

# You Don't Mess With the Zohan on Prom Night

While my mom has had the kids this week, we managed to fit in 2 movies of opposite genres: the suspense / horror flick, [Prom Night](#) (2008 remake of the 1980 film), vs. the silly comedy, [You Don't Mess With the Zohan](#), Adam Sandler's new movie. Suspense / Horror wins this time, hands down.

Prom Night – an easy, old fashioned slasher movie. I really liked that the villain and his motivations were unveiled in the first scenes of the movie. I didn't have to waste the rest of the movie worrying about *what* was trying to get the victims, why, and how many of them the victims needed to eliminate. Predictable yet startling – don't expect too much and you'll have fun.

You Don't Mess With the Zohan – ok, I really wasn't expecting much from this movie. The previews had basically said it all. A former Israeli terrorist fighter is looking for a fresh start and decides to become a hairdresser in the US. The movie is what it is – a really dumb comedy. As crude as [Adam Sandler](#) promises to be, you have to have a certain type of sense of humor to enjoy this movie. I didn't have a bad time at the movie, but many of the jokes got old before they were done using them and the humor became even raunchier than expected. While Adam Sandler does have a few worthwhile movies to his credit ([Happy Gilmore](#) and [The Wedding Singer](#) are my favorites), this is not one of them. Oh, well, it was bargain night at the movie theater, so \$8 for two of us to see a movie, get 2 pops and some popcorn was well worth it!

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# Time To Clean The Mothballs Out Of The Closet

Now that the latest Indiana Jones movie has hit the theatres and has already been dethroned at the box office, I began to start coming up with sure fire ways to relaunch other 1980s blockbuster movie franchises... many of which ended on a sad or horrible note. We have already seen a new Rocky as well as Rambo feature. I kind of appreciated [Rocky Balboa](#) as a nice homage and wrap up of the previous movies (it was far better than the deplorable [Rocky V](#)). I lost interest in the shoot em up Rambo series after the second installment. I think Stallone should have come up with a good story for both franchises to interact; however, that might have been asking a little too much for his acting prowess.

How about a nice return of *Jaws* (not the James Bond character with metal teeth but the shark). [Jaws the Revenge](#) (I think it was called) was just too horrible to even get into. Anything anyone comes up with surely would be better than that debacle. How about a wonderful sequel to both the *Jaws* series and *Finding Nemo*?

The [Beverly Hills Cop](#) franchise took a serious nosedive with the third movie in the series. Audiences expected to see Eddie Murphy be funny as the wise cracking Detroit to LA detective Axel Foley (with or without the foul language). The third movie was almost a family oriented feature taking place at a theme park. I suggest combining *Beverly Hills Cop* with many of the movies in which Eddie appears as several characters. Why not have Axel go in search of the people responsible for the travesty that is *Norbit* and arrest them? I do see that a *Beverly Hills Cop IV* is in the earliest stages of development.


I think it is about time to dust off the [Police Academy](#) shelf. This could be another collaboration with Steve Guttenberg and

company joining Eddie Murphy, Eddie Murphy, Eddie Murphy, AAAAAAND Eddie Murphy on a quest to find the villains who stole the careers of the other academy grads.

Or... how about *Revenge of the Killer Tomatoes*? I think we have had only *Attack* and *Return* so why not?

Of course most of these franchises were products of their time and reflected the period. Very doubtful that any of them would be able to start with anything near a fresh approach.

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## Two Turtles Mating

Last Saturday while I was at the library, some of my other family members decided to take the little ones to the Ft. Wayne Children's Zoo. When they returned, the highlight seemed to be seeing two rather enormous turtles "going at it." Apparently, the spectacle drew quite a crowd. My four-year-old niece commented that she watched them wrestle. Following the spectacle, one of the animals could be heard letting out a great sigh (of relief?).

This story made me recall one of the most hilarious yet apropos movie reviews I have ever read or heard. The 1980 movie [\*The Blue Lagoon\*](#) tells the coming-of-age tale of an eight-year old boy and girl who were shipwrecked on a desert island following a shipwreck. As they age, the two

(Christopher Atkins and Brooke Shields) make all kinds of “discoveries.”

In 1991, [Return to the Blue Lagoon](#) was released which brings me to the review. Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert must have thought very highly of both films. Mr. Ebert recalled that the best thing about the original was “two turtles mating.” The scene must have been a wonder to behold! Unfortunately, the *Return* featured no such memorable scenes. Funny how the glowing reports have still kept me away from seeing either film. And where, oh where have the two stars gone oh where oh where can they be?

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## The Strangers

Such a busy week this week, we had to move date night to Monday since we have meetings every other day this week. So we traveled down the road to see the movie called [the Strangers](#), a suspense horror film. And I don't really have much to say about it. It was exactly what I was expecting, not a thing more. Lots of suspense, so the movie was good for that edge-of-your-seat anticipation, but there was no background about why the terror was taking place, which I would have liked – just a movie about a couple who are victimized in a remote vacation home by scary people with extremely creepy looking masks. And, this isn't really a spoiler because right there in the film's introduction they tell you that the main characters are not going to make it. So watching these people struggle the whole movie knowing they won't triumph over evil was kind of... well, I guess I'd say almost pointless. There is also another event that takes place in the movie involving someone's demise that you can see coming a mile away. So,

while the film was incredibly predictable, it was good for suspense; it's not like I'd say it was a bad movie or boring or anything like that... Just nothing to write home about. [Liv Tyler](#) is not a bad actress either, but I'd have to say this wasn't one of my favorite horror / suspense movies. I appreciated the fact that it was done without the gore that seems to be plaguing many a horror film these days, but I really would have liked more story than just people getting terrorized by other people for no reason. If you like suspense, check it out; it is 90 minutes of nail-biting tension, but don't go expecting too much. I like many horror movies better, including the [Texas Chainsaw Massacre](#) remake from 2003 to name an example.

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## Did I Miss Something?

We watched an interesting movie tonight, for lack of a better word. It is called [Funny Games](#). It wasn't funny, and let me apologize ahead of time for the vague review – you'll have to see the movie to understand why I couldn't write too much about it. I had never heard of it before, but it was a thriller, so my husband suggested it. If you like thrillers, see it and then tell me what you think. I don't really know what to say about this movie. It was captivating and VERY tense, so I was never bored, but I was disappointed with the way it ended. For one thing, I did not understand the movie.

Let me back up and give a quick synopsis. [Naomi Watts](#) stars as a mother who, along with her husband and son are held captive by 2 very well-spoken young men in their remotely secluded (of course it's secluded – this IS a thriller movie!) vacation home. As I said, the movie is very intense but only after what is a somewhat slow start. I don't want to

spoil anything, so I will just say that are no words for what happened in the last 40 minutes of the movie. Near the conclusion, it took a turn for the confusing, and what happened made me not really understand the entire movie. It's based on an Austrian film, and imdb.com said that the American guy who remade it didn't change much from the Austrian version, so maybe it didn't translate well? I liked the movie, for the time being anyway while I was watching it, but I would really like some insight about a certain event that took place... it might actually be a thriller I would watch again, which is rare, but I might want to see if I can get what I must have missed. Like I said, if you're a big fan of suspense movies, I would try this one, it's definitely different from all the others! And if you have seen it or do see it, make sure you try to fill me in on what I missed, cuz I just didn't get it!

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## **Giddy As A School Boy?**

I was giddy as a school boy (inside) all day after I received two phone calls at work from a great friend informing me that he and his wife wanted to go and see THE MOVIE with me this afternoon. I was soooo excited... work just dragged by until 3.30 when I was allowed to leave a half hour early to make the 5pm showing. I cannot believe that it has been 19 years since Indiana Jones last graced the big screen and it really did look as if it were going to be the last time as Indy and his companions rode off into the sunset in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. From what I gathered on screen, I believe that Spielberg, Lucas, Ford, and company wanted to tie up some loose ends.

Without giving away too much, Kingdom of the Crystal Skull was

an entertaining movie but at times it was a bit too hokey... even for someone who still watches the three movies at least once a year (and when and why did *Raiders of the Lost Ark* become *Indiana Jones and the Raiders of the Lost Ark*?). The year is 1957, 20+ years after World War II and Nazis. This time, the enemies are the Russians and seeds of McCarthyism are seen in the beginning of the movie. We learn a little about what Dr. Jones has been up to since that time.

