



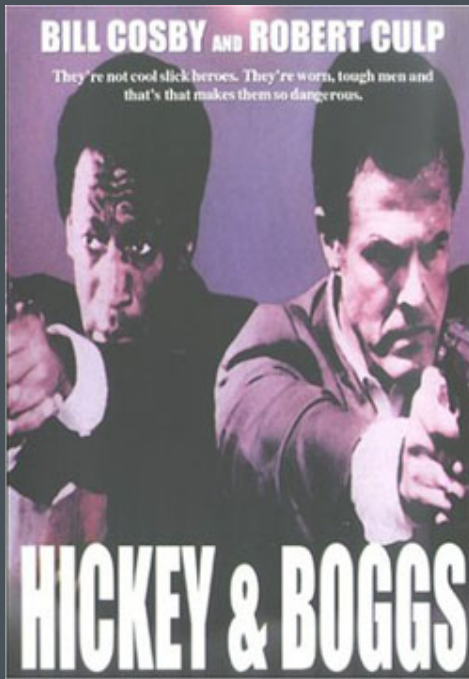
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Hickey & Boggs

By [Abel Folgar](#)

Thursday, Nov 04, 1:13 PM

One of the best detective flicks of our time.



Hickey & Boggs is one of the most misunderstood movies of our time. It is a movie that clearly, with a few more dollars thrown its way, would've gone down as the greatest piece committed to celluloid in its genre. Written by Walter Hill (director of 1982's *48 Hrs.*) and directed by Robert Culp (television's *I Spy*), this is the story of two down-on-their-luck private investigators.

Peppered with the usual genre clichés (hard drinking, money troubles, broken families), this film actually produces an exciting plot with the re-teaming of Culp with Bill Cosby. Having had some degree of success with their television show *I Spy*, which ran for 82 episodes, they share an incredibly powerful rapport and chemistry that Owen Wilson and Eddie Murphy would pay big bucks for. The story revolves around the P.I.s accepting a "missing woman" assignment and being thrown into the fray of a \$400,000 robbery cache, a hilariously feminized rich/bad guy, a Black Panthers-like gang, the mob, and the police. The action is kinda choppy and seems like the editor (David Berlatsky) and Culp never traded ideas. This makes for a sometimes-confusing movie to follow.

However, Bill Cosby's acting is incredible. While Culp plays the one that is falling apart on-screen (and does an admirable job of it), Cosby's reservation and gloomy seriousness quickly establishes him as the more reserved fellow who's probably already fallen apart and is quietly awaiting the day a bullet severs him from reality.

This particular DVD transfer gets a really bad rap from online bloggers and I agree with it being not the greatest product out there, but it doesn't seem like there will be anything bearing the word "remastered" out in the market in the near future. But c'mon, you weren't born with a DVD player in the living room or HD technology in place: you've seen third generation VHS copies of porn and dealt with it. Now, the \$20 price tag could use a severe lowering.

The cinematography is excellent, given the grainy and jumpy quality of the transfer. Los Angeles is not manicured in any way, shape, or form... it is almost as if though the city of angels is in some way responsible for the violent nature of the protagonists.

For those looking for comparisons, I offer Alan Ladd's 1953 classic end-of-the-west masterpiece *Shane* and Raymond Chandler's *The Long Goodbye*. Some people say *Chinatown*, but I say it is closer to the aforementioned works solely based on the grit and doom you inherently know will befall the anti-heroes. On a plus note, you'll see appearances by established actor Vincent Gardenia and a then-unknown James Woods.

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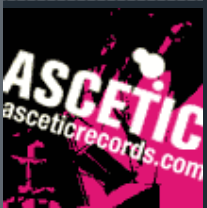
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