referee” is to enforce the rules of football or any other sport in order to make sure everything is done fairly (The person who does this is called a referee). Avoid the double negatives used here!

1000 barrels of oil a day.

A large container that is used to ship liquids like oil or beer.

I don't want any drunks tromping on my street.

A “drunk” is a person who has drunk too much alcohol, and

“to tromp” is to walk or step very hard, but this verb is very rare.

You're so sexy, Duane.

This is still a common way to describe a sexually attractive person.

I ain't mad at you, but goddamn it!

A crude and widely used way to express anger or frustration.

What do you mean, asking my girl for a date?

“You have a lot of nerve to ask my girl out on a date.”

You turn me loose!

“To turn a person loose” is to let them go free, perhaps after they've been tied up or physically held.

Come on, let's have it out.

In this case, “to have it out” means to get into a physical fight, though this is rarely used.

Here, knock off that shit, boys! It's Christmas season!

A crude way of saying “stop doing that” (If a person screams “knock it off!,” they are saying stop it!).

He's so crazy about me he doesn't have good sense.

In this context, if you are "crazy about" a person, you like them so much that you are obsessed with them, or completely infatuated.

Nothing against Duane, but that's a roughneck for you.

In this film, a "roughneck" is a person who works in the oil fields. This is Lois' way of saying she doesn't dislike Duane, but she is not surprised by his bad behavior.

They aren't sophisticated about these things.

If a person is "sophisticated" about something, they are educated about it and understand its complexities.

Let's have some punch, boys.

A fruit drink, popular at parties, that is served from a large bowl.

Mind my asking?

"Would it bother you if I ask?..."

She thought I got fresh with her. I never did, really.

In this context, to "get fresh" with a girl is to be sexually aggressive (If a boy tries to kiss an innocent girl on the first date, some might think that's being fresh). It can also mean to be rude or disrespectful.

Will you drive me to the clinic again next week? :: You bet!

A "clinic" is an office or building where doctors diagnose patients.

*Sonny has an affair, Jacy goes to a wild party,  
and the boys give Billy a very bad time.*

He better not dawdle here.

"To dawdle" is a rare verb meaning to waste time doing nothing.

We're dressed informally, as you can see.

"To dress informally" is to dress in casual clothes such as blue jeans and T-shirts (but it does not mean to wear no clothes at all!).

You got to get undressed out there on the diving board.

"To dive" is to jump into water head first, and a "diving board" is the long plank or board from which people dive into pools.

Everybody out there for the strip show.

"To strip" is to take off your clothes, and thus a "strip show" is a show or production in which people take off their clothes in front of others.

If you fall, Sandy can fish you out.

“To fish out” a person from a pool is to pull them out of the water.

Why don't we go hunt some pussy? :: You wouldn't know what to do with it if we found some.

“Pussy” is an extremely crude word for a woman's sexual organs, or more generally, sex involving a woman.

Let's all go out and get a fuck.

Used as a single count noun, a very crude way of referring to sex.

I know where's a heifer.

A “heifer” is a young cow (Leroy is joking that sex with a cow is better than nothing. Also note that the noun and verb should be inverted).

We ought to buy Billy here a piece of ass. We oughtn't let him die a virgin.

Another extremely crude and sexist way to refer to a sexually attractive woman. Note again that today, people say shouldn't, not oughtn't.

He ain't no idiot kid. He just don't talk.

An “idiot” is a very stupid person, though note here it is used as an adjective. Also note how ungrammatical the above sentences are!

We ought to fix him up with Jimmy Sue.

“To fix up” a person with somebody else is to arrange for them to see each other romantically, or in this case, only sexually.

Come on, we're going to get you laid.

“To get laid” is a slangy and very common way of saying to have sex.

Screw it to her, boy.

“To screw” is to have sex, though it is never used as a transitive verb, as it is here.

You kids stop that yelling. It ain't even in.

“To yell” is to scream or shout.

Look at this mess.

A “mess” is a critical word for a state of disorder, dirtiness or offensive, unpleasant or cluttered condition.

