



DiCaprio and Winslet in *Revolutionary Road*.

(MOVIES)

The Dreamers

IMAGINE YOU have a fantasy: to quit your job, sell your house, move abroad, start all over. What if, suddenly, the fantasy becomes possible? Do you follow through? Or do you discover that the dream is only appealing as a *what-if*—and if so, do you feel relieved? Ashamed? Unsure of who you are? All of these questions—big, scary questions about our identities and desires—are faced head-on in **Revolutionary Road**, adapted from Richard Yates's 1961 novel (see page 114). As the young marrieds who yearn to break free of their suburban doldrums but can't foresee the consequences, Kate Winslet and Leonardo DiCaprio (*above*) are devastating—

their *Titanic* chemistry is as potent, and as heartrending, as ever.

Revolutionary Road is one of several adaptations in theaters now. F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1922 story **The Curious Case of Benjamin Button** gets a second act in David Fincher's much-awaited film version, starring Brad Pitt in the *Candide*-like tale of a man who is born elderly and ages backward. Broadway hit **Doubt** moves from stage to screen, with Meryl Streep as a nun who suspects a priest (Philip Seymour Hoffman) of molesting a student. And Jennifer Aniston and Owen Wilson lead the cast of **Marley & Me**, based on John Grogan's best-seller about a dog who's as loyal and lovable as he is cluelessly destructive. —J.W.

Art Meets Life

The well-heeled fantasia *Gossip Girl* is the current standard-bearer for depictions of randy, voluble teenagers tearing through the concrete jungle. But for a real-world alternative, two innovative new films blur the lines between scripted drama and documentary to create gripping immersion courses on urban youth. In **Up with Me** (available now via IFC's movies-on-demand service), a prep-school student comes home on break to his rough Harlem neighborhood, where he makes a fateful decision to help a troubled friend. Director Greg Takouides collaborated on the screenplay with his cast of mostly at-risk Harlem teens,

who play fictionalized versions of themselves. (They also offered up their homes as movie sets.) **The Class** (in limited release) stars real-life Paris teacher François Bégaudeau (*below*) opposite a multicultural ensemble of junior high school students—all nonprofessional actors—who contradict, inspire, and sometimes infuriate their devoted instructor. Winner of the 2008 Palme d'Or at Cannes, Laurent Cantet's drama portrays its crowded, rowdy classroom as a microcosm of democracy; the questions the film raises about the challenges facing public education are as urgent in America as they are in France. —J.W.



Note to Self: Get Social

"The happiest people have vibrant social networks. In several studies of individuals with self-reported high well-being, the number one strategy used to raise mood and combat depression was 'social affiliation.' People also report feeling happier when they are around others."

—CAROLINE ADAMS MILLER AND MICHAEL B. FRISCH, PHD, IN *CREATING YOUR BEST LIFE* (STERLING)

If you have only... 15 minutes: Listen to a Yaddocast, from the podcast series about the history of Yaddo, the legendary artists' residence, and its most famous guests. Subjects include Langston Hughes (*right*), Saul Bellow, and Flannery O'Connor (yaddo.org).