All of the elements of the previous films are here: the quest to find the MacGuffin, keeping it away from the villains, the creepy crawly creatures... yes there is at least one snake involved, the big action pieces, and above all Harrison Ford's unflappable portrayal with all the dry wit one comes to expect from the action star. The most pleasant surprise is Karen Allen's return to the fold as Marion Ravenwood from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The chemistry and magic between the two leads was unmistakable from the moment they resumed their bickering which was a highlight of the first film.

After the movie, we discussed one scene that would make a fantastic water ride at an amusement park. I have often thought that the mine car chase/battle in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* would be the basis for a great rollercoaster.

There were more times in this film that the action was slowed down and you kept wanting something to happen. It was very slow to get going but once it did, it kept us entertained. As we discussed, it may be that we might just be revisiting something from our youth and not being as captivated by it as adults. I admit that seeing the newest *Star Wars* trilogy kind of had me feeling that way, but there was just something missing in this Indy adventure.

The supporting cast of new friends for the archaeologist were unfamiliar. Gone were Marcus Brody and Sallah. In their place were a teenage James Dean type school drop out, a kidnapped colleague of Indy's, and a greedy man who apparently had

adventures with Indy following *The Last Crusade*.

So, while not as memorable as the three previous chapters, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* is an entertaining film that any fan of the original blockbusters should see. By the way, be sure to look for one of the treasures Dr. Jones uncovered in the previous movies in the warehouse segment at the beginning of the movie... blink and you may miss it. And anyone who can tell me where the shooting star seen in all Spielberg movies is, will be rewarded handsomely.

Overall, I give it 3 out of 5.

[Indiana Jones](#) tickets on sale now!



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## Johnny Be Good

There are several things that go into the making of any movie: acting, directing, writing, set design, etc. I feel that some of the best movies are defined not only visually but aurally. There is one man who in the past 40+ years has become the master of film scores. He has composed the music for at least 6 of the top box office movies of all time and has become the right hand man of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas. In every movie he has ever composed the music for, John Williams creates several characters (or at least enhances those on stage) along with the London Symphony Orchestra. Where would Darth Vader be without the ominous, thunderous "Imperial March?" Elliot and E.T. could not have flown on the bicycle without the wondrous theme. Christopher Reeve would not be nearly as super without the triumphant strains of the "Superman March." Bruce the Shark would have been a guppy

without the haunting motif from *Jaws*. I do not believe there has been a recent film directed by Steven Spielberg that Maestro Williams has not composed the score to. Whether it be blockbusters like *Jurassic Park* or more serious, thought-provoking movies like *Schindler's List*, Mr. Williams has been the musical Force (pun intended) behind all of them. Several DVDs produced have the option of viewing the film with music only... just see how little empty space there is without the dialog. If it is a John Williams scored film there would not be much. If there is one thing I am a guilty collector of it is the breathtaking, awe inspiring beauty of the music of John Williams. I challenge anyone to name any movie that he has composed the music for that would be better without it. I anxiously await not only the crack of Indiana Jones' whip but also the majesty that is the opening bars of the "Raiders March."

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## Ignorant Viewpoint of Iron Man

I've never read a comic book in my life, so why did I go see [Iron Man](#)? Easy – Tuesday is movie night for us, my local movie theater had 3 movies available, and it only cost \$3 for both of us to see one. The choices were [What Happens in Vegas](#), which I wasn't going to touch with a ten foot pole. I don't like [Ashton Kutcher](#), I'm not a big fan of [Cameron Diaz](#), and I heard a reviewer say something about the audience being tortured, not to mention that the premise itself sounded terrible – more like a Saturday Night Live skit than a movie. Another choice was [Prince Caspian](#), which I was somewhat open-

mindful about watching since I did read the first of the Narnia books way way back when, but my husband wasn't interested in seeing that one at all, and the 2 hour and 20 minute running time kinda turned us away also. So Iron Man it was.

The movie started out interesting enough – it was never boring, so don't let the fact that I fell asleep fool you. That's just what I do when I don't have time to nap during the day and I see a movie too early before I've gotten my second wind that carries me through the evening. So I would say that there was too much of a backstory given, even for people like us who had never really heard of Iron Man before and especially didn't know his backstory. The backstory seemed to go on and on, but my husband liked that, and since I was sleeping through most of it, I can't really fairly say that it was too long. Super hero movies are not even close to being my favorite kind of movie, but I did enjoy this one. It had the perfect amount of action (too much action makes my mind wander), cool special effects, and an interesting story line. The acting wasn't horrible or even bad, but what do you expect with veterans like [Robert Downey Jr.](#) and [Gwyneth Paltrow](#)?

They had good chemistry; the love story wasn't too cheesy, and I liked the ending of the movie. I really enjoyed seeing all the technology as Robert Downey Jr. was working in his "cave" and whatnot, and the huge enemy suit was really fun to watch in the showdown between good and evil. The people behind us came close to ruining things though, since it was a grown woman exclaiming things like, "Cool! That's awesome! I wish I could do that!" I'm glad she was enjoying herself, but it was distracting to the rest of us.

Since I'm not a comic book fan, I will pose a question to those who are. What percentage of superheros are filthy rich tech geeks who develop their weapons in reclusive mansions? This seems to be a common theme, but maybe it's just in the superhero movies I've seen. But anyway, I liked the movie; it tempted me to possibly check out Dark Knight this summer,

unless I'm too busy like, having a baby or something. Iron Man was well worth our \$3. I don't think I would have said the same for What Happens in Vegas.

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## Believe It...Or Not

In almost every film made, there are casting issues. The actors seen in the final product are not necessarily the people originally chosen to fill the roles. Well known to most trivia buffs, Shirley Temple possibly would have been Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* had she not been under contract to MGM rival Fox at the time. Buddy Ebsen was cast as the Tin Man until he discovered that he was allergic to makeup used in the costume.

-Imagine how different *Gone with the Wind* would have been if Lucille Ball had been cast as Scarlett O'Hara or Groucho Marx as Rhett Butler.

-Moving forward a few decades, the Bruce Willis starring action movie [Die Hard](#) was originally planned as a sequel to that fine Arnold Schwarzenegger masterpiece, *Commando*. However, after the Governator turned the role down, the film was changed and eventually starred Mr. Willis after four other casting attempts.

-Speaking of Ah-nuld, could you possibly imagine O.J. Simpson as *The Terminator*? Seriously, it could have happened.

-Bill Murray was considered for the role of [Batman](#)/Bruce Wayne in the 1989 film. Has Mr. Murray ever done a non-comedic movie? Or maybe, the movie was originally supposed to be lighter in tone and closer to the ['60s television show](#). Robin Williams was considered for the role of the Joker in both the

original Tim Burton directed movie and also for this summer's *The Dark Knight* (which will be Heath Ledger's swan song).

You can view other possible casting choices for your favorite movies at [notstarring.com](http://notstarring.com).



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## To Boldly Go To Infinity And Beyond

Because I know all of my faithful readers have been dying to learn the answers to last Saturday's tagline quiz (aside from the one who provided additional clues to the answers), I will now reveal the correct responses.

1. [The Fly](#) (1986 remake starring Jeff Goldblum and Gena Davis)
2. [Jurassic Park](#) (which was pretty much a gimme... again with Jeff Goldblum... purely coincidence)
3. [Star Trek: The Motion Picture](#) (rather plodding kick off of the movie franchise which will be relaunched [Christmas Day, 2008](#) and is being directed by "Lost" creator J.J. Abrams)
4. [Aliens](#) (the best of the Sigourney Weaver starring quadrilogy... I have yet to try the two Alien v. Predator films)
5. [Toy Story](#) (a third is in the works... interesting)

6. [E.T. – The Extraterrestrial](#) (again, a bit obvious. Harrison Ford was married to the screenwriter, Melissa Matheson at the time of its release and was supposed to have a cameo as a school principal. Steven Spielberg felt that the actor's presence would be too distracting to the cast and crew and his scene was cut. Did not hurt either the movie nor Mr. Ford's career in the least).

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