Idiots as bad as Mexicans.

An “idiot” is a person who is very stupid or uneducated.

I wouldn't mess with him again for less than three and a half.

"To mess with" a person is to argue, fight or get involved with them.

Which one of you bloodied his nose?

"To bloody" a part of the body is to make it bleed or injure it.

How did he get messed up with her?

"To get messed up" with a person is to get involved with them, in this case in a sexual way (It could be in terms of business or other contexts).

We all chipped in and bought him a piece of ass.

"To chip in" is to contribute some money with other people in order to buy something for somebody else. A "piece of ass" is a very crude and stupid way of referring to a woman.

I don't want to have no more to do with you.

"I don't want to see or talk to you anymore."

Scaring a poor unfortunate creature like

Billy just so you could have a few laughs.

A "creature" is any type of animal or monster, though it can in the right context refer to a human being, especially a weak or fragile one.

I've been around that trashy behavior all my life. I'm getting tired of putting up with it.

"Trashy" is an interesting adjective that means of poor quality, or as here, immoral or dirty. "To put up with" something is to accept it, even though you don't like it.

We're his best customers; He can't run us off.

"To run a person off" a place or property is to chase them away.

He ain't gonna come. They're probably running plays right now.

In a sports context, to be "running plays" is to be practicing specific plays or strategies.

He was there, he just didn't have the decency to own up to it.

"Decency" is the quality of being decent or moral, or of showing civil or ethical behavior. "To own up to" something bad or unpopular is to admit to having done it.

Don't worry, I won't tell on her.

"To tell on" a person is to tell a parent or other person of authority that the person in question has done something wrong or illegal.

A person can't sneeze in this town without somebody offering them a handkerchief.

This is Genevive's way of saying that the town is so small, and people are so interested in other people's personal lives, that nobody has any real privacy.

It's an awful small town for any kind of carrying on.

"Awful" is an interesting adverb mean very (As an adjective, it means very bad). In this context, "to carry on" means to behave in way that attracts a lot of attention, such as by fighting or screaming.

What are you grinning about? Chicken-fry me a steak and try to use meat this time.

"To grin" is to smile in a way that shows the person is amused or embarrassed. "Chicken fried steak" is a chicken breast that is fried like a steak (However, "chicken-fry" is rarely if ever used as a verb).

121-14. Must be pretty near a record.

In this context, a "record" is an unequaled statistic or fact (In this case, 121-14 is the worst defeat in the history of the local football team).

I reckon y'all need glasses.

"To reckon" is a very old-fashioned and Southern way of saying to think, and "y'all" is used in the Southern US to mean "you all," when addressing two or more people.

I wasn't brought up to leave a husband.

"To bring up" a person is to raise them from childhood to adult.

I was 20 years old. I thought hairy chested football coaches were about it.

This is Ruth's way of saying she was too young and naïve and easily impressed when she married her husband, the football coach.

I'm going to buy us a new quilt.

A "quilt" is a cloth covering usually filled with padding and held in place by ties or sewn designs.

He'd shoot us, probably. He's always glad to have an excuse to use his deer rifle.

If a person is "glad," they are happy or content about something.

A "deer" is a large animal that is often hunted, and a "rifle" is a type of gun that is frequently carried on one's shoulder with a cloth strap.

Keep an eye on them corks, Billy.

A "cork" is the thing that is used to close up wine bottles.

I just came out here to get a little scenery.

“Scenery” is the view of a landscape or the surrounding natural environment, such as the trees and ocean.

I reckon the reason I always drag you out here is that I’m as sentimental as the next fellow when it comes to old times.

“To drag” a person out to a place is to force them to go there (It literally means to pull on the ground). If a person is “sentimental,” they become easily emotional, especially about relationships and memories from the past. A “fellow” is another word for a guy.

Me and this young lady was pretty wild, I guess. In pretty deep.

This is Sam’s way of saying that they became very intensely involved with each other in a romantic or sexual way.

