

A Break From The Stinker Trend

My husband and I have been watching some stinky movies lately. Many of them have had something in common, but I don't want to say which ones or what their common trait is for fear of making these movies predictable and even worse for people who might decide to watch them. I will just name the titles of the movies we've watched lately that weren't any good along with some quick notes:

[Edge of Darkness](#) (recent Mel Gibson mess), [Shutter Island](#) (so looking forward to this one and it let me down), [Memento](#) (man loses memory and uses Polaroids to remind himself of his mission in life), [Fight Club](#) (made us permanently question imdb.com's rating system – this one got an 8.8 and we hated it), [The Skeleton Key](#) (Kate Hudson voo-doo flick – need I say any more?), [The Machinist](#) (the best part of this movie was Christian Bale's acting – what does that tell you?), [Angel Heart](#) (more voo-doo, this time from the 80's with Robert DeNiro and "Denise" from the Cosby Show which will never be the same for me again – I saw more of Denise than I ever needed to see; there was little about this movie that wasn't disturbing – why they are bothering with a remake in 2011 is way beyond me), [Surveillance](#) (I liked this one a little, but my husband did not. One of the rare movies upon which we disagreed. Bill Pullman was pretty good), [The Collector](#) (a horror movie that wasn't quite as bad as the other mentioned above. VERY gory, and the amount of squirms and gore did not outweigh the good things about the movie).

Some of those movies are newer and we saw them in the theater; others are older releases watched at home. There just isn't much coming to the theaters these days. The Nightmare Elm Street remake is coming soon, but my hopes are not high for that one – the Halloween remake was awful, and the redone

Friday the 13th wasn't much better. I did enjoy My Bloody Valentine 3D that came out a few years ago, but then again, I never saw the original.

At least we've been offered a break from all the stinkers. We saw the Steve Carell / Tina Fey comedy-adventure flick Date Night for **our** date night the other night, and it was enjoyable. Better than I thought, actually. Steve Carell plays an everyman suburban husband who takes his wife out for a date night, and they say they are another couple in order to get a table at a swanky restaurant. Problem is, the couple they pose as are mixed up in no-good business – hijinks ensue. Steve Carell wasn't given much to work with for his character, but it amazes me how he brings life to every one of his roles and makes every character different from one another – how does he do that?

And surprisingly, we got a break from our stinker-streak for at home movies too with a Sarah Michelle Gellar suspense thriller that was actually quite enjoyable, despite my usual disdain for the actress. It's called [Possession](#), but don't let the title fool you – it was a pretty good suspense movie with a crummy title. The movie follows a young couple who are very much in love and celebrating their first wedding anniversary. Complicating their lives however, is the husband's convict brother, who has just been released from prison and is staying with them. There is a horrible car accident, and both brothers end up in comas with the brother-in-law waking up thinking he's the husband... sounds like a cheesy soap opera, but it was well done, and we liked it. From what I've been reading, it's a remake of a Korean movie called Addicted; I might have to check out the original. There is also an alternate ending, but I'll stick with the ending I saw – the alternate sounds dumb.

I'm just glad that we broke our stinker-streak, even if it did have to involve Sarah Michelle Gellar. Consider this blog post your warning to stay away from the ones I listed above –

some were almost bad enough to add to my “horrible movies” list; one that includes such bombs as The Love Guru and The Night Listener. You’ve been warned!!

Enchantment In The Real World

What would happen if characters in fairy tale land (or Disney animation land) joined real-world New York City? That is what Princess Giselle of Andalasia learns when she is banished on her wedding day by the Evil Queen Narissa. The Queen sends her son’s intended off to the land where “happily ever after” doesn’t exist.

Upon arriving in the Big Apple, Giselle meets Robert, a cynical divorce lawyer, and his daughter Morgan who believes that a real princess has stepped out of a book. Of course, her father has forbidden her to read such make believe drivel.

But not to fear, Prince Charming and Giselle’s chipmunk friend, Pip, come to the rescue! BUT... the Queen’s vile spy, Nathaniel, has been sent to put an end to Giselle for good.

I found [Enchanted](#) to be a really cute musical comedy if a bit cliched with all the ties to past classic animated features.