She bet me a silver dollar she could beat me across this tank. She did.

In this case, a “tank” is a man-made pool or lake for storing water.

Her and her husband was young and miserable with each other like so many young married folks are.

A powerful adjective meaning very unhappy.

Note how “to be” is often conjugated incorrectly.

I thought they’d change with some age, but it didn’t turn out that way.

If something “turns out” in a certain way, it becomes or finishes that way.

Being crazy about a woman like her is always the right thing to do.

“To be crazy about” a woman usually means to like them so much that you are obsessed or infatuated with them.

Being a decrepit old bag of bones, that’s what’s ridiculous. Getting old.

“Decrepit” is a strong adjective meaning very weak and fragile due to old age.

Thank God. I’m glad I wasn’t on fire---I would’ve burned to death before you got one button undone.

Note the verbs that are used when working with a button on a shirt are to do and undo.

*Sunny and Duane head for Mexico, and tragedy strikes the town.*

Why don’t we just take off and go some place? I’m sick and tired of this town.

“To take off” is a slangy way of saying to leave.

How much money you got? :: 30 bucks.

A “buck” is a very common word for a dollar.

You’re going all the way to Mexico tonight in this old heap of junk?

A “heap” is another word for a pile or a collection of things thrown one on top of the other, though a heap of junk can be used colloquially for anything of poor quality, such as a car.

Reckon the town will get along without us till Monday.

This is Sonny’s way of saying that Anarene will survive even if he and Duane leave for a few days.

You take money below that border, it sort of melts sometime.

If ice “melts” it dissolves or disappears. Sam is saying it is easy for Americans to lose money while traveling in Mexico.

Try not to drink too much of that buggy water.

If water has “bugs” in it, it has tiny bacteria or other biological organisms that can make people sick.

You catch the clap, you’ll wish you hadn’t drunk nothing.

A common slang expression for the sexually transmitted disease gonorrhea.

My stomach doesn’t feel so good. You got any more of those Tums?

A popular medicine people take when their stomach is upset.

Sam died yesterday morning. Yep, quite a blow.

One way of saying “a terrible event that has hurt us badly.”

Keeled over on the snooker tables. Had a stroke.

If a person “keels over,” they collapse on the ground, often while holding their arms around their stomach. “Snooker” is a game that is played on a table that is a bit smaller than a pool table. A “stroke” is the sudden cutting off of blood to the brain, which can be deadly.

He was quite a fellow.

“He was a great guy.”

They found his will...He left you the pool hall, Sunny.

A person’s will is a legal document that officially leaves their possessions to others after they have died.

He left the picture show to old Miss Mosey. Hell, she's too far gone to even run a popcorn machine.

In this case, if a person is "too far gone," they are too old, weak or crazy to do anything productive.

I deserve it as least as much as that ignorant little bastard.

If a person is "ignorant," they are naïve, uneducated or uninformed about a particular situation. A "bastard" is a crude and common insult word for a mean or abusive man.

You know I can't stand to be tickled.

If a person "can't stand" something, they hate it or refuse to accept it. "To tickle" a person is to touch them in such a way that they are forced to laugh uncomfortably from the touching sensation.

Get off a minute, for goodness sake. You might fall and mash me.

"For goodness sake" is a gentle way of expressing anger, frustration or other emotion. "To mash" a person is to crush them or reduce them to a soft, pulpy condition by using great pressure (You would usually mash a potato and not a person).

It was Mexico. No telling what you got down there.

This is Jacy's way of saying there is no way to know what kind of disease Duane may have caught while in Mexico.

I think you're the meanest boy I ever saw;

My mother was dead right about you.

If a person is "dead right" about something, they were totally correct in terms of what they thought or predicted.

I don't want one soul to know.

In this case, a "soul" is a person or individual (A person's "soul" is the spiritual part of them that is supposed to survive after death).

Quit prissing! I don't think you did it right, anyway.

An interesting but no longer used verb meaning to brag or boast.

What's on your feeble mind, Duane?

"Feeble" is a sad little word meaning weak or ineffective.

You find somebody else to pester. I got a new boyfriend.

"Pester" is a useful verb meaning to bother, harass or annoy.

Roughnecks say you can get a job out in Odessa anytime.

In this film, the men who work out in the oil fields.

If you hear they busted up, let me know.

This means to break up (which is in fact much more common).

How about hopping out?

"To hop out" of a car is to get out, usually very quickly.

He's just awful, mama. :: Why do you fool with him?

If a person is "awful," they are extremely bad. In this case, "to fool" with somebody is to get involved with them, perhaps romantically (To fool around with somebody is much more common).

I ought to give Abilene hell, instead of him.

"To give somebody hell" is to severely criticize them or to make life very difficult for them.

What I've done has not worked out too well.

If something doesn't "work out" too well, it does not end up well, or end with good results.

Right now, Ruth Popper's got as good a set-up as anyone.

An excellent word for a general situation in life (It can refer to a job, or in this case, a relationship).

Why, sure, Sunny's reasonably good-looking and he's young.

The most common colloquial way to describe a person who is pretty or handsome.

That's the silliest thing I've ever heard of. She's 40 years old.

If something is "silly," it is not serious or important.

So am I, honey; it's kind of an itchy age.

"To itch" is to feel the need to rub or scratch. In this case, "itchy" is used to describe a person who has a lot of sexual desires, which is to say they always want to scratch what itches because they are never satisfied.

Pretty easy shot, Sheriff.

If a person is an "easy shot," it would be easy to shoot and injure or kill them.

Goddamn you, Monroe, you made me scratch.

In this context, "to scratch" in pool is to hit the ball poorly, so that it does not go into the pocket on the table.

Mrs. Clary is afraid that that Joe Bob might molest her or something.

"To molest" a child is to sexually abuse or harm them.

If that's the way it is, no telling what we'll find.

One way of saying "there is no way to know what we'll find."

Filthy! :: Here, now, grab here! None of this damn frenzy!

If a person is "filthy," they are extremely dirty, or more generally, sexually perverted. "To grab" a person is to forcefully seize them or hold on to them. A "frenzy" is an outburst of excitement, violence and great fear, anger or other emotion.

It's the Lord's justice, son. You'll settle with the murderer and thief.

"The Lord" is how Christian's refer to God. In this case, "to settle" with a criminal is to take revenge, perhaps by attacking or killing them.

Sonny, drive the Plymouth to town.

A type of car.

Doctor said he didn't do nothing. Never had the guts.

"Guts" are literally stomach intestines, but more colloquially refers to courage or bravery.

Sheriff figured he'd done something.

A "sheriff" is a high ranking police officer, and "to figure" is a common and colloquial way of saying to think or guess.

I felt lonesome. I thought you might want to drive around a while.

A common way of saying to drive for pleasure or to relax, without any particular destination or goal.

Please take me riding.

To give a "ride" to a person is to transport them in a car, but the verb is never used.

I'm too old for screwing in cars.

"To screw" is slangy and old-fashioned way of saying to have sex.

*Sonny and Duane battle, Sonny and Jacy get married,  
the marriage is annulled, and they all return to their lonely lives....*

You turned rough-neck? :: Got to make a living so I can keep the pool hall open.

"To make a living" is to make enough money to survive. A "pool hall" is a place with lots of pool or billiard tables, often combined with a bar or café.

Her didn't do nothing, but get her to take her underpants off.  
Another word for underwear.

We took out Mexican food. :: I heard that ain't all you're eating.  
A sexual play on words; "To eat out"  
a girl is to perform oral sex on her.

Jacy would never let you screw her. You ain't that good a cocksman.  
A "cock" is a crude word for a penis, and a "cocksman" is  
a very dated and silly word for a sexually talented man.

The only reason she went with you as long as she did was  
because you were in the backfield and I was on the goddamn line.  
In American football, the "backfield" refers to those players  
who run with the ball, while the line refers to those players  
who block or tackle, but never carry the ball.

Jacy's the kind of girl who brings out the meanness in a man.  
If you "bring out" a personality trait in a person (meanness,  
kindness, etc), your personality causes that trait or characteristic to  
become stronger or more dominant in that other person.

Louis couldn't afford a flour sack, little less a mink.  
A "sack of flour" is a bag of finely ground wheat for cooking,  
which usually looks like white powder. A "mink" is a beautiful  
animal, and the expensive fur coat that is made from its fur.  
Note the meaning of "little less." This is to say if he can't afford A,  
then he certainly can't afford B (which is even more expensive).

I've always had a soft spot for her.  
To have a "soft spot" for a person is to like  
them or feel gentle affection for them.

I wonder what would have happened if my  
dad had made the strikes that Gene made.  
In this case, a "strike" refers to when an energy  
company drills into the ground and discovers lots of oil.

They offered that rig to him first.  
A large machine that is used to drill in the ground for oil.

You want to go to Korea and get yourself killed?  
Note that this film takes place in 1952,  
in the middle of the Korean war.

You ain't got your senses back yet.  
 "You still have no common sense."

The café won't run itself.  
 "To run" a business is to manage it.

I've been missing you.  
 Note that even though to miss is a stative verb, it can be correctly used in the present perfect progressive tense!

The whole town will be knocked for a loop if we do; They'll never forget it.  
 If a person is "knocked for a loop," they are totally surprised or shocked by something and have trouble dealing with it emotionally.

You were so dear to fight for me; My folks won't like it, but we'll run off.  
 In this context, if a person is "dear," they are very sweet or kind. "To run off" is to leave in a hurry.

Not while I'm driving; I might have a wreck.  
 A bad car accident, in which the car might be destroyed.

I had to leave them a note....so they wouldn't be worried out of their mind.  
 If a person is "worried out of their mind," they are extremely nervous.

What could they get us for? We got a right to get married.  
 In this case, this is Sonny's way of asking what crime the police could officially charge them with.

I wish you didn't have that stupid eye patch; It's really creepy.  
 An "eye patch" is a covering that is put over an eye to protect it after it has been injured. "Creepy" is an excellent adjective to describe anything that is scary, disturbing or causes nervous expectation.

Howdy, what part of Texas are y'all from?  
 A surprisingly common way to say hello.

Newlyweds, ain't you?  
 "Newlyweds" are people who have just recently married.

I'll be heartbroken if my folks have done this.  
 A person who is "heartbroken" is extremely upset or overcome by sadness or sorrow, often because of a death or other tragedy.

You think I worked like a dog all my life so my daughter could end up in a pool hall?

“To work like a dog” is a common expression that means to work very, very hard. “To end up” means to become or finish.

It's a hell of a note.

A filler phrase added for emphasis (“That’s an amazing note”).

Shut up and take her home. :: You bet I will.

“You bet” is one way of showing complete agreement with what the person you’re speaking with has just said or requested.

Have a little drink of bourbon. It will pick you up.

“Bourbon” is a type of strong liquor (like tequila). If a food or drug “picks you up,” it gives you a sudden surge or burst of energy.

You’re lucky we got you clear of her as soon as we did.

This is Lois’ way of saying that Sonny is lucky that they were able to get him away from Jacy, since even though she’s so pretty, she’s dangerous.

Sounded like a good deal to me, kiddo. Shouldn’t let Jacy turn your head.

A “good deal” is a good price, or in this case, a good agreement.

“Kiddo” is a slangy version of kid, but used only when talking directly to the person (You wouldn’t say ‘look at the kiddo’ over there). If a girl “turns your head,” you turn to look at her because she is so pretty.

Oklahoma is not much of an improvement.

The state directly above Texas.

I would have been one of those amity types that thinks that playing bridge is the best thing life has to offer.

“Amity” means friendly, but this is almost never used.

“Bridge” is a very popular type of card game.

Nobody knows where he got the name. One night...it just came to me.

A way of saying “unexpectedly, the words just came into my head.”

He was so pleased.

A useful way of saying happy, content or satisfied.

I can see what he saw in you, too.

If you “see something in” another person, you see a part of their personality or character, such as their kindness or sensitivity.

That Logan boy is quarterback.

The most important position in American football.

Boy, we finally got us a team. We didn't in your day, did we, son?

"In your day" is a way of saying when you were younger, or more specifically here, when Sonny was playing on the football team.

You never learned the fundamentals. You know, blocking and tackling.

An important word that means the most important and basic things.

He's home on leave, wearing his uniform.

If a soldier is home "on leave," they are usually given time to relax and be with their families for a few weeks.

See if you can stretch that thing a while.

"To stretch" something is to try and extend it in length, or to make it as long as possible by pulling on its opposite sides.

He's a good old boy, ain't he?

A still used expression that generally refers to a friendly but not very educated white man from a small Southern town.

I've been thinking all week that I'd run into you.

"To run into" a person is to see them by chance, without having planned to.

Take them to Missouri, Matt.

A Midwestern state (St. Louis is located there).

If she had lived, I think we could have kept it going. I just didn't have the know-how.

An interesting noun to describe the skills that are necessary to do anything, from run a business to fix a car.

You watch out now, overseas.

"Be careful."

I guess the next piece of ass I get will be yellow.

This is Duane's vulgar and racist way of saying that the next woman he has sex with will be Asian (or more specifically, Korean).

You might help her bring home the groceries if you have time.

Food that is bought in a store.

I ain't over her yet. It's the damndest thing.

If you are not "over" a person, you are still emotionally hurt by having broken up with them. "Damndest" means strange or odd (Unlike "damn," which is just used to show anger or other emotion).

That's the only reason you and I got into it that time.

In this case, "to get into it" means to start arguing or fighting.

Reckon you and her would've got it all straightened out if I hadn't butted in.

"To straighten out" a situation is to fix it (note that the past participle should be *straighten*). "To butt in" is to get involved in something that is private or that you should stay away from.

No, they would have annulled me, too, even if we had.

"To annul" a marriage is to make it legally invalid, as though it had never happened (In general though, a person is not annulled).

He was just an old simple-minded kid. Never had no sense.

A person who is "simple-minded" is generally uneducated and rarely thinks of complex or intellectual issues. If a person has "no sense," they have no common sense.

Hell no!

A forceful and slangy way of telling a person you disagree with them.

I still want to know what he was doing lugging that broom around this time of day. :: He was sweeping, you sons-of-bitches!

"To lug" something is to carry it or drag it on the ground. A "broom" is a common tool used for sweeping floors. A "son-of-a-bitch" is a common and crude insult term for a mean or abusive person (A bitch is a mean woman).

Why am I always apologizing to you, you little bastard?

The male equivalent of a bitch! A mean or abusive man.

I bet you left her plenty of nights, whenever Jacy whistled.

"To whistle" is to make a high shrill sound by forcing air out of puckered lips. If a girl can get a boy to do something just by whistling, she has a lot of power or influence over that boy.

I'm around the corner, now. You've ruined it.

The first sentence is Ruth's way of saying that she has finally recovered emotionally (Today, people will say a person has "rounded the corner" when they start to improve). "To ruin" something is to harm or destroy it.

Never you mind, honey, never you mind.

An old-fashioned way of saying "don't worry about it."

# **The Last Picture Show**

## **Possible Topics for ESL Class Discussion**

- 1) **Would you ever live in a place like Anarene?  
What are the advantages and disadvantages?**
  
- 2) **Are there small towns in your country that are similar?**
  
- 3) **Why was this movie shot in black and white?**
  
- 4) **What do you think this movie was trying to tell us about people?**
  
- 5) **Between Ruth, Lois and Jacy, who is the most dangerous?**
  
- 6) **What was special about Sam the Lion?**
  
- 7) **Were there any truly admirable characters in this film?**
  
- 8) **What did you like and not like about this movie?**