I really liked the nod to the past with the opening and closing of the book and the narration (provided by Julie Andrews, herself). The name of a restaurant brought a chuckle. I thought the leads were all well cast. Notice Timothy Spall who played Nathaniel. He played another “rat” in a little well-known film franchise... he just has that face and persona about him. And if you think that a bunch of people singing and dancing around [Bethesda Fountain](#) is strange... just imagine how many out-of-work performers there are in New York City alone! But I imagine that it would look

rather ridiculous if it were not being done for a Disney movie
□ Actually, it was one of my favorite parts of the movie...
being accompanied musically by a street corner reggae group
around Central Park (in the daylight, of course). Wonder how
much money Robert really put in their box.

The climax might be a little much for the very young, but
overall I think *Enchanted* would delight any young princess 6
and over. Cute movie.

Shortest Movie Review Ever

Just watched *Fight Club* – one of the worst movies I have ever
seen. I can't believe we wasted over 2 hours of kid-less time
on this piece of you-know-what.

The people who voted (yes, all 357,160 of them) for this on
imdb.com to give it an 8.8 out of 10 and made it #16 of their
top 250 movies of all time should be ashamed – makes me
hesitate to be advised by any of their ratings in the future.

I am not going to waste any more of my time writing or
thinking about this movie.

Triangle

Here we go, another movie review – have you seen or even heard
of a movie called *Triangle* (2009)? It's not a mainstream
movie; it only got about 5,000 votes on imdb.com

But my husband and I watched it the other night, and we both really enjoyed it – so much that I found it worthy of a little blog post.



So where do I start... because as a reviewer on imdb.com so eloquently said:

How to talk about "Triangle" without giving anything away? It's a puzzle equal to that which the movie presents its audience because this isn't your standard horror movie.

I think that is very true about this movie – it's one of those that is a puzzle all the way through, and while many of these types of movies end up disappointing me in the end, Triangle is the exception. It's a movie where I could see the viewer getting more and more out of it each time he or she watches it, and I will definitely try watching it again. If you're interested in a real puzzle of a movie, check out Triangle – but **don't** read too much on imdb.com about it first. And especially, **DO NOT** watch the trailer. It's better to watch it going in cold; knowing almost nothing about it, which is why I didn't say much in this "review". I will only say that I recommend it as a very different type of movie-watching experience. After you've seen it, you will want to read as many discussion boards about Triangle as you can; it's really interesting to ponder the... well, just see it, then we can talk ☐

And one more interesting thing about Triangle – as I was reading the discussion boards, I came across comparisons between Triangle and an old poem called [The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge](#). It seemed very strange to me that I had completely forgotten that I read The Rime of the Ancient Mariner way back when in school until I was reading about it the other day, which is when details of its plot flashed in my mind like déjà vu – an interesting thing to happen, considering the themes of the movie Triangle...

Night Of The Hunter

We recently came upon an old horror movie (1955) called [Night of the Hunter](#). And if you've noticed, I don't really write movie reviews anymore – I watch a lot of movies and there is too much other stuff going on in my life... but Night of the Hunter is surprisingly intriguing for a black-and-white horror flick, so I want to recommend it.



In Night of the Hunter, a little kid named Johnny is left with an incredibly adult responsibility when his father is arrested for robbing a bank and killed in prison – Johnny must now take care of his little sister Pearl and hide the stolen money – never to tell anyone where it is. Johnny's father talks in his sleep in prison, and his insane cellmate learns of the money and the kids. The cellmate, played by Robert Mitchum, dons the personality of a preacher and manages to charm the

childrens' mother into making him their new stepfather, even though he is only interested in the hidden treasure. What follows is a riveting cat-and-mouse game between the children and the bad guy, and while old-fashioned, the movie managed to become quite an intriguing horror / suspense film. I would share the trailer since they have it on youtube, but apparently the producers were attempting to attract a different type of audience as the trailer plays up the *very few* sexual aspects of the film – which really isn't representative of the film at all; the trailer completely misrepresents the film and that's why I'm not going to show it. There was good acting, great directing, and talented camera shots and cinematography that really helped to heighten the suspense. Some of the characters are incredibly old-fashioned (a friend of the childrens' mother tells her that she "can't raise those children without a man", suggesting that she find a man, ANY man to help her – this idea is completely irrelevant in today's society where single moms are commonplace), but it's easy and kind of fun to transport yourself back in time in order to sympathize and begin to understand the plight of these characters. The movie is set in the Depression era; a time when kids were often more of a financial burden than their parents could handle. In many cases, it was thought to be best for them if they were left to take care of themselves, often before they were teenagers. This aspect of the movie also explains Johnny's determination to take care of his little sister, as well as to explain other events in the movie that are best to be left unsaid here – I certainly don't want to spoil anything. Overall, Night of the Hunter is a riveting, classic horror movie experience that effectively transcends the decades-long gap between its release and modern horror movies – which all too often rely on blood, violence and gore to entertain.

After watching the movie, I looked up the actors on imdb.com, and I was surprised to learn that young Johnny is played by Peter Graves – a popular actor best known to me as Capt.

Clarence Oveur in the Airplane! movies. It was quite novel to see him in a movie as a kid when I was familiar with his later-in-life acting roles... And I was also surprised to see that the childrens' mother was portrayed by the late Shelley Winters, an actress that I knew best as Roseanne's Nana Mary on the 90's sitcom Roseanne – no wonder I didn't recognize her nearly 40 years earlier!

And a final note – Night of the Hunter is based on a novel, one I will have to add to my 'books to read' list... er, make that my 'books to read if I ever finish the Harry Potter series' list. ☐

Smurfingly Insider Info

It's no secret that there is a big screen version in the works of the popular little blue 80's tv characters known as The Smurfs. I haven't heard much buzz about this, just enough to know that it's in development. I don't know if it's going to be live action, CGI-enhanced, or 3D (though I would guess that with the growing popularity of 3D that this might not be a bad idea). I do know that the main roles are rumored to have been cast, and this is the news that shocked me and prompted this post – [Quentin Tarantino as Brainy Smurf?!?](#) If this movie is going to be live action, this is going to be interesting... my money is going on Tarantino doing the voice-over for the character, not actually being made up as Brainy Smurf and doing the acting. Although perhaps the actors will film the movie and then be "drawn" over, ala Avatar. But however they do it, I will surely be checking it out as I was a huge fan of The Smurf's cartoon in the 80's – I even had a Smurf's record! Who can forget the toothbrush song?!? I listened to this over and over as a kid and was pleased to

find it on youtube. (I would like to apologize to my friend Carol in advance – DO NOT click the video, Carol!) Oh, and by the way, they've slated Katy Perry as Smurfette, and Jonathan Winters as Papa Smurf. No word on Gargamel yet, although Neil Patrick Harris apparently has a role as a "live" character who helps the smurfs (Johan or Peewit?). And Alan Cumming is Gutsy Smurf – who the heck is Gutsy Smurf? Is this going to be a parody movie of the Smurfs, much like the Brady Bunch movies (which actually did a great job of hilariously spoofing the 70's tv show)? Staying tuned!

And Call Off Christmas!

Before the newest in the endless stream of Robin Hood tales hits the big screen this summer (the first film featuring the outlaw dates back to 1908... the character is hundreds of years old), I recently revisited the 1991 Kevin Costner version *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*. Lots of memories dating back to the summer going into my senior year in high school. I of course saw the movie in the theatre. I really liked it but found some bits a little unnerving. Would Maid Marian, a woman of noble blood during the Crusades of King Richard the Lionhearted really hit a man "below the belt?"

I vividly recall the remarkably gifted character actor Alan Rickman in his delightfully delicious turn as the Sheriff of Nottingham. From the original *Die Hard* to the continuing Harry Potter saga as Prof. Snape, Rickman shines in the most seemingly villainous of roles. Anyone who orders the cancellation of Christmas is pure evil! Was the birth of Christ celebrated in the 12 Century? Who cares anyway? Too much digging into a movie is bad for the enjoyment, in my opinion.

Back to the school year. After the success of the Bryan Adams hit from the soundtrack, the choir sang "(Everything I Do), I Do It For You." Along with "Unchained Melody" from *Ghost*, the two songs made for a nice duo of songs from the movies. The score by Michael Kamen is perfect!

The home video version is definitely in need of an upgrade. The sound on the DVD I received from Netflix was not all that great even coming from the Blu-Ray conversion. Maybe it will receive an upgrade prior to the new film. Or I could watch "Robin Hood Daffy."

Here's the trailer for the new movie:

History With Oscar

If nothing else, last night's Academy Awards made a strong statement that traditional movie making is still preferable to the rise of technology... in the eyes of the voters anyway. *Avatar* may have earned \$567,890,123.45 (that figure may even be low) at the box office but I think it was ultimately the big loser this year at the awards. I really thing Dr. Doogie's kick-off to the evening was the low point, Did anyone else see his song (?) and dance? If not... you will have to hunt yourself. Honestly, I thought he was supposed to be good? But I thought Mr. Baldwin and the ALWAYS hilarious Steve Martin were wonderful!

I knew that the time had come for the first female Best Director even more so than the first African-American (forgive me if that is un-PC). But I think the fact that Ms. Bigelow and *The Hurt Locker* swept the top two categories and was the biggest winner was a bit of a surprise. However, looking back there have been other examples of David-Goliath at the Oscars. Does anyone remember 1977 when a little movie called *Star Wars* was beaten by the less groundbreaking Woody Allen pic, *Annie Hall*? Or 1982 when a little guy trying to "Phone Home" lost to *Gandhi*? So how do we possibly explain the year of the water-logged boat sinking?! A fluke!

I was happy to see *Star Trek* win in one category. It tied with *The Voyage Home* (the one with the whales... very high on my list) for the most noms by a movie in the series. Even *The Motion Picture* (zzz) got three. Last night's Make Up victory was the first win for the 44 year series.

So while I came in 4th in the pool, I did walk away with a nice gift. The ceramic teddy bear banks are adorable, thanks

Carol! Always a ball worthy of the best Hollywood can throw!

I still had a difficult time voting for Sandra Bullock. Maybe it's her low opinion of one of her first on screen performances. If you can't be happy about playing the second Bionic Woman (and I'm not talking about the unremarkable series reboot of a few seasons ago) then... and what was with the lipstick... EGAD!

And what happened to the "No thanking" policy? Not to be outdone by the endless Best Actor/Actress presentations. So much for saving time. And apparently, "research" doesn't always help, right C? ☐

Give Me What I Want And I'll Go Away

If memory serves, Stephen King's [*Storm of the Century*](#) was a mini-series in the late 90s. It definitely was not a theatrical release since I watched the 2hr15min first part tonight. I have seen many of King's other movies and this one definitely ranks VERY high. Maybe it's because Mr. King actually had a hand in the production or perhaps it's because everything about the movie is so compelling. For a televised production, I thought the editing was very well done. It is usually much easier to pick out where commercials would be inserted but it just flowed.

I caught the blink or you miss cameo by the writer and a reference to at least one of his other works. I caught the Superman homage and chuckled when Tim Daly uttered it. For those of you who don't know, Daly was the voice of the animated Man of Steel from 1996-2000. But Colm Feore who

plays the creepy, enigmatic, brilliant baddie, Andre Linoge made me think of another equally brilliant villain: Dr. Hannibal Lecter. But tell me, what was it he was whispering throughout especially when the sound of the storm was raging? I don't think it was "I'm a Little Teapot."

I can't wait to watch part 2 to find out just what exactly Linoge is. Signs are given throughout that he might be a leftover from *'Salem's Lot* but I think he maybe something even more sinister.

Head Games Before The Unknown Hits

I have heard all kinds of forecasts for the next day or so. I will let Nature take her course and live with what we are given. This afternoon, Megan and I had made plans to see *Shutter Island*. The first I had come into knowledge of the movie was the trailer during the Super Bowl. I thought it looked awesome... even if Leonardo DiCaprio was the star. I think the movie about the boat sinking turned me off of his acting talent.

I will give only the vaguest of outlines for those of you wishing to see the psychological thriller. Leo plays Teddy Daniels, a veteran U.S. Marshall, who along with his young partner, investigate the escape of a patient at a high security "mental institution for the criminally insane."

What follows is a great mind game... I really like those types of movies! We both thought it was very good. Although definitely not for the 6-8 young children who were with their adult companions. I am pleased to say that the only time I noticed them was one who started crying 5 minutes after the show began. Thankfully, one of the adults was quick to take the child out of the theatre. Of course after the 2.5 hour movie (didn't notice the length really), we were greeted by nacho and popcorn remains in our path.

On the return trip, snow had begun falling and when we arrived on Union Street, we found fire engines and a police car along the opposite side of the street. After dropping my companion at her place, I took another route home and was passed by 2 more emergency vehicles. Hopefully nothing serious.

Here is the trailer for *Shutter Island